

Georgia Southern University  
**Digital Commons@Georgia Southern**

---

Georgia Educational Research Association  
Conference

---

Oct 7th, 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

# Books or Boots: A Case Study of the Dependents of the Deployed

Meagan Arrastia  
VSU, [mcarrastia@valdosta.edu](mailto:mcarrastia@valdosta.edu)

Aria Nicole Alvarez  
Valdosta State University, [aalvarez@valdosta.edu](mailto:aalvarez@valdosta.edu)

Breanna Mechelle Drummond  
Valdosta State University, [bmdrummond@valdosta.edu](mailto:bmdrummond@valdosta.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/gera>

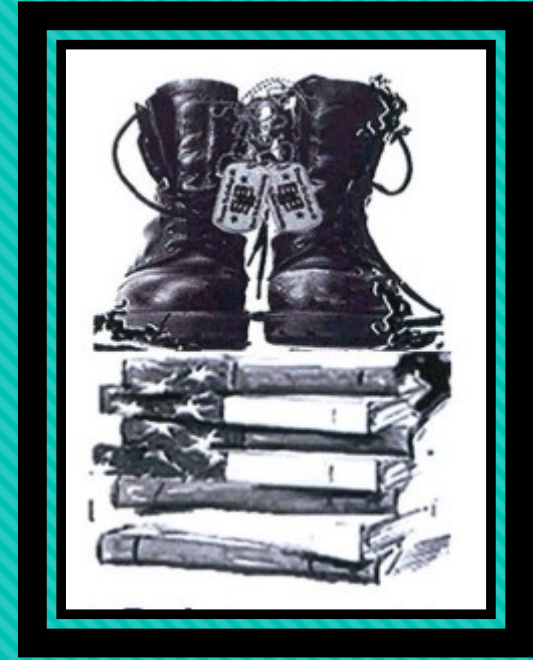
---

## Recommended Citation

Arrastia, Meagan; Alvarez, Aria Nicole; and Drummond, Breanna Mechelle, "Books or Boots: A Case Study of the Dependents of the Deployed" (2016). *Georgia Educational Research Association Conference*. 3.  
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/gera/2016/2016/3>

This presentation (open access) is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences & Events at Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. It has been accepted for inclusion in Georgia Educational Research Association Conference by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu).

# Books or Boots: A Case Study of the Dependents of the Deployed

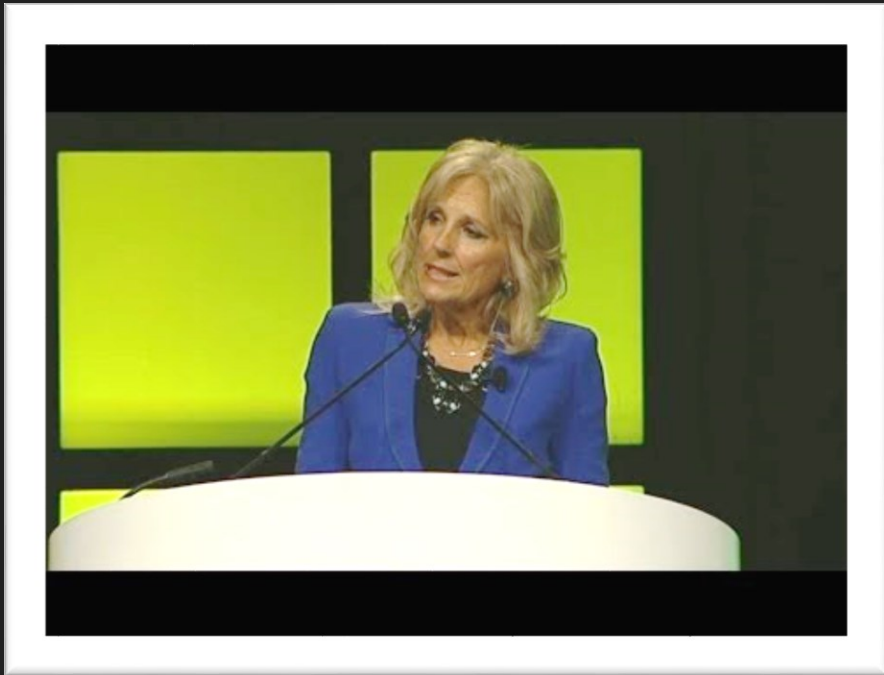


*Meagan Caridad Arrastia, PhD*

*Aria Nicole Alvarez*

*Breanna Mechelle Drummond, Valdosta State University*

# Introduction



- Dr. Jill Biden's address at the 2016 AERA annual meeting to study and serve military families.
- We present a preliminary study of the dependents in military families currently attending college.

