



2020

Commencement

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY



Chair's Charge to Graduates

— *Dr. Bert Uchino* —

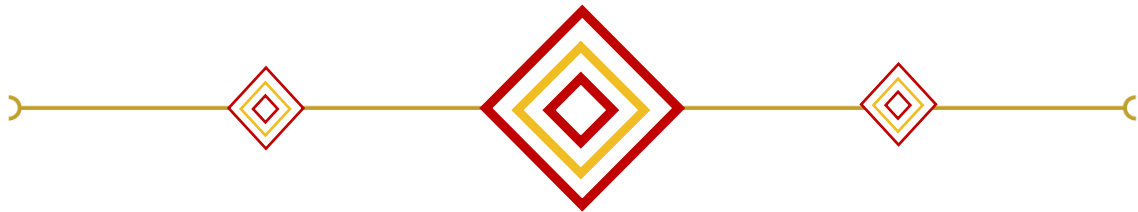
Graduation is the highlight of our year as it is a celebration of your many years of hard work. This year was especially difficult as COVID-19 redefined our academic (and personal) lives in unprecedented ways. You were asked to navigate the sudden and challenging changes with flexibility, thoughtfulness, and especially compassion. I have been so impressed with how you all rallied to support our academic mission. This was no small task because as graduate students you are a central part of our research, teaching, and service missions. You conduct research of the highest quality and help train our undergraduates to one day fill your shoes. Just about all of you have taught a course at some point and I have noticed that many of your courses are rated higher than our faculty. Finally, many of you are engaged in both formal and informal service, including serving on committees and reaching out to the community. The department thanks you sincerely for all that you have done, especially during these challenging times.

Before you move forward, however, celebrate what you have just accomplished. This journey started many years ago, motivated by relevant personal experiences or simply taking a course in Psychology that you found fascinating. You excelled in your undergraduate courses and got accepted into graduate studies. Remember the excitement as you got that email of acceptance? That excitement eventually transformed into a little anxiety and finally determination as you sought to excel on your chosen path. Don't forget about your family, mentors, and friends. Everyone who steps to the stage and graduates has trusted individuals who supported and believed in them through the good and bad. This is as much a celebration for them as it is for you and know that they have immense pride in your accomplishments.

The department is so proud that you reached this academic milestone and you have our heartfelt congratulations. Celebrate the personal and social journey that got you to this point. Remember to thank the incredible individuals who were instrumental in your accomplishment. Remember that you are the future of our field. Make it better. Conduct impactful research, advocate for policies you believe in, or directly help individual cope with their lives. Believe in yourself as we do. For you are well-prepared for all that lies ahead.



Doctor of Philosophy
GRADUATES





Alex Crenshaw

Autonomic Processes Associated with
Empathic Accuracy in Romantic
Couples

What's next on the horizon? I am currently finishing clinical internship at the Charleston Consortium. In August I start a new position as a postdoctoral fellow in Dr. Candice Monson's IMPACT Lab at Ryerson University in Toronto. I'll be working on a few different projects, but the main one is to help roll out and test an online adaptation of her couples-based treatment for PTSD!

Words of Gratitude: Thank you Brian for always supporting me, having my best interest at heart, and challenging me. You give so much to your students, and I am so grateful. Thanks to all the faculty who commit so much to student development, and who contribute to the fantastic U of U environment that is intellectually serious and interpersonally relaxed. Thanks Jon, Pascal, and Brian for helping me become a passable stats nerd. Thanks Tim and Craig for your guidance and support throughout grad school. Thanks Nancy, Cindy, and Angela for making grad school life less painful in a million different ways. And thanks to my wife, Tenzin, for your love, support, and for keeping me laughing through everything.



Danielle Geerling

Responding to Motivational Challenges:
College Students' Attributions about
Motivation Problems

What's next on the horizon? In the fall, I am starting a tenure-track position at St. Norbert College in De Pere, Wisconsin.

Words of Gratitude: Thank you to everyone who made this accomplishment possible for me! I especially want to thank my mentors - Carol, Jackie, Paul, and Ed - and my dynamic duo of social support - Dani and Jasmine - for all the advice and assistance through the years. Thank you also to my husband, Andy, and my family for their never-ending support of my goals and dreams!



Jasara Hogan

Earthquake or Erosion?: A Comparison of
Communication Behaviors in Everyday and
Conflict Conversations

What's next on the horizon? I finish my internship at the Charleston Consortium on July 31st and then I've accepted a NIAAA T32 Fellowship at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) that will start in August!

