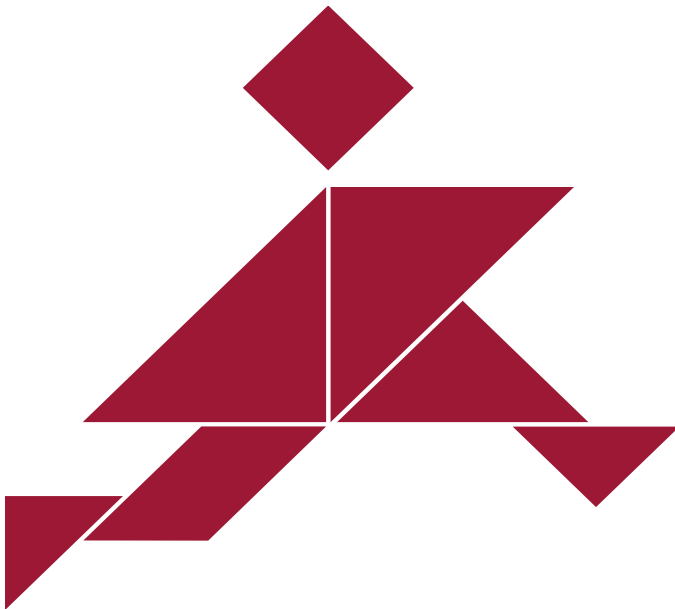


---

# COPING WITH STRESSFUL SITUATIONS IN THE PROFESSIONAL DOMAIN

---

VÉRONIQUE EICHER, CHRISTIAN STAERKLÉ, ALAIN CLÉMENCE



OVERCOMING VULNERABILITY: LIFE COURSE PERSPECTIVES

---

# OUR PROJECT

---

- Facing critical events in early adulthood: A normative approach to vulnerability and life course regulation
    - Explore regulation of vulnerable situations as a function of internal and external vulnerability
    - Young adults 15-30 year olds
  
  - Goal of this study: Explore the relationship between stress, self-efficacy, and optimism in education
    - Self-efficacy as resource to overcome stress ?
-

# INTRODUCTION – STRESS AND OPTIMISM

---

- Optimism
    - Expecting “positive outcomes, even when things are difficult” (Scheier, Carver, & Bridges, 2001, p. 191)
    - Predictor of subjective well-being (e.g., Chang & Sanna, 2001; Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003; Eid & Diener, 2004; Makikangas & Kinnunen, 2003)
  - Educational stress
    - Predictor of educational dropout (Eicher et al., 2013), leading to higher rates of unemployment and lower income (Belfield & Levin, 2007)
    - Predictor of less psychological well-being (e.g., Chang, 1998)
-

# INTRODUCTION – SELF-EFFICACY

---

- Self-efficacy

- “Conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the outcomes” (Bandura, 1977, p. 193)
- Seen as stable (general self-efficacy, e.g., Chen, Gully, & Eden, 2001; Mortimer, Lorence, & Kumka, 1986; but see Gurin & Brim, 1984)

# INTRODUCTION – RELATION BETWEEN SELF-EFFICACY AND STRESS

---

## 1. Self-efficacy X Stress

- Self-efficacy moderates positive impact of stress on strain (e.g., Jex & Bliese, 1999)

