

# HONOURS

## Stephanie Goodwin

Supervisor: Dr. Matthew Vierimaa

### Research Focus

Dementia is a pressing issue in the healthcare system. The prevalence of the condition is rising quickly, leading to high rates of admissions in long-term care facilities. Those with dementia suffer from a progressive decline in cognition, memory, and physical function. These symptoms make it increasingly difficult for this population to remain physically active. Additionally, individuals with dementia often suffer from mental health concerns, most notably depression. Exercise has been found to attenuate the cognitive and emotional symptoms of depression in individuals with dementia, however little research has been done on the effectiveness of different exercise types in this population. Stephanie's research focuses on the relationship between physical activity and depression in individuals with dementia. The goal was to gain insight on the physical activity habits of individuals with dementia living both in and out of long-term care facilities as well as to investigate their depressive symptoms. Through the use of surveys, data was collected regarding the physical activity habits, severity of cognitive decline, and severity of depressive symptoms of 10 individuals with dementia. The results of this study will compare depressive symptoms as they relate to physical activity habits, exercise type, and cognition, and identify any relationships between these factors.

### The Researcher



Stephanie is a fourth-year Kinesiology student from Argyle, Nova-Scotia. Throughout her time at Acadia, she has been involved in many organizations on campus including the S.M.I.L.E. program, cardiac rehabilitation program, Acadia Dance Collective, and Acadia Dance Community Club. She has also been a TA for multiple Kinesiology courses and a mentor to younger students through the Acadia Kinesiology Peer-Mentorship program. Stephanie has always wanted to pursue a career in rehabilitation and hopes to continue her education with a Masters degree in Occupational Therapy.