



# Affective Science

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The first issue of *Affective Science* is a landmark event. Just as behaviorism and cognitive science were dominant foci in their eras, affective science is emerging as a new focus in our era. The first issue of *Affective Science* is a testament to the vibrancy of the emerging field of affective science, which is increasingly serving as the connective structure that links diverse fields of scientific inquiry. For the many people who contributed to the development of this new journal and to the many others who will carry it forth into the future, we offer our heartfelt gratitude. It is an honor for the three of us to serve as the founding editors for *Affective Science* and we appreciate the trust and support of the broader community of scholars we represent.

The field of affective science encompasses a broad range of affective processes, which includes emotions, moods, preferences, attitudes, value-based decisions, and stress responses. Although these topics have long played an important role in many areas of scientific inquiry, their emergence into a more coherent and identifiable research area—replete with research societies, training programs, faculty positions, and journals—has occurred more recently. The explosive growth of this field reflects the increased recognition of the central role that affect plays in all aspects of human behavior. Affect determines what we attend to and remember, what we decide to do and what we decide not to do, who we are drawn to and who we avoid, how we are similar to and different from other people, and how we interact productively and unproductively with others. Basic affective processes scaffold many core aspects of our social and cognitive development. Affective dysfunction is at the root of the majority of mental disorders and predisposes people to and alters the course of many physical disorders. Because of this wide-ranging scope, affective mechanisms

and processes can only be fully understood from a broad, interdisciplinary perspective.

As a publication of the Society for Affective Science (SAS), *Affective Science* reflects the purpose and principles of that organization. SAS was founded in 2012 and held its first annual conference in 2014. Each of us has served as SAS president during its first decade of existence, and thus, we each have experienced the goals and aspirations of the society and its members firsthand. SAS was created in response to a perceived need for an organization that would foster basic and applied research in the variety of fields that study affect. From the outset, the SAS annual conference strove to showcase research drawn internationally from psychology, medicine, neuroscience, computer science, law, economics, anthropology, linguistics, sociology, business, political science, and other related fields. Thus, breadth, multidisciplinary, and internationalism have always been important principles. SAS was designed to foster interaction of scholars at all stages of professional development, but was particularly concerned with providing a forum where younger scientists would be able to participate fully. This investment in fostering the development of the next generation of affective scientists is an important principle that we hope to carry over into *Affective Science* as well. In our view, this can be achieved by striving for a balance between including the voices of senior, well-established figures and those who are in middle and early career stages. Finally, SAS was founded to provide a home where differences in theoretical perspectives and methodologies would be welcome. Handled with sensitivity and respect, these differences can create vibrant dialogues and drive important scientific advances. We are committed to carrying forward these values in *Affective Science* and hope to create a culture of civility in the ways we interact with authors and each other.

Creating a new journal was on SAS's agenda from the outset. This is because such a journal was viewed as playing a crucial role in helping achieve SAS's mission. Although several other excellent journals exist in the field of affective science, each is more narrowly focused than *Affective Science*, whether by publication type, methodologies, populations, or aspects of science. The SAS leadership felt that there was a

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pressing need and a unique opportunity for a new journal that deals with the field of affective science in a broad manner, encompassing different disciplines, methodologies, and populations, and including research on the role of affect in both healthy and unhealthy functioning. Because SAS was designed to reflect this kind of breadth, there was no need to constrain its journal to reflect a narrower set of topics or approaches. With the dramatic growth of affective science, the accelerating pace of discovery, and the expansion of the science into new areas of inquiry and new populations, we think the time is right for this broadly based new journal.

In launching *Affective Science*, we are acutely aware of the need to establish a standard of excellence that will be reflected in the review process and in the published articles. As founding editors, we join with the members of SAS and with scientists across the full breadth of affective science who aspire to have *Affective Science* become a premier journal in the field. To seize this unique opportunity, SAS partnered with Springer Publishing Company, and in August, 2019, launched *Affective Science* with the goal of helping to stimulate and shape the emerging field of affective science. Its motivation and goals are evidenced in the journal's mission statement:

*Affective Science* covers the field of affective science in a broad manner, encompassing different disciplines, biological and behavioral methodologies, human and non-human animal models, and normal and clinical populations. The journal recognizes the central role that affective processes play in the lives of individuals, groups, cultures, and countries, and their profound implications for health and well-being. *Affective Science* provides a forum for both basic and applied research.