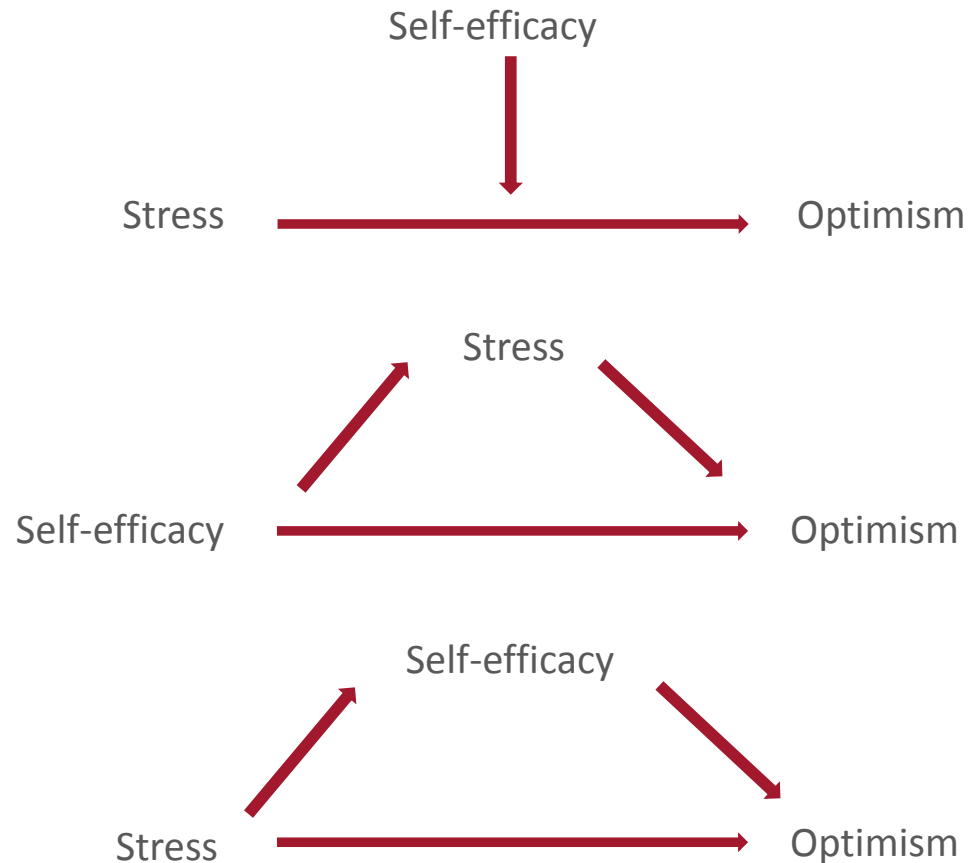
## 2. Self-efficacy → Stress

- Self-efficacy crucial in evaluating demands from environment (Lazarus' cognitive model of stress, Lazarus & Folkman, 1984)
- Self-efficacy → stress → burnout: Confirmed in 1-year-longitudinal cross-lagged model (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008)

## 3. Physiological Stress → Self-efficacy

- Physiological arousal states due to stress affect self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Solberg et al., 1998).
-

# MODERATION OR MEDIATION ?



## METHOD - DATA

---

- TREE survey (since 2001)
  - N = 6343
  - Years used in this study: 2001-2004
  - Students who were in education (vocational or college-track) for at least three out of four years
  - N = 4312
  - N = 2412 women (55.9 % women)
  - N = 3833 born in Switzerland (89.3 %)
-

# METHOD – MEASURES

---

- Optimism (5 items)
    - “Whatever happens, I can see the positive side of it.”
    - Scale from 1 to 6
    - $\alpha = .82 - 85$
  - Educational stress (5 items)
    - “At school, I often feel out of my depth.”
    - Scale from 1 to 5
    - $\alpha = .78 - 82$
  - Self-efficacy (4 items)
    - “I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.”
    - Scale from 1 to 4
    - $\alpha = .72 - 74$
-



