

# COMM GRAD NEWSLETTER

The newsletter guides graduate students about important events, resources, and beneficial opportunities. This issue introduces our new 2023 cohort, highlights resources for graduate students, and provides a detailed timeline for the upcoming academic year with key dates for grad-related events.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE GRADUATE DIRECTOR

### “EMBRACE THE ABSURD”

I started my career working abroad in consumer market research in post-communist Central Europe in the early 1990s. A philosophy major with no marketable skills (and minimal grasp on the Czech language), I struggled with imposter syndrome given the seemingly ridiculous situations in which I often found myself – like the time I had to give a presentation to (mostly older and male) Austrian clients in German with simultaneous translation into Hungarian, advising them on their brand strategy. One thing that helped me to combat my insecurities was “embracing the absurd” – that is, accepting that there are seemingly irrational things around us that we can’t always control, and that’s okay.



JENNIFER GIBBS

There is absurdity all around us, from the precautions we had to take to stay safe during a multi-year global pandemic, to the demands of grad school and academia more broadly (say what, Reviewer 2?!), to university bureaucracy, to the costs of living in Santa Barbara. While I am not encouraging anyone to abdicate responsibility, I have found that sometimes – especially in difficult situations – acknowledging the absurdity of life helps to lighten the perceived gravity of things and make them more bearable. It helps you take things less seriously, which removes the pressure to be perfect (which is an absurd concept, if you think about it). Lightening the load is a major theme in one of my favorite novels by the Czech author Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. If you haven’t read it, it’s a great read. I wish everyone a wonderful 2023-2024 academic year. Embrace the absurd!

## Inside this Newsletter

A Message from the Graduate Director.....p. 1

Welcome, 2023 Grad Cohort!.....p. 2-6

Congrats to our Recent Grads.....p. 7

Graduate Student Resources & Workshops.....p. 8-9

Research Colloquia & Professional Development.....p. 10

GSACC Leadership..p. 11

Grad Support.....p. 12-14

Important Dates....p. 15

About Us.....p. 16

# WELCOME, 2023 GRAD COHORT!

## SOFIA CAVANESS



I received my BA in Communication and Italian Studies from UCSB in 2021. After graduating I traveled to Ecuador for a few months where I backpacked, worked as an outdoor guide, summited mountains and lived in the Amazon. Later, I worked at a local non-profit, Heal The Ocean, as a Research and Policy Analyst. Before starting grad school I went to back to Italy to visit family before returning to Santa Barbara. I am interested in the field of organizational communication with a focus on cultural studies, particularly exploring high reliability organizations (HROs) within natural resource agencies. I would like to look at how organizations deal with identity, right and wrong, and how individual values influence interactions with the public with the overall aim to address societal issues through innovative organizational frameworks. Outside of the classroom you will find me in the ocean, hiking or camping in the mountains or sewing.

## ALAN CRAWLEY

I received my Bachelor's degree in Psychology with honors at the Universidad del Salvador, Argentina. I have been studying Nonverbal Communication (NVC) for the past 10 years in as many fields of applications, interdisciplinary perspectives, and methods as I can. My professional experience includes giving online and live lectures for open courses and university classes about NVC, social media research dissemination, as well as a few public speaking sessions for company events. I am interested in understanding the past, present, and future of the field of NVC as well as focusing on specific aspects such as theoretical developments, nonverbal skills, and facial expressions. I am married and have a rescued dog, Susi, who has made my life much happier. I consider myself a cinephile and appreciate discussions.



**UC SANTA BARBARA**

**Department of Communication**

# WELCOME, 2023 GRAD COHORT!

## ERICK GARCIA

I received my M.A. in Psychological Research from California State University, Long Beach in 2023 and my B.A. in Psychology from the University of California, Irvine in 2020. Previously, my research explored digital emotional contagion and source attribution, focusing on human and algorithm interactions on social media platforms. My current research interests lie in the intersection of psychology and communication. Specifically, I'm interested in exploring how social processes (e.g., emotion, contagion, influence, approval, culture, and community) drive human interactions on social media and digital platforms. In my free time, I enjoy film photography, collecting watches, watching anime, going to concerts, and playing Dance Dance Revolution.



