



Daniel Palac, Ph.D.

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PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Dr. Daniel Palac is an expert in human factors and regularly investigates the role of human performance in vehicle accidents, industrial incidents, workplace hazards, consumer product safety, and warning system effectiveness. He has extensive experience in the design, evaluation, and analysis of warnings and instructions for both consumer products and industrial equipment. Dr. Palac has presented his findings to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and is well-versed in evaluating compliance with regulatory standards set by the CPSC, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), American National Standards Institute (ANSI), and other governing bodies.

Before transitioning to his career in failure analysis, Dr. Palac earned his degrees in psychology and kinesiology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), where his academic focus was on cognition and physical activity behavior. During his time at UIUC, he conducted research on the effectiveness of aerobic exercise and cognitive training in mitigating post-concussion symptoms. Dr. Palac specializes in human performance psychology, perception, and cognition. He served as a researcher at UIUC's Exercise, Technology, and Cognition Laboratory, where he contributed to federally funded randomized controlled trials. His work included the design and implementation of studies, advanced statistical modeling, quantitative data analysis, and neuropsychological assessment in both healthy individuals and clinical populations. His research emphasized cognitive function, behavioral outcomes, and performance in individuals with concussion. Additionally, Dr. Palac has explored the use of emerging technologies to enhance spatial navigation and reduce injury risk during physical activity.

POSITIONS

Brillouin Consulting
Senior Manager

Greater Chicago Area, IL
Oct 2025 - Present

Human Factors expert specializing in vehicle accidents, industrial incidents and workplace hazards, consumer product safety, warnings and safety information, and other areas of human performance. Litigation and proactive study experience.

Exponent
Managing Scientist, Human Factors
Senior Scientist, Human Factors
Scientist, Human Factors

Greater Chicago Area, IL
Mar 2023 - Sep 2025
Mar 2022 - Mar 2023
Jan 2019 - Mar 2022

ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Ph.D., Kinesiology

Champaign-Urbana, IL
2019

Adler University
M.A., Psychology, Sport and Health Psychology

Chicago, IL
2014

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
B.S., Psychology

Champaign-Urbana, IL
2012

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Graduate Instructor of Record, Social Science of Human Movement, UIUC, 2017

LICENSES & CERTIFICATIONS

- Certified Forklift Operator (CFO)
- OSHA #511 Occupational Safety and Health Standards for General Industry

PROFESSIONAL HONORS

- UIUC Laura J. Huelster Graduate Student Award, 2019
- UIUC Research Apprenticeship Program Mentor, 2018-2019
- UIUC Teacher Ranked as Excellent by their Students, 2014-2017

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, 2019- Present
- American College of Sports Medicine, 2016 – Present
- Society of Behavioral Medicine, 2014 – Present

PUBLICATIONS

- Palac D, Scully ID, Jonas RK, Campbell JL, Young D, Cades DM. Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS): Who's driving what and what's driving use? Proceedings of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society Annual Meeting. 2021;65(1):1220-1224. doi:10.1177/1071181321651234.
- Palac D, Bullard T, Cohen JD, Nguyen LT, Mudar RA, Mullen SP. Effects of traditional vs. iPad enhanced aerobic exercise on wayfinding efficacy and cognition: A pilot randomized controlled trial. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health 2019; 16(3495): 1-16. doi: 10.3390/ijerph16183495.
- Mullen SP, Cohen J, Palac D. Physical activity and sedentary behavior. In: Behavioral and Social Science in Medicine: Principles and Practice of Biopsychosocial Care. Waldstein SR, Muldoon MF, Satterfield JM, Novack DH, Cole S (eds), Springer, NY, 2017.
- Mullen SP, Palac D, Bryant L. Maps to apps: Evaluation of wayfinding technology. In: Community Wayfinding: Pathways to Understanding. Hunter R, Anderson L, Belza B, Hooker S (eds), Springer, NY 2016; ch10, 137-151.