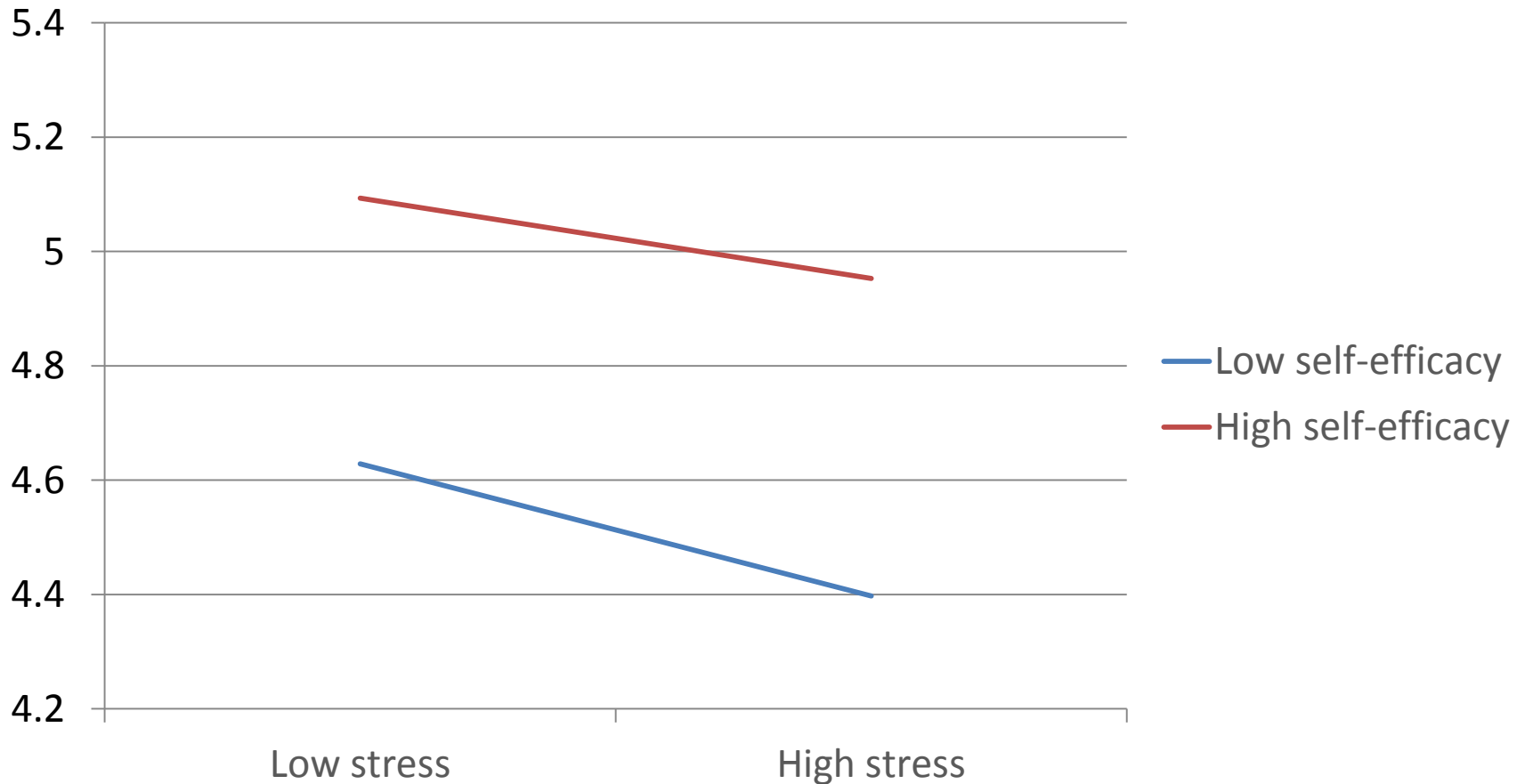
# RESULTS – MODERATION



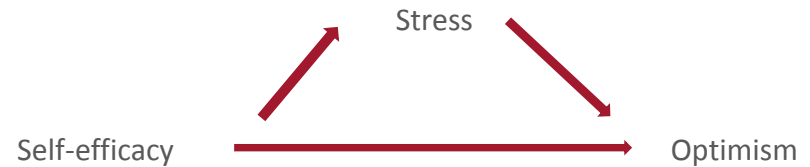
	B (S.E.)	t
<b>Intercept</b>	4.77 (0.02)	306.82***
<b>Time (linear)</b>	-0.01 (0.00)	-2.63**
<b>Time (quadratic)</b>	0.00 (0.00)	0.98
<b>Men</b>	0.05 (0.02)	2.88**
<b>Non-Swiss</b>	-0.12 (0.03)	-3.97***
<b>Stress</b>	-0.12 (0.01)	-14.27***
<b>Self-efficacy</b>	0.54 (0.01)	39.25***
<b>Stress X Self-efficacy</b>	0.06 (0.01)	4.45***

