

Society for Psychophysiological Research Student Newsletter

Spring 2018, Volume 26



This newsletter was created by Anna Finley, Katie Garrison, Julia McDonald, Lauren Neal, Natalie Ulrich, Ricardo Wilhelm, and Jolie Wormwood of the SPR committee to Promote Student Interests and is sent to current student and general members. Please forward to your own students and interested colleagues!

Upcoming Opportunities and Deadlines

SPR Call for Abstracts!

Are you excited about your latest research results and want to present them to the audience at the upcoming 58th annual SPR meeting in Quebec City, Quebec, Canada? The submission portal for abstracts for posters and symposia is **NOW OPEN!** Abstracts can be submitted **until Monday, April 2nd**. For further information, please visit the [SPR website](#). Think your research is top-notch? Posters by student authors can be considered for one of SPR's student poster awards (just select that you want your poster to be considered when you submit it). You can see the list of last year's recipients in this edition of the newsletter!

SPR Research Fellowship Training Awards

Would you like to visit the lab of an SPR member to learn new skills and techniques? Consider applying for an SPR Research Fellowship Training Award from the Education and Training Committee and the Committee to Promote Student Interests. These awards allow students or postdocs to obtain mentorship/training in psychophysiological assessment and analysis with experts in the field, which they could not get at their home institution. This could involve travel to a remote site or travel expenses for a remote mentor to visit the applicant's lab. Each application may include a **budget of up to \$5,000 USD** (although smaller budgeted applications are encouraged and would allow for more applications to be funded). Up to \$500 of these funds can be used to defray SPR conference travel costs. The deadline for applications is **May 1, 2018**, for funding to begin early September 2018. Applications are short (3-5 pages) but require that applicants, mentors and proposed training sponsors also submit biosketches. Award notices will be sent via email beginning June 1, 2018. If additional funds are available after June 1, 2018, a second application announcement will be made. Awardees will also be recognized at the Saturday Business Luncheon during the annual SPR meeting. Further information regarding eligibility criteria and the application process are available on the [SPR website](#) See the list of 2017 recipients in this edition of the newsletter!

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2017 Student Award Recipients

Poster Award Recipients

Aislinn Sandre, McGill University. *The late positive potential prospectively predicts subjective stress during the transition to university.*

Elizabeth Mulligan, Florida State University. *Menstrual cycle phase and progesterone relate to electrocortical response to monetary gains and losses and depressive symptoms in women.*

Constantin Winker, University of Muenster, Germany. *Transcranial direct current stimulation of the ventromedial prefrontal cortex modulates affective facial picture processing: neuronal and behavioral evidence.*

Matthias Sperl, University of Marburg. *Alpha-2 adrenoreceptor antagonist yohimbine modulates consolidation of conditioned fear.*

Nick Berggren, Birkbeck University of London. *I see trees of red, green roses too: Limitations to object-based identification in visual search.*

Christian Panitz, University of Marburg. *Feedback-evoked cortico-cardiac coupling in relation to anxiety and catecholaminergic challenges.*

Jessica Lake, University of California-Los Angeles. *Reward and punishment motivation demonstrate opponency in dorsal anterior cingulate despite salience-encoding activation.*

Emily Perkins, Florida State University. *Multi-domain assessment of callousness.*

Ciara Devine, The University of Dublin, Trinity College. *Temporal uncertainty gives rise to premature initiation of perceptual decision formation in the human brain.*

Christopher Sege, University of Florida. *Avoidance and escape: individual differences in defensive behavior.*

2017 Research Fellowship Training Grant Recipients

Heather Soder, University of South Florida

Matthias Sperl, University of Marburg

Martin Hochheimer, University of Würzburg

Hannah Lawrence, University of Maine

2017 Diversity Travel Award Recipients

Michaela Herzog, University of Leuven

Josef Sucec, University of Leuven

Mona El-Hout, University of South Florida

2017 Travel Award Recipients

North American

Anna Finley, Texas A&M University

Brittany Speed, Stony Brook University

David Rompilla, Jr., Towson University

Elizabeth Parisi, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Glenna Read, Indiana University

