

Psychological & Brain Sciences

Graduate Student Newsletter

Issue 002 - Winter 2022

Edited by W. Connor Gibbs & Sophie Peterson

Hello everyone! Happy new year and start of Winter quarter! 🎉🥳🎊

In this quarter's issue, in addition to announcing the social event the Graduate Executive Committee (GEC) has planned, you will hear from two of our graduating students (Dr. Chelsea Brown & Dr. Spencer Mermelstein) and get updates from several department committees about the work they've been doing over the previous quarter. Before all of that, the GEC would like to formally congratulate all of the amazing students who graduated in Fall 2021. Congratulations to Dr. Chelsea Brown, Dr. Puneeth Chakravathula, Dr. Dipanjana Das, Dr. Michelle Handy, Dr. Evan Layher, Dr. Spencer Mermelstein, & Dr. Lauren Ortosky.

The GEC would also like to announce that on February 4th from 1-2pm, Lana Smith-Hale from the Graduate Division will be speaking as part of a department professional development seminar. More information will be shared closer to the event but Lana will be covering how to translate the skills we have learned in our PhD program to non-academic careers.

Lastly, we would like to draw your attention to the very bottom of this newsletter. Moving forward, at the bottom of all of our newsletters we will be including several anonymous forms in order to collect any feedback you may have. In addition to the link to our PBS graduate student Twitter (@[pbs_grads](#)), there is a link to an *anonymous* [Google Form](#) that can be used to provide feedback specifically on these newsletters. There is also a [Google Form](#) that can be used to provide *anonymous* feedback or make an *anonymous* recommendation to any of the following department committees:

- Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
- Graduate Affairs
- Graduate Executive
- Graduate Training

- Undergraduate Experience

Please feel free to use these forms to provide any feedback and recommendations you may have.

With that, we'll get on with the rest of the newsletter. We hope you all have an amazing quarter and we're looking forward to seeing you at our Mardi Gras party later this quarter.

Thank you,
The Graduate Executive Committee

Social Events This Quarter



Psych & Brain Sciences



Mardi Gras Edition

WHEN: Friday February 25th, 5:00-8:00pm

WHERE: SAGE Room (Psych 1312)

WHO: PBS graduate students, faculty, and staff

- Kids and +1's welcome as well!

Light food and beverages will be provided.

For alcoholic drinks, donate to the drink fund via Venmo to Connor Gibbs (@WConnorGibbs) by Thursday, Feb 24th



**We're bringing back raffles
again too!**



Congratulations Drs...

We asked some of our latest graduates for any advice they wanted to pass along to all PBS graduate students. Here is what a few of them had to say:



Chelsea Brown (Neuroscience and Behavior)

“My advice would be that if you're at all interested in non-academic jobs after grad school, try to find an internship! It'll help you decide whether that's what you want, and if you do decide to apply for industry jobs, it'll make you a stronger candidate.”

Spencer Mermelstein (Developmental and Evolutionary Psychology)

“Plan early that an academic career may not be a viable or desirable option for you years down the line. Do work hard on developing your research, methods, and stats, but keep an eye out for opportunities for professional experience like an internship. The combination of your academic and professional experience makes you extremely employable by great companies.”



Committee Updates



Image by [Glenn Carstens-Peters](#)

Graduate Executive

Last quarter the GEC organized the department Halloween party. Our goal was to encourage community growth after being virtual for so long and to officially welcome all the first and second year grad students to campus. In fall, the GEC also began planning and organizing the upcoming social events for this quarter (please see above), in addition to this newsletter. We hope this quarter's social events will provide opportunities to continue to build a strong PBS community. Additionally, we hope this newsletter and committee updates will help to foster a culture of transparency, openness, and communication within the department.

About This Committee: This committee oversees internal projects, social media accounts, and organizes social events.

Email: gradexecutive@psych.ucsb.edu

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

The DEIC accomplished 5 key items in Fall 2021. First, the DEIC developed a strategy to implement elements of the UCOP faculty diversity grant awarded to Shelly Gable last year. This included: a) Selecting Alisa Bedrov for the GSA position attached to this grant. b) Identifying senior scholars to invite to the senior speaker series. Two invitations have gone out so far, and our first speaker (Stephanie Fryberg) is scheduled to visit in April 2022. c) Coordinated with Alisa Bedrov to identify recipients of the UC Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship program to invite to a speaker series. So far one invitation has been sent out (responses pending). Second, the DEIC developed a plan to update/create the diversity information on the PBS website. We met with the LSCF web designer Brian Wolf and have had him create a prototype microsite that will replace the existing 'JEDI' tab on the PBS website. We will be working on developing this site early in Winter 2022 and hope to have it launched during Winter quarter. Third, the DEIC discussed the PBS Graduate Student Faculty Mentor program and made recommendations to the Graduate Affairs committee about the creation of some guidelines for mentors/mentees to clarify the goals and expectations of participants in this program. Fourth, the DEIC developed an analysis plan for the PBS climate survey administered in Spring 2021. The analysis of the data is underway, with Dan Conroy-Beam taking the lead. Finally, representatives from the committee attended the two monthly meetings of Diversity Officers and attended a training session on best practice for equitable search committees, all run by the office of the Vice Chancellor for Diversity Equity and Inclusion.

About This Committee: This committee oversees department culture and climate, diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Email: deic@psych.ucsb.edu

Graduate Admissions

The Graduate Admissions Committee consists of Dan Conroy-Beam, Courney Durdle (Graduate Student Representative), Michael Goard, Richard Mayer (Chair), Katherine Lowe (Staff Representative), Chris McFerron (Staff Representative), Sophie Peterson (Graduate Student

Representative), and Kyle Ratner. We are pleased to report that the Department received approximately 300 applications for our PhD program this year. In December, the Committee began the process of determining how to allocate recruitment slots to interested faculty, based on the Department's procedures and our target class size. Due to recent changes in campus fellowships, the Committee will determine which prospective students will be granted a Central Fellowship in January. Our Interview Day (or Recruitment Day) will be on Friday, February 11, and is likely to be a virtual event this year. We look forward to everyone's participation in this important Departmental event. We also look forward to recruiting another excellent incoming class of outstanding students.

About This Committee: This committee oversees graduate student outreach and recruitment.
Email: gradadmissions@psych.ucsb.edu

Undergraduate Experience

In Fall 2021, the Undergraduate Experience Committee (UEC) selected the first recipient of the Mr. Jashojit and Mrs. Helen Roy Research Fund. The fund will provide need-based financial aid (\$2000) to an undergraduate student committed to research excellence in PBS. The awardee will be notified at the beginning of Winter quarter. One new initiative that the UEC is considering for Winter 2022 is to hold a town hall with undergraduate students. The Committee wants to hear directly from our students, to learn about the concerns they have and suggestions for enhancing their undergraduate experience in PBS.

About This Committee: This committee oversees improvement of the PBS undergraduate experience.

Email: ugradexperience@psych.ucsb.edu

 Follow us on Twitter [@pbs_grads](https://twitter.com/pbs_grads)

Do you know a PBS grad student with exciting news or a recent accomplishment?

Fill out [this form](#) so we can share it on our Twitter!

This newsletter was organized by the Graduate Executive Committee. If you would like to provide *anonymous* feedback on this newsletter, please complete this [Google Form](#).

If you would like to provide *anonymous* feedback or make an *anonymous* recommendation to any of the committees listed above, please complete this [Google Form](#).