

Newsletter of the CPA Section for Students



Issue #10, Spring 2019

STUDENTS IN PSYCHOLOGY
SECTION OF THE CPA

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings to all student members! Bonjour à tous les membres étudiants!

It was a pleasure and honour to serve as Chair of the CPA Section for Students in Psychology over the 2018-2019 year. I was so grateful to have the opportunity to connect with students from across Canada in this role! In this issue of the Section's newsletter, you will find information about the upcoming 2019 CPA Convention in Halifax as well as many interesting pieces written by students from our section on Page 19.

We have planned several engaging and informative events for students attending this year's 2019 CPA Convention in Halifax, designed to address the training needs for students at all levels of training. We will present workshops and discussion forums on several topics, including graduate school applications, publishing, self-care, networking and the replication crisis. If you cannot attend this year's convention but are interested in any of these topics, we will be posting the slides for each of these presentations on our website. A full video recording for our graduate school applications workshops will also be available on the website shortly after convention. We are also very excited that Dr. Sherry Stewart from Dalhousie University will present her research on addictions and mental health and provide students with insights into the latest developments in this important field of research.

Next year, Alexandra Richard from McGill University will take on the role of Chair of the Section for Students. We will also be welcoming Joanna Collaton and Andréanne Angerhn onto the student executive as Chair-Elect and Francophone Affairs Officer, respectively.

I would like to thank our current Past-Chair, Jean-Philippe Gagné, for his strong leadership and hard work throughout the past three years. I would also like to thank Georden Jones, who served as our Francophone Affairs Officer for the past two terms (4 years!).

If this is your first CPA convention, please make sure to attend the First Time Attendees Reception on Thursday May 30th at 5pm. The entire CPA Section for Students Executive and CPA Board will be in attendance, and this is a great opportunity to make new connections while learning more about what the convention has to offer for students. We will also have a "Student Lounge" open throughout the convention, where students can take a break from convention activities to relax, meet other students, and enjoy some refreshments while learning more about our Section activities. You also will not want to miss our Annual Student Section Social Event, taking place at the Red Stag Tavern on Saturday June 1st from 7-9pm. Don't forget to bring your conference badge in exchange for a free drink and some finger food!

I hope to meet many of you in Halifax throughout the 80th Annual CPA Convention!

Chelsea Moran, University of Calgary

Email : chelsea.moran1@ucalgary.ca

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Catch the Student Section at CPA National Convention & NACCJPC 2019!

Join the Student Section at the 80th CPA National Convention and the 4th North American Correctional and Criminal Justice Psychology Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia this year from May 31st to June 2nd at the Halifax Marriott Harbourfront and Hotel Halifax!

This newsletter will feature the various workshops and activities we will be taking part in and hosting at convention. We hope to see you there!



Facebook: CPA Section for Students

<https://www.facebook.com/CPASectionForStudents/>



Twitter: @CPA_Students

Don't forget to use the hashtag **#CPAconv2019** !



CPA Section News Page

Be sure to check <https://cpa.ca/students/news/> and your emails for news from our Section.

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As a first time attendee or presenter at the CPA Convention, you may have several questions about what to wear, bring, or do at the conference. Here are a few tips to keep in mind before you join us at ICAP 2018.

What to Wear

First impressions matter, so you want to look your best. Don't wear jeans but the dress code typically ranges from business-casual to professional attire. Also, wear comfortable shoes. You will likely be walking a lot from room to room or building to building. Appear professional, but be comfortable in what you are wearing.

What to Bring

Pack some snacks and a reusable water bottle! Sometimes the talks you want to attend are back to back and you may not have time to stop and grab some food in between. Bring a notebook and pen to take notes. Also, have some business cards on hand for networking opportunities.

What to Do

Connect with the CPA Student Section on social media for additional resources. Many of us will be attending convention so do not be afraid to say hi and get to know us. We can help you navigate convention. Attend our discussion forums, workshops, business meeting, and of course the student social to meet other individuals in our section. Also, take time to explore the convention city! Stay tuned for an orientation guide with further information.

