

Message from the Editor: Brittany Jakubiec



Brittany Jakubiec is a second year Master of Education student.

I would like to start off by saying a huge **THANK YOU** to everyone who contributed to the inaugural issue of the GSA Newsletter. It was a huge success and we received many positive comments. Your feedback is integral in making this publication better and more representative of the wider graduate community at UPEI. If you would like to contribute, please email me at gsa@upei.ca.

Dr. Liz Townsend – An Introduction

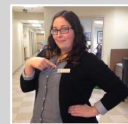
Congratulations to the GSA for launching this newsletter. I was asked to introduce myself as Coordinator of Graduate Studies (Faculty of Education). My passion since starting in August 2014 has been my work with you in four contexts – the graduate *Certificate in Educational Leadership in Nunavut*, the *Master of Education (MEd) in Leadership in Learning*, the *PhD in Educational Studies*, and *ED 692 Higher Education Teaching*.



Through these contexts, I have the privilege of coaching, facilitating, organizing, and otherwise enabling almost 262 graduate students – the largest field of graduate studies at UPEI! I oversee or take action with 204 students in the UPEI MEd and PhD programs. In addition I oversee 43 graduate students in coordination with Dr. Jane Preston in the Certificate in Educational Leadership in Nunavut, and 15 students who have just registered in the new Winter Semester ED 692 course for UPEI teachers, post-docs, and graduate students who want to develop competence in higher education teaching. You need to know that all this graduate studies work is facilitated greatly by Cathy Hennessey, Graduate Administration Support (Thanks Cathy!). (continued on page 2)

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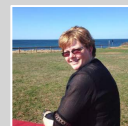
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UPEI GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Valerie Campbell (President), Brittany Jakubiec (VP Internal), Satyajit Sen (VP External), Jill Martin (Media Relations), Babafela Awosile (AVC Rep), Kate Liu (Education Rep), Keefe Deighan (Business Rep), Danielle Perry (Nursing Rep), Kshitij Trivedi (Science Rep), Mark Currie (Arts Rep)

Editor: Brittany Jakubiec
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Take a look at the privilege that comes with my position. I have indirect contact with 190 MEd students, of whom 167 are in the MEd Course Work stream. They all use digital technologies mostly in a blend of online courses and face-to-face learning in on-site summer institutes. I meet off-site students through Orientation and other 'meetings' by SKYPE or the Black Board vide-conference platform called Collaborate. For those who may not be familiar with the MEd, students all complete the same 10-course graduate degree in various combinations of core and elective courses in seven Cohorts. Each Cohort includes around 20 - 30 learners with professors who may be at UPEI or anywhere in the world. I think of us - students and faculty - as a 'community of adventurous learners'. The current cohorts start at different times and offer a Cohort focus: 1. Additional Designation in Inclusive Education; 2. College Educators; 3. MEd Western PEI with a focus on Literacy and Inclusion; 4. Global Perspectives (International Education, on-site); plus 3 Cohorts focused on 21st Century Teaching and Learning, one of which is fully online to study anytime, anywhere.

I am gradually meeting the 23 MEd Thesis students by email or face to face. The spark for meetings is usually to talk through a student's choice of topic and possible thesis supervisor, committee members, or a thesis examiner. What an energizing range of educational topics for me to follow vicariously – critical thinking, project-based learning, digital technologies, literacies in various contexts, curriculum, and many areas of leadership in PEI and well beyond.

My greatest on-site contact is with the 14 PhD students who are at various stages. Because PhD students may be admitted with a Masters degree in almost any field, some have backgrounds in school-based education while others are looking at educational issues related to health, aging, community activism, social sciences, or science. We interact at Graduate Seminars, the new student-lead seminar series that facilitate discussions about the PhD Comprehensive Portfolio, Thesis Defense, epistemology, and data analysis. Being supervisor for one of the PhD students keeps me on my toes to understand how the PhD program is working!

I am routinely asked how I came to UPEI and why. I'm an Islander By Choice. My first encounter with UPEI was in a few courses in the 1970s (I have a 4-digit campus login). With a Master of Adult Education (SFX) and a PhD in Education (Dalhousie), I was a founding faculty member and the 2nd Director of Dalhousie's School of Occupational Therapy. Now I'm an Adjunct Professor and 50% Coordinator of Graduate Studies with the Faculty of Education. Thanks for the chance to say hello in this Newsletter!