Kellie Ann Lee, The New School for Social Research

Kristen Rudd, University of California, Riverside

Kyle Curham, University of Arizona

Lauritz Dieckman, University of Arizona

Sepideh Heydari, University of Victoria

Xi Ren, University of Missouri-Columbia

Non-North American

Androula Kepola, University of Cyprus

Ciara Devine, University of Dublin, Trinity College

Eduardo Bellomo, Bangor University

Kathryn Biernacki, Australian Catholic University

Kristina Hengen, University of Mannheim

Ruyi Qiu, Tsinghua University

Sophie Shirenova, Lomonosov Moscow State University

Stephany Naziri, University of Cyprus

Tsukasa Kimura, Kwansai Gakuin University

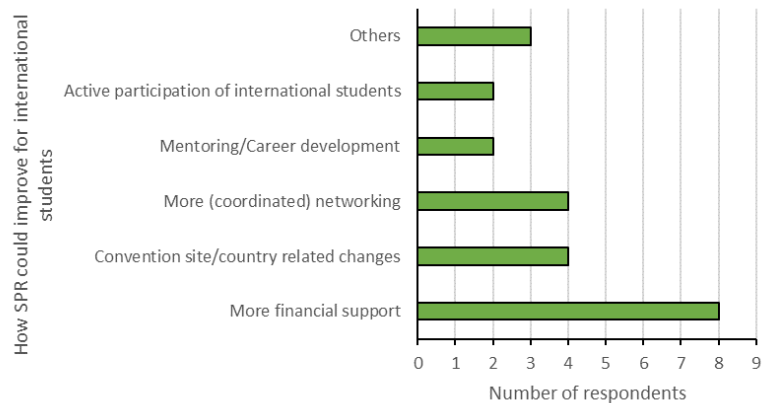
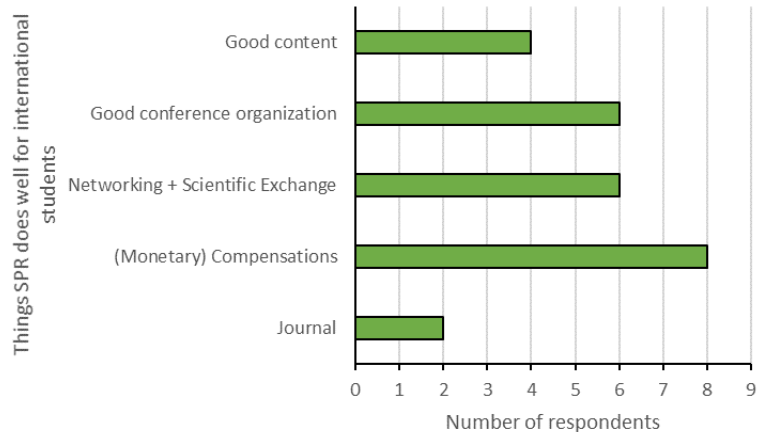
International Students Subcommittee Survey Results

The International Students Subcommittee conducted a survey among international student SPR members in Fall 2017. The aim of this survey was to find out about international students' needs and wishes with regard to SPR, how well those needs are currently met, and where there is still room for improvement.

The sample consisted of 41 respondents (19 female, 21 male, one preferred not to indicate gender) from a broad range of countries, including Germany, China, Italy, and Japan. Regarding career stage, 32 participants were graduate students and 9 were post docs.

Respondents were asked to indicate how well SPR meets the needs of international students on a 5-point rating scale, with 1 indicating "poorly" and 5 indicating "very well". On this rating scale, the majority answered with 3, 4, or 5 (mean = 3.76, median = 4, mode = 4).

Two follow-up questions asked respondents to indicate what SPR has done well to meet their needs as international students and how SPR could improve to meet their needs (see figure below). The majority of the responses concerning things that SPR does well for international students include: (monetary) compensations, networking and scientific exchange, and good conference organization. The most frequently given points for improvement include more financial support, convention site/country related changes and more (coordinated) networking.