# Research Questions: Dependents of the Deployed

- What were their childhood experiences at home and school?
- What are their current motivations during the college experience?
- What are their perceived effects of deployments?



# Methods

- Semi-Structured interview protocol.
  - “How do you feel like your experience growing up contributed to your decision to go to college?”
- Started with grounded theory approach and constant comparison method.
- Interview were transcribed and deidentified; open coding ongoing.
- Preliminary codes center around extrinsic motivation.
- Self-determination theory was adopted (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

- IRB Approved
- Convenience Sampling of initial survey, participants self selected themselves for interviews based on parental deployment.
- 6 female participants total
- Pseudonyms were utilized.
- Each participant was given a \$25 Amazon gift card.
- Interviews were conducted by the 3 authors on the phone (2) and in person (4).
- Recruitment and interviews are ongoing.

## Participants and Sampling

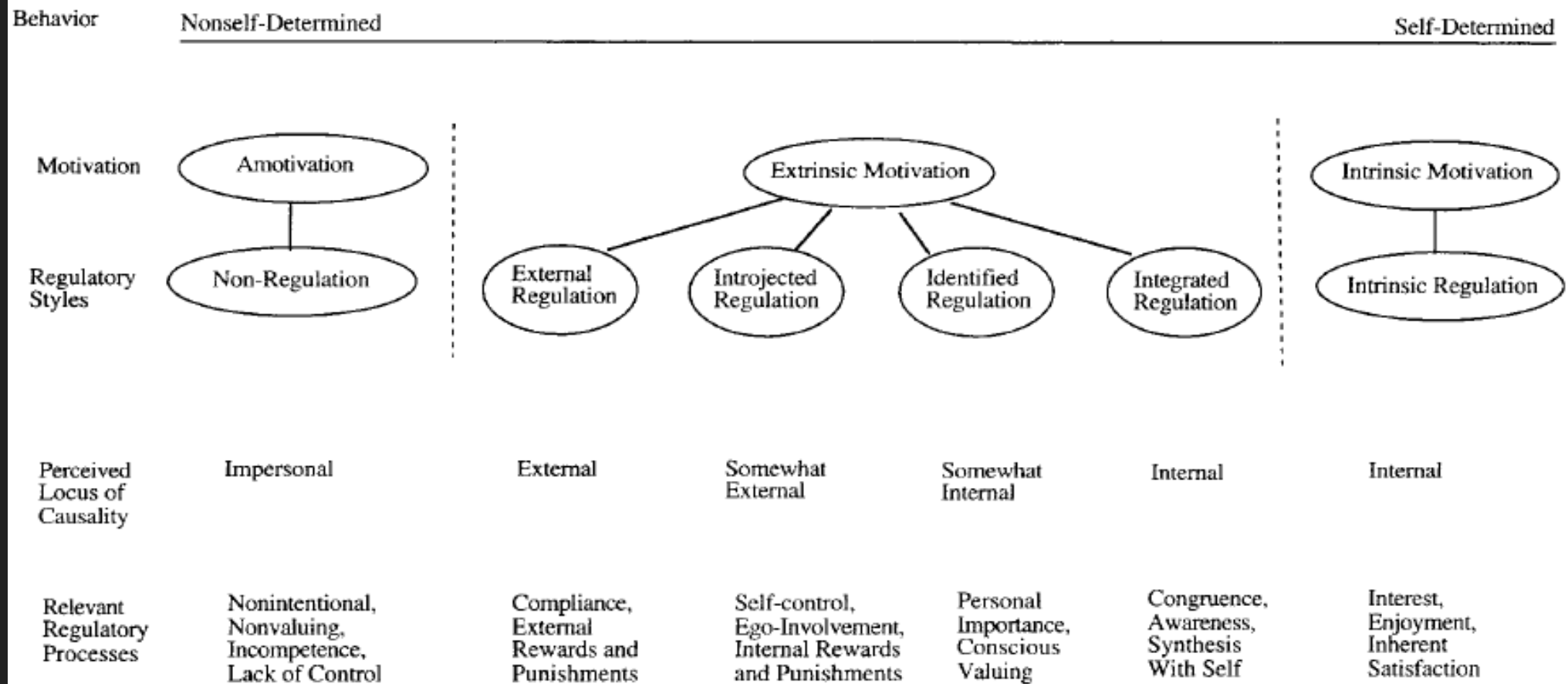
**Table 1. Participant Characteristics.**