SO YOU WANT TO ATTEND CONVENTION...

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MEET OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Sherry H. Stewart

Sherry H. Stewart, Ph.D., holds a CIHR Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Addictions and Mental Health and is a Professor in the Departments of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, and Community Health and Epidemiology at Dalhousie University. Dr. Stewart is also a licensed clinical psychologist in Nova Scotia. She is well known for her research on psychological factors contributing to the comorbidity of emotional and substance use disorders. She has developed and evaluated novel interventions for emotional problems, addictive behaviors, and their co-occurrence. She is a member of the Scientific Advisory to the Canadian Centre on Substance use and Addiction, and Editor-in-Chief for the Journal of Gambling Issues. Dr. Stewart founded the Centre for Addiction Research at Dalhousie (CARD), a centre fostering collaboration among those conducting addictions research at Dalhousie. She is on the steering committee, and is the Atlantic lead, of the Quebec-Atlantic node of the Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (CRISM) and serves on the CRISM national executive. She is Graduate Program Coordinator of the MSc program in psychiatry research at Dalhousie. Dr. Stewart receives funding from several research agencies including the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR).



Emotional Disorder – Substance Use Disorder Comorbidity: Nature, Mechanisms, and Treatment

In this Keynote Address, Dr. Stewart will discuss her research program designed to advance theoretical understanding of the psychosocial factors contributing to the complex interplay between emotional disorder and substance use disorder symptoms, and to develop, evaluate, and disseminate into practice, effective interventions for these comorbid conditions. More specifically, she will discuss her ongoing studies using laboratory-based, longitudinal, and daily diary methods to enhance the understanding of these forms of comorbidity, using her work on co-occurring PTSD-cannabis use disorder, and social anxiety disorder-alcohol use disorder, as examples. Dr. Stewart will also introduce how randomized controlled trial methods can be used to test novel interventions for these forms of comorbidity. She will use her work on the development and evaluation of transdiagnostic treatments for emotional disorders-substance use disorders to illustrate these principles. This Keynote Address is designed to discuss how students can make use of the lessons learned from this line of research to further their research and clinical training.

Saturday, June 1st, 2019 at 3:45pm - 4:30 pm, Sable B

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STUDENT SECTION PROGRAMS

The Student Section has prepared several programs for you to attend during convention. Join in the discussion on many topics to further your knowledge and gain valuable skills.



Workshop - Graduate School in Psychology: Navigating the Application Components with Confidence

Current graduate students in various fields of psychology (i.e., clinical, counselling, and forensic) and at all levels of training (i.e., master's and doctoral) will provide relevant and concrete information—including personal experiences—regarding the graduate school application process. Questions will be addressed in English and French.

Friday, May 31st, 2019 at 10:45am - 12:30pm, Nova Scotia Ballroom B



Workshop - Self-Care and Wellness during Grad School: How to Stay Healthy Under Pressure

We will discuss the importance of self-care, the symptoms and signs of burnout, research supporting self-care, and self-care strategies in an open and collaborative environment. Additionally, we will discuss issues relevant to students including procrastination, time management, working autonomously, and setting both long-term and short-term goals.

Saturday, June 1st, 2019 at 10:30am - 12:00pm, Sable B



Discussion Forum - Strategies for Networking as a Psychology Student

We will focus on finding a balance between in-person and virtual networking to benefit from the positive aspects of both strategies to create strong, long-lasting professional relationships. The application of these skills will be directly related to psychology students and students will have the opportunity to discuss and practice various strategies with each other throughout the discussion forum.

Saturday, June 1st, 2019 at 12:00pm - 12:30pm, Sable B

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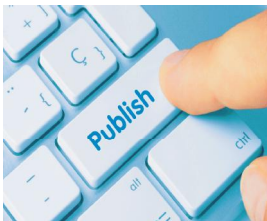
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Discussion Forum - Moving on from the “Replication Crisis”: Students as Leaders in the Renaissance of Psychological Research

This discussion forum will begin by providing participants with background information about the impact of questionable research practices on the reproducibility of empirical evidence, as well as an overview of recommended solutions based on open science principles. We will then facilitate a discussion about potential student-driven solutions and their feasibility.

