

**Washington State University**

**College of Education**

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**Will defend the dissertation**

**Date: April 14, 2021**

**Time: Noon**

**Location: Zoom by request**

*Faculty, students and the general public are encouraged to attend*

**EMERGING ADULTS PERCEPTIONS' OF HELP-SEEKING STIGMA  
FROM PARENTS AND PEERS**

**Chair: Hsin-Ya Liao**

The mental health literature has long identified a discrepancy between emerging adults' needs for mental health services and actual utilization. Considering their internalized self-stigma of seeking counseling is the strongest predictor of their help-seeking attitudes and intentions, it is necessary for researchers to understand the factors that contribute to their development of self-stigma. One factor which has not yet been explored is emerging adults' perceptions of stigma from their parents and peers. The primary purpose of the proposed study is to empirically examine the relationships between emerging adults' perceptions of stigma from their parents and peers, their self-stigma, and their attitudes toward counseling. Public stigma is also included in this study to compare the salience of public stigma to perceptions of parental and peer-related stigma as predictors of their self-stigma. The secondary purpose is to explore the moderating roles of gender and cultural orientation (i.e., individuals' self-construal) on the relationship between perceptions of stigma and self-stigma. The tertiary purpose is to replicate Vogel et al.'s (2007) stigma of seeking counseling framework with a newly adapted public stigma scale. In the current study, a sample of 252 emerging adult participants were recruited at Washington State University via convenience sampling. Path analyses and repeated sample mean comparison were performed to test five hypotheses. The results showed that: (1) the stigma of SC framework was replicated with the newly adapted public stigma scale; (2) self-stigma mediated the relationship between perceptions of peer-related stigma and attitudes toward counseling, but not the relationship between perceptions of parental stigma and attitudes toward counseling; and (3) neither gender nor cultural orientation moderated the relationship between perceptions of stigma and self-stigma. Implications for future research and practice on help-seeking stigma and emerging adults are discussed.