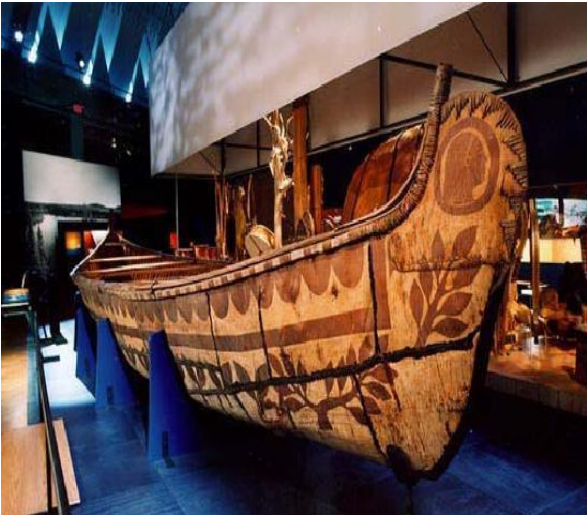
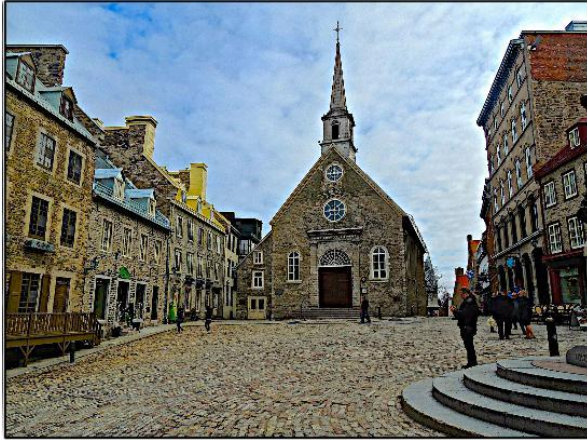
Based on the suggestions, we have identified three potential next action steps:

1. *Raise the number of travel awards* (maybe include quota, e.g. for developing countries)
2. *Continue Early Career Conversation Hour with added emphasis on networking*
3. *Provide time and space for an international student symposium*

For further information, please have a look at the [full report](#) (questionnaire, full report, list of answers to open ended questions). The International Students Subcommittee would like to thank the participants for their time and feedback!

About Quebec City

Come explore Quebec City's delightful mix of architectural styles, natural beauty, French-language culture and cuisine. Some of these must-see attractions include strolling through some of the oldest streets in North America in [Old Quebec](#). If you like the outdoors, you can also visit Montmorency Falls at [Parc de la Chute-Montmorency](#) or stay in the city and stroll through the [Plains of Abraham](#). Overlooking the [St. Lawrence River](#) is the [Aquarium du Québec](#). There are also plenty of museums, including [La Citadelle](#), for those who are interested in learning about Canada's past and its traditions.



Your stay would not be complete without trying [poutine](#) and [tourtière québécoise](#). Be sure to check out [L'Atelier: Cuisine & Cocktails](#), which provides a breathtaking 40-foot high views. The [D'Orsay Restaurant-Pub](#) is also great place to catch up with friends. Québec City has something for everyone to enjoy!

Spotlight Interview with Anna Weinberg Assistant Professor at McGill University

What made you choose to pursue a degree in Clinical Psychology? How did you become interested in using psychophysiological methods?



I worked in journalism for several years between undergrad and grad school—and in fact I didn't study psychology as an undergrad. I only started taking classes in psychology about six years after undergrad (at the New School and then at Columbia). As a journalist I had been most interested in personality profiles—where the idea was to use the brief information one could get from interviews and research to construct a portrait of a person's inner life that could in some way explain their motivations. But it's hard to get paid to do long-form profiles. When I started taking psychology classes, I found that the ones I loved the most tended to focus on affective science and the very intriguing idea that it might be possible to quantify emotional experience. At Columbia, I also started working in a project between two labs: Walter Mischel's lab, working primarily with Ethan Kross, who was a graduate student there at the time, and Kevin Ochsner's lab. The project I was working on was in a population of 9/11 survivors, some of whom had PTSD and some of whom did not—the idea was to use fMRI to identify patterns of emotional response and emotion regulatory deficits that might help us understand how and why people develop psychopathology after an illness. I did not get a chance to see this project through to its end, but the promise of being able to use observed neural deficits to predict who was likely to become ill was really intriguing to me. I was also taking a class with Dr. Mischel and was floundering about for a final paper topic before landing on the idea of reviewing distinct patterns of cognitive function and language usage in Generalized Anxiety Disorder and Depression. Both of these experiences made me believe clinical psychology was the right route for me—though Dr. Mischel did try to convince me to go into experimental psychology with the reasoning that I could answer the questions I was interested in without investing the time in clinical training. He also noted I'd need to straighten my curly hair, buy a conservative twinset, and begin wearing pearls if I wanted to fit into clinical psychology. I understand these points now better than I did when he was making them to me, but I'm happy to have gotten the clinical training I did, and I still don't own a twinset. As for interest in psychophysiological research, apart from the work in Dr. Ochsner's lab, I was also taking a class called "Emotion," with Lois Putnam. This class walked us through work from William James, Albert Ax, and Margaret Bradley and Peter Lang (among many others, of course) and I loved it. So when I started looking at mentors for graduate school and saw Greg Hajcak's work, which used psychophysiological methods to understand distinct patterns of emotional responding in anxiety and depression, and David Klonsky's work, which focused on emotional responding and failures in emotion regulation—I was thrilled. And luckily for me, they accepted me.

