



Stephanie Balters

Instructor, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences - Interdisciplinary Brain Sciences

Bio

BIO

Dr. Stephanie Balters is an instructor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University School of Medicine. She is the director of the Empowerment Neuroscience Laboratory and studies how social factors such as interpersonal trauma and cultural biases impact brain function and mental health outcomes. Dr. Balters develops evidence-based interventions to improve well-being, work productivity, and team performance. She is passionate about embracing authenticity, vulnerability, and individual differences, and leveraging adverse experiences towards self-growth and achieving one's full potential. Dr. Balters holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering and has earned a Ph.D. in Engineering Design. Her diverse career journey includes experiences at the Center for Design Research and Computer Science at Stanford University before transitioning to the School of Medicine. Dr. Balters is a Human Factors Specialist at NATO and facilitates Empowerment Workshops at Stanford University.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Instructor, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences - Interdisciplinary Brain Sciences
- Member, Wu Tsai Human Performance Alliance
- Member, Maternal & Child Health Research Institute (MCHRI)

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Stanford Postdoc JEDI Champion Award (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion), Stanford University (2023)
- K99/R00 Pathway to Independence Award, National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) (2023)
- Stanford Postdoc JEDI Champion Award (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion), nominated, Stanford University (2022)
- Jump Start Award for Excellence in Research, Stanford University (2021)
- Postdoctoral Fellowship from the Center for Automotive Research, Stanford University (2019)
- Postdoctoral Fellowship, Norwegian Centres of Expertise (2018)
- Predoctoral Fellowship from the Scandinavian Consortium for Organizational Research, Stanford University (2017)
- Predoctoral Fellowship from the Vice Dean of Education, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (2014)
- Thesis award, Best Master's Thesis in Automotive Engineering in the Academic year 2012/2013, RWTH Aachen University (2013)

BOARDS, ADVISORY COMMITTEES, PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Founding Director, Stanford Women Empowerment Initiative (2022 - present)
- Peer Review Committee Member, NSF (2020 - present)
- Women Empowerment Coach, Stanford Grant Writing Academy (2021 - present)
- Human Factors Specialist, NATO (2019 - present)

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- Postdoc, Stanford University, School of Medicine , Interaction Neuroscience (2021)
- Postdoc, Stanford University, School of Medicine , Precision Health (2019)
- Visiting Researcher, Stanford University, Computer Science , Human Computer Interaction (2017)
- Visiting Researcher, Stanford University, Center for Design Research , Human Machine Interaction (2017)
- Ph.D., NTNU , Mechanical Engineering (2017)
- M.Eng., RWTH Aachen University , Mechanical Engineering and Business Administration (2012)
- B.Eng., RWTH Aachen University , Mechanical Engineering and Business Administration (2008)

LINKS

- My Lab Site: <https://empowering.stanford.edu/>

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Neural responses to gender-based microaggressions in academic medicine.** *Journal of neuroscience research*
Balters, S., Foland-Ross, L. C., Bruno, J., Periyakoil, V. S., Valantine, H., Reiss, A. L.
2023
- **Expressing appreciation is linked to interpersonal closeness and inter-brain coherence, both in person and over Zoom.** *Cerebral cortex (New York, N.Y. : 1991)*
Balters, S., Miller, J. G., Reiss, A. L.
2023
- **Virtual (Zoom) Interactions Alter Conversational Behavior and Inter-Brain Coherence.** *The Journal of neuroscience : the official journal of the Society for Neuroscience*
Balters, S., Miller, J. G., Li, R., Hawthorne, G., Reiss, A. L.
2023
- **A Neuroscience Approach to Women Entrepreneurs' Pitch Performance: Impact of Inter-Brain Synchrony on Investment Decisions** *Design Thinking Research*
Balters, S., Heaton, S., Reiss, A. L.
Springer.2023
- **Current opinions on the present and future use of functional near-infrared spectroscopy in psychiatry.** *Neurophotonics*
Li, R., Hosseini, H., Saggar, M., Balters, S. C., Reiss, A. L.
2023; 10 (1): 013505
- **Design science and neuroscience: A systematic review of the emergent field of Design Neurocognition** *DESIGN STUDIES*
Balters, S., Weinstein, T., Mayseless, N., Auernhammer, J., Hawthorne, G., Steinert, M., Meinel, C., Leifer, L. J., Reiss, A. L.
2023; 84
- **Priming Activity to Increase Interpersonal Closeness, Inter-brain Coherence, and Team Creativity Outcome** *Design Thinking Research*
Balters, S., Hawthorne, G., Reiss, A. L.
Springer.2023
- **Conflicting spatial representations impairs object tracking performance in an aerospace environment** *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMAN-COMPUTER STUDIES*
Geesean, J. W., Balters, S.
2022; 167
- **Cortical activation predicts posttraumatic improvement in youth treated with TF-CBT or CCT.** *Journal of psychiatric research*
Espil, F. M., Balters, S., Li, R., McCurdy, B. H., Kletter, H., Piccirilli, A., Cohen, J. A., Weems, C. F., Reiss, A. L., Carrion, V. G.
2022; 156: 25-35

