Successful Scholarship Applications

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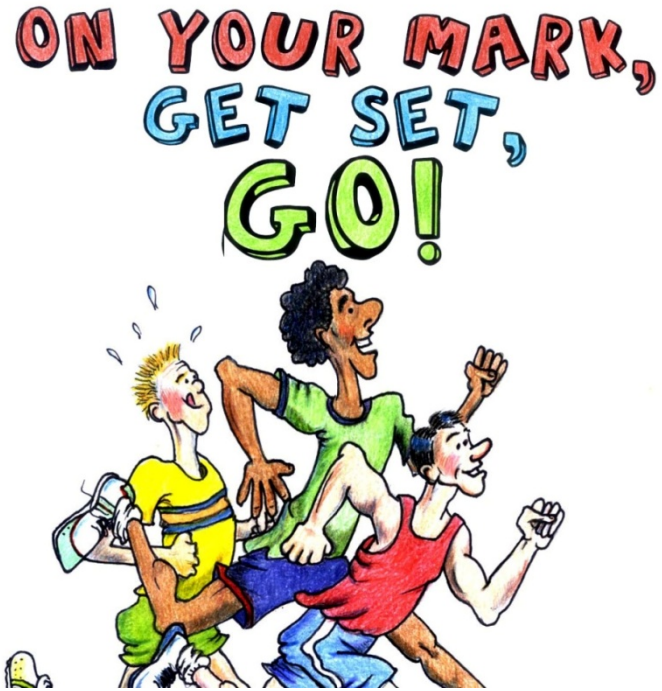
Presentation Outline

- **Getting Started**
  - Where and how to find funding
- **How to Prepare**
  - Improve your chance of success
- **Preparing your Application**
  - Tips for preparing a successful application



Getting Started:
Where to find funding

- Tri-council (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC)
- Industry-Partnered Scholarships
- Host University
- Provincial agencies
- Other organizations and associations (e.g., Foundations)

Getting Started:
How to find funding

- Graduate Studies office
- Graduate Coordinator for your program
- Current or potential supervisor, and other students in the group – how are they funded?
- Scholarship databases, e.g., scholarshipscanada.com and scholarships.gc.ca

Getting Started: Before you begin

- Review the guidelines
  - Ensure that your research topic is appropriate for the funding agency
  - Make sure that you are eligible to apply! Citizenship, length of time in studies, location of study, subject matter, etc., may exclude you from certain opportunities
  - Ensure that you will be eligible to hold the award
    - E.g., eligibility of proposed program, registration status, program start date

How to prepare:
Enhance your qualifications

- Take action now to improve your chance of success
- Review the program requirements and evaluation criteria to determine areas where you can seek to improve your rating
  - Build upon your academic record
  - Improve your CV

Current Canada Graduate Scholarship Master's Program Evaluation Criteria

Academic Excellence - 50%	Research Potential - 30%	Personal Characteristics and Interpersonal Skills - 20%
As demonstrated by past academic results, transcripts, awards and distinctions. Indicators of Academic Excellence: •Academic record (first class average) •Scholarships and awards held •Duration of previous studies •Type of program and courses pursued •Course load •Relative standing (if available)	**As demonstrated by the applicant's research history, his/her interest in discovery, the proposed research, its potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field, and any anticipated outcomes.** Indicators of Research Potential: •Quality and originality of contributions to research and development •Relevance of work experience and academic training to field of proposed research •Significance, feasibility, and merit of proposed research •Judgment and ability to think critically •Ability to apply skills and knowledge •Initiative, autonomy and independence •Research experience and achievements relative to expectations of someone with the candidate's academic experience	**As demonstrated by the applicant's past professional and relevant extracurricular interactions and collaborations.** Indicators of Personal Characteristics and Interpersonal Skills: •Work experience •Leadership experience •Project management including organizing conferences and meetings •The ability or potential to communicate theoretical, technical and/or scientific concepts clearly and logically in written and oral formats •Involvement in academic life •Volunteerism/community outreach

Discussion Question: What can you do *now* to improve your chances of obtaining a scholarship?

Discussion summary:

•Get involved in academic life: help organize a conference, student union, etc.

• Obtain research experience (paid or volunteer) with your professors

• Attend conferences and find opportunities to publish and present

• Apply for a variety of awards and scholarships

• Volunteer in the community

Some characteristics of successful applicants

- Average marks in high 80's and above
- Scholarships and awards
- Related research experience (field technician, lab assistant, etc.) and other experience that builds personal characteristics (leadership, team work, communication, conflict resolution, mentorship)
- Research contributions – presentations, posters, journal articles
- Volunteer experience such as conference planning, campus societies, community groups, etc.