How has your involvement with SPR helped you in your career?

I've learned an enormous amount through my involvement with SPR. I remember the first conference I went to, in Austin, I was *terrified*, and rehearsed and re-rehearsed my methods

the whole trip down. The people I spoke to at that conference (and subsequent conferences) were, in fact, quite methodologically rigorous, but also almost invariably curious, engaged, and generous with the time they took to discuss a poster. Over time the fear has subsided somewhat, but I am still struck by how engaged the society is in raising its trainees to be careful scientists and in bringing them into the scientific community. It would not be possible to enumerate all of the things I have learned at the conference or from SPR members over the years because there are too many, but I'm sure most of it has helped my career. I've also made great friends, collaborators, and a research network through the society.

This year you are the program chair for the 2018 Annual Meeting in Quebec City. How has the experience of being program chair been for you so far? What can we all look forward to at this year's meeting?

Thus far it's been very interesting! The program committee and I have had great conversations about how to shape the scientific program and what we want to highlight. I think we have an exciting program lined up—we have invited Regina Sullivan, Ahmad Hariri, and Birte Forstmann as keynote addresses. For pre-conference workshops, we have two perennial favorites: the ERP bootcamp (with Emily Kappenman) and HLM (with Liz Page-Gould), and a new workshop on machine learning (with Leila Wehbe) that I am hoping to attend. And we're working on a big project and panel discussion/ symposium on replication and rigor in psychophysiological research—we will also have a special section of a poster session for posters highlighting these themes. The committee is still reviewing symposium abstracts, but from what I've seen, it will be an exciting and packed conference. And of course it's in Quebec City this year—which is an extremely charming city—in early October, which is a particularly lovely time of year for our part of the world. Come talk science and peep leaves with us!

Your research studies the neural patterns associated with depression and anxiety, and specifically identifies pathological responses to errors, reward, and threat. What about this research area excites you, and where do you see your research program going in the future?

A lot of this work has focused on identifying patterns of neural response that can differentiate distinct forms of dysfunction within the internalizing spectrum. We've also been working on research that can use these neural responses to identify people who are at risk for psychopathology but who have not yet manifested the illness. More recently, we've been focused on *how* these neural responses develop (e.g., because of a family history? Neurotoxic effects of stress?) as well as *why* these neural responses result in mental illness, with a particular interest in interactions with stress: Do these vulnerability markers make people more vulnerable to the effects of stress? Do they cause people to behave in ways that generate more stress in their lives? Most of the studies we're working on now (and several we're trying hard to get funded) are aiming to answer these questions.

What general career advice do you have for SPR's student members? Was there something you were told early in your career that helped you achieve the success you have had?

I don't know that I have general career advice! I think the things that helped me the most early on were the examples set by the people I admired. Greg Hajcak—as SPR knows—does a lot of things right, and some of the characteristics of his that I always try to emulate are being fearless about learning new things, being curious, collaborating widely, working hard and efficiently, and writing constantly. More recently, I was given the advice: “Choose which things you're going to be bad at,” with the implication that, if you don't, you may do badly at the things about which you care most. Thinking in this way helps me to prioritize and structure my time better. Being a champion top-speed emailer is not at the top of traits I aspire to, so that makes it easier to ignore emails while I work on a grant or paper or play with my kids.

What tips do you have for maintaining work-life balance in academia?