Saturday, June 1st, 2019 at 3:15pm - 3:45pm, Sable B



Workshop - To publish or not to publish: Understanding the process of publication and peer-review

The purpose of this workshop is to provide students with an introduction to the publishing and peer-review process. This workshop will be divided into four parts: 1) Overview of the peer-review and publishing processes; 2) Steps to select a suitable journal; 3) Steps to reviewing manuscripts; 4) Responding to reviewers.

Sunday, June 2nd, 2019 at 10:30am – 12:00pm, Acadia C

Student Section Poster and Gimme-5 Session

Check out the posters and Gimme-5 presentations submitted to the Student Section during this session!



Sunday, June 2nd, 2019 at 1:00pm - 2:00pm, Halifax Ballroom AB

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FIRST TIME ATTENDEES RECEPTION



If you are a first time attendee of the CPA Convention, attend this welcome reception to learn more tips about attending convention, mingle with other first-timers, and chat with the Student Executive and other CPA Board Members. **Free** appetizers included.

Thursday, May 30th, 2019 at 5:00pm – 6:00pm, Sable Foyer (Main Level)

ANNUAL STUDENT SECTION BUSINESS MEETING



Chaired by Chelsea Moran.

Please join us to reflect on the past year, as it allows us to provide new resources to the Section. All students are welcome to attend and we look forward to hearing your feedback! We will be announcing the **Student Section's Travel Award Recipients** and will be giving certificates to our **Student Lounge Volunteers** during the Annual Business Meeting.

Saturday, June 1st, 2019 at 4:45pm – 5:45pm, Sable B

STUDENT LOUNGE



Make sure to check out our student lounge for some information on the several initiatives we have to offer. Take a break, network with other student members, and enjoy our charging station. Our Student Lounge will be open throughout the convention.

Oxford Room

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REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Have we convinced you to come to convention yet? If so, it is not too late to register. [Register today!](#)

Registration Type	Early Bird (February – April 30, 2019 23:59 EST)	Regular (May 1 – May 30, 2019 23:59 EST)	On-Site (May 31 – June 2, 2019 23:59 EST)
CPA Members*	\$300+tax	\$375+tax	\$450+tax
Honorary Life, Honorary Fellow and Retired Member	\$180+tax	\$225+tax	\$270+tax
Student Affiliates	\$140+tax	\$175+tax	\$180+tax
Non-Members	\$650+tax	\$800+tax	\$950+tax
Student Non-Affiliates	\$260+tax	\$320+tax	\$380+tax
Companion/Significant Other (Daily Rate)***	\$100+tax	\$100+tax	\$100+tax

Please note that if you register for the CPA convention, you can also attend the NACCJPC!



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Here's what you've missed!

ELECTION RESULTS

This year we had several outstanding candidates put their name forward to join our executive. Thank you to all those who expressed interest in the positions and to all those who voted during the election period. We are pleased to welcome the following individuals to our team beginning in June 2019:

Chair-Elect: Joanna Collaton (*University of Guelph*)

Francophone Affairs Officer: Andr  anne Angehrn (*University of Regina*)

We look forward to working with you over the upcoming year!

GRANT RECIPIENTS

This year, the Student Section awarded two Student Research Grants (\$500 each) and two Campus Initiative Grants (\$500 each). Congratulations to this year's recipients!

