Welcome to the Rankin Lab

The Social Function Lab is led by Dr. Katherine Rankin, a professor in the UCSF Department of Neurology and neuropsychologist at the UCSF Memory and Aging Center (MAC) [1]. Our research examines the neuroanatomic changes that can cause altered personality, social behavior, and neuropsychiatry in dementia. We develop tests of social and emotional cognition that will allow an earlier, more accurate differential diagnosis of neurodegenerative diseases like behavioral variant frontotemporal dementia (bvFTD), semantic variant primary progressive aphasia (svPPA), and corticobasal degeneration. We study the neurobiological mechanisms of disease-related change in socioemotional behavior, such as empathy, self-awareness, creativity, theory of mind, narrative creation, evaluations, and reading social cues.