## ISMAHARIF (HARIF) ISMAIL

I received my B.Soc.Sci. and M.Soc.Sci (Social and Organizational Psychology concentration) degrees in Psychology from the National University of Singapore. After graduating, I continued working at the same university, designing and testing psychological interventions that promote goal pursuit among adults ranging from citizenship behavior to personal career development. Situated at the intersection of motivation science, social identity and communication technologies, my research broadly studies group processes, intergroup relations and inequality. I am interested in how media environments and social psychological processes interact in bolstering (or undermining) the resilience and social cohesion of nations. Outside of research, I enjoy watching movies at the cinema, playing foosball and solving murder mysteries.



UC SANTA BARBARA

Department of Communication

# WELCOME, 2023 GRAD COHORT!



## BEDLAM (BECKY) OAK

Bedlam has a background in engineering, receiving their B.S. in Chemical Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and working in semiconductor manufacturing research at IBM before coming to UCSB to study Electrical and Computer Engineering in the Fall of 2020. While studying protein engineering in the Theogarajan lab, they became enmeshed in graduate student community, organizing and activism, helping them realize their passion for community organizing. Bedlam is so excited to be switching into the Communication Department, and looks forward to researching the role played by narratives and professional identities in the 2022 UAW Academic Worker Strike. In their free time, Bedlam enjoys rock climbing, running, pottery, gardening and baking teeny little cupcakes.

## QIYAO PENG

I received my BA in International Communications from the University of Nottingham, Ningbo, China, and my master's in communication management from University of Southern California. During my time at USC, I developed my interest in Computer-Mediated Communication. Now I am also interested in the impact of new media and emerging technologies on health-related behaviors and outcomes, particularly among older adults and marginalized groups. In my free time, I enjoy going hiking and camping with my family and our 9-year-old poodle, Naonao. When I am on my own, I love wandering around and exploring unfamiliar small towns and villages with no set destination.



# WELCOME, 2023 GRAD COHORT!

## MARGOT PLUNKETT

I received BAs in Communication and English (Literature) from Barrett, the Honors College at Arizona State University. I am an organizational communication scholar examining toxic work environments, workplace bullies, emotions in the workplace, and the anticipatory socialization and assimilation process. My research aims to pinpoint moments of incivility in the workplace and unearth the rationale behind stifling behaviors, while facilitating ways individuals can combat these occurrences. Investigating these situations has engendered an interest in implementing Humanistic Management in workplace spheres. In my spare time, I enjoy embroidery, baking, racquetball, and spending time with loved ones!



## YIDI WANG

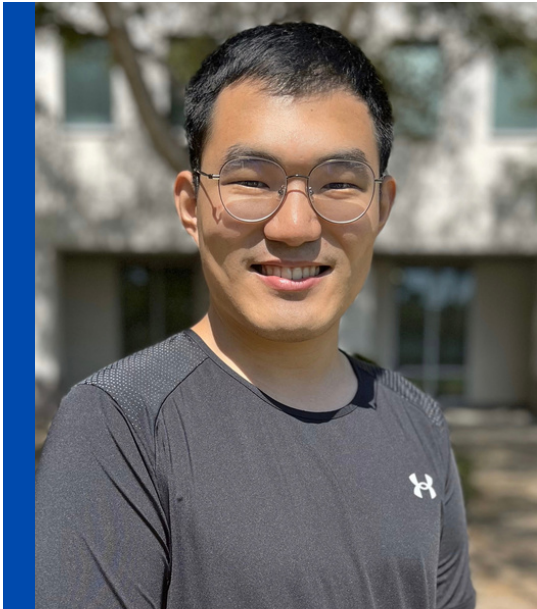
I earned my BA in Television Broadcasting Science from Dalian University of Technology, followed by my MA in Communication from Wuhan University in 2021. I recently transferred from the Ph.D. program at the University of Georgia to our department. I serve as lab manager for Dr. Jiaying Liu's K01 project, investigating the factors influencing e-cigarette use among youth and young adults. I am enthusiastic about pursuing my research interests, which focus on understanding the underlying mechanisms of successful communication to promote better public health outcomes through effective message interventions and health misinformation correction. Outside of my academic pursuits, I have a passion for traveling and derive great enjoyment from savoring coffee and milk tea.