Words of Gratitude: I don't think we have enough room in this program for me to thank all of the people I need to thank for getting me through the last seven years. Brian, I am so grateful that you gave me this opportunity, and I can never thank you enough for all the time and energy you invested in me. I couldn't picture going on this journey with anyone else, and I'm so lucky to always have you in my corner. Bert, thank you for always supporting me and believing in me; I can't begin to tell you what a difference you've made. Jon, thank you for being such a wonderful teacher and mentor. I left every interaction with you better than when I began it. Colin, you were such an important part of my Utah experience that it's hard to believe that you weren't there for half of it. Thank you for always listening to me, advising me, and sharing your family with me. And just think, it's only a year until you'll all be in Charleston, too! Nancy and Cindy, there are not words to sufficiently express how how deeply grateful I am for everything that the two of you have done for me. You are the true heart and soul of the department and I cannot count the number of times I was saved by your open door. Rob, although I could fill pages with thoughts of appreciation of you, you hate compliments and I'm a Pioneer now so we can't justify the extra electricity for all that typing. Instead I will simply say, you are the second author on my doctorate.





Ascher Munion

What Are Our Assumptions Missing?:
Exploring the Impacts of Miss-specifying
Missing Data Mechanisms in Mixed
Effect Models

What's next on the horizon? I am tentatively accepting a tenure-track position in quantitative methods.

Words of Gratitude: I would like to extend a few special thank yous - first to Jonathan Butner, the best advisor I could ever have asked for, without whom I would not have completed this process. Throughout my time at Utah, Jon has been both intellectually inspiring and personally supportive throughout many difficult times. Additionally, I would like to thank Cynthia Berg and Jeanine Stefanucci, who have contributed and supported me so extensively through this process. Getting to work with such an exceptional set of advisors has invigorated my desire to stay in academia, reminding me of the personal impacts that mentors can have. They have truly helped me grow extensively both as a person and an academic. I am so excited and grateful for my future work and the ongoing collaborations that have been built during my time here.



Erika Roberge

Predicting Response to Cognitive
Processing Therapy: Does Trauma
History Matter?

What's next on the horizon? I have accepted a full time permanent staff position on the PTSD Clinical Team at the Salt Lake City VA Medical Center! I will be on both the PTSD and DBT clinical teams and will have 25% protected research time to assist with new research studies, as well as to establish my own research program and build the mental health research program at the SLC VA.

Words of Gratitude: Words cannot sufficiently express my gratitude to Dr. Craig Bryan and the National Center for Veterans Studies for welcoming me in 2014! I continue to be humbled and incredibly proud by the opportunity to work with such a passionate group of people with whom I share a deeply-seeded personal passion: to care for our nation's veterans and their families. Dr. Bryan has afforded me with truly incredible opportunities over the years and has helped me grow personally and professionally beyond measure. Thank you!



Ruben Tinajero

Associations Among Nonrestorative Sleep, Daytime Dysfunction, and Pre-sleep Arousal: A Multilevel Modeling Analysis

What's next on the horizon? I accepted a faculty position at the West Virginia University School of Medicine in the Department of Family Medicine.

Words of Gratitude: I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Paula G. Williams for her support and encouragement throughout my graduate training. Also, I would like to thank my clinical practicum supervisors Drs. Katherine T. Fortenberry, Christina M. Derbidge, and Akiko Okifuji for providing me outstanding opportunities to grow as a clinician and for their mentorship.



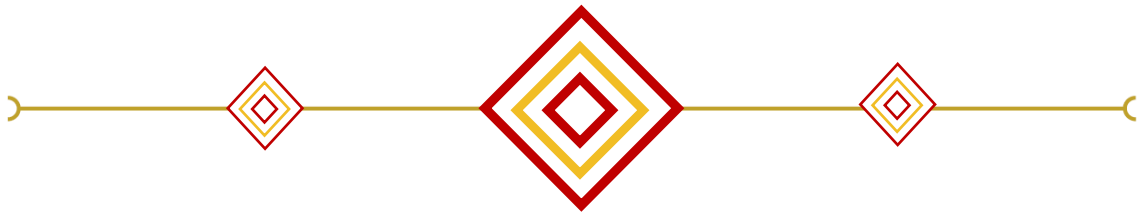
Lauren Williams

Identifying the Characteristics of Expertise in Volumetric Image Interpretation

What's next on the horizon? I'm starting a postdoc at UC-San Diego this fall!

Words of Gratitude: Thanks to my excellent advisor, Trafton Drew; my fellow-grad students; and my dissertation committee.

Master of Science
GRADUATES





Kimberley Johnson

Individual Differences in Aesthetic Engagement and Proneness to Aesthetic Chill: Associations with Stress-Related Growth Orientation

What's next on the horizon? I successfully defended my master's thesis spring semester, and am excited to continue on toward my Ph.D. I will be teaching an undergraduate course on Stress Management this summer (rather apropos given the current collective stressor of COVID-19!), will be working on finishing up a few manuscripts, and plan to continue online data collection for our lab's studies.

