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Gray Matters

Psi Chi's Undergraduate Newsletter for Psychology Majors

Article from our Psi Chi Advisor

Dr. Deborah Garfin

It continues to be a pleasure and honor to serve as GSU's Psi Chi Faculty Advisor.

Our organization has grown both in strength and in number thanks to our many highly dedicated and committed members. In addition to our amazing executive board and current members, we even have not-yet members who have given of their time and energy to work on Psi Chi projects this semester.

I would like to thank everyone who worked on the Practicum Fair, PURC, and our table in the Plaza for their efforts in presenting fantastic programming during this Fall 2007 semester. The phenomenal amount of work that went into producing this newsletter is also appreciated.

It is not easy to balance the demands of school, work, and family responsibilities. Those students that take on additional commitments such as getting involved in organizations such as Psi Chi deserve special recognition.

Thanks for making my job not only easier but highly rewarding. Looking forward to working with you all as we plan for a productive and successful spring semester.



Psi Chi Fall Induction

Dr. Deborah Garfin

Welcome to our new Psi Chi inductees!

We will be inducting 36 new members at our Fall 2007 Induction Ceremony to be held on December 6 from 4:00-5:30 pm at the University Center, Room 460.

All current members are encouraged to attend this special program and meet and congratulate our new members.

We will follow the induction with a short members meeting to discuss activities for the Spring 2007 semester.

The last part of our program will be a highly informative session presenting strategies for preparing for the GREs.

Of course no Psi Chi activity is complete without refreshments, so come hungry! Dress is business casual. Plan to join us on the 6th.



Practicum Fair

Tiffany Phillips

Georgia State University's Psi Chi Chapter provides numerous opportunities for psychology majors to learn about the field and prepare them for careers in psychology. Psi Chi hosts numerous events, many in ...

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...conjunction with GSU's psychology department..

The Practicum Fair is one event that is highly beneficial to psychology majors. This year's Practicum Fair, held on October 11, 2007, was hosted by Psi Chi and the Psychology Department.

Representatives from both research groups as well as from applied settings met with students who were interested in considering a practicum experience. Faculty members, graduate students, site supervisors, and current practicum students provided information about the practicum site as well as what opportunities for training were available to undergraduate students.

Dr. Rochelle Cohen, director of the practicum program, presented a power point presentation about the procedures and benefits of participating in a practicum experience. Refreshments were provided and a large turnout made the program a great success.



Important Information for Psychology Majors Regarding Practica

Tiffany Phillips

What is a Practicum?

Practica provide students with an opportunity to work and receive training in a setting where psychology methods and principles are applied in a community setting (Psyc 4770) or through directed research in a research setting (Psyc 4760). Each practicum course is equivalent to 1-3 credit hours

of course work while students receive 30 hours of training for each credit hour registered. Graduate programs in psychology view this research or applied experience to be a critical part of an undergraduate's education. Therefore, it is vital that students take part in these exciting and wonderful opportunities provided by Georgia State University.

Students may earn up to six credits of practicum experience. Many students participate in both a research and an applied practicum.

Research practica (4760) provides an excellent opportunity for students who are considering pursuing careers in psychological research to get hands on, directed research experience in the psychology department. GSU faculty needing help with their grants or other research/academic projects often offer practicum experiences. Practicum opportunities are also available with hospital-based research projects and other local universities. See GSU Faculty Lab descriptions at

<http://www.gsu.edu/~wwwpug/ResearchPracticaSites.htm>.

Applied/Service practica (4770) provides direct training opportunities and gives students hands-on experience in the field at various psychology related institutions within the local community. This experience can range from working with children to adults, and in hospitals, courts, advocacy groups, and other community-based agencies. Students planning to apply to graduate programs in psychology will enhance their application to graduate programs in psychology with the addition of this experience. Practica will also help the student develop new skills and provide rewarding experiences in giving to the community.

The Psychology Department maintains a roster of agencies and faculty projects that have practicum positions open for undergraduates on the Psychology Department undergraduate web page. See

<http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwpsy/undergrad/AppliedPracticaSites.htm>

Requirements

Before signing up for a practicum, check to see if the following prerequisites are met:

- A student must be in sophomore standing
- For Applied/Service practica, a student must have taken Psyc 3110 (Interpersonal Behavior)
- A student must have a minimum (overall) GPA of 2.5 and a minimum Psychology GPA of 3.0
- Advising and authorization by the department

The following steps must be taken to be involved in a practicum:

See the following webpage for a complete description of the procedure outlined below:

<http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwpsy/undergrad/PracticumGeneralInfo.htm>

1. Review the practicum website and have a general idea of what practica you are interested in.
2. Make an appointment with the Psychology Undergraduate Advisement Office (sign up at the 11th floor Urban Life reception desk.) Bring a current PACE form.
3. Students will be given an application form with an advisement code and signature verifying that the student has been advised.