<u>Pseudonym</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Major</u>	<u>Branch</u>	<u>GPA</u>
Arika	22	Social Sciences	Army	3.3
Ashleigh	20	Sciences	Army	3.3
Jarnell	20	Sciences	Air Force	2.85
Laura	22	Social Sciences	Marines	3.3
Mena	35	Social Sciences	Army	3.29
Sabrina	18	Sciences	Air Force	2.0

# Theoretical Framework (Ryan & Deci, 2000)

**Figure 1**

*The Self-Determination Continuum Showing Types of Motivation With Their Regulatory Styles, Loci of Causality, and Corresponding Processes*



“...college was never an... ‘Well, if you go to college.’  
It was a ‘when you go to college.’... I was raised with  
the mentality that I was going to college... My parents  
have always just supported us, and always wanted us  
to get high enough grades that we could make it into  
college. And my dad right now, if there's any proof  
that he believes in us, he's working a job and he's  
about to go overseas working on a job to get enough  
money to pay for us to go to college...”

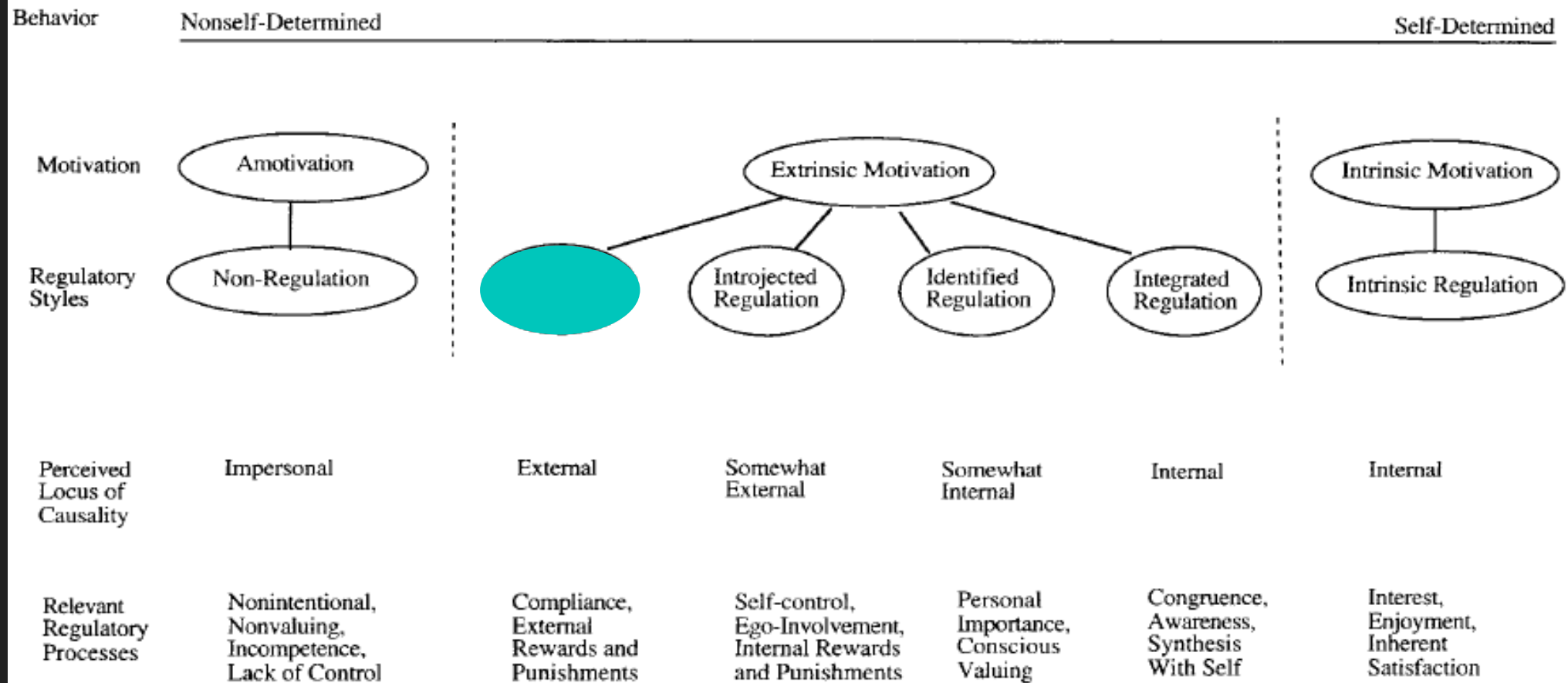
Ashleigh



# Ashleigh: External Regulation

**Figure 1**

*The Self-Determination Continuum Showing Types of Motivation With Their Regulatory Styles, Loci of Causality, and Corresponding Processes*



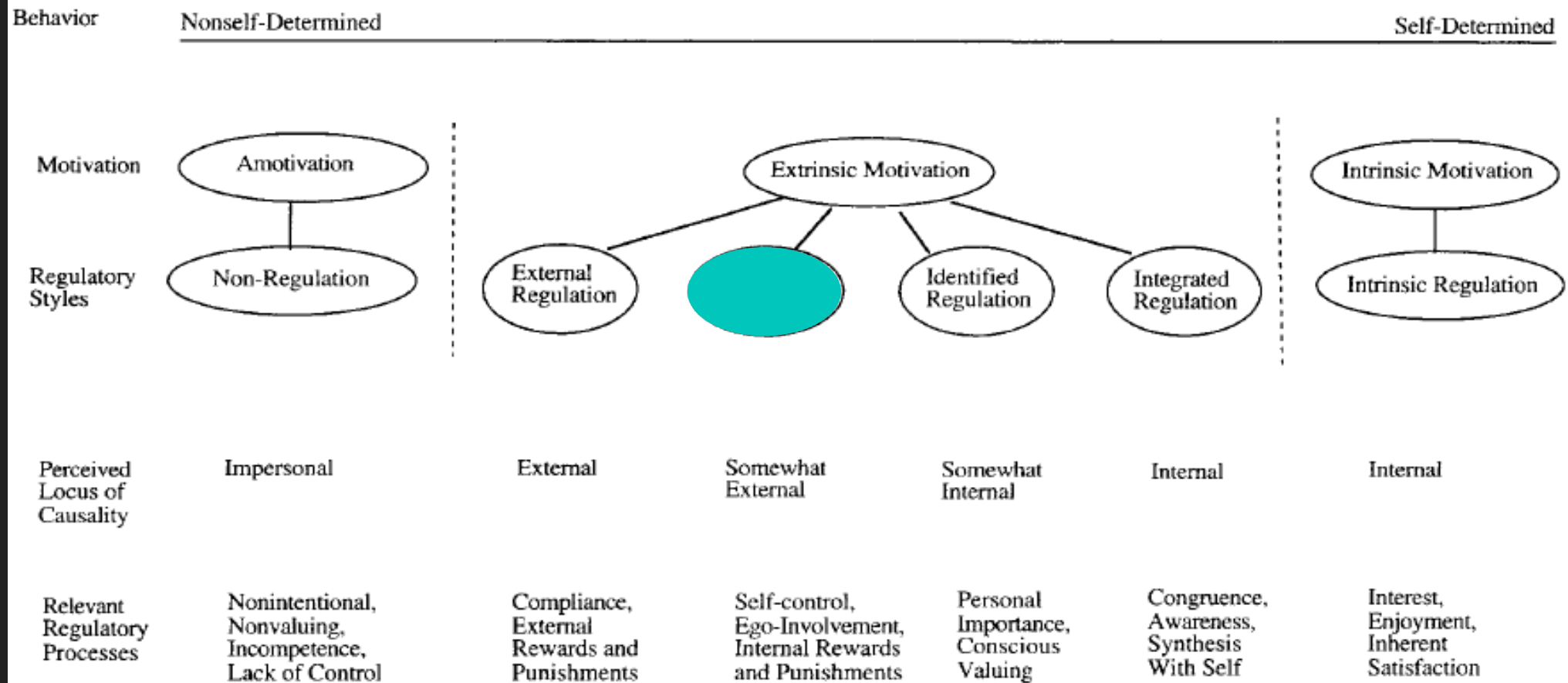
“...I realized... I was ready, I wanted to get out. I wanted to get out of my household. So I was like, ‘I know I can't play around.’ School was pretty serious for me. Like, ‘I need to get good grades, so I can go to college and I can be a doctor, so I can get out of here.’”

