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College of the Liberal Arts

*The Criminology Speaker Series presents:*

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**Friday, April 16 | Noon**



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## "Retrospective and Prospective Measures of Childhood Adversities in Predictions of Adult Health Burden: What Is Learned from Different Representations of the Past?"

Exposure to childhood adversities has been shown to predict premature mortality and morbidity including numerous illnesses, diseases, and chronic conditions later in life. Assessments of adverse childhood experiences have increasingly made their way into standard clinical practice. Most of this research has examined perceived health burden and has largely relied on retrospective measures of childhood events obtained from adult samples. Few studies have employed prospective measures gathered at early phases in life, and fewer still examine biomarkers. Most importantly, the limitations and biases of human memory have introduced uncertainty about the meaning of retrospective recollections of early life. These uncertainties pose important challenges to any straightforward interpretation of the linkage between childhood adversities and health outcomes. Using longitudinal data on a sample of African American young adults this study (1) examines the corroboration between prospective and retrospective reports, and (2) their relationships with subjective assessments of health and a biomarker of cardiovascular disease. The study concludes with a discussion of the retrospective method in the context of research on the hypothesized lasting effects of childhood adversities.

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