Advice from our Grads: Applying for PhD Programs

Fit is everything! Find the program and adviser that fits you most and trust yourself!
-Xingyu Liu

Don’t be afraid to reach out to prior mentors, potential mentors, and students who have successfully gotten into PhD programs. I was able to find out what projects each mentor was working on, if they were accepting students and if I was a good match for their lab. If anyone wants to chat about the application process, please reach out kschodt@unm.edu. I am happy to help and provide guidance if I can. - Kaitlyn Schodt

Looking for programs is so important, make sure you try several ways to look for potential advisors! A few things I did: ask your current advisor, look at authors of articles you’re interested in, research conference brochures for students or professors who gave talks that you’re interested in and then check out their lab websites! - Samantha Bean

Start early on everything! Make sure to check the deadlines for GRE scores, transcripts, letters of rec, because those things take time to prepare and send! You can also fill out the basic applications early too. I would also write a brief synopsis of any faculty’s papers you read, lab research interests, etc. Anything of substance that doesn’t go into your excel sheet will still be useful come skype-interview time. Good luck to everyone who’s applying. I can’t imagine how it must feel trying to plan your future during the pandemic, but you will all get through it and have more experience for it! - Emily Line

From the Director's Desk:
Kristin D. Mickelson

Welcome to the new academic year! I know the past 6 months have been a trying and unpredictable time for all of us. However, I have been heartened by the resilience shown by our students and faculty and their perseverance in difficult times. For me, one highlight was our Spring Celebration in late April. Although virtual, it was wonderful to celebrate all we accomplished during AY 19-20. Plus, we learned a lot about our faculty through the trivia game! 😊

I look forward to what the new academic year will bring in all its new forms!

Kudos!

Kudos to our amazing faculty and students for their dedication and adaptation to all of the changes this semester!

Dr. Nick Duran who received tenure and promotion to Associate Professor

Dr. Deborah Hall who was awarded a large NSF grant for a collaborative research project investigating interdisciplinary models to identify and understand cyberbullying.

Dr. Trudy Kuo who became the new Director of Psychology Online Undergraduate Programs (BA/BS).

Dr. Tess Neal, Dr. Nicholas Schweitzer, and Dr. Jessica Salerno – who are being recognized by the 2020 ASU President’s Award for Innovation for their central role in the ASU Law and Behavioral Science Initiative.
Faculty Spotlight: Mary Burleson

Mary Burleson earned a BA in Anthropology and an interdisciplinary MS in Biology and Psychology at New Mexico State University, and a PhD in Psychology through a Behavioral Neuroscience program at ASU. She then went to the Ohio State University for three years of postdoctoral training in Psychoneuroimmunology, Psychoneuroendocrinology, and Cardiovascular Psychophysiology. Mary’s research interests include emotion, stress, touch, co-regulation, & autonomic psychophysiology. In her Biosocial Psychology Lab with fellow faculty and students, Mary is currently studying how social touch—particularly affectionate touch—affects interpersonal regulation, social connection, stress, mood, and pleasure.

Mary describes her path into academia as a long road. However, once she realized that she could become a university professor, she never wavered and now couldn’t imagine a better job! Her love for physiology began in the 7th grade and her interest in psychology came from her with fascination with how physiological processes create subjective experience and behavior.

In the past two years, Mary has received two awards for mentoring and teaching, for which she is very appreciative. She has also published seven journal articles since 2017 - three of which were first authored by former students in our MS program!

Outside of academia, Mary enjoys working with color and even had a stained-glass studio for a number of years before graduate school. Mary is never without her bucket of colored pencils and doodling during meetings and brownbag – but don’t worry, she is ALWAYS listening; in fact, the doodling makes her listen better (it is true – there is even research supporting it). She also enjoys both indoor and outdoor gardening. Pre-COVID-19 you could find Mary working out at the gym. She is also the proud owner of three dogs and is working on getting a cat.

Alumni Spotlight: Kaitlyn Schodt

Kaitlyn Schodt graduated from the MS Psychology program in Spring 2019. She is currently a 2nd year doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at the University of New Mexico. Her primary research focuses on anxiety disorders and emotion regulation, especially in the context of interpersonal relationships. Currently, she is investigating alcohol use motivations/expectancies among individuals with social anxiety, as well as how various emotion regulation strategies might influence the likelihood of drinking. Additionally, Kaitlyn is involved in a study on mental health and positive psychological resources among college students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kaitlyn found her way into pursuing psychology while in undergrad when she had started working as a research assistant in different labs and volunteering at a local crisis center. Through these experiences her interest in clinical psychology and research grew, which ultimately led her to pursue graduate studies.

Kaitlyn’s favorite memory from ASU was attending her first research conference, the International Association for Relationship Research, with her lab mates and Kristin Mickelson (her advisor). She described the opportunity to travel to the conference and present her research as an awesome experience. Kaitlyn remembers the many great talks, discussions with other researchers and attending the networking/socializing events. She says, “As cheesy as it sounds, I think it was around that time I first had the feeling that I was right where I was meant to be.”

The MS Psychology program aided in Kaitlyn’s success by further developing her scientific writing skills, understanding the research process and improving time management skills. Going into a PhD program, Kaitlyn felt well-prepared and knew what to expect (at least somewhat). The program also solidified her interest in Psychology and helped give her the confidence to pursue a PhD. Kaitlyn says she feels very lucky to have had Kristin as a mentor, as it pushed her to do better and helped shape her as a researcher.

Outside of Academia, Kaitlyn enjoys hiking and exploring. She has found both New Mexico and Arizona to be great places to spend her weekends outdoors. She is a huge fan of horror and true crime shows/movies, local markets and breweries. Kaitlyn loves to cook and bake, both of which have aided in relieving grad school stress.