Jarnell

# Jarnell: Introjected Regulation

**Figure 1**

*The Self-Determination Continuum Showing Types of Motivation With Their Regulatory Styles, Loci of Causality, and Corresponding Processes*



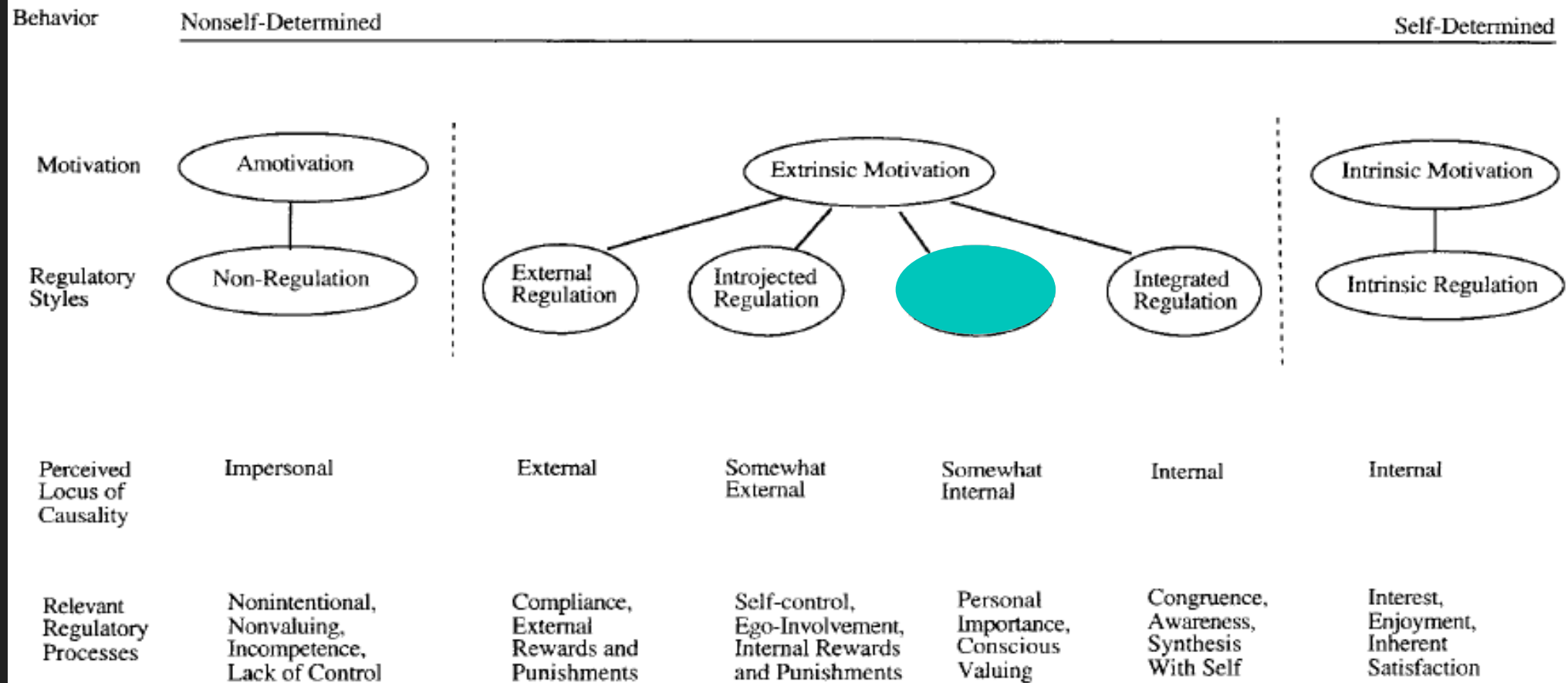
“Him being deployed didn't have an effect but what he did did; it had an effect because I'm trying to do military psych. Going back, getting into college 'cause it's kind of what I was supposed to do. “