Student Research Grant

Julia Grummish (University of Regina)

Title: Estradiol and cognitive functioning in the menopause transition



Keera Fishman (University of Ottawa)

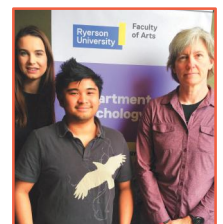
Title: Ready, Set, Goal! A randomized controlled trial examining motivation and Cognition in Stroke Patients



Campus Initiative Grant

Vincent Santiago (Ryerson University)

Initiative: Diversity recruitment weekend for underrepresented psychology graduate students



Middle: Vincent Santiago

Danielle Petricone-Westwood (University of Ottawa)

Initiative: Creation of mental health toolkits ("BOOST kits") with self-care tips and items



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GET INVOLVED

1. Join our Executive Team!

Each year, we hold elections for a variety of positions. For our next election period, we will be looking for people to fill the positions of:

- Chair-Elect
- Administrative and Finance Officer
- Communications Officer
- Undergraduate Student Affairs Officer
- Graduate Student Affairs Officer

Stay tuned for updates on the election process and check our website for a [Summary of Executive Member Duties](#).

2. Join the Student Mentorship Program!

Are you an undergraduate student looking for support in applying to graduate school? Are you a graduate student looking to get experience in a leadership role? If so, read below for more information about the CPA's Student Mentorship Program.

The CPA Student Mentorship Program offers Student Affiliates the opportunity to engage in peer-mentorship relationships with fellow students. The primary purpose of this program is to facilitate the exchange of information and the sharing of personal and professional experiences amongst CPA Student Affiliate Members with varying levels of education across Canada. Student mentors (i.e., graduate students) have the opportunity to develop and hone their mentoring skills, which can be extended to various professional domains, whereas mentees (i.e., undergraduate students) have a unique experience to extend their knowledge of the various subject areas in psychology, develop their communication skills, and receive guidance around their decisions. Students are matched based on academic or career interests, (e.g., clinical versus experimental psychology), geographical location, as well as specific interests and skills, with the goal being to connect undergraduate student mentees seeking guidance, information, or support with graduate student mentors whom share similar interests, research, and career goals within their domain of psychology. By taking this approach, we hope to provide all students participating in the CPA Student Mentorship Program with the most positive experience that assists them in making lasting connections and achieving their desired educational and career goals.



To participate in the program, students must be registered as a CPA student affiliate (for more information about becoming a CPA Student Affiliate, click [here](#)). Undergraduate students (mentees) and graduate students (mentors) are asked to complete an application form and submit their CV. Additionally, mentors are asked to provide a personal statement that outlines their previous mentoring experience and describes how they feel they could assist students in a mentorship role. Applications are then matched by the Program Coordinator to create dyads that are compatible based on career goals, interests in specific areas of psychology, geographic location, as well as language and communication preferences. Once paired, mentors and mentees are provided with an icebreaker activity and training manual to make the mentoring process as smooth as possible. While these tools have been made available to students to facilitate the mentoring process, we have also made efforts to ensure students can tailor this experience to suit the specific needs of each mentorship pair. Ultimately, it is up to each dyad to decide what works best for them, such as how often and through what medium (phone, email, or in person) of communication is mutually convenient for both individuals.

The mentorship was originally developed in 2015 by Zarina Giannone and was coordinated in past years by Jean-Philippe Gagné (2016 – 2017) and Chelsea Moran (2017 – 2018). The 2018-2019 year marked the fourth yearly edition of the CPA Student Mentorship Program, which was coordinated by Alexandra Richard. Alexandra, building on the work of the previous program coordinators, worked to expand advertisement of the program to English and French-speaking universities across Canada. She successfully recruited and paired 39 mentor-mentee dyads to participate in this year's edition of the program, which was a significant increase from the 25 dyads whom participated last year. Additionally, this was the first year that the CPA Mentorship program translated all of the program materials to French in order to make the program completely accessible to both English and French-speaking CPA Student Affiliates. We were very pleased to see some applications from francophone students from French-speaking universities and we hope to continue to adapt this program to encourage and facilitate participation for francophone students in the future. A feedback survey was administered mid-way through the year to assess mentees' views of the program. Of the twenty individuals who completed the survey, 75% of respondents reported that the program met most of their expectations, 90% of respondents reported receiving information, support, or advice from their mentors, and 70% of respondents felt their mentor devoted special time and consideration to their careers. An end-of-year feedback report will be administered in May to both mentors and mentees in hopes to elicit feedback regarding ways the program can continue to be enhanced in future years to maximize the usefulness and enjoyment of the program on the part of both mentors and mentees.