**UC SANTA BARBARA**

**Department of Communication**

# WELCOME, 2023 GRAD COHORT!



## YIFEI WANG

I received my bachelor's degree in Communication from Cornell University and my master's degree in Communications and New Media from the National University of Singapore. My research interests center around political communication and CMC. I seek to study social identity in the digital space, investigating the underlying mechanisms, consequences, and related information behaviors. In my spare time, I enjoy hiking, swimming, and playing basketball. I am a big fan of Arsenal F.C. and LA Lakers!

## YIDI (JENNIE) ZHANG

I received my BA in Media and Communication from City University of Hong Kong in 2020. After that, I worked for Bytedance for nearly one year as a product manager, focusing on advancing the content environment on social media and user growth. I received my MA in Communication from Michigan State University in 2023. During my master's study, I focused on vicarious interactions in online communities and online social support. At UCSB, I will continuously focus on the intersection of computer-mediated and interpersonal communication, exploring the social influence of communication technology. My fundamental goal for studying people's online interactions is to explore the psychological process of people's online behavior, from establishing impressions to further interactions in online social networks. Outside work, I enjoy listening to podcasts, hiking, having hotpots with friends, and traveling.

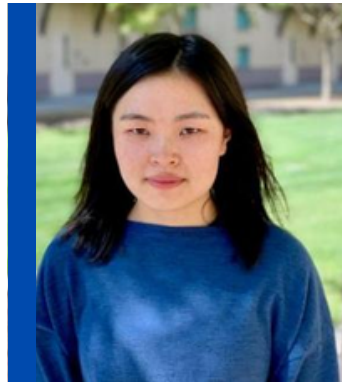


**WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!**

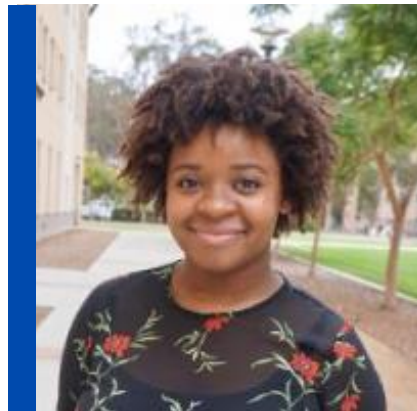


# CONGRATS TO OUR RECENT PHDS!

Congratulations to our impressive graduate students for earning their PhDs and securing career positions. We are excited to recognize their accomplishments. Please feel free to reach out to our graduate alumni.



**DR. YIBEI CHEN**



**DR. CHANTEL  
HAUGHTON**



**DR. YEWEON KIM**

FALL 2023

# GRADUATE STUDENT RESOURCE CENTER

[Click here to register in Shoreline!](#)



Fall 2023 Programming

## CAREER WORKSHOPS

- Using AI in the Job Search: Grad Student Dos and Don'ts | Oct 11, 11a-12:30p
- Pronoun Anxiety in Career and Professional Settings, Application Materials, and Interviews | Oct 16, 4:30-6p
- International Grad Empowerment Workshop | Date TBA

## FUNDING & FINANCES

- Finding Funding for Graduate Students | Oct 25 & Nov 8, 1-2pm
- Finding Funding for International Graduate Students | Oct 17 & Nov 14, 11a-12p

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Finish your Dissertation or Thesis Once and For All | Oct 6, 12-1:30pm
- Individualized Professional Skills Program Meet & Eats | Oct 20 & Nov 3, 12-1p
- Lunch & Learn | Oct 13 & Nov 17, 12-1:15p
- Academic and Non-Academic Job Market Pop-In | Oct 17, 2-3:30p
- Connecting at Conferences | Oct 23, 12:30-1:30p
- Improv for Interviewing | Nov 16, 12-1:30p

## LIBRARY RESEARCH WORKSHOPS

- ORCID Workshop for Graduate Students | Oct 11, 12-1p
- Lit Reviews in Humanities & Social Sciences: Practical Tips and Strategies | Oct 25, 12-1p
- Zotero Basics Workshops | Nov 8, 12-2p

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- International Grads Sunset Stroll | Oct 6, 6-7:30pm
- International Students Halloween Event | Date TBA
- International Student Pizza Night | Date TBA
- Dealing with Homesickness for International Students | Date TBA

Check out [Shoreline](#) for full event details and to RSVP

## CAMPUS WRITING RESOURCES

Improve and become a more productive writer!