No significant effects for SES and education type

# RESULTS – MODERATION



# RESULTS – MEDIATION



	Model a		Model b	
	B (S.E.)	t	B (S.E.)	t
<b>Intercept</b>	4.76 (0.02)	311.74***	4.76 (0.02)	306.81***
<b>Time (linear)</b>	-0.01 (0.00)	-2.13*	-0.01 (0.00)	-2.56*
<b>Time (quadratic)</b>	0.00 (0.00)	0.88	0.00 (0.00)	1.02
<b>Men</b>	0.08 (0.02)	4.10***	0.05 (0.02)	2.79**
<b>Non-Swiss</b>	-0.11 (0.03)	-3.75***	-0.12 (0.03)	-3.96***
<b>Self-efficacy</b>	0.58 (0.01)	43.92***	0.55 (0.01)	39.44***
<b>Stress</b>			-0.12 (0.01)	-14.19***

No significant effects for SES and education type

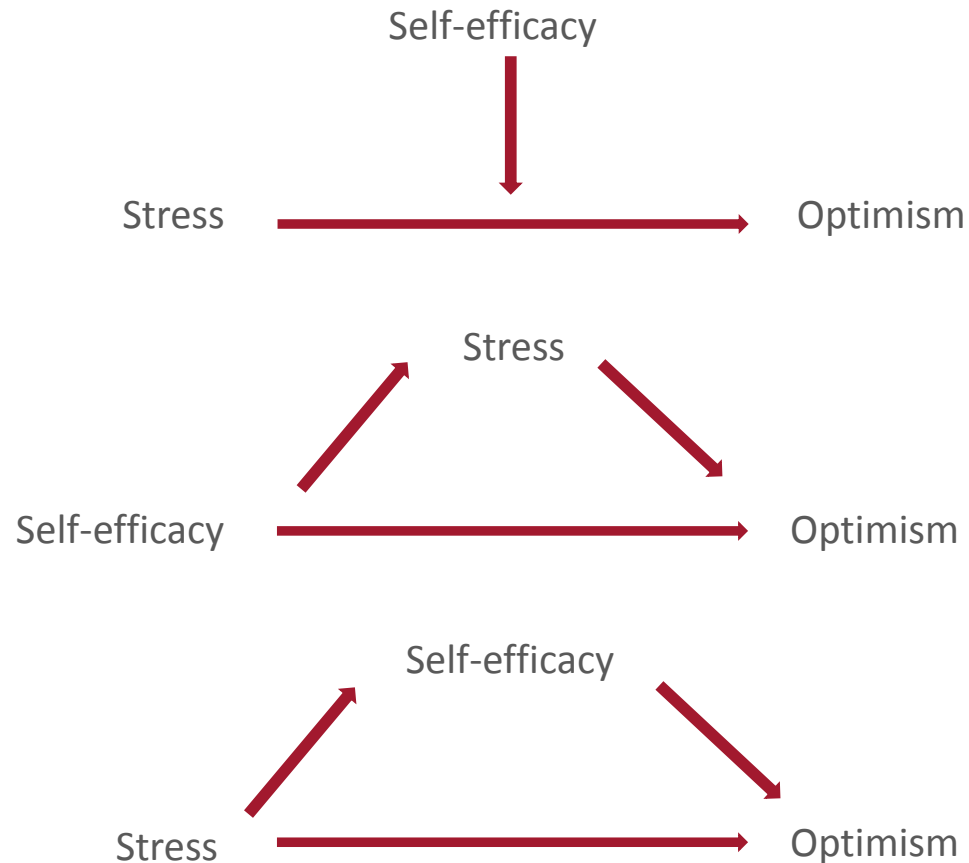
# RESULTS – MEDIATION



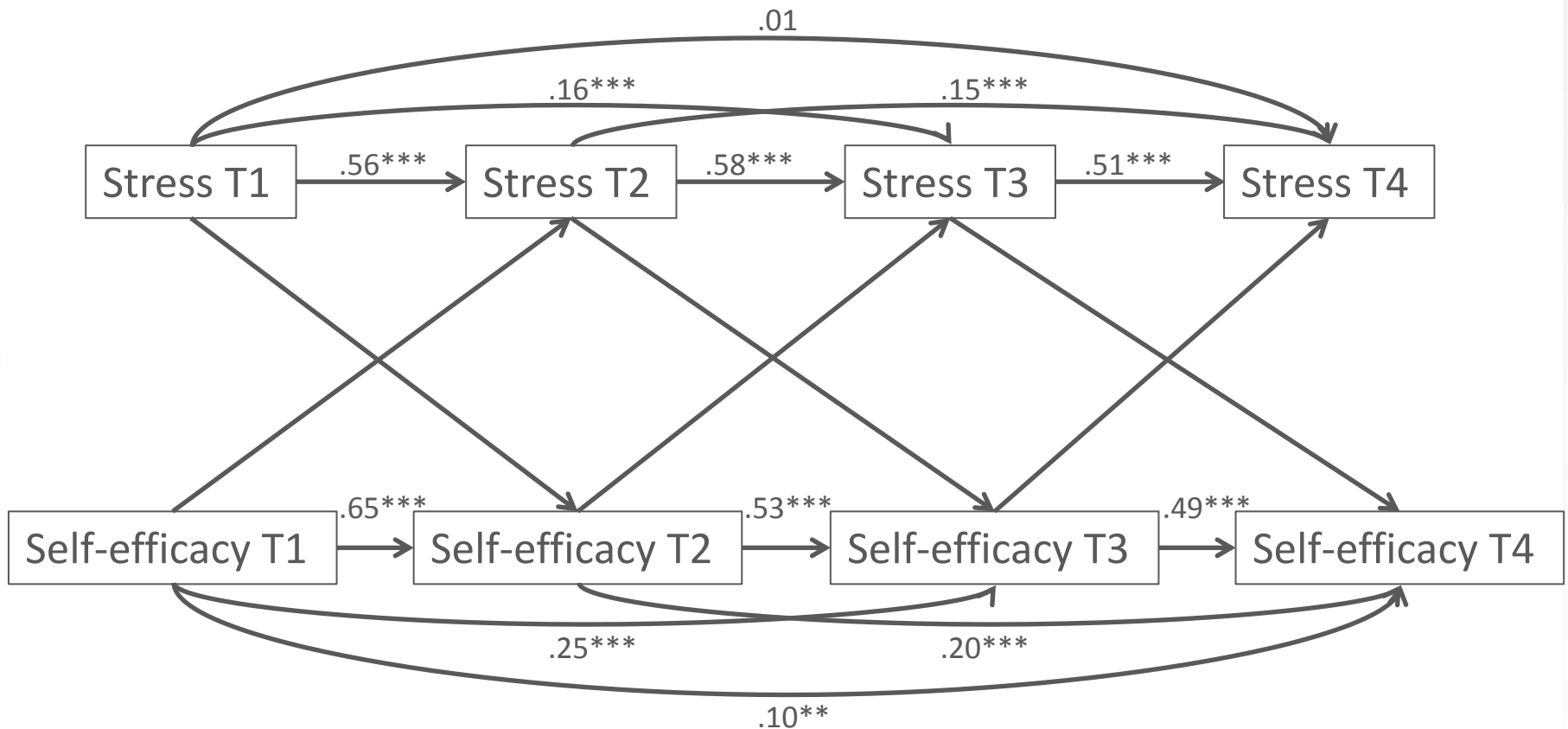
	Model a		Model b	
	B (S.E.)	t	B (S.E.)	t
<b>Intercept</b>	4.74 (0.02)	275.84***	4.76 (0.02)	306.81***
<b>Time (linear)</b>	-0.01 (0.00)	-1.86	-0.01 (0.00)	-2.56*
<b>Time (quadratic)</b>	-0.01 (0.00)	-2.18*	0.00 (0.00)	1.02
<b>Men</b>	0.14 (0.02)	6.64***	0.05 (0.02)	2.79**
<b>Non-Swiss</b>	-0.11 (0.03)	-3.18***	-0.12 (0.03)	-3.96***
<b>Stress</b>	-0.18 (0.01)	-19.93***	-0.12 (0.01)	-14.19***
<b>Self-efficacy</b>			0.55 (0.01)	39.44***