PRESENTATIONS

- Grossi E., Palac, D. Navigating Consumer Product Safety: Engineering and Human Factors Insights. Presentation, IEEE International Symposium on Product Compliance Engineering, Chicago, Illinois, 2024.
- Palac D, Mullen SP. Relationships among concussion history and subsequent physical activity, memory, and mindfulness. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Society of Behavioral Medicine, Washington DC, 2019.
- Palac D. The role of physical activity and exercise in molding healthy minds. Keynote presentation at North Central College's Health Awareness Week, Naperville, IL, 2018.
- Palac D, Cohen JD, Bullard T, Kramer AF, McAuley E, Mullen SP. Personality profiles, exercise trial attrition and adherence: Do the Big Five matter? Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Society of Behavioral Medicine, New Orleans, LA, 2018.
- Bullard T, Cohen JD, Palac D, Kramer AF, McAuley E, Mullen SP. Exercise self-efficacy growth trajectories after 20 hours of cognitive training. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Society of Behavioral Medicine, New Orleans, LA, 2018.
- Phansikar M, Palac D, Cohen JD, Bullard T, North JR, Wilund K, Wong B, Mullen SP. Complementary effects of exercise and heat therapy on mindfulness and cognition. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Society of Behavioral Medicine, New Orleans, LA, 2018.

- North JR, Cohen JD, Palac D, Bullard T, Phansikar M, Wong B, Wilund K, Mullen SP. Increased sleep efficiency through heat therapy and exercise. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Society of Behavioral Medicine, New Orleans, LA, 2018.
- Cohen JD, Palac D, Bullard T, North JR, Phansikar M, Mullen SP. Relationships among affect, memory, perceptions, and physical function in older adults with cancer. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Society of Behavioral Medicine, New Orleans, LA, 2018.
- Mullen SP, Cohen JD, Palac D, Bullard T, Phansikar M, North JR, Wong B, Wilund K. A pilot RCT testing effects of steam-room usage after exercise on cardiovascular functioning among pre-hypertensive adults. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Society of Behavioral Medicine, New Orleans, LA, 2018.
- Palac D. An introduction to the field of sport psychology: An applied approach. Presentation in KIN 160 Introduction to Kinesiology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL, 2017.
- Palac D, Mullen SP. Self-efficacy for exercise-specific memory and prospective mobile health application use. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Society for Behavioral Medicine, San Diego, CA, 2017.
- Bullard T, Rebar A, Cohen JD, Palac D, Wichman AL, Kramer AF, McAuley E, Mullen SP. Exercise related attitudinal changes after 20 hours of cognitive training. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Society of Behavioral Medicine, San Diego, CA, 2017.
- Palac D, Hua AK, Cohen JD, Bullard T, Kramer AF, McAuley E, Mullen SP. Short and long-term effects of multi-modal cognitive training on processing speed. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Society for Behavioral Medicine, Washington DC, 2016.
- Hua AK, Bullard T, Cohen JD, Palac D, McAuley E, Kramer AF, Mullen SP. A novel cognitive training intervention reduces back pain in middle-aged adults. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Society for Behavioral Medicine, Washington DC, 2016.
- Cohen JD, Palac D, Bullard T, Hua AK, Shroyer R, Wong B, Wilund K, Woods J, Kramer AF, Mullen SP. Chronic cognitive effects of sauna following aerobic exercise on processing speed. Poster submitted to the Annual Meeting for the Society for Behavioral Medicine, Washington DC, 2016.
- Bullard T, Cohen JD, Palac D, Hua AK, Kramer AF, McAuley E, Mullen SP. Inter-individual differences in self-regulation of exercise: A latent profile analysis. Poster submitted to the Annual Meeting for the Society for Behavioral Medicine, Washington DC, 2016.
- Mullen SP, Bullard T, Cohen JD, Palac D, Hua AK, Johnson A, Mudar R. A comparison of traditional and tablet-delivered Trails A & B in three samples. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Cognitive Neuroscience Society, San Francisco, CA, 2015.
- Cohen JD, Bullard T, Palac D, Mullen SP. Physical and cognitive benefits associated with exercise and sauna use. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Cognitive Neuroscience Society, San Francisco, CA, 2015.
- Palac D. Psyche of the injured athlete: Importance of stress management, goal setting, social support, and mental imagery. Presentation at North Central College, Naperville, IL, 2014.
- Palac D, Brodhead T. Money over equity: An Adlerian perspective examining individual and social effects of athlete exploitation. Poster presented at the Annual Meeting for the Association for Applied Sport Psychology, New Orleans, LA, 2013.
- Palac D, Kerulis M. Classroom management and advocacy for concussions: Head injury in schools part two. Workshop presented at the Illinois School Counselor Association, Skokie, IL, 2013.

PEER REVIEWS

- BMC Geriatrics
- The Gerontologist
- Psychology of Sport & Exercise
- Centre for Behaviour Change in Digital Health Conference