### Graduate Writer's Room

The Graduate Writer's Room is a quiet space located in the Student Resource Building's Conference Room (SRB 1103). On Tuesdays from 10 am-4 pm, graduate students can work on their writing in peace—complete with all the coffee and snacks they need! Arrive and leave as you need. Great for any student looking for a space to write without distractions.

### Writing Consultations

Students may request a one-on-one writing consultation with the university's Graduate Writing Specialist. Writing can be in any stage of development, from any discipline, and belong to any context. To schedule an appointment, please send an email to [robby.nadler@graddiv.ucsb.edu](mailto:robby.nadler@graddiv.ucsb.edu). Please note that this is not a proofreading/editing service.

### Editors for Hire

The Graduate Division now posts a list of editors for hire. This is a third-party service to connect students with potential editors: we do not officially endorse the quality or services of anyone on this list, nor do we receive compensation of any kind for business that transpires through this list. Information about editing experiences, rates, and contact information can be found by [clicking here](#).



FALL 2023

# GRADUATE STUDENT RESOURCE CENTER cont.

[Click here to register in Shoreline!](#)



## CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

GSA Bagel Hour | Weds starting Oct 11, 9a-12p  
Grad Halloween Party w/ the GSA | Oct 21, 6-9p

## SELECTED INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Fostering Belonging and Community in the Classroom | Oct 6, 3-4:15p & Nov 7, 4-5:15p  
Effective Questioning and Classroom Assessment Techniques | Oct 10, 11a-12:15p & Oct 16, 11a-12:15p  
Crafting Your Teaching Philosophy Statement | Oct 12, 9-10:15a  
How to Help Students Build Better Reading and Writing Skills Across the Disciplines | Oct 12, 3-4:15p  
Designing and Grading Assessments | Oct 17, 11a-12:15p & Oct 23 11a-12:15p  
Improving Teaching Through Feedback and Reflection | Oct 19 10-11:30 & Nov 20, 1-2:30p  
Cool Tools for Communication and Collaboration | Oct 20, 3-4:15p  
Crafting Your Diversity Statement | Oct 24, 2-3p  
Creating Engaging Lessons | Oct 25, 1-3:15p & Nov 15, 10-11:15a  
Active Learning: What, Why, and How? | Oct 26, 12-1:15p & Nov 17, 10:30-11:45a  
Make Your Course More Accessible with UDL | Nov 8, 2-3p  
Teaching Demo for Prospective Jobs | By appointment, email [id-tadp@ucsb.edu](mailto:id-tadp@ucsb.edu)



## RESEARCH COLLOQUIA

This year we will be organizing several research colloquia throughout the year, to help fulfill 505. Cynthia Stohl has organized two colloquia for the fall:

Friday Oct. 13th 3:30-5pm, SSMS 1009:  
Roundtable Discussion

**BEYOND STUDENT POPULATIONS: DOING RESEARCH IN MULTIPLE SETTINGS WITH VARIOUS POPULATIONS**

Speakers: Jennifer Kam, Muniba Saleem,  
Jennifer Gibbs, Allison Mazur  
Moderator: Cynthia Stohl

Friday Oct. 20th 3:30-5pm, SSMS 1009:  
Bradac Lecture

**"I SEE ROADS OPEN UP IN FRONT OF ME": DRAWING CONNECTIONS AMONG DISCOURSES OF RETIREMENT**

Speaker: Dr. Patricia Gettings, University of Albany, SUNY  
Moderator: Howie Giles

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP SERIES

We will also host one information panel per quarter this academic year. GSACC officers will facilitate the information panels, so they can tailor the workshop to meet the graduate students' needs.