No significant effects for SES and education type

# MODERATION OR MEDIATION ?

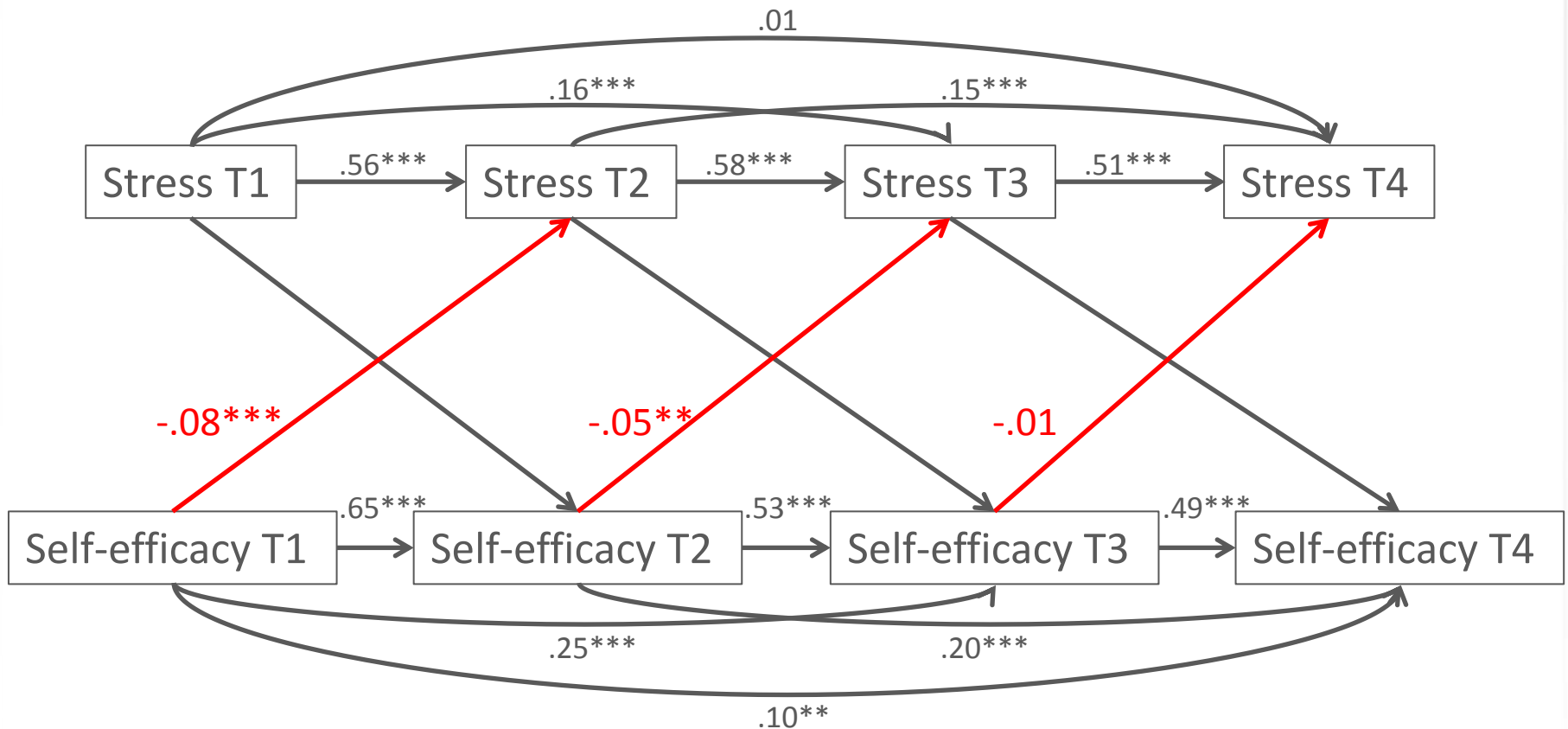


# RESULTS – CROSS-LAGGED MODEL



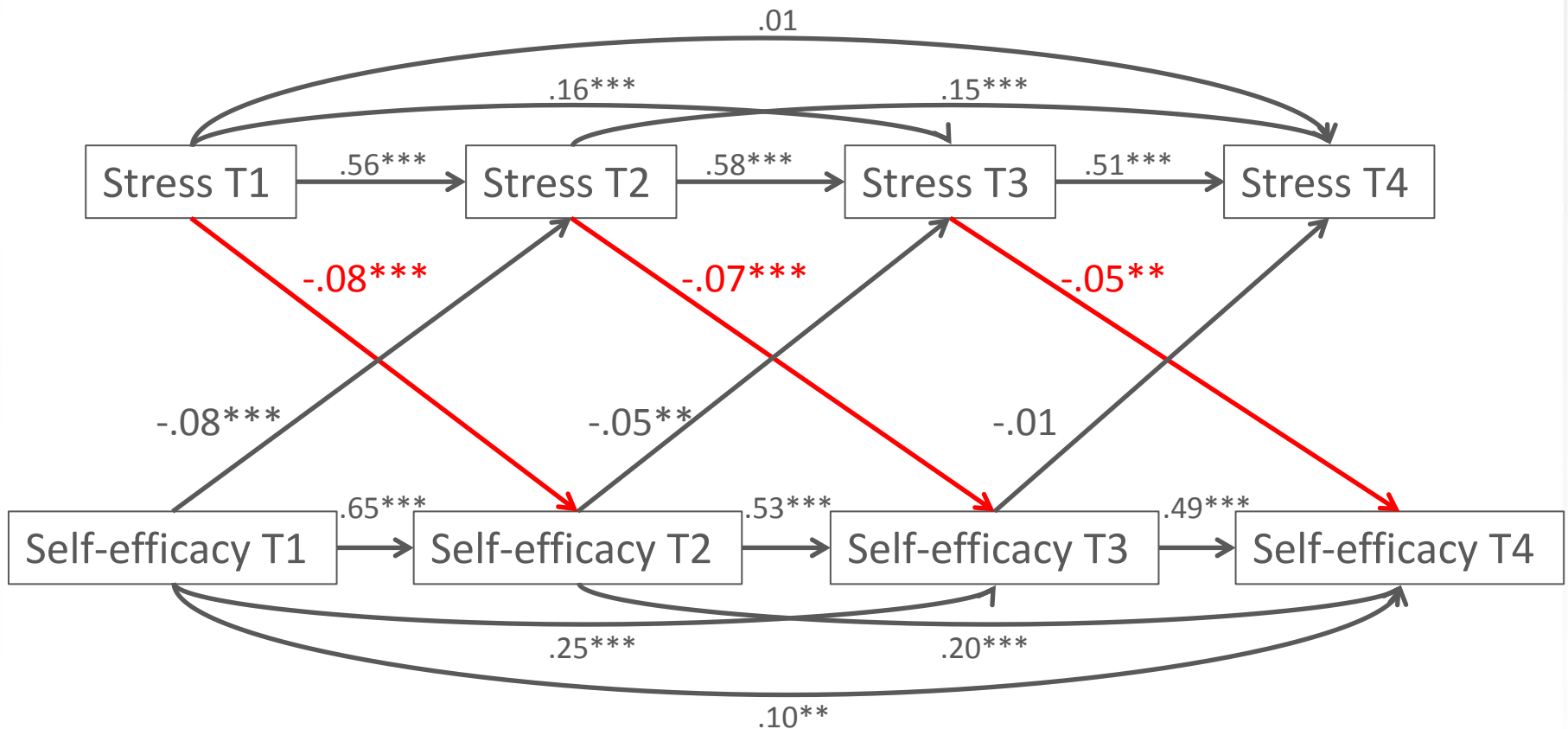
$\chi^2(518) = 2225.8^{***}$ , CFI = .96, TLI = .95, RMSEA = .028 (.026 - .029)

# RESULTS – CROSS-LAGGED MODEL



$\chi^2(518) = 2225.8^{***}$ , CFI = .96, TLI = .95, RMSEA = .028 (.026 - .029)

# RESULTS – CROSS-LAGGED MODEL





# DISCUSSION

---

- Self-efficacy and stress are clearly related
  - Self-efficacy buffers negative impact of stress on optimism
  - Self-efficacy decreases stress one year later
  - Stress decreases self-efficacy one year later
- Self-efficacy as resource: Yes but..
  - Only to a limited extent
  - Feedback loop: Self-efficacy decreases stress, but stress also decreases self-efficacy!

# DISCUSSION - LIMITATIONS

---

- Preliminary results
  - In-depth analysis of longitudinal relation between stress and self-efficacy
- Short- versus long-term effects
  - One year lag is very long → different short-term effects?
- Sample
  - Young adults in education → external validity?

---

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ATTENTION**

veronique.eicher@unil.ch