If you are interested in participating in the CPA Student Mentorship Program next year, mark your calendars! The call for applications for the 2019 – 2020 academic year will be released in June/July 2019. We will announce this on our webpage and will also be circulating emails to all our CPA Student Affiliates, so keep an eye out! In the meantime, please feel free to check out our [website](#) for more details about the program, or feel free to email Alexandra, the program coordinator, at alexandra.richard@mail.mcgill.ca or <mailto:alexandra.richard@mail.mcgill.ca> if you have any questions or concerns about the program. We always welcome feedback from past and current participants to continue to adapt the program to the needs of CPA student affiliates.



3. Become a Campus or Student Representative!

The CPA Campus Representative program has expanded to include more leadership opportunities for students with the additional roles of Undergraduate Student Representative and Graduate Student Representative available.

As a campus rep, you are a liaison between students (CPA members and non-members) and the CPA, including the Student Section. Your primary responsibility is to promote the CPA and Section for Students initiatives, activities, deadlines and requests through effective communication (e.g., in person, through email, and bulletin board postings) with the students and staff in your department, with the help of the student representatives.

Check our website to find more information on [How to Become a Campus or Student Representative](#).

4. Share your writing talents with us!

The CPA Section for Students has two great ways for you to share your writing with others.

Section Newsletter

This newsletter aims to improve the communication within our section and allows you to get to know your executive team, as well as stay up to date on current events. The newsletter is a great place for you to share events and new initiatives related to psychology being held at universities across Canada.

Please contact our Communications Officer, Alisia Palermo (alisia.palermo@uoit.net), for more information on submissions!

MindPad

Are you looking to boost your CV? Do you have an article, a paper from a class, or ongoing research that you'd like to share? Well, you could submit it for publication to Mind Pad, Canada's student written, edited, and published psychology journal.

Mind Pad publishes a range of submissions, including but not limited to:

- Original research summaries (clinical or fundamental);
- Review summaries;
- Psychology career-related articles;

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- Opinion articles on a psychology-related topic;
- Reflections on new trends in psychology or psychology research;
- Reflections on psychology in the media;
- Reports on conferences or workshops attended.

Students who are not enrolled in psychology programs may also submit a manuscript to the journal, if its subject-matter falls within one of the subfields of psychology. Please contact us if you wish to check if your subject would be of interest for Mind Pad!

- Your submission should be 800 to 2000 words in length.
- The content of the submission should be of interest to all who are practicing and studying psychology and/or any of its subfields (e.g. neuropsychology, psycholinguistics, social psychology) but the primary audience of Mind Pad are students of psychology.

Check our website for more information on [Mind Pad Editorial Policy and Submissions](#).

Articles and questions should be submitted to jean_ga@live.concordia.ca. Submissions are accepted on an ongoing basis.

Sincerely,

Jean-Philippe Gagné
Editor-in-Chief

5. Be in the know!

Be sure to follow us on social media (as mentioned previously in this newsletter), and read those emails we sent you! We offer many resources for students including a variety of student awards throughout the year and we do not want you to miss out on a single one!

Like us on [Facebook](#).

Follow us on [Twitter](#).

Read our emails.

Tell your friends to [become a student affiliate](#).

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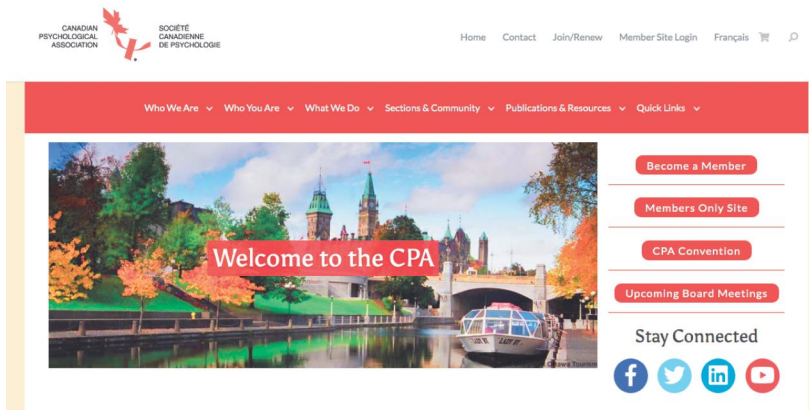
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How to: Join the Student Section for FREE

