



The FORUM

The Newsletter of the SPSP Graduate Student Committee Summer 2003

Results you can relate to: A look at SPSP Graduate Student Members

Remember that survey you filled out? An upcoming issue of the Forum will feature a more indepth report, but in the meantime, check out the stats on SPSP graduate students!

Who are we? We are a diverse group. 259 students responded from 9 different countries (212-USA; 27-Canada; 7-Australian; 5-Great Britain; 4-Germany; 1-Belgian; 1-Ireland; 1-Netherlands; 1-New Zealand). According to this sample, our average age is 27.4 years old and a majority of our SPSP student members are female (67.9%). Ethnically, we are 85.1% Caucasian; 5.5% Asian/Pacific Islander; 2.3% African; 2.3% Hispanic; 1.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native; 5.5% classified as other. Many students (26.3%) are first generation college students while 5.7% described themselves as being a nontraditional student (30+ upon entering their program). 1.5% reported having a physical disability and 4.6% classified themselves as belonging to some other minority group not identified in our survey. The average department/program contained 17 social/personality students who took 5.6 years to earn their degree when entering with a BA/BS, or 4.4

years when entering with a masters degree.

Show me the money! Tuition charges varied widely, ranging from only \$250 to \$35,000 per year. A majority of students receive partial (13%) or full tuition (66.4%) reimbursement. Only 19% are completely responsible for meeting tuition costs at their program. Beyond tuition reimbursement, 63% of graduate students are receiving additional financial support. The average annual stipend was \$13,365 distributed over 10 months.

What do we do? For most, teaching is a big part of graduate life, both as assistants and as primary instructors for undergraduate courses. Most (61%) indicated that they started as a teaching assistant within their first year of graduate school, and 79% had by their second year. 32.7% had been a primary instructor by the end of their 3rd year in graduate school. The number of hours students spent on teaching and preparation varied dramatically, with the average being 14.14 hours. While the majority of students indicated that there was formal teaching preparation (70.1%) in their programs, many students receive no teaching preparation (10%) or only informal

support from faculty. Student satisfaction with their training for teaching in their programs was significantly correlated ($r = .167, p < .01$) with overall satisfaction with their graduate program.

What's it all mean? You've just been given a peek at the information we were able to pull from your surveys. We hope that

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President's Corner

I hope you all are enjoying your summer so far! The (GSC) has been very busy planning for the next SPSP conference in Austin, TX. (Don't forget, the proposal deadline for symposia and posters is fast approaching - July 25th!). The Graduate Poster Award (GPA) will again be offered this year, with one award each session for posters that reflect excellence, clarity, and personal knowledge in a discussion with three "secret" judges. For eligibility requirements and application information, visit <http://www.spsp.org/student>. Deadline information will be posted on the website and in the next edition of the Forum this Fall. Reminders will also be sent out through the Student Listserv.

In addition to the GPA, we are planning several other programs for graduate students. APA may offer a half-day academic careers pre-conference, and if so, we will collaborate with them to fill the rest of the day with a workshop on non-academic jobs. Again, check the listserv and website for updates! Additionally, we are organizing a mentoring lunch where you can register to share a table with a selected mentor. Your opinions as to the types of mentors you would like at this luncheon (research interests, identity groups, expertise in a specific field, etc.) are wanted, please email Michele Schlehofer-Sutton at michele.sutton@cgu.edu or Chandra Osborn at chandra.osborn@uconn.edu with your suggestions. Finally, we are compiling a list of alternative

accommodations, car rental information, and fun, "non-conference" activities to post on the web site for students. If you are familiar with the Austin area, please email any of the committee members, and we will be sure to add your suggestions to our list!

If you haven't already subscribed to our student listserv, I highly recommend it. We regularly post non-academic career opportunities (at least once a month), have a confidential forum (Dear Sigmunda) for students to email concerns and respond with suggestions, and also actively seek student member's opinions on important issues. And, unlike other Listservs, the traffic isn't overwhelming, so you can breathe easy knowing your mailbox won't be constantly inundated! To join, simply send an email to listserv@lists.acs.ohio-state.edu with the following message: subscribe spsp-grad Firstname Lastname. You will then get an email confirmation of your subscription and be able to send messages to the group by emailing spsp-grad@lists.acs.ohio-state.edu.

Lastly, I would also like to thank everyone who filled out the SPSP graduate student survey. Doing so gives us a chance to evaluate the needs of our student members. Congratulations to the winners of the free memberships that were offered as an incentive for participating!

I hope you all enjoy the rest of your summer, and look forward to hearing more of your suggestions!

Spotlight on...

John V. Petrocelli

Indiana University, Bloomington

This ongoing series features graduate students randomly selected from the subscriber list of the Graduate Student Listserv.

