



Stony Brook Research

**OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH
&
THE INSTITUTE FOR ENGINEERING-DRIVEN MEDICINE
COVID-19 SEED GRANT PROGRAM**

COVER PAGE

Research project title: The COPE Study (COVID-19 Pregnancy Experiences)-- Experiences of Women Pregnant During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Associated Health Impacts

PI: Dr. Heidi Preis, Research Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology*

Co-PI: Dr. Marci Lobel, Professor, Department of Psychology

Co-PI: Dr. Brittain Mahaffey, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health

Project Summary:

The COVID-19 public health crisis has severely affected the lives of pregnant women. Social distancing, financial insecurity, uncertainty about the impact of the virus on fetal development, and restrictions related to prenatal care are some of the many problems that pregnant women are now facing. Although adverse effects of prenatal maternal stress are well documented, relationships among pandemic exposure, stress, birth outcomes, and pregnant women's mental and physical health and that of their offspring are largely unknown. We will recruit an online sample of 800 women at different stages of pregnancy to complete well-established self-report instruments to assess COVID-19 related and non-COVID-19 related stress, risk and resilience factors, and mental and physical health. Online instruments will be re-administered several months later as the pandemic subsides. With these data as a foundation, we will submit an NIH R01 application within a year to follow-up the cohort and investigate longitudinally the impacts of prenatally assessed variables on birth outcomes and maternal and infant health. This critically timed research capitalizes on unique skills and experience of the research team in maternal stress and reproductive health and will spotlight factors that mitigate or exacerbate the impact of stress on women pregnant during the pandemic.

***See enclosed letter from Dr. Sheri Levy, Psychology Department Chair, endorsing the appointment of Dr. Preis as PI for this project.**