



PSCHOLASTIC



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VICE PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Hi everyone,

Like many students, I can see the light at the end of the semester, and I am looking forward to relaxing in warm summer weather. Between us and our summer break are some of the most stressful weeks of our university careers - assignments, final projects, papers, and exams. These times can certainly be overwhelming, and I would like to remind you to be kind to yourself. If your to-do list is proving to be too much, talk to your professors, lean on your friends, and use the resources available on campus to give yourself a little "me time". You are not alone, and the PSA's lounges are a great place to commiserate with other students about pretty much anything on your mind, or meet up with us at one of our events to see what we're all about. We can't wait to meet you!

All the best,

Cassandra Byblow
 Vice-President
 University of Regina
 Psychology Students' Association



MY UNDERGRADUATE PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

by Donna Dumitrescu

I have been fortunate to work with Dr. Natasha Gallant in her Aging, Residents, and Caregivers (ARC) Research Unit as a research assistant, as well as an honours student. A long-term project in the works is related to perceptions of the midlife (ages 45-64), ageism and age-inclusivity directed toward this group, and how middle-aged adults are resilient to ageism. This project involved semi-structured interviews that we are currently analyzing. I have also worked on a rapid scoping review about the historical and contemporary evidence related to expressions of belonging and isolation within the Canadian long-term care sector. I got into this opportunity through applying to do a SCPOR traineeship with Dr. Gallant back in 2021. Other opportunities similar to this can be found through FGSR and NSERC. I would encourage anyone interested in keeping an eye out for research assistant positions to network with professors over email and to frequently visit the U of R Careers page.

I have also volunteered in the Social Context, Health, and Trauma lab (SCHT) with Dr. Bridget Klest. I helped to create plain language summaries of the research done with the lab to be posted on the website. The goal with this was to make research more understandable and accessible to everyday people. I found out about Dr. Klest's work through the psychology faculty page on the U of R website, and found the volunteer application requirements on her website.

EDITOR/DESIGNER

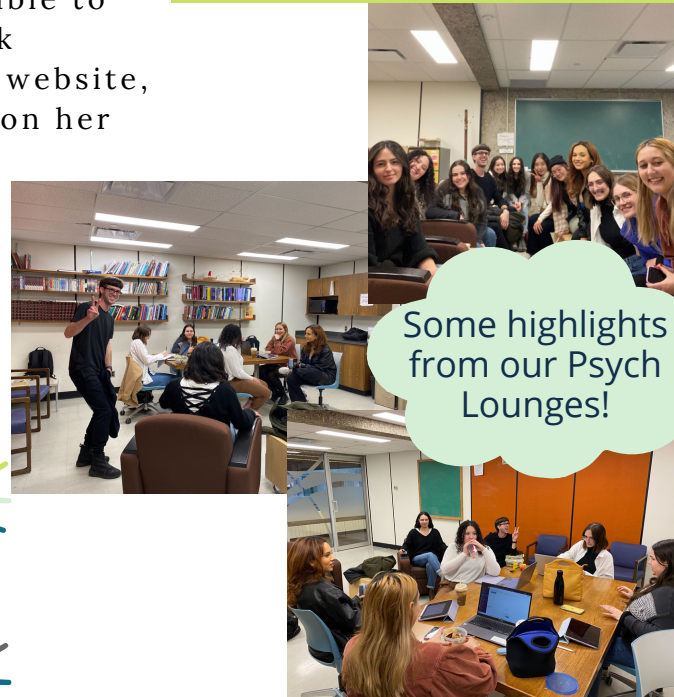
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WANT TO CONTRIBUTE?

We accept all submissions, however, we reserve the right to edit for clarity and length. Send submissions to: urpsa@uregina.ca



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TRANSITIONING FROM PSYCHOLOGY TO A PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM

by Julia Gregory with Sydney Sulymka and Michaela Flaman

Psychology is a frequent topic of interest for standardized admissions exams and pre-requisites for professional programs, such as medicine, law, dentistry, pharmacy, nutrition, optometry, etc. So, it is not a surprise that many psychology majors are interested in pursuing a professional program. University of Regina alumni Michaela Flaman and Sydney Sulymka provide insight into their experiences transitioning from the psychology undergraduate program to medicine and law, respectively.



BA in Psychology vs. BSc in Psychology

While Sydney earned a BA in Psychology and Michaela earned a BSc in Psychology, both alumni reiterate that students choose a program based on their interests. Sydney mentioned that science alumni are skilled at writing precisely in her law program, and Michaela mentioned that an arts background would help create a holistic approach to patient care.

Check out the requirements for the program and school you wish to attend, and consider whether the BA or BSc offers you an engaging course load!

Remember – it is okay for your path to evolve with your interests. Sydney completed a Certificate in International Studies alongside her degree, and Michaela switched from majoring in biology to majoring in psychology.

Should You Apply for the Honours Program?

Sydney and Michaela completed their honours theses, although research experience was not a requirement for their programs. Sydney urges students to apply for honours if they are interested, as honours offers an opportunity to develop the writing skills necessary for concise legal analyses and personal statements. Michaela conducted research with Laurie Sykes Tottenham and Jennifer Gordon, offering a unique insight into biomedical and psychosocial research. During the multiple mini interviews, Michaela drew upon her experience in the honours program to exemplify practitioner competencies, such as communication, collaboration, professionalism, and scholarly research. While honours was worthwhile for Michaela, it is okay if research is not apart of your undergraduate journey. Reflect on your experiences that exemplify practitioner competencies!