There are many benefits associated with your CPA Student Affiliate membership, and many of these are provided through being a member of the CPA Section for Students. When you purchase or renew a CPA Student Affiliate membership, you are not automatically enrolled as a member of the Section for Students – you must choose to join on your online profile. Becoming a member of the Section for Students is completely free, and this ensures that you are eligible for the awards and activities that our Section provides to students. If you want to make sure that you are making the most of your membership, follow the steps below to join!

Steps to join the CPA Section for Students

1. Log into [Members Only Site](#) and click on "Manage my Profile".



2. Log in using your credentials on the next page.
3. Scroll down your profile page to "If you wish to join a [Section](#) after you have completed the online renewal, please [Click Here](#)" (Near bottom of page)
4. Scroll down to "Students in Psychology" among the list of CPA Sections and check the box. Then click "Next"

- ☐ Sport and Exercise Psychology - \$6.00
- ☒ Students in Psychology - \$0.00
- ☐ Teaching of Psychology - \$5.00
- ☐ Traumatic Stress - \$10.00
- ☐ Women and Psychology - \$5.00

Next

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- The payment page will indicate amount owed of \$0.00 (no payment required). Agree with the terms and conditions and click submit – you are now officially a member of the Section for Students!

Payment

No payment is required for your Order.

☒ I agree to the [Terms and Conditions](#)

Submit Cancel

- Congratulations! You are now a Student Section Affiliate! *Don't forget to add this to your CV!*



STUDENT SUBMISSIONS

Thank you to all of the students who submitted a piece for this edition of the Newsletter! To submit for the next Newsletter or for more information, please contact our Communications Officer, Alisia (alisia.palermo@uoit.net).

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My Lovely [Fiancé] in the Psych Ward: Work-Life Balance as a Graduate Student Caring for an Ill Partner

Lauren Trafford, M.Ed. Candidate

University of Alberta

When my soon-to-be mother-in-law flew in to help me care for her son, we stopped off at a local Chapters store to purchase a book. It was painfully ironic that her book club had recently chosen to read *My Lovely Wife in the Psych Ward: A Memoir* by Mark Lukach. When I read the "about" section on the book jacket, I could feel my throat begin to close. The book is about a young couple who, without notice, are faced with the unimaginable. Mark's wife had "suffered a terrifying and unexpected psychotic break" at age 27, leading to a nearly month-long stay for her in a hospital psychiatric ward. Not four days earlier, my own partner had experienced the same phenomenon—a 2-hour long psychotic break, during which he was sent to the psychiatric ward at the hospital (within the university where I was, and still am, a graduate student).

This all happened at the end of my winter term in 2019, not long ago. Prior to this event, my fiancé had already been in and out of emergency rooms for weeks dealing with a physical illness, and it was some time during this period when the first warning signs of psychological distress began. I figured it was a combination of his pain, frustration, and lack of sleep which were all contributing to symptoms of confusion and mood swings. Although he was never on regular medication in his life, his physical illness meant that he had to adjust to taking daily medications, and he could never seem to remember when and how to take each pill. He would start his day bright and cheerful, but come home swearing he couldn't stand his friends and family any longer. All of this behaviour was uncharacteristic, but I now see them for what they were—warning signs of a much more troubling, underlying mental health problem.