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4. Students will set up interviews for the sites they are considering. You **MUST** have an application form with an advisement code and signature in order to be interviewed.

5. Once interviews have been completed and a site has been selected. The application must be turned in to the 11th floor receptionist. All paperwork must be turned in by the end of registration.

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Providing a CV(resume) at your interview will help the interviewer appreciate your background and experience

The following links provide more information on how to prepare a student CV and/or resume:

http://www.psichi.org/pubs/articles/article_475.asp

<http://psych.hanover.edu/handbook/vita2.html>

<http://www.free-resume-tips.com/resumetips/curriclm.html>

Additional Information:

If you need additional information please email the practicum program at: psypracticum@gsu.edu with “practicum” in the Subject Line. You will receive an automatic response with the following Word attachments: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's), Registration Instructions, and other resource information to help with the practicum advisement process.



Psi Chi Grants and Scholarships

Sunita Kapahi

Psi Chi members have a chance to break away from at least one stereotype of university students. Those students who long for the day where they can separate themselves from the idea of a “broke college student” should consider applying for the many scholarships sponsored by Psi Chi. A number of awards are currently available to undergraduate and graduate members, including:

Allyn & Bacon Awards *Deadline: May 1st*

Open to all undergraduate Psi Chi members and are awarded to those who submit the best overall empirical research papers. Awards are \$1,000 for first place, \$650 for second place, and \$350 for third place. The abstracts of the winning papers, as well as photographs and brief biographies of the top three winners, are published in Eye on Psi Chi.

APA Science Directorate Internship Grant *Deadline: January 15th*

All undergraduate and graduate Psi Chi members are eligible for this internship. This program provides one undergraduate student a summer internship with APA. The Science Directorate pays approximately \$3,500 for a 10-week period, while Psi Chi awards an additional \$2,000 for living expenses.

Erlbaum Awards *Deadline: May 1st*

These awards are open to all undergraduate and graduate Psi Chi members and are awarded to those who submit the best overall empirical studies in the area of cognitive science. The awards are \$500 for the first-place graduate student and \$500 for the first-place undergraduate student. The abstracts of the winning papers, as well as photographs and brief biographies of the top two winners, are published in Eye on Psi Chi.

Guilford Awards *Deadline: May 1st*

All Psi Chi undergraduate members are eligible to submit their research for these awards. Cash awards are \$1,000 for first place, \$650 for second place, and \$350 for third place. In addition, all winners and their faculty research advisors receive award certificates. The abstracts of the winning papers, as well as photographs and brief biographies of the top three winners, are published in Eye on Psi Chi.

Hunt Research Grants *Deadline: October 1st*

All Psi Chi student and faculty members are eligible for these grants. Up to three grants of up to \$3,000 each are given each year to enable members to complete empirical research that addresses a question directly related to Psi Chi. Unlike other national Psi Chi award/grant programs, these Grants focus on research directly related to the mission of Psi Chi.

National Convention Research Awards *Deadline: December 1st*

All Psi Chi members are eligible to submit their research for these awards. Cash awards of \$300 for undergraduates and \$500 for graduates are presented to students submitting the best research for Psi Chi sessions at the APA and APS national conventions. Up to 8 awards for the APA Convention and 8 for the APS Convention are given.

Summer Research Grants *Deadline: March 30th*

All undergraduate members are eligible for these summer research grants (research must be conducted while still an undergraduate, not after graduation). The purpose of this program is to provide funds for members to conduct summer research at nationally recognized research institutions. Psi Chi will award 10 grants of \$3,500 (a stipend of \$2,500 to the Psi Chi student plus \$1,000 to the sponsoring faculty member at the research institution).

Psi Chi members should also consider looking into applying for Regional Research Awards. All members (undergraduate and graduate) are eligible to submit their research for these awards. Cash awards of \$300 each are presented to students submitting the best research papers to Psi Chi sessions at regional conventions. The number of awards in each region varies based on the size of the region; a total of 78 awards of \$300 each are available each academic year. Deadlines for submissions vary according to region and sometimes from year to year; check your fall regional mailing or the Psi Chi website for details.

Application/submission guidelines and additional scholarship information for all of these scholarship and others are available online at <http://psichi.org/awards/>.

Honors Theses

Britnay Ferguson

If you have completed a Research Practicum you may want to consider conducting an Honors Thesis. Honors Theses are generally conducted by undergraduate juniors and seniors who have an interest in applying to a clinical psychology graduate program. Students generally have served as a volunteer or conducted a research practicum within a professor's lab with whom they ask to guide their individual research. The subject of the research is to be decided between the professor and student but generally is close in line to the ongoing research of the professor.