Yes, I've heard about that fabled balance. I'm still trying to get my lab operating, my husband and I are both pre-tenure academics, and we have two young children (5 years and 10 months), so really almost *all* I do is work, parent, and be late transitioning from one to the other. I guess that counts in a way as balance, since I'm not *only* working, but many other aspects of my life have fallen by the wayside. In terms of balance between those two things, I try to work when I'm working, and come home by 6 and parent without thinking about work, but of course the two do get tangled. By way of example, I've interrupted typing responses to [these questions](#) several times to put tiny people to bed, listen to an earnest and heartfelt speech on the relative merits of two desserts vs. only one dessert, and argue about the speed at which pajamas can realistically be put on a human body. I am absolutely not *advocating* a life of only work and parenting, and I'm sure there are people (cultures?) out there who can find more of a balance. On the other hand, it would not be realistic for me to achieve the things I want to achieve at work right now and spend enough time with my kids and also have a flourishing social life and a fulfilling qigong practice, and I'm not sure it's fair to people considering these choices to pretend otherwise. I assume at some point this will change? I also say all of this as someone who is lucky to have access to relatively inexpensive daycare, a spouse who parents equally and does all the cooking, and kids who are (touch wood) healthy. I don't know how people who don't have those things find balance.

Updates from the Committee to Promote Student Interests

Are your needs being met? Want to get involved? Please feel free to contact members of the committee with suggestions, questions, comments, or to bond with a fellow psychophysiological (Contact information for all Committee members available on the [SPR website](#)).

Post-Doctoral/Early Career Subcommittee: The Post-Doctoral/Early Career Subcommittee has been working on collecting feedback for low-cost events that would be of interest to students and early career members as an alternative to the formal Early Career Conversation Hour that we have organized at past meetings. If you would like to submit any feedback or recommend changes, please reach out to Dan Foti (foti@purdue.edu).

Meeting Events Subcommittee: It is easy to fall in love with Quebec City. Start planning your stay on page 4 of this newsletter, and explore even more options at [Quebec City Wikitravel](#). Stay tuned for the location of our Friday night Student Social, as well as a list of student-friendly attractions. If you have ideas about things to do in Quebec City, and you would like to get involved in our planning, please contact Aislinn Sandre (aislinn.sandre@mail.mcgill.ca). *Au revoir*—we are looking forward to seeing you in Quebec City!

Public Relations Subcommittee: The public relations subcommittee is preparing for the 2018 SPR Conference in Quebec City. We are excited to announce three invited speakers: **Ahmad Hariri**, Duke University, *Neural Signatures of Risk for Mental Illness*; **Regina Sullivan**, NYU, *Neurobiology of Infant Attachment to the Caregiver and Neural mechanisms for Enduring Mental Health*; **Birte Forstmann**, University of Amsterdam, *Towards a Mechanistic Understanding of Terra Incognita: The Human Subcortex*. And three pre-conference workshops: **Two-day ERP Bootcamp** (with Emily Kappenman); **Multi-level Modeling** (with Liz Page-Gould); **Machine Learning for Neuroimaging Data: Building and Using Predictive Models** (with Leila Wehbe). We are also working on two collaborative replication projects where two teams at different labs are trying to replicate a study from one of the labs. The projects will culminate in a large **symposium/ panel discussion on rigor and replication in psychophysiological research** at the 2018 conference. We hope everyone will attend! Finally, we are also hosting a local symposium on the psychophysiology of **cognitive and affective aspects of pain**, with researchers from Montreal and Quebec City.

International Students Subcommittee: Are you excited about international collaborations and want to visit the lab of an SPR member to learn new psychophysiological methods? Are you looking for information on host labs for internships or research visits? Check out our [SPR International Students Exchange Forum](#), which contains information on international labs that are happy to host you! Does your lab also welcome (international) exchange students but is not yet on our list? Simply send us an e-mail (matthias.sperl@staff.uni-marburg.de) with your lab's information and we will create a subpage for you!

Do you want to get in touch with other SPR international student members to plan your research visit abroad (funding, visa, lodging, etc.) or to prepare for the next SPR meeting in Quebec City (room sharing, where to go, what to do, etc.)? Then you shouldn't miss out on our [forum](#)! We are working on adding to the website during the next months, so check back occasionally, and feel free to actively participate!

Don't forget to check out the “**International Students Subcommittee Survey Results**” on page 3 of this newsletter.

Have an exciting opportunity for our student members or a fun student event planned for the 58th annual SPR conference in Quebec City? We'd love to highlight it in our next newsletter!
Contact Jolie Wormwood at: jbwormwood@gmail.com