

## **MPA Proposal**

### **Purpose:**

The main purpose of this research is deciphering whether physical attractiveness predicts meaning in life (MIL). Previous research suggests that attractive people attain a smoother path through life than unattractive people. Those seen as attractive are more likely to be successful in the workplace and earn more money (Hosada et al., 2003). They are also more likely to have higher well-being and are less susceptible to depression (Gupta et al., 2015).

### **Procedure:**

Over the course of three studies, a collective 1,235 participants provided ratings of self-reported and perceived levels of MIL and attractiveness. In Study 1, student participants were asked to respond to questions regarding their own attractiveness, MIL, and other relevant measures. In Study 2, online participants were prompted to rate not only their own levels of attractiveness and MIL, but were also asked to rate the levels of MIL and attractiveness of people presented to them in photographs. In Study 3, participants responded to numerous self-reported measures before taking a photograph of them self. The attractiveness of these photographs was then rated by independent coders.

### **Results and Conclusion:**

Analysis of Studies 1 and 2 demonstrated that people who believe that they are attractive rate their lives as more meaningful than people who do not ( $r=.14$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Furthermore, people will judge another individual's MIL based on how attractive that individual is thought to be ( $r=.42$ ,  $p<.001$ ). In Study 3, we predict a positive correlation between other-rated attractiveness and self-reported MIL will emerge. While one might expect that MIL is too deep of a construct to be reliant on something so shallow as physical attractiveness, these findings converge on the notion that one's appearance does, in fact, relate to how meaningful they find life to be.