How to prepare:
Start thinking about your proposal

- The application typically requires a research proposal
- Outline a proposal
- Define your questions/objectives/hypotheses
- Conduct a literature review

Preparing your application

- Typical components:
  - Application form (lay summary, keywords, etc.)
  - Research Proposal
  - CV
  - Transcripts
  - Reference Letters

Preparing your application: Writing your research proposal

- Explain what you are going to do, how you are going to do it, and why it is important
  - Clear objectives
  - Up-to-date literature review
  - Explain your approach and methods
  - State the significance of the proposed research

Preparing your application: A successful proposal

- Project should be ambitious but feasible
- Emphasize the significance, but avoid over-stating the impact of your work
- Reduce jargon or highly technical language; define abbreviations/acronyms
- Follow instructions carefully & adhere to formatting requirements -- do not exceed page limits or send more information than the instructions require

Suppression of pathological brain oscillations in Parkinson's disease with visual stimuli

Parkinson's disease (PD) is characterized by the motor symptoms of tremor, rigidity, slowness of movement and postural instability. Surgical treatments or pharmacotherapy are currently available for PD patients, but often result in serious side effects [7]. **Alternative, non-invasive treatments are thus needed**. Recent research has shown that lack of dopamine (DA), characteristic of PD, results in an abnormal synchronization of neuronal activity within the basal ganglia and related cortical loops [5]. These beta-band, pathological oscillations are prominent in the subthalamic nucleus (STN) and the globus pallidus external (GPe), and appear to suppress movement. High frequency deep brain stimulation (DBS) of the STN has been shown to result in motor improvements in PD patients [5], possibly by disrupting abnormal neuronal synchronization [6]. However, disruption of pathological oscillations need not be invasive, as visually guided movements can dampen and desynchronize oscillatory activity in the STN of PD patients [2], even with low-amplitude (but appropriately timed) stimuli [8]. Other work in normal subjects has inferred direct cortical → STN effects during a number of behavioral responses such as a go/stop paradigm [1]. ***We hypothesize that suppression of abnormal oscillations in PD can be achieved with the use of appropriately-timed visual stimuli and/or motor tasks.*** In order to have maximum flexibility and effectiveness of visual stimuli, we will utilize Virtual Environments (VE).

The current proposal examines the direct effects of visual stimuli and motor behavior on synchronized beta brain activity in PD, as opposed to prior studies that have only looked at the relation between visual stimuli and gross behavioural performance such as gait [3,4]. In order to assess the effect of specifically-timed visual stimuli and behavioural paradigms on the pathological oscillations seen in PD, we will first use a suite of paradigms that have been shown to activate the STN in normal subjects. We will then proceed to see if specific visual stimuli alone, in the absence of motor movements, can achieve the same effect on suppressing oscillations. The research will build on previous work in our group showing that coupling patterns in EEG recordings can be used to infer stimulus-induced changes, and that these patterns are different in PD subjects. We will also test whether levodopa medication affects the sensitivity to stimuli. The study will include ten healthy volunteers as well as ten levodopa-treated patients with clinically defined, mild-moderate PD, recruited from the Pacific Parkinson's Research Centre at UBC. The candidate's role will involve (1) recruiting and obtaining consent from subjects, applying electro-physiological electrodes and supervising the collection of data; (2) designing a set of experiments using visual stimuli that can be repetitively applied and analyzing the resulting data. The proposed research is an essential part of the long-term goal of providing an effective, non-invasive treatment for PD.

[1] Aron AR and Poldrack RA. *J Neurosci.* 2006; 26(9): 2424-33; **[2]** Amirnovin et al. *J Neurosci.* 2004; 24(50): 11302-6; **[3]** Baram Y, Miller A. *Neurology* 2006; 66: 178-181; **[4]** Bayliss JD, Ballard DH. *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems* 2000; 12: 3-9, MIT Press; **[5]** Brown P, Williams D. *Clin Neurophysiol.* 2005; 116(11): 2510-9; **[6]** Cassim F et al. *Epileptic Disord.* 2002; 4 Suppl 3: S31-45; **[7]** Guehl D et al. *European Journal of Neurology* 2006; 13(9): 963-71; **[8]** Rosenblum M, Pikovsky A. *Phys Rev E Stat Nonlin Soft Matter Phys.* 2004; 70(4 Pt 1): 041904.