### Mental Health First Aid Training

Our fall professional development workshop will be a training session on mental health first aid certification, to be conducted by Veronica Wilson. Stay tuned for more details.

Stay tuned for the winter and spring workshops. Each is held on the third Friday of the quarter at 3:00 pm in SSMS 1009. If you have ideas for information panels, please send them to GSACC All-Grad Representative, Cynthia McLeod ([cynthiamcleod@ucsb.edu](mailto:cynthiamcleod@ucsb.edu)) and Graduate Director, Dr. Jenn Gibbs ([gibbs@ucsb.edu](mailto:gibbs@ucsb.edu)). Your ideas are welcomed and appreciated.

In addition, we plan to have one or more job searches this year that will require time from faculty and graduate students; these too are outstanding opportunities for our graduate students to learn about job searches.

# GSACC LEADERSHIP

## ALL-GRAD



CYNTHIA MCLEOD

## ABD



ALLISON MAZUR

## PHD



SUNGBIN YOUK

## MA



CHLOE GONZALES

## FIRST YEAR



VERONICA WILSON

## TA LIAISONS



NANCY MOLINA-ROGERS

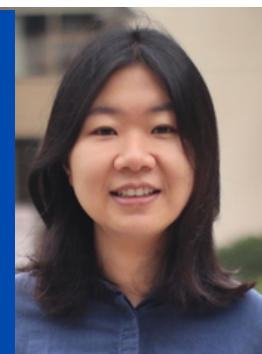


LAURENT WANG

## OFFICE REPRESENTATIVES



NANCY MOLINA-ROGERS



MINGHUI WANG

## COMMUNICATION CHAIR



LINDSAY MILLER

## EXTERNAL OUTREACH



HYOJIN LEE

## KNOWLEDGE BASE COORDINATOR



BRITTANY WHEELER

## DEPARTMENTAL CLIMATE CHAIR



KYLIE WOODMAN

## DEI GRAD REP



CHENGYU FANG

UC SANTA BARBARA

Department of Communication

# GRAD SUPPORT

## 2023-24 GRADUATE COMMITTEE



DR. JENNIFER  
GIBBS



DR. MIRIAM  
METZGER



DR. KAREN  
MYERS



DR. SCOTT  
REID



DR. CYNTHIA  
STOHL



DR. DAN LANE

### GRADUATE DIVERSITY ADVOCATE

Dr. Dan Lane will serve as this year's Graduate DEI Liaison for our Department. As the Graduate DEI Liaison, Dan will take the lead in supporting graduate student interests related to diversity, equity, and inclusion within our Department. He encourages graduate students who have questions, concerns, or suggestions related to DEI to contact him at [dlane@ucsb.edu](mailto:dlane@ucsb.edu).

### STUDENT AFFAIRS MANAGER

Jacova works with the Graduate Director to provide grads with clear and timely advising on administrative processes. She keeps track of grad students' progress in the program (fulfilling course requirements and milestones), assists with hiring TAs and Associates, and acts as a liaison with the Graduate Division and other graduate student resources on campus. She also oversees undergraduate advising and staff in the department.



JACOVA SNYDER

UC SANTA BARBARA

Department of Communication

# GRAD SUPPORT cont.



DR. NIKKI TRUSCELLI

## TA COORDINATOR

As the Grad TA Coordinator, Nikki provides pedagogical leadership and support to graduate students. Each quarter, she has the challenging task of working through graduate students' busy schedules and assigning them as teaching assistants (TAs) to our undergraduate courses. Nikki also teaches COMM 500 every fall quarter, which offers graduate students tools to develop their pedagogical skills. She works closely with many of our graduate students who TA the introductory communication courses that she also teaches.

## BUSINESS OFFICER

As Business Officer, Casey provides management support to the Chair, and establishes and implements administrative objectives and policies for the department. Her responsibilities include academic administration and support, purchasing and financial management, staff oversight, and facilities management. She works closely with the Chair and student affairs staff on department curriculum planning.



CASEY HANKEY



MICHELLE FREDRICH

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

As the Financial Assistant for the Department, you can turn to Michelle for questions about financial issues and Department supplies. She also approves expenditures and reimbursements. Along with Casey, Michelle also has keys to the Department offices.