Laura

# Laura: Identified Regulation

**Figure 1**

*The Self-Determination Continuum Showing Types of Motivation With Their Regulatory Styles, Loci of Causality, and Corresponding Processes*



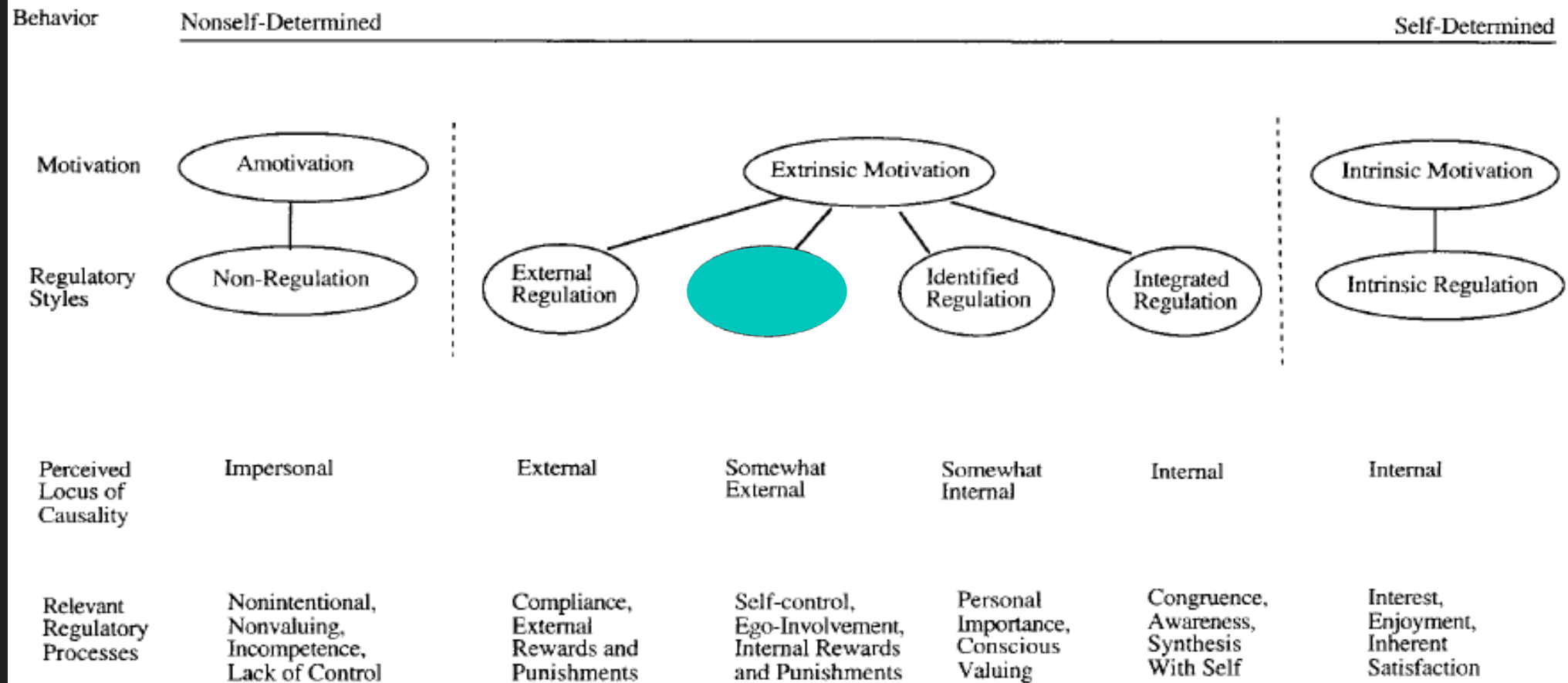
“[My parents] always push education but again they’re like why get an education if you’re not going to do it the right way... So I took a **couple years off** and worked and I didn’t go back until I knew I was ready and from then on, whenever I go to school and take classes whether it’s between working over the years, I’m pretty much a **straight A student... I want that A.**”

Mena

# Mena: Introjected Regulation

**Figure 1**

*The Self-Determination Continuum Showing Types of Motivation With Their Regulatory Styles, Loci of Causality, and Corresponding Processes*



“...since my mom was so emerged in the military life, it trickled down to me too. So the perseverance, integrity, all that stuff, it's just like, "I need to go to college 'cause I need to be the best that I can be," type thing. Even though I took the ASVAB four times to go straight into the military. I guess you internalize their values. It's just like, "Okay, I know I can be better than this. Like, go to college.”