As a graduate student, I was already feeling the compounding pressures of completing my final assignments, grading for a course I was TAing, preparing for a conference, chipping away at my masters thesis, and carrying out additional RA work I had picked up to support our finances. When my commitments to caring for my partner became highly demanding, I felt truly drained of any ability to show up for anything. I missed classes, birthdays, messages, calls, emails, and social gatherings. As final assignment deadlines drew closer, I had no idea if I would need to rush my partner to the ER in the days before a deadline, or if I would get the chance to devote some time to completing my assignments. I felt very unsure of how to ask for help when I had no notice of when my fiancé needed medical attention, especially when we had relocated 3000 kilometers away from home for me to attend the grad program of my dreams. It was left to just the two of us to care for one another. When I realized I was out of options, I emailed each of my course professors to arrange meetings.

I was very fortunate to have each professor listen without judgment, and accept my circumstances with kindness and compassion. They each offered me options that were within their power, such as due date extensions or eliminating assignments that required class attendance in favour of altering the weighting of other, at-home assignments. They encouraged open lines of communication, with the understanding that it was not always possible to give them advance notice.



They also regularly encouraged me to take time to care for myself, something that had fallen away through the struggle between caring for someone else and meeting *other people's* expectations: meeting professors' deadlines, meeting department grading deadlines, meeting the expectations for conference poster data cleaning, and adhering to the unofficial thesis timeline drawn up by my supervisor... and of course, supporting my partner as much as possible.

Asking for so much help so often was much more difficult than I imagined. Grad school is sometimes described as a "pressure cooker," where the limits of cognition and caffeine consumption are tested daily. At a system-level, graduate students are expected to take charge of their education and pursue as many opportunities as possible, but what if the cards life deals you make even the minimum required coursework too much? Imposter syndrome took on a new form for me. My partner and I are young, so I had not anticipated taking on a caregiving role at this stage of my life. Parents and couples face this balancing act all the time, through both grad school and professional careers. Could I handle the pressure of juggling caregiving with academia?

The answer was yes and no. Yes, I was able to come out the other side of this experience with a newfound appreciation for quality psychological services, evidence-based treatments, and multidisciplinary practices within hospital inpatient programs. And no, I was not able to finish on time, on my own, without swallowing my pride and asking for assistance. My initial, unsustainable approach was to spend mornings in the hospital, afternoons in class, and evenings working feverishly on papers until I fell asleep on my keyboard. I soon realized that incorporating scheduled self-care was a requirement without which the quality of my assignments suffered greatly. My professors—and, when my needs exceeded their ability to help me, my department's graduate chair as well—offered many flexible solutions to accommodate the very real challenges of life in acknowledgement of their impact on my academic abilities. All I had wanted was a fair shot at being assessed alongside a class of my peers. At first, asking for extensions felt unfair to those around me when I was still taking time between hospital visits to catch a movie or read a (fiction) book (purely for pleasure). However, I eventually realized that time spent caring for myself deserved space in my planner.

Eventually, my lovely fiancé's stay in the psych ward was over. During this time, I was lucky to have his mother, aunt, and brother rally together to make sure someone visited him every day, accompanied him on supervised walks, and reminded us both how much we are loved and supported. My program faculty routinely reminded me to meet my own needs and to be gentle with my expectations of myself. My cohort further encouraged me to take time to enjoy life and even assembled a "self-care care package" to continue honouring the love and commitment I owe myself, in the same way that I had honoured the love and commitment I have for my partner and my program.

Don't be afraid to ask for help, even if the response you receive is "no." Not everything in life is within our control, and—especially in this profession—we owe it to ourselves to consider the challenges we face within the context of our character, our thoughts, our emotions, and our environments.



Just keep swimming: Riding the tides of graduate school

Reflections from MA, PhD, and PostDoc Perspectives

Catherine Bergeron, Kyla Brophy, Adina Coroiu, & Chelsea Moran

1. Building community

As human beings, we need one another to survive. Graduate school requires a lot of individual work, which can be isolating. It is very important to stay connected, from a personal and a professional standpoint. For many of us, the lab is our home base during grad school, and building a strong lab community facilitates productivity and is a source of social support and mentorship. It is also important to remember that you are likely already a member of many different professional (e.g., your university, faculty, department, and lab) and non-professional (e.g., religious or spiritual, gym or leisure club, friends, family—biological or chosen) communities with which you interact either in-person or virtually (e.g., #PhDChat and #AcademicTwitter). It is important to be proactive about staying involved and to dedicate time and effort to building and sharing communities by:

- Establishing personal norms (e.g., how frequently you meet/attend events; what is expected of you; how often you access or become active on Twitter; how often you check in with peers and mentors about professional development)
- Creating group norms through consultation with group members (e.g., organize lab meetings, journal clubs, and lab socials, if they are not already in place).