Tips from Melissa Belvadi, UPEI Librarian

Did you know that graduate students can use the Interlibrary Loan service to get materials that the library owns? As a special service, the library staff will scan an article or a single chapter (at a time) from a book within the library's print collections and send you the PDF so you don't have to copy or scan it yourself!

Just use the usual Interlibrary Loan request form as if the library doesn't own the materials and make sure you indicate that you are a graduate student from the drop down menu.

For more information, ask any library staff.

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Meet the GSA Science Representative: Kshitij Ashwinkumar Trivedi



Kshitij is from Rajkot, Gujarat (India) and is in the MSc Environmental Sciences program

At present, my main area of research is Plant developmental biology, in that I am interested in studying plant development at molecular level, especially the development of flowers. For my MSc thesis, I will be studying the ABC model of floral development at the molecular level in the species of Malvaceae and/or Araceae family, which are important horticultural varieties and good examples of homeosis. Homeosis is defined as a phenomenon where a particular domain of one organ is partially or completely replaced by another organ. In terms of research project and experiments, I will isolate and document sequences of Class A, B, and C genes, a group of homeotic genes which are critical for specifying floral organ identity. Moreover, I will also be studying the expression levels and patterns of Class A, B, and C genes in particular domains (portions) of flowers at early stages of development. This will enable me to develop a complete sequence of gene expression intensity.

In order to address these objectives I will use various molecular biology protocols like nucleic acid extraction, extraction of reference sequences from online nucleotide databases, design of novel primers, regular and quantitative real-time PCR, DNA sequencing and *In-situ* hybridization.

In near future, I am planning to undertake my PhD in the same research area that I have described above or in the field of plant biology having applications of biotechnology, and I am planning to pursue my career as a successful research scientist in the field of plant molecular biology.

UPCOMING EVENTS!

- *My Journey Through Graduate School* seminar series.
February 3, from 12:15 to 1:00 pm – Janet Loebach and Brandi Bell (Location TBA)
March 2, from 12:15 to 1:00 pm – Drs. Jane Preston and Brian Wagner (Faculty Lounge, Main Building)
Contact bjakubiec@upei.ca for more details.
- Canadian Federation of University Women Charlottetown Graduate Scholarships.
Deadline January 30, 2015. Contact hkeoughan@upei.ca for more details.
- Are you a parent and student? Check out the UPEI Parenting Students group on Facebook! Upcoming events on January 31, February 14, March 21, and April 4, 2015!
- Islander Day. February 16, 2015!
- UPEI Reading Week. February 23-27, 2015!
- UPEI Mental Health Week. March 9-13, 2015!

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10 Tips for Surviving Graduate School By: Dr. Stacey MacKinnon



- 1** Chocolate.
- 2** Deep breathing exercises, similar to Lamaze.
- 3** Hot baths and backrubs.
- 4** Always trying to find something interesting in what you're working on... even if it's how they make gel pen ink that doesn't glop.
- 5** Take regularly scheduled time off for yourself and family. Getting finished on time or faster means nothing if you lose yourself, your health, or your support team in the process.
- 6** Take up kick boxing (and keep it to yourself that you're picturing your supervisor's head on the punching bag).
- 7** Break it all down into small pieces, decide how much you think you can reasonably do on a given day, then cut that in half. Celebrate when that half is done, then check the clock to see how much time you have left before your mandatory cut off time. Use only the left over time for more work.
- 8** Don't take on any extra work. **9** Sleep.
- 10** Remember why you got into this field to begin with, and think about what you'll be able to do when you're done. Then, dangle that carrot like mad.

DO YOU WANT TO CONTRIBUTE?

Email your ideas, suggestions, and articles to gsa@upei.ca

Are you looking to keep on top of university news, career advice, and job listings? Grad students should take a look at University Affairs, which provides a number of ways to stay informed about

and connected with Canada's university community. The magazine is published 10 times per year and is free to those who work or study at UPEI and other Canadian universities. In addition to [news](#), [opinion](#), and [career advice](#) being posted each month, www.universityaffairs.ca offers access to the largest higher ed [job listing](#) service in Canada. University Affairs also has weekly [e-newsletters](#) to keep subscribers informed about the latest feature stories and online content. Take a moment to have a look!



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