It is estimated that up to 30% of college students feel clinically depressed. Psychological treatment for depression can be effective in relieving depression for many populations, including college students. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) has demonstrated effectiveness for depression and is considered an evidence-based treatment for depressive disorders. In addition to psychological treatment, various exercise interventions have been shown to be effective in reducing depressive symptoms, including yoga, which combines physical activity with mindfulness meditation practice. ACT also incorporates mindfulness practice as a treatment component, thus yoga conceptually corresponds as an ancillary treatment with ACT. The purpose of the present study is to compare ACT alone to ACT plus a yoga component with college students, using a single-blind, randomized, active control design to determine if the addition of yoga helps to further relieve depression. Results from a small sample size revealed similarly improved outcomes on depression, mindfulness, acceptance, and quality of life domains for both an individual ACT intervention condition and an ACT plus group yoga condition, suggesting yoga may not add to the effectiveness of ACT. However, an interesting trend was noted within social quality of life suggesting that the addition of group-based yoga may help to further improve social quality of life. Further studies with increased sample size are
needed to better determine effectiveness of yoga as an ancillary treatment for ACT for depression, and to further explore the effects of yoga on social well-being.