# GRAD SUPPORT cont.

## UNDERGRADUATE ADVISORS



SALVADOR

ANABEL

GONZALEZ GARCIA

ROCHA AMBROSIO

Sal and Anabel advise undergraduates in the pre-Comm and Communication major. They provide add codes to undergrad research assistants for course credit. When your undergrads have advising, DSP, or add/waitlist questions, send them to the Undergraduate Advising Office.



MANDY CZARNECKI

## ACADEMIC PERSONNEL & OFFICE COORDINATOR

Mandy provides administrative support for recruitment, appointment, and advancement for faculty and academic appointees, and also works with faculty to collect materials for their merit reviews and promotions. Additionally, Mandy processes payroll for both faculty and graduate students, manages course evaluations and places textbook orders.

# IMPORTANT DATES

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28**

**CLASSES BEGIN**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13**  
(3:30PM - 5PM, SSMS 1009)

**COLLOQUIA RONDTABLE**  
ON RESEARCH WITH  
NON-STUDENT POPULATIONS

**NOVEMBER 16-19**

**NATIONAL COMMUNICATION**  
**ASSOCIATION CONVENTION**  
NATIONAL HARBOR, MD

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2**  
(TIME & LOCATION TBD)

**DEPARTMENT**  
**WINTER PARTY**

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25**  
(10AM - 4:30PM)

**DEPARTMENT ORIENTATION**  
FOR THE 2023 GRAD COHORT

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1**  
(12PM - 3PM)

**DEPARTMENT WELCOME**  
**BACK POTLUCK**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20**  
(3:30PM - 5PM, SSMS 1009)

**BRADAC LECTURE**  
DR. PATRICIA GETTINGS

**NOVEMBER**  
(DATE & TIME TBD)

**GRAD FALL**  
**RECRUITMENT EVENT**  
(ONLINE)

# ABOUT US

**Gordon Abra, Continuing Lecturer**

**Tamara Afifi, Professor**

**Walid Afifi, Professor**

**Norah Dunbar, Professor**

**Andrew Flanagan, Professor**

**Jennifer Gibbs, Professor**

**Howie Giles, Distinguished Research Prof.**

**Amy Gonzales, Associate Professor**

**Kristy Hamilton, Assistant Professor**

**Renee Houston, Teaching Professor**

**Jennifer Kam, Professor**

**Young Ji Kim, Assistant Professor**

**Dan Lane, Assistant Professor**

**Dan Linz, Professor**

**Jiaying Liu, Associate Professor**

**Dana Mastro, Professor, Associate Vice**

**Chancellor for Academic Personnel**

**Andy Merolla, Associate Professor**

**Miriam Metzger, Professor**

**Karen Myers, Professor**

**Robin Nabi, Professor**

**Prateekshit "Kanu" Pandey, Assistant Prof.**

**W. James Potter, Professor**

**Linda Putnam, Distinguished Research Prof.**

**Scott Reid, Professor**

**Ronald E. Rice, Distinguished Professor**

**Muniba Saleem, Associate Professor**

**Cynthia Stohl, Distinguished Professor**

**Michael Stohl, Distinguished Professor**

**Nikki Truscelli, Lecturer**

**Joseph Walther, Distinguished Professor**

**René Weber, Professor**

## UCSB DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION RANKED 5TH IN THE WORLD

*In its Academic Ranking of World Universities 2022 global ranking by academic subjects, the prestigious Shanghai Ranking places UC Santa Barbara at #5 in the field of Communication. UC Santa Barbara is the only California institution in the top 15 for Communication, rising from #8 in 2018 and #13 in 2017.*

The Department of Communication was founded in 1985 when Professors James Bradac, Anthony Mulac, and John Wiemann separated from the Department of Speech and Hearing to establish a Communication Studies Program. When the PhD program was approved in 1990, there were nine full time faculty in Communication. Presently there are 2 full time ladder or senate faculty members, 7 emeriti faculty, 2 non-senate faculty, and 7 affiliated faculty from political science, sociology, technology management, and brain and psychological sciences.

**UC SANTA BARBARA**

**Department of Communication**