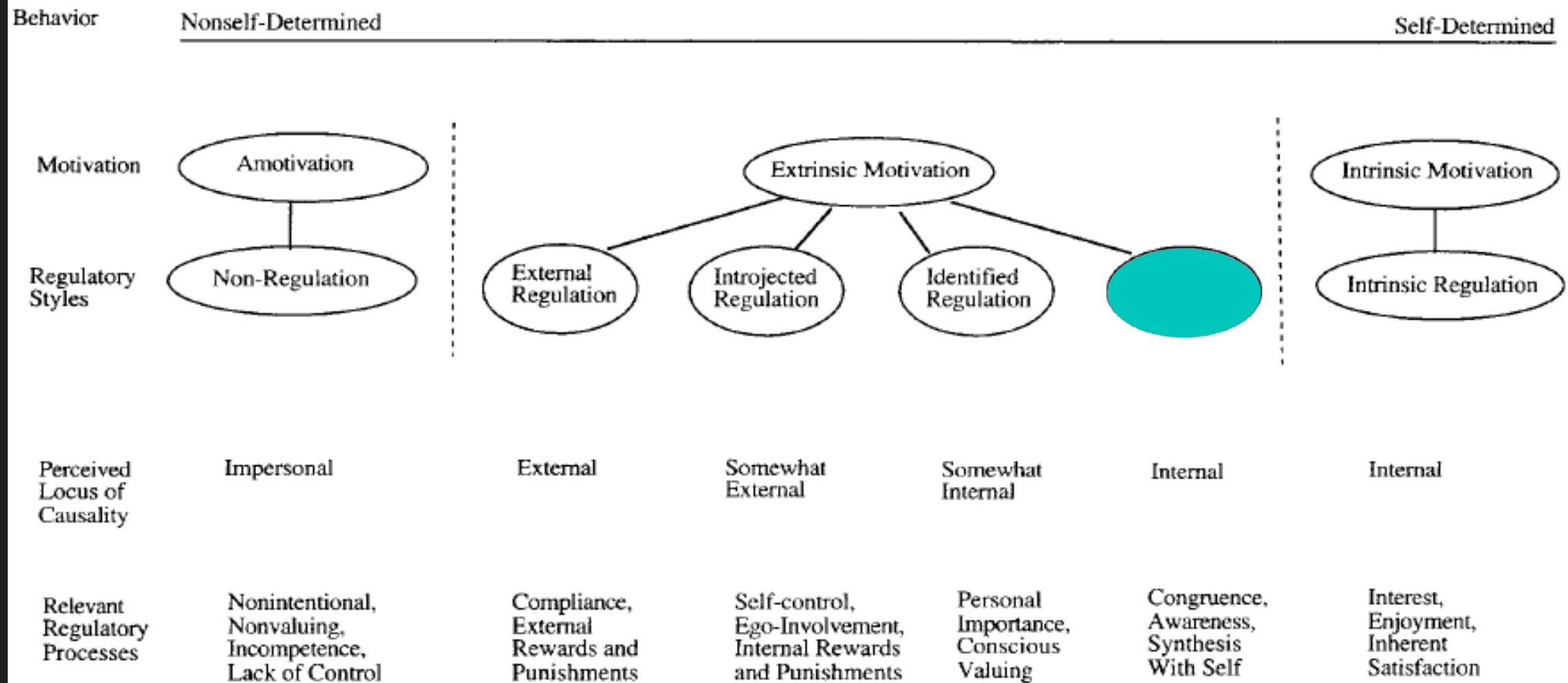
Arika



# Arika: Integrated Regulation

**Figure 1**

*The Self-Determination Continuum Showing Types of Motivation With Their Regulatory Styles, Loci of Causality, and Corresponding Processes*