Background Information and Significance

Hypothesis

Approach & Methods

Impact

References

Source: https://www.grad.ubc.ca/prospective-students/scholarships-awards-funding

The Lived Experiences of Women Leaders in University Settings: Supports and Barriers

Brittany A. E. Jakubiec

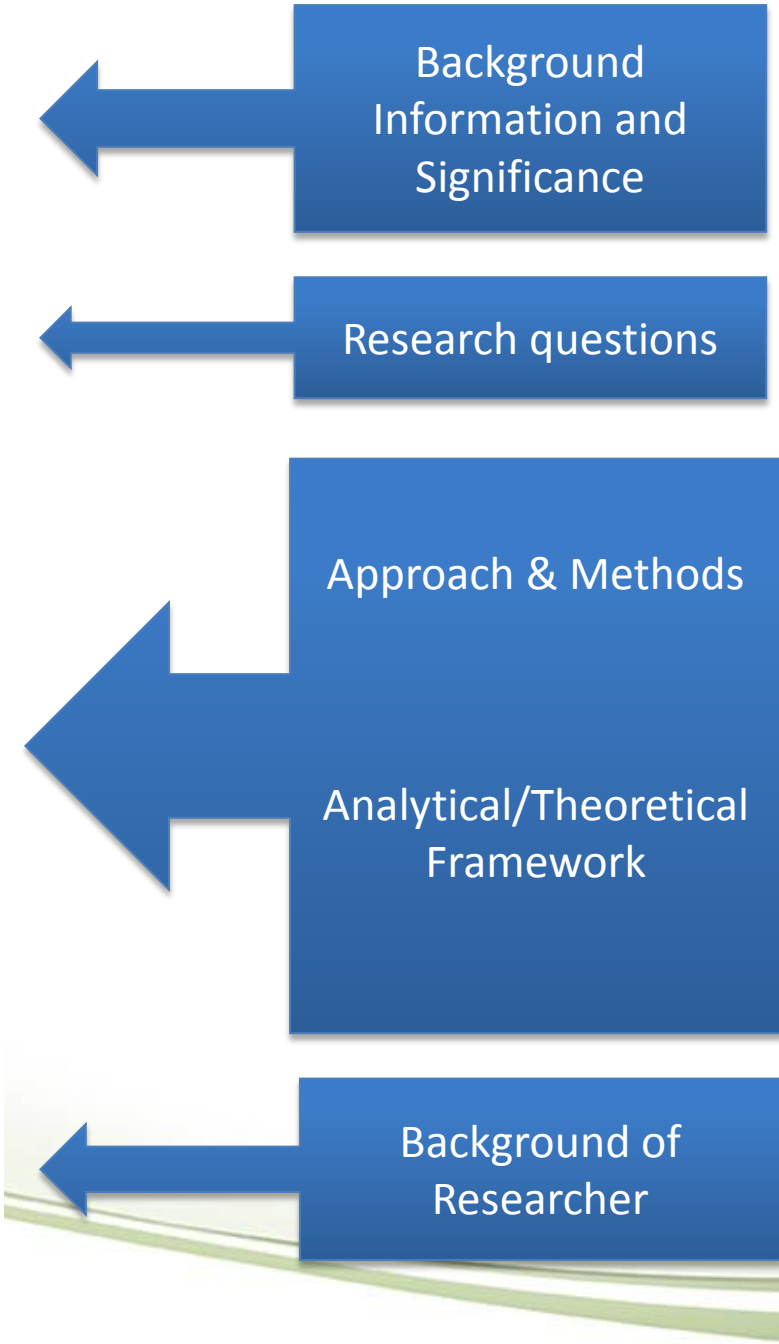
Introduction & Significance: Women leaders in North American and European universities face myriad challenges and supports (Blood et al., 2012; Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011). Aspiring female leaders noted mentoring, constructive feedback, and being regarded as a distinguished researcher and publisher as crucial supports (Dean, 2009; Growe & Montgomery, 1999; Pruitt, Johnson, Catlin, & Knox, 2010). Barriers include lack of mentorship, unrealistic expectations, discrimination, overwhelming workloads, and a lack of work-life balance, adequate childcare, and available leadership training programs (Pyke, 2013; Tessens, White, & Web, 2011). In Canadian universities, women hold only 22% of full professor positions (Council of Canadian Academies, 2012). Although many universities are making strides toward filling leadership positions with skilled women, gender equality, as a fundamental human right, must be a central component of the overall functioning of Canadian universities (UNESCO, 2013).

Purpose & Research Questions: This research will document the lived experiences of women leaders who are full professors or hold senior leadership positions in universities in Atlantic Canada. The following research questions direct the study: (a) What are the perceived personal and professional supports that assist women in assuming and maintaining a leadership position in a university? (b) What are the perceived personal and professional challenges for women leaders in a university? (c) How does gender influence a woman's leadership identity and behaviors?