- **Towards assessing subcortical "deep brain" biomarkers of PTSD with functional near-infrared spectroscopy.** *Cerebral cortex (New York, N.Y. : 1991)*
Balters, S., Schlichting, M. R., Foland-Ross, L., Brigadoi, S., Miller, J. G., Kochenderfer, M. J., Garrett, A. S., Reiss, A. L.
2022
- **Interpersonal Trust Activity to Increase Team Creativity Outcome: An fNIRS Hyperscanning Approach.** *In Design Thinking Research. Springer.*
Balters, S., Weinstein, T., Hawthorne, G., Reiss, A. L.
2022
- **The NATO Guidebook for Human Experimentation with Unmanned Aerial Systems**
Geeseman, J. W., Hou, M., Balters, S., Darrah, S., Kuffner, M., Richardson, D., Vorm, E.
NATO Headquarters.2022
- **Functional near-infrared spectroscopy brain imaging predicts symptom severity in youth exposed to traumatic stress.** *Journal of psychiatric research*
Balters, S., Li, R., Espil, F. M., Piccirilli, A., Liu, N., Gundran, A., Carrion, V. G., Weems, C. F., Cohen, J. A., Reiss, A. L.
2021; 144: 494-502
- **Individualized stress detection using an unmodified car steering wheel.** *Scientific reports*
Balters, S., Gowda, N., Ordonez, F., Paredes, P. E.
2021; 11 (1): 20646
- **Dynamic Inter-Brain Synchrony in Real-life Inter-Personal Cooperation: A Functional Near-infrared Spectroscopy Hyperscanning Study.** *NeuroImage*
Li, R., Mayseless, N., Balters, S., Reiss, A. L.
2021: 118263
- **A Methodological Review of fNIRS in Driving Research: Relevance to the Future of Autonomous Vehicles.** *Frontiers in human neuroscience*
Balters, S., Baker, J. M., Geeseman, J. W., Reiss, A. L.
2021; 15: 637589
- **The NATO Human-System Integration Guidebook**
Geeseman, J. W., Hou, M., Balters, S., Darrah, S., Kuffner, M., Richardson, D., Vorm, E.
NATO Headquarters.2021
- **Inter-brain Synchrony and Innovation in a Zoom World Using Analog and Digital Manipulatives.** *In Design Thinking Research. Springer.*
Balters, S., Mayseless, N., Grace, H., Reiss, A. L.
2021
- **Dyadic Sex Composition and Task Classification Using fNIRS Hyperscanning Data** *20th IEEE International Conference on Machine Learning and Applications (ICMLA)*
Kruse, L. A., Reiss, A. L., Kochenderfer, M. J., Balters, S.
2021
- **Unobtrusive stress sensing via a commercial steering wheel.** *Scientific Reports*
Balters, S., Gowda, N., Ordonez, F., Paredes, P. E.
2021
- **Inter-Brain Synchrony and Innovation in a Zoom World Using Analog and Digital Manipulatives** *Design Thinking Research*
Balters, S., Baker, J., Hawthorne, G., Reiss, A. L.
Springer.2021
- **Capturing Human Interaction in the Virtual Age: A Perspective on the Future of fNIRS Hyperscanning** *FRONTIERS IN HUMAN NEUROSCIENCE*
Balters, S., Baker, J. M., Hawthorne, G., Reiss, A. L.
2020; 14: 588494
- **Functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS) in an Aerospace Environment: Challenges and Considerations** *AEROSPACE MEDICINE AND HUMAN PERFORMANCE*
Geeseman, J., Balters, S., Cotton, O., Kiehl, Z., Lucia, L., Tenison, C.
2020; 91 (10): 833–35
- **Mayday, Mayday, Mayday: Using salivary cortisol to detect distress (and eustress!) in critical incident training** *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INDUSTRIAL ERGONOMICS*