Preparing Your Application

Typical medical and law programs require an entire calendar year, at minimum, for the application process, so familiarize yourself with application requirements, which may include a standardized admissions exam. Michaela and Sydney recall an ample amount of self-directed studying to prepare for their MCAT and LSAT, as there were plenty of test topics outside of the scope of typical psychology courses. In addition, Michaela and Sydney recommend students search for valuable volunteer and work opportunities that lend to a personal statement or admissions interview. Choose something that you will enjoy and reflect on how this experience shapes the person you are!

Final Tips for Aspiring Professionals

- 1) Research your program of interest to understand the requirements and application process.
- 2) Go for it! It is perfectly okay to have a unique background and undergraduate experience – in fact, professional fields are better able to serve their community if there is diverse representation. Reflect upon your unique experiences throughout the application and interview process to accurately represent your strengths as a prospective professional.



QUALITATIVE VS. QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

by Dr. Susan Yamamoto

Interdisciplinary work is a valuable undertaking in which scholars can jointly answer questions while leveraging the strengths of their field. However, to do so requires consideration of one's research philosophy and acceptance of its limitations. It can seem like it's all about stats, but the difference is deeper. Using the scientific method, quantitative psychology follows theory to test predictions on samples of people, in hopes of making conclusions about certain populations. In my area, psych-law, this typically means closed-ended questions (e.g., would you find this defendant guilty or not guilty) and tightly controlled experimental manipulation. If we want to assess open-ended data, like in the context of a jury deliberation, things get a bit stickier. Computer science has made leaps and bounds in producing exciting methods for analyzing large datasets by executing keyword searches and systematically summarizing content (check out the *Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count* by Pennebaker et al., 2022 if you're interested). However, this approach usually still requires many human coders to vet/flag themes, which have been chosen in advance. For example, coders might read through each mock-juror's speaking turn and indicate whether they were talking about evidence, verdicts, legal misinformation, or something else in a catch-all 'other' category.

One frustrating thing about this process (big shout-out to my volunteer coders) is that you miss a ton of information. You might have a solid theory, but then it turns out no one is really talking about that theme.

This is an obvious place where qualitative research can be a good fit. Of course, this is not something we can dabble in; it too requires rigorous training and an understanding of a specific methodological philosophy. A qualitative researcher can take a relatively smaller quantity of responses that are rich in meaning and work directly from responses to generate naturally occurring themes. They will also consider their own position and how it might uniquely inform the analysis. Whereas we have a target sample size in mind given planned statistical analyses, qualitative researchers may rely on the idea of 'saturation' (the point at which more data no longer yield further substantive information). We might need several coders to provide the same ratings, whereas qualitative researchers might see value in divergent perspectives on the same data. With an earnest attempt to understand the methodological language of our colleagues from other fields, there is a lot we can accomplish together.



RETROSPECTIVE: FORMAL

by Safa Nadeem, Outreach Coordinator

The PSA hosting our first-ever formal started out as this mini idea that kept popping up amongst members, and that seed bloomed into a great night with the best people. When the winter semester started, the ball got rolling on the formal and we all started the planning process. Even though all of our events tend to get pretty good traction among psychology students, we haven't really had an event of this scale. The number of people that showed up absolutely blew us away! You would think that it would have been so stressful planning out the logistics from the venue to decor to sales - but we honestly have the most incredible team ever and almost every single member played a role in making the night happen!

Originally, our student conference and formal weren't supposed to land on the same date, and it was a lot of pressure with two of our biggest projects playing out on the same day. But, if you told me or honestly any of us from the PSA, that we would get so much interest and turnout from students in and outside of psychology, faculty members, and even people from outside of the U of R, I never would have believed you.

From the end of January, notes became meetings, which became tables and posters all around campus, and all of a sudden: the night was here.

We really wanted the event to scream "Psychology Students Association" and when it came down to it, the event was head-to-toe PSA if you ask me. From the colour of the napkins at the tables to the, incredibly beautiful, outfits that night, we found ourselves in the middle of a room that felt surreal.

Being on the dance floor with people I did and didn't know (and profs!) made me really feel the community aspect of being in a student group, and I am incredibly grateful to all the people who showed up, and everyone that made it possible!



RETROSPECTIVE: CONFERENCE 2023

by Sarah Gulash, Director of Communications

On March 25, 2023, the U of R Psychology Students Association (PSA) hosted the second Coming Together in Psychology conference. Our focus with this year's conference was forensic psychology and its related fields. We heard from eight amazing speakers.

Amanda Richter-Goddard, a School Support Specialist, and Rodger Ross, an Indigenous Cultural Liaison, joined us from Regina Catholic School Division to discuss restorative justice and the importance of Indigenous knowledge within the justice system. Next we heard from Dr. Paul Simard Smith from the Department of Philosophy who discussed political legitimacy in the Canadian legal order. We then had two students from the Experiment and Applied Psychology program here at the U of R. Kelsey Trott and Shaelyn Carr are from the Child Evidence Lab; Kelsey discussed his experience in federal law enforcement and his research in police reform. Shaelyn discussed her Master's work on the use of Multiple Independent Lineups with child eyewitnesses. Dr. Susan Yamamoto from the Department of Psychology then shared some valuable information about intersectionality and social identity in the courtroom. Janelle Jackiw from the Departments of Sociology and Justice Studies then discussed some practical career routes within the field of forensic psychology. Dr. Henry Chow from the Department of Sociology wrapped up the conference with his research on predictors of punitive attitudes towards sex offenders.

We learned so much from all of the amazing speakers and are so grateful for the opportunity to hear from each of them! We already have so many exciting ideas and improvements for next year's conference, so stay tuned for 2024!