Now completing his second year at Indiana, John Petrocelli tells us that his path to IU was far from direct. As an undergraduate, John studied both psychology and history. Later he earned his Masters Degree in community counseling at Slippery Rock University and spent three years in the counseling program at the University of Georgia, where he became increasingly interested in a career in research and teaching.

When John decided to transfer to a social psychology program, he applied to just three programs. A close match between his interests and faculty research was among his primary criteria in selecting a program. John explains, "because I had become very interested in many areas of social cognition, I looked for the 'eclectic' social psychologist to work with. If there is such a thing as an eclectic social psychologist, it's Jim Sherman." Another advantage of Indiana University was the potential for collaboration with its cognitive science program.

John's research involves exploring "motivated reasoning that occurs despite awareness of attitude change." He also studies "time perspective orientation as it relates to ease of retrieval effects to predict evaluations of the past and expectations of the future." In the future, John hopes to examine "time perspective orientation as it relates to subjective well-being and affective forecasting."

John's advice to young and incoming graduate students is to "not just find the advisor that you can 'work with', [but] find the advisor that is willing to push you, by making you a better thinker and a better social psychologist altogether." For more on John, check GSC website at www.spsp.org/student/studnews.htm or visit his home page at <http://php.indiana.edu/~jpetroce/home.html>.

9 Questions with Recent Survivor of a Successful Academic Job Hunt

Josephine Korchmaros recently completed her graduate training at the University of Connecticut and will be at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale in the fall. She agreed to answer 20 questions about the search process. The following are excerpts from our interview with Jo in June of 2003. For a full transcript (and the other 11 questions we asked), check out the GSC website!:

1) Was this your first year on the market? *Yes*

2) How many jobs did you apply for? *37*

3) Would you recommend applying to every school that has an opening, or only to those where you would likely accept an offer? *Repeating the good advice I received from my mentor, I suggest that people apply to any position that they are at all likely to accept.*

Typically there is very little information in position advertisements and only enough time to gather a little bit of information about each position and the institutions that are offering the positions. Therefore, at that time, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to be able to accurately rank the positions in terms of likelihood of accepting the position. I suggest having two categories: "Definitely not" and "Maybe." Forget about the "Definitely not's" and apply to the "Maybe's."

4) How many interviews did you have? *I had six telephone and three on-site interviews. Two of the 6 telephone interviews were precursors to two of the on-site interviews. Be prepared for telephone interviews. Many search committees are using telephone interviews to gather more information about candidates, which they then use to decide which candidates to invite for on-site interviews. Telephone interviews are also oppor-*

tunities for candidates to gather more information about the position and the institution. So, have questions ready.

5) What are interviews like?

Are you put on the spot, or is it a congenial atmosphere?

Interviews vary, though are generally congenial in nature. The best advice I can give is to be prepared for possible interview questions and for small talk, to practice your talk as many times as possible, to use the interview to gather as much relevant information as you can, and to not take it personally if someone does not act friendly towards you. Finally, if at all possible, schedule a day of rest after each on-site interview. They are physically and cognitively draining.

6) What things do you need to be prepared for at the interview that might not be obvious? *Job candidates should know what their needs and desires are. They should know what the bare minimum of research and teaching resources and facilities that they are willing to settle for to be able to get their work done.*

Also, they should know what research and teaching resources and facilities they would ideally want. Job candidates should have these things in mind—or, better yet, have a detailed list—before they expect to be contacted. I was asked about startup and lab space needs during a couple of phone interviews.

7) How much time passed between submission deadline and notification of an interview? *There is a great deal of*

variability. The first deadlines were Sept 1, while others were as late as January. I was first contacted for a phone interview in November and last contacted in February.

8) Usually how soon after an interview can someone expect to be notified of whether or not she or he will be offered the

position? *Again expect a great deal of variability. The amount of time between interview and notification of whether or not someone will be offered the position depends on many factors (e.g., how many interviews are left to be conducted, when these interviews are scheduled, when the search committee plans to meet and decide, whether another candidate(s) is offered the position first). A candidate could receive notification the day after the interview or two months later.*

9) Was there anything that you learned late in the process that you would have liked to have known early in grad school? *The importance of planning ahead. The application process takes quite a bit of time and energy and will disrupt both the Spring and Fall semester. Usually, at this time, candidates are also working on their dissertations, other research, perhaps teaching a course or two, and trying to maintain a personal life. But they need not have all of these responsibilities. Candidates' lives will be significantly less stressful if early on in graduate school they can plan to limit their responsibilities the first year during which they will be on the job market.*

Survey results (Cont.)

reporting this demographic information will allow our graduate student members to better understand how they fit into the SPSP community and how their department or program compares with other programs around the country. Like all good social psychologists, we will be subjecting this dataset to further analysis and be examining the relations between these variables. Stay tuned for more results from the GSC web survey in upcoming issues of the Forum! Winners of the free memberships were: Michelle Sherrill, Meara Habashi, Maxine Tremblay, Heike Winterheld, and Ken DeMarree.