Most typically, honors theses are conducted over two semesters and result in six hours credit. The first semester is set aside for the reading and research aspect of the project and the second for the writing of the results found. For psychology majors four additional courses, three hours each, are needed from the honors department.

Two courses should be any combination of Honors Colloquium and Honors Forum. The second pair of coursework may be any upper-division honors course, including Honors Colloquium and Forum. You may also choose to add an honors dimension to any class offered by Georgia State to fulfill this requirement.

Here is step by step list on how to approach starting your Honors Thesis:

1. At least one semester before the project is to begin, identify the professor with who you will be conducting research.
2. A proposal stating questions that the project will investigate and research procedures to be followed should be

submitted. This should include a proposed bibliography of readings. There are forms and guidelines for proposals in the Honors Program Office. Dr. Stacie Stewart is the Psychology department's coordinator with the Honors Department. She will also be a valuable resource for proposal submission.

3. So that it can be reviewed by the Honors Executive Committee for approval, the proposal should be submitted to the Honors Program Office by 5:15 p.m. on the last day to withdraw from classes ("W" Day) of the semester prior to the semester in which the research class will be taken.

4. The student will be asked to attend the next meeting of the Honors Executive Committee, where she/he will make a two-minute oral presentation of the proposed research project and will answer questions from the Council.

5. If required by the Honors Executive Committee, revisions to the proposal are made and approved by the Director.

6. The student enrolls, typically in consecutive semesters, in Honors Thesis Research and Honors Thesis Writing courses within his or her department. The Honors staff will provide course and computer numbers.

For more information visit <http://www.cas.gsu.edu/337.html>



PURC 2007

Glena Read

The 7th annual Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference (PURC 2007) was held on November 2, 2007 at Georgia State University's...

Tips for Research Poster Composition

Britnay Ferguson

This year, several weeks before GSU's Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference, Michael J. Owren gave a PowerPoint presentation on how to compose a poster to be presented at a research conference. The lecture was sponsored by Psi Chi and included a professional poster printing session the following week.

Here is a quick summary of Dr. Owren's tips which will be very useful to you if you plan to present a poster at GSURC next semester of PURC next fall.

1. Posters should be made in a single slide in power point.
2. In page layout, size your poster at 44" (width) by 34" (height) a ratio of 1.33.
3. Mount your poster on a trifold with pushpins, or according to the conventions regulations
4. Keep the information simple and brief. Avoid psychology jargon.
5. Use large fonts. Titles should be 72 or more, headings at 48 or more and all other font should never be less than 20-24. Arial is the easiest font to read in regards to large posters.
6. Use pertinent graphics, photos and figures. Pixilation should never be smaller than 200x300. 3D graphics should be avoided, they unnecessary and flashy. Color is good but you should keep to a simple color scheme.

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7. Make sure information flows logically. Keep information in 3 to 4 columns if possible.

8. Use bullet points. The space in between concepts allows a break for the mind of the viewer to stop and think.

Here is a quick summary on the components of a Psychology Research Poster:

1. **Title** (Concise, avoid psychology jargon)

2. **Authors and affiliations** (Below and smaller than title)

3. **Relevant logos** (School, conference or lab logos all are considered relevant)

4. **Abstract** (120 words or less, generally not required)

5. **Introduction** (Start general then narrow to specific topic. 3-4 bullet points should be sufficient)

6. **Method, Results, Discussion and/or Conclusion** (All should be brief)

7. **Conclusion** (Must mirror the objective of the research project that was previously stated.)

8. **References** (Citation and References are both not required. However if a reference section is included it may be made a smaller font.)

8. **Acknowledgments** (Not required, may be made a smaller font).



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...Rialto Center. This event, hosted by the GSU Department of Psychology, Psi Chi, the Center for Behavioral

Neuroscience, and the Program in Clinical Psychology, provided psychology undergraduates who are involved in research a chance to showcase their work. This year's theme was "Understanding Psychopathology." Multiple posters were displayed with diverse topics, ranging from "Gender Differences in Problem-Solving Skills" to "NPY Injection in the Perifornical Nucleus of the Hypothalamus in Siberian Hamsters."

Intriguing research topics notwithstanding, PURC also features a specially invited keynote speaker. This year, Dr. Terry D. Blumenthal gave a talk on the "Brain Mechanisms of Fear and Anxiety." Dr. Blumenthal has been on the faculty of Wake Forest University for 20 years and prides himself on involving undergraduate students in research. He has supervised 31 graduate student theses and 29 undergraduate theses.

His research is primarily concerned with the eye blink component of the startle response though the theses he has supervised have been very diverse ranging from clinical to social traditions. Not only was the talk incredibly informative about his research, but Dr. Blumenthal was also an engaging speaker. He made plenty of time for audience interaction, jokes and anecdotes about his former student and this year's PURC advisor, Dr. Chris Goode.