Methodology, Research Design, & Data Collection: This qualitative research is located in the constructivist paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011) and from this standpoint, knowledge is not absolute; rather, knowledge is co-constructed between researcher and participant. In order to explore participants' lived experiences, a phenomenological research design will be used (Wertz et al., 2011) and it is the goal of the researcher to locate the *essence* of the experiences from the point of view of the participants. Performing phenomenological research within this paradigm will yield a greater understanding of the lived reality of the participants. Six participants (i.e., full professors or senior administration) in two universities in Atlantic Canada will be asked to participate in two rounds of semi-structured individual interviews (Merriam, 2009), ensuring data saturation (Suter, 2012). Participants will complete a daily leadership log for two weeks, identifying times where they felt supported and challenged. Furthermore, in order to more clearly understand the participants' work context, I will job-shadow each individual for two days while maintaining observational field notes. I will maintain a reflexive journal (Ortlipp, 2008), which will assist me in becoming more aware of personal assumptions and feelings regarding the research, and I will bracket these issues (Fischer, 2009).

Analytical Framework: Women in leadership positions struggle to meet role expectations due to androcentric views of what it means to be a leader (Dean, 2009; Growe & Montgomey, 1999). For this reason, I propose to use the Role Congruity Theory (RCT) as the analytical lens for the research (Eagly & Karau, 2002). RCT purports that women are positively appraised when their characteristics are perceived to align with the requirements of their typical social roles; however, since *leader* is often perceived to be a man's role, women experience incongruity when filling a leadership position. Approaching data analysis using RCT allows for the representation of the participants' experiences as women leaders in the male-dominated realm of leadership within the context of higher education.

Background of Researcher: I am a first-year, full time MEd student enrolled at UPEI in the Leadership and Learning program. This year, I submitted 2 sole-authored papers to peer-reviewed journals. With my supervisor (Dr. Jane P. Preston), I published 1 peer-reviewed article and we have a second co-authored paper submitted to an international peer-reviewed journal. This year, I co-presented at 1 national conference (*CSSE*). In June 2014, I am scheduled to co-present a paper with my supervisor at an international leadership conference (*CCEAM*). In the past 4 years, I have also assumed the position of a Research Assistant for 4 professors, including my supervisor. This extensive research experience has provided me with rich hands-on knowledge related to qualitative and quantitative research and has enhanced my abilities and confidence to conduct quality research in the area of women and leadership.



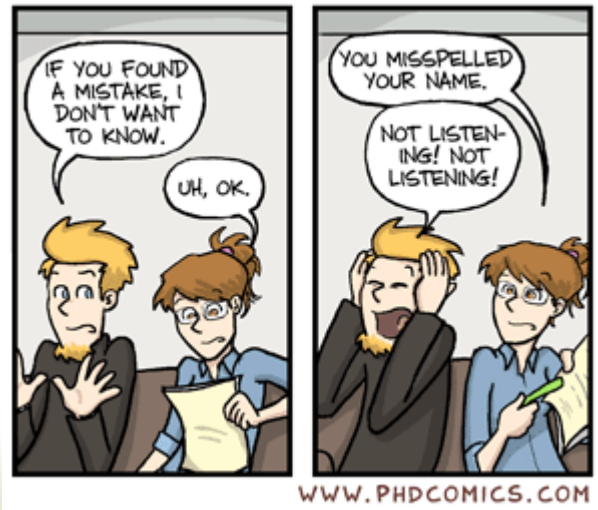
Some characteristics of unsuccessful proposals

- Inadequate or out-of-date literature review
- Project not feasible within the timeframe
- Overuse of technical jargon
- Lack of justification in the plan/methods, e.g.:
  - Sample size
  - Location of study
  - Access to resources, certain populations, etc.
- Originality and significance not highlighted
  - Impact on the field, and broader benefits (to policy, practice, etc.)
- Red flags that are not explained such as gaps in your record

Preparing your application: Referee assessments

- Consider your referees
  - Choose referees that know you well – i.e., can back up assessment with specific examples
  - Ask well in advance of the deadline
  - Have an updated CV ready for them
  - Send a friendly reminder of the deadline
- http://www.universityaffairs.ca/career-advice/career-advice-article/how-to-ask-for-a-reference-letter

Discussion Question: What are some strategies that you can use to improve your chances of a successful application?



Discussion summary:

•Find other students who are applying for the scholarship and work together

• Have others from outside your discipline review your application

• Give your referees time to prepare, and provide them with the guidelines, selection criteria, and your CV

• Consider the criteria that the reviewers are looking for and prepare your application with this in mind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