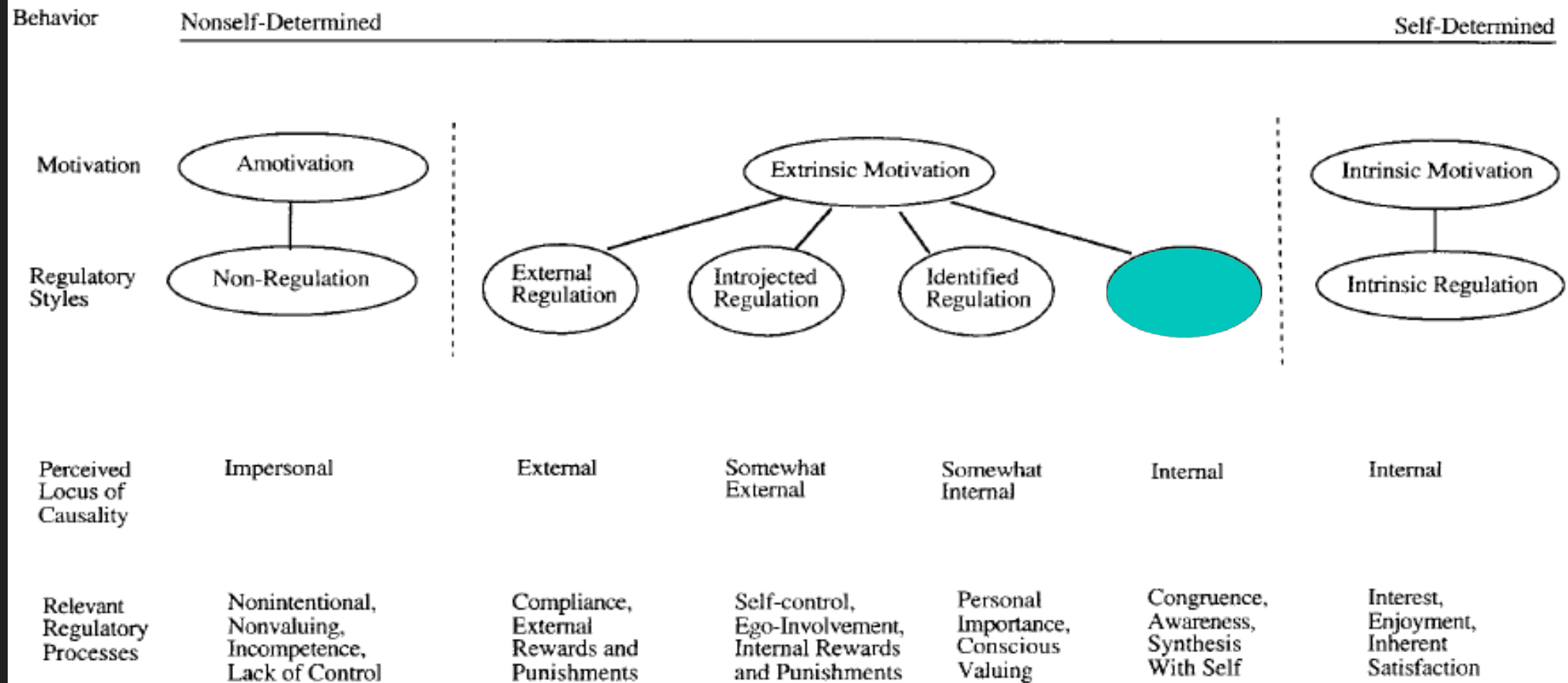
“...think I can be a doctor. I think I can finish this. That I like the pressure, I like the challenge. All my friends were like ‘Oh, God. I hated IB, it was so much work. It was terrible.’ And I was like ‘Dude, I would do it all over again. If I got a chance to go back, I would do it.’”

Sabrina

# Sabrina: Integrated Regulation

**Figure 1**

*The Self-Determination Continuum Showing Types of Motivation With Their Regulatory Styles, Loci of Causality, and Corresponding Processes*



# Themes, Delineations, & Future Research

- Shifts in family dynamics and structure to accommodate the deployed parent.
  - A heightened socio-emotional awareness, yet a sense of isolation from others.
- Differences across military branches and gender of parent.
  - No Navy or Coast Guard representation yet
- Lack of “military friendly” campus resources.
- Increased financial distress.
- Effects of transitory periods and switching schools.



# Thank you!



- Comments or Questions?
- Email Dr. Arrastia
- [mcarrastia@valdosta.edu](mailto:mcarrastia@valdosta.edu)