Words of Gratitude: A big thanks to my advisor Paula Williams for her guidance and encouragement over this past year as I navigated the muddy waters of new parenthood. Working to simultaneously pursue (and somehow balance, albeit imperfectly at times!) both graduate school and motherhood has been no small task, and I feel so lucky to have people in my corner who believe in me.



Robyn Kilshaw

Vocally-Encoded Emotional Arousal as a Marker of Trauma-Linked Callousness in a Sample of Detained Youth

What's next on the horizon? The next big thing for me and my husband will be the birth of our first baby in early August. With that on the horizon, I will be spending most of this summer preparing for the arrival of the little man and trying to stay as cool as possible :)

Words of Gratitude: I'd like to send a HUGE thank you to my husband and the ladies in my clinical cohort (and their partners!) for being such a wonderfully inspiring, encouraging, and loving group of people, and for always always making me laugh. I'd also like to thank my advisor, Patricia Kerig, and the many faculty that provided me with support, flexibility, and reassurance during a tough year--thank you all so much.



Amy McDonnell

Nature Modulates Neurophysiological
Correlates of Reward

What's next on the horizon? My future plans are to ride out quarantine summer by living in my trailer and "restoring my attention" in nature before writing my Prelim.

Words of Gratitude: Special thanks to my labmates (Emily, Sara, Spencer, and Dave) for making grad school fun.



Ana Vazquez

Lethality & Mortality: A Test of the
Interpersonal Theory of Suicide in a
Military Population

What's next on the horizon? I'm planning to spend the summer self-isolating with my dogs, Sterling and Archer. Hopefully, we will get to spend some time outside together and virtually connecting with friends and family!

Words of Gratitude: I am immensely grateful for the constant support and outpouring of kindness from the department faculty, staff, and students, especially over the last year. This group is filled with the most caring and compassionate individuals I have ever encountered, and I am so thankful to you all! Dr. Bryan, thank you for welcoming me into the National Center for Veterans Studies, for helping me grow as a researcher, and for your and AnnaBelle's uncommon kindness and support over the past year! To my wonderful labmates Erika, Julia, Kelsi, & Kent: I am endlessly grateful for your friendship, mentorship, and unwavering support! I am exceptionally grateful for my cohort mates, Robyn, Stacey, & Emily (plus Steve, Julian, & Andrew). To the Fab 4, my Utah-family, it has been an honor learning and growing among such brilliant, funny, and caring women! To my Mama-Sonja and brothers, Paris, Alex, Isaiah, and Matthew: thank you for your modeled strength and unfailing encouragement this year. My work would not be as meaningful without each of you on my mind and in my heart. Finally, to my mom, 'thank you' will never be enough, but thank you for being super-mom, for never letting me doubt my capabilities, and for being my hero and guidepost for everything. Thank you to all these folks and many, many more - we did it!

Honors Graduates

The undergraduate Departmental Honors Track in Psychology involves extended research experience and completion of an Honors Thesis. Congratulations to this year's honors graduates!

December 2019 graduates

Dylan Neff – Drs. Conradt and Crowell

Jill Stevens – Dr. Baucom

May 2020 graduates

Maxton Cline – Dr. White

Kaedyn Crabtree – Dr. Strayer

Kelli Geskes – Dr. Smith

Brittney Hayes – Dr. Smith

Miranda Jones – Dr. Holsti

Treasure Lundskog – Dr. Conradt

Kyrah Naegle – Dr. Raby

Ali Palmer – Dr. Raby

Su Myat Phyu Sin – Dr. Chen

Joshua Urry – Dr. Crowell

Debbie Vargas – Dr. Kerig

Kathryn Wylie – Drs. Pasupathi and Wainryb

Psychology Department Awards

B. Jack White Memorial Award

This award was established to honor Dr. B. Jack White, who was a faculty member in the Psychology department from 1957-1987. It is given annually to an advanced psychology graduate student who has shown overall excellence in performance, taking into account coursework, research productivity, teaching, and departmental service.

JASMINE NORMAN

Frederick T. Rhodewalt Award for Innovative Scholarship

This award is given to a graduate student to recognize and encourage creative, innovative or transformative research in honor of Dr. Rhodewalt, who is remembered for his critical thinking, creativity, and openness to new ideas.

JACK SILCOX

Nancy Patterson Klekas Outstanding Service Award

Nancy was beloved a member of the Psychology Department community for nearly 30 years. She is remembered for her warmth and humor, her unfailingly positive outlook on life, her integrity, and her willingness to go the extra mile to help others. The graduate student who wins this award has demonstrated the values central to Nancy's life: integrity, a strong sense of community, and a commitment to service.

DANIELLE GEERLING

Kevin Hawley Memorial Award

Kevin Hawley was a graduate student in our department from 1985-1992 who sadly passed away in 1994 after a long and courageous battle with cancer. As a result of his scholastic excellence, generous service to others, congenial temperament, inspirational fortitude in the face of adversity, and general zest for life, Kevin acquired the utmost respect and gratitude of the entire student population. With this in mind, the Kevin Hawley Memorial Award is given to the esteemed graduate student as voted on by the graduate student body.