- Balters, S., Geeseman, J. W., Tveten, A., Hildre, H., Ju, W., Steinert, M.
2020; 78
- **Calm Commute: Guided Slow Breathing for Daily Stress Management in Drivers** *Interactive, Mobile, Wireless, Ubiquitous Technologies*
Balters, S., Mauriello, M., Park, S., Landay, J., Paredes, P.
2020
 - **The Neuroscience of Team Cooperation versus Team Collaboration** *Design Thinking Research*
Balters, S., Mayseless, N., Hawthorne, G., Reiss, A. L.
Springer.2020
 - **Back to School: Impact of Training on Driver Behavior and State in Autonomous Vehicles**
Sibi, S., Balters, S., Fu, E., Strack, E. G., Steinert, M., Ju, W., IEEE
IEEE.2020: 1189-1196
 - **On-road Guided Slow Breathing Interventions for Car Commuters**
Balters, S., Landay, J. A., Paredes, P. E., Assoc Comp Machinery
ASSOC COMPUTING MACHINERY.2019
 - **On-road Stress Analysis for In-car Interventions During The Commute**
Balters, S., Bernstein, M., Paredes, P. E., Assoc Comp Machinery
ASSOC COMPUTING MACHINERY.2019
 - **Breath Booster! Exploring In-Car, Fast-Paced Breathing Interventions to Enhance Driver Arousal State**
Balters, S., Murnane, E. L., Landay, J. A., Paredes, P. E., ACM
ASSOC COMPUTING MACHINERY.2018: 128-137
 - **Just Breathe: In-Car Interventions for Guided Slow Breathing** *Journal of ACM on Interactive, Mobile, Wearable and Ubiquitous Technologies*
Paredes, P. E., Zhou, Y., Hamdam, N., Balters, S., Murnane, E., Ju, W., Landay, J. A.
2018
 - **Driving with the Fishes: Towards Calming and Mindful Virtual Reality Experiences for the Car** *Journal of ACM on Interactive, Mobile, Wearable and Ubiquitous Technologies*
Paredes, P., Balters, S., Qian, K., Murnane, E., Ju, W., Landay, J. A.
2018
 - **Capturing emotion reactivity through physiology measurement as a foundation for affective engineering in engineering design science and engineering practices** *JOURNAL OF INTELLIGENT MANUFACTURING*
Balters, S., Steinert, M.
2017; 28 (7): 1585-1607
 - **Learning-by-Doing: Using Near Infrared Spectroscopy to Detect Habituation and Adaptation in Automated Driving**
Balters, S., Sibi, S., Johns, M., Steinert, M., Ju, W., Assoc Comp Machinery
ASSOC COMPUTING MACHINERY.2017: 134-143
 - **Towards New Affect Integrated Interaction Design: Papers on Theory, Instrument, and Context of Affective Engineering. Doctoral Thesis.** *Norwegian University of Science and Technology*
Balters, S.
2017
 - **Assessing Driver Cortical Activity during Varying Levels of Automation with Functional Near Infrared Spectroscopy**
Sibi, S., Balters, S., Ju, W., Steinert, M.
2017
 - **Smell – Forgotten yet Critical Dimension in Product Development?**
Limseth, G., Cuesta, K., Balters, S., Garcia Cifuentes, J. P., Steinert, M.
2016
 - **Introducing the Wayfaring Approach for the Development of Human Experiments in Interaction Design and Engineering Design Science**
Leikanger, K. K., Balters, S., Steinert, M.
2016

- **Experimental studies in interaction design and engineering design science - a repository for experiment setups.**
Kriesi, C., Balters, S., Steinert, M.
2016
- **Impact of road- and vehicle-related parameters on the energy efficiency of hybrid city buses.** *International Journal of Electric and Hybrid Vehicles*
Balters, S., Scholz-Starke, K., Eckstein, L.
2015
- **Physiology and sensorial based quantification of human-object interaction - the QOSI matrix.**
Balters, S., Jensen, M. B., Steinert, M.
2015
- **Measuring Prototypes – A Standardized Quantitative Description of Prototypes and their Outcome for Data Collection and Analysis.**
Jensen, M. B., Balters, S., Steinert, M.
2015
- **Distributed Experiments in Design Sciences, A Next Step in Design Observation Studies?**
Kriesi, C., Balters, S., Steinert, M.
2015
- **Photography - A New Tool in Needfinding.**
Wulvik, A., Balters, S., Steinert, M.
2015
- **Decision-Making in engineering—A call for affective engineering dimensions in applied engineering design and design sciences.**
Balters, S., Steinert, M.
2014
- **Physiological Data Acquisition for Deeper Insights into Prototyping.**
Kriesi, C., Steinert, M., Meboldt, M., Balters, S.
2014