2. Taking initiative in your relationship with your supervisor

Every supervisory relationship is different, ranging from well-defined, strict and regular interactions to flexible, or needs-based check-ins. Regardless of the supervision style, academic supervisors are a key source of support for graduate students. However, we believe it is the students' responsibility to take a leadership role in their graduate training by independently generating training goals, research interests, potential research projects and/or clinical opportunities. Supervisors can help to guide this process, but students risk missing out on opportunities to tailor their graduate school experience to their own career and learning goals if they are not also an active participant in this process. Also, remember to use your time with your supervisors and mentors effectively by setting meeting agendas and summarizing action points for future meetings. If you are new to a lab, you may consider checking in with peers about what is acceptable versus non-acceptable with respect to the supervisory relationship.

3. Believing in yourself

Graduate school is difficult and we all struggle at one point or another with our confidence that we can succeed in this challenging environment. Unfortunately, Imposter Syndrome is a common experience for many graduate students. It is so easy to focus on our own perceived flaws and failures, and lose sight of our progress and accomplishments. To counter this tendency and to manage feelings of insecurity throughout grad school, we recommend that students begin building an archive of personal accomplishments (small or large) that can act as a reminder of past successes and boost motivation during low periods. Some of things we found helpful include:

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- Keeping a personal folder with offer/admission letters and scholarship/grant results, thank you cards, meaningful emails from mentors;
- Creating time to reflect on your accomplishments by listing things that make you feel proud, such as submitting a paper, applying for an award, making a new professional connection at a conference, defending your thesis;
- Celebrating your small and big successes by rewarding yourself whenever you make progress towards your goals;
- Practicing self-compassion and reframing criticisms as opportunities to learn and improve.

4. Prioritizing self-care

It can be easy to fall into the habit of working late into the night, fueling yourself with caffeine, and making sacrifices in other areas of your life. While adaptive during very busy periods (funding!), neglecting your self-care is not the foundation for a pleasant or productive graduate school experience. You are your own greatest asset, and your social and personal needs are an important part of staying healthy. We recommend setting a daily work schedule that allows for some time to be dedicated to pleasurable or soothing activities. Some of our ideas include reading a book, going for a walk, or attending a yoga class. Remember: you may have a lot of work to do, but you'll be better at doing it if you take care of yourself.

5. Maintaining a growth mindset

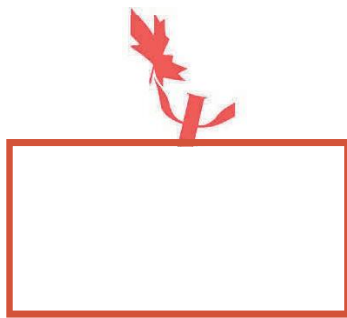
Taking charge of projects and learning new skills can seem daunting early on in your graduate career. However, these are the best opportunities for you to grow in terms of experience and confidence. Some of the greatest learning opportunities exist outside of classrooms and graduate school is a great time to pursue new knowledge and skills. We recommend grad students challenge themselves by:

- Trying new things (e.g., prepare an oral instead of a poster submission at the next conference; learn a new statistical technique)
- Sign up for free training seminars and workshops offered by your university
- Seek out exposure to new knowledge via journal clubs, training workshops, and guest lectures.

Remember that your non-academic interests need to be cultivated as well! Use the resources available to you within your larger community to develop other aspects of yourself. You may consider challenging yourself by taking up a new hobby or learning more about an art form you are less familiar with. Plus, many cultural experiences are available at a discounted prices for students.



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