It is easy for journals and the scientists who publish in them to slip into silos of expertise and interest that narrow focus and limit opportunities to connect with the work of others. *Affective Science* is committed to creating a large tent that includes affective science that has traditionally fallen into separate silos. Thus, we invite and will actively encourage submissions from multiple disciplines, which will expose our readers to new theories, methods, and research questions. By including both biological and behavioral methodologies we hope to inspire greater cross-fertilization and methodological sophistication for researchers who have traditionally focused on one or the other set of methods. Major advances in the history of affective science have emerged from the cross-fertilization of human and non-human animal models, with similarities and differences across species providing invaluable insights into the origins and functions of affective phenomena. Rather than segregating research on “healthy” and “clinical” populations into separate journals, we see these as representing an important continuum where clinical

populations provide invaluable information about the extremes of affect and normal populations provide the basic understanding of processes that are altered by psychological and physical disease. Although affect certainly exists within the individual, it also plays a critical role in creating, maintaining, and dissolving the links among individuals that are found in dyadic, group, cultural, and national relationships. Finally, a broad, inclusive journal should include both basic research that asks fundamental questions about the nature of affect as well as applied research that explores the influences that affect has on such phenomena as health and well-being.

We envision *Affective Science* as offering a home for researchers' best work that advances understanding of fundamental features of affect and affective processes. In committing to these lofty goals of becoming a premier journal in affective science, we, as founding editors, have committed to several basic ground rules. These guidelines will no doubt make our jobs and those of our Associate Editors and reviewers more difficult, but we view them as critical to achieving our goals.

First, we are committed to publishing work that directly addresses theoretical and methodological controversies in affective science and will not limit the journal by only accepting articles that align with a particular perspective or approach. Because the typical article will report findings from an empirical study, we expect arguments about theoretical positions to be strongly supported with data in addition to prose. We encourage contributors to follow well-established principles of good science including posing falsifiable hypotheses and designing research that can support or fail to support favored theories. Decades of emotion research have yielded what seems to be sacred beliefs that are difficult to counter. Although this may have created islands of agreement among like-minded proponents, we do not consider this to be ideal for promoting scientific progress. We view healthy disagreement and open-minded empiricism as the life blood of science and will encourage this in *Affective Science*.

To be faithful to this first guideline, our second guideline is that *Affective Science* will promote civility and respect from authors and reviewers. Disagreements and differences in interpretation of data and conclusions are unavoidable, but these should be handled without rancor or ad hominem attacks. We and the entire editorial board are deeply committed to a civil process in which submissions from different disciplines, perspectives, and traditions; from new and experienced investigators; and from authors who represent the full range of personal and scientific diversity are treated with care, constructiveness, and respect.

Our third guideline is to embrace best practices in research. To this end we have adopted Level II Transparency and Openness Promotions (TOP) guidelines at *Affective Science* (see <https://cos.io/top/> for more details). In brief these guidelines require publicly posting data and materials.

Exceptions to this practice must be identified at the time of article submission and included in the final publication. Research in affective science often relies on complex affect manipulations, sophisticated questionnaires, and/or complex analytic approaches. For affective science to be reproducible and for the science to advance, readers of *Affective Science* need to have access to materials and methods that can inform beyond the words in an article. Moreover, making data available that contributed to the conclusions drawn in a research article provides a number of advantages including providing critical information for subsequent review articles and meta-analyses. Relatedly, we are committed to transparency and accountability, and will publish the acting editor's name on every published article.

Finally, we plan to publish articles that are aspirational because they push the envelope of affective science. We imagine this type of innovation coming in various forms such as

presenting new methods, integrating seemingly distinct areas, presenting different perspectives on new as well as timeless questions, leveraging big data and other advancements in technology, and other innovations that we cannot yet envision. In sum, we are looking for papers that report rigorous studies, with complete reporting that shed light on affective science in broad, deep, and creative ways.

As founding editors, we are excited about the launch of *Affective Science*. We are proud of this initial issue, and immensely grateful to our authors, reviewers, editors, and publisher. We hope that *Affective Science* will prove its mettle in the coming decades and that generations of affective scientists will come to see this as the premier outlet for publishing their own research, learning about the research of others, and watching the field of affective science evolve in both imagined and unimagined new directions.