PURC is also catered and the food (and conference) is free for students, faculty, and the public to attend. This conference is a wonderful way to find out about the research that is being done in the Psychology Department of

Georgia State University by students and faculty. Information about group advising sessions, Psi Chi, and doctoral programs in psychology is available.

Tracy Hipp (supervised by Dr. Chris Goode) was awarded 1st Place *and* the Diversity Award for her research investigating, "Suicide and Hate Crimes: Contextualizing LGBT (Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender) Adolescent Crisis."

Nicole Santamaria, also supervised by Dr. Chris Goode, was awarded 2nd place. Her study was entitled, "The Predictive Relationship of Self-Esteem and Academic Self-Efficacy on Academic Performance."

Third Place was awarded to **Neesia Smith** under the supervision of Dr. David Washburn for the poster entitled "The Effects of Training on Performance and its Relation to TCD (Transcranial Doppler)."



GSURC 2008

Sunita Kapahi

Missed your chance to present a poster at PURC in October? Don't worry, another opportunity is coming up! On March 14, 2008, the second annual Georgia State University Undergraduate Research Conference (GSURC) will take place on our campus. The program includes research posters and papers, artistic displays and performances, oral presentations, a keynote speaker, and an awards ceremony.

The conference is designed to increase awareness of undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative activities on campus, as well as recognize the importance of faculty-student...

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“Getting In” Book Review

Glena Read

When asked by a psychological statistics teacher how many students in a class were planning on attending graduate school in Psychology at least 75% of the class raised their hands. Enthusiasm for higher education was tempered when the teacher handed out papers listing the actual percentage of people who apply and succeed in getting in, along with their GPA's. The percentage of accepted students was surprisingly low and shockingly disappointing.

Luckily, there are resources available for prospective graduate school applicants. The most helpful book that I have found is “Getting In: A Step-by-Step Plan for Gaining Admission to Graduate School in Psychology,” published by the American Psychological Association (APA). Each of the book's seven chapters breaks down a different aspect of applying to graduate school and becoming a more desirable candidate for admission.

Chapters one through four examine the reader's willingness and capability to attempt the rigorous process of applying to and attending graduate school.

Specifically, **Chapters two and four** pose the question, “is a graduate degree in psychology the right choice for you?” These chapters will help the reader examine the qualities he or she may possess and determine what qualities will help and what qualities will hinder a successful education in graduate school.

Chapter three describes the different programs in graduate school, the models of practice, and the types of jobs available to people who choose each one. It is important to read chapter three before deciding what program to apply to. The program a student chooses will affect the course of his or her education and eventually, his or her career. **Chapter five** expands on this idea by examining, in depth, the different programs in psychology. This chapter makes the reader truly consider what he or she wants in a program and helps the reader compile a list of programs that fit his or her interests. Chapter five also encourages the student to contact, request information from, and visit the programs they wish to apply to.

Chapter six, “Applying to Graduate Programs,” details how the prospective student should prepare a resume, get letters of recommendation, write application essays, and fill out financial aid and graduate school application forms. Chapter six is very helpful in preparing materials to apply to graduate school but is vital to read the other chapters as well.

Chapter seven describes the proper way for accepting and declining offers. It also helps one deal with being rejected from graduate school and explains that the process does not have to end there.

The seven chapters consist of a comprehensive guide that is essential to a student considering applying to graduate school in psychology. Besides these chapters there are also numerous resources listed in the back of the book. The helpful “Timetable for Early Planners” provides a general timeline for students who consider graduate school as early as junior year of their college career. In addition, the APA divisions and their contacts are listed as well as contacts for the State and Provincial Boards and Agencies for licensure and certification of psychologists, a sample recommendation form, and resources for the minority fellowship program.

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...collaboration. All departments are invited to participate and showcase the excellent work of their undergraduate students, and psychology students are no exception.

Last year, nine of the posters and two of the oral presentations were presented by psychology students. Linda Cheng, a student working with Dr. Diana Robins earned the second place award in the poster presentation competition.

The Keynote Speaker for GSURC 2008 will be a full-time Georgia State faculty member nominated by the GSU community for the Faculty Award for Undergraduate Research. In addition to the award this individual will receive \$2000. The deadline for nomination is January 4, 2008, so Psi Chi members, make sure to nominate your most influential psychology professors!

The proposal submission deadline is January 30, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. Information for students and faculty regarding registration, proposal submission, and a schedule for the day is available at www.gsu.edu/gsurc, and the form for the Faculty Award can be found at http://www.gsu.edu/files/GSURC_keynote_nomination.pdf.



For information on Psi Chi and how to join visit

<http://www2.gsu.edu/~7Ewwwpsy/undergrad/PsiChi.htm>

To access previous editions of Gray Matters visit

<http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwpsy/Newsletters.htm>