ROBYN KILSHAW

Clayton Awards

Thanks to a generous gift from the Joseph A. and Ruth S. Clayton trust, the Clayton Awards represent efforts to support outstanding graduate student research and to further the professional development and degree progress of graduate students.

Clayton Award For Excellence in Graduate Research

KIMBERLEY JOHNSON

This award will fund my research aimed at identifying key moderators of and coping processes involved in the association between maternal birth injury (MBI), distress, and functional impairment in the following year postpartum. Despite its prevalence and impact, the psychosocial sequelae of MBI remain virtually unstudied; as such, this research has the potential help address the significant and largely unmet needs of postpartum women who have experienced MBI.

JASMINE NORMAN

This award will fund a programmatic line of research investigating Black women's appraisals of social rejection at the intersection of race and gender. Specifically, the funded study will empirically examine the impact of social rejection when varying the race and gender of the rejection source (a Black woman, a White woman, a Black man, or a White man).

Clayton Award for Excellence in Research on Underrepresented Populations

DANIELLE DRUMMOND

In this project, we will interview low-SES and middle-aged individuals about how they think about and prioritize their health goals relative to other important goals and behaviors in their lives, as previous research suggests that they may prioritize goals differently as compared to higher-SES and younger individuals. We will also examine whether these thoughts about health goals relate to differential engagement in health behaviors among these groups.

YESEUL NAM

This research is about cultural differences on the basis of drawing ingroup boundaries. I expect that people from individualistic cultures (e.g., Americans) include a new person into their ingroup when they share similarities, whereas people from collectivistic cultures (e.g., East Asians) categorize a new person as their ingroup when they have (potential) relationships. Research findings can give some insights to reduce intercultural conflicts, especially in this current pandemic situation.

College and Graduate School Awards

Graduate Research Fellowship

The Graduate Research Fellowship (GRF) is an award given by the University of Utah Graduate School to provide the opportunity for full-time research during the academic year. The GRF is awarded to students based on both the quality and impact of their research as well as academic achievements.

LUCYBEL MENDEZ

This GRF-funded project aims to fill a critical gap in our understanding of the factors compelling youth on a pathway toward gang involvement by leveraging longitudinal data to examine the parallel growth processes among gang involvement, violence victimization, and violence perpetration, and examining the influence of posttraumatic stress symptoms and psychopathic traits on these co-trajectories.

BRIANNA WELLEN

This award will fund my research aimed at elucidating mechanisms underlying symptoms and behavioral treatment of Tourette Syndrome and related disorders. I will be collecting time series data from individuals with Tourette Syndrome and using statistical methodologies consistent with Dynamical Systems Theory to understand how symptoms are maintained and respond to treatment.

University Teaching Award

The purpose of the University Teaching Assistantship program is to improve graduate education programs and training at the University of Utah in the service of undergraduate education through the creative use of graduate teaching assistants. Awards are given to graduate students whose proposed courses have the potential to impact undergraduate education.

EMILY SCOTT

The goal of the "Data Science for Psychology Majors" course is for undergraduates to gain experience applying, expanding, and refining skills in research design and methodology, statistics, and programming. Students taking this course would learn how to propose a research question, select validated measures from the literature, collect their own data, and analyze that data in R. These skills would better prepare undergraduates for the job market, for graduate school, and as well as other career paths.

College and Graduate School Awards

Gustafson Award

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences presents the Gustafson Award for the quantitative study of human behavior.

ROBYN KILSHAW

Ron McBride Foundation Play for Life Summer Fellowship

This summer fellowship was created to provide support to students obtaining an education in medical and counseling professions that are essential for the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders, with a particular emphasis on opioid misuse. The Utah Opioid Task Force, Ron McBride Foundation, and Dennis Cecchini partnered together to host the Play for Life: The Tennyson Cecchini Memorial Golf Tournament. The proceeds from that tournament make this fellowship opportunity possible.

**MINDY BROWN
BAILEY SPECK**

National Awards

PARISA KALIUSH

NIH-National Research Service Award

(funding pending council meeting, Score = 20; 7th percentile)

Suicide is a leading cause of death among new mothers, and sleep disruption and emotion dysregulation may contribute to this risk. For this project, I will use experience sampling methodology, wrist actigraphy, and dynamical systems modeling to examine how women's sleep, emotion dysregulation, and self-injurious thoughts and behaviors fluctuate from pregnancy to postpartum. This project will inform efforts to prevent maternal distress and self-harm-related deaths.

JASARA HOGAN

NIH T32 Postdoctoral Fellowship; Medical University of South Carolina

STEVEN CARLSON

NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program Honorable Mention