



FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN PSYCHOLOGY

6.18.2019

AFTER GRADUATION OPTIONS

- Full-time research
 - Lab manager, research assistant, research coordinator...
- Graduate school
 - Terminal master's
 - PhD — clinical, developmental, cog sci...
 - PsyD — clinical

SHOULD I GO STRAIGHT INTO GRADUATE SCHOOL?

- Determine your interests (and disinterests)!
 - Read!
 - Gain a variety of research experiences!
 - Take advantage of your options (honors thesis, directed studies, poster presentations, etc)
- Research positions at any level are competitive so make sure you take advantage of any opportunity you have!
 - How competitive are they?

FULL TIME RESEARCH

- How do I find these positions?
 - CogDevSoc listserv**
 - Networking
 - Emailing PIs
- Application Requirements
 - CV, cover letter, and 2-3 references
 - Other materials: transcript/projected graduation information
- Not all lab manager/RA jobs are the same!

LAB MANAGERSHIP QUESTIONS

- What are the differences in full time research positions? Does one look better on an application?
- How specific should your research interest be in alignment to a lab management position?
- What should I look for in a lab manager position?
- What if I don't do any research and teach instead? Does that hurt my chances of getting into graduate school?
- Is there anything you wish you knew before you became a lab manager?
- Do you regret taking off time to be a lab manager? Or not doing a Masters?

GRADUATE SCHOOL

- Terminal Master's
 - 1-2 years
 - General psychology vs. specialized fields
 - \$\$\$
- PhD
 - Master's along the way
 - 5-7 years
 - Research degree
 - Clinical, developmental, cognitive...
 - \$\$
- PsyD
 - 4-5 years
 - Clinical applications, less research
 - \$\$\$

GRADUATE SCHOOL APPLICATION COMPONENTS

- Transcript
- CV
- GRE scores
 - Clinical programs require Psychology subject test (April, August, October, and November)
- Personal Statement/Statement of Purpose
- 3 Recommenders
- Other materials: Diversity statement (UC/public schools), writing sample

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ALEXIS SMITH

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EDUCATION

BA in Psychology

Boston University, Expected May 2018

Cum Laude (GPA 3.54)

Honors Thesis: **The Role of Social Influences in Children's Decision Making**

RESEARCH AND CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Boston University Developing Minds Lab

PI: Melissa Kibbe, PhD

Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, Boston University

Honors Thesis

September 2016 - Present

- Under the supervision of my PI, Dr. Melissa Kibbe, and Dr. Peter Blake of Boston University's Social Development and Learning Lab, I am working on my honors thesis, which investigates the effects of peer decisions on children's own decision making. I designed a paradigm in which 4-to-10-year-old children were given information about how other children valued and used resources, and examined whether they interpreted and used this information to make decisions about resources for themselves. I constructed four experiments, each examining different contexts that may affect a child's decision to use their peer's choices to influence their own decisions. I presented the results of the first two experiments at the 2017 Cognitive Development Society conference (Smith, Blake, & Kibbe, 2017). Further, I have begun the manuscript for these experiments in which I will be first author (Smith, Blake, & Kibbe, in prep).

Head Research Assistant, May 2017 - Present

- As head research assistant, I implemented a new training procedure for new research assistants. I am responsible for hiring research assistants and maintaining daily lab operations including organizational needs as well as study execution. I also maintain recruitment relationships with various child developmental organizations and the Boston Museum of Science. I support communication with our lab's postdoc, graduate students, and other staff in the Psychological and Brain Sciences department. My other responsibilities include maintaining our recruitment database and participant information, updating the lab's website, coordinating lab orders, utilizing the Open Science Framework to register studies, and reviewing any of our undergraduate research assistants' funding applications through the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program.

Research Assistant, January 2016 - May 2017

- As a research assistant in the Developing Minds Lab, I conducted studies with children, ages 5 months to 10 years old, concerning working memory, mathematical cognition, and social development. As a research assistant, I was in charge of recruiting families using public birth records, the Boston University Child Development Labs database, and recruitment events for the projects I was working on. I also coded data using software, such as jHab, iMovie, and PrefLook. During weekly lab meetings, I participated in discussions of current research in the cognitive development field, critiques of journal articles, and the current status of ongoing research in the lab.

Boston Child Study Center

Clinical Assistant

Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) Clinic

March 2017 - Present

- As a PCIT clinical assistant, I attended weekly clinical rounds where we discussed case conceptualization and evaluated family treatment progress. Additionally, I observed

2012 - 2016

Spring 2015

Summer 2014

2014 - Present

Summer 2013

2013 - Present

2012-2016

2012-2013

2014 - 2016

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problems

Summer 2014

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d RWJMS

2013 - 2014

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d behavioral
ng SPSS

THE CV

- College only!
- Education background including GPA
- Research/clinical experience (including summer internships!)
- Any other **relevant** activities
- Awards, honors, funding (UROP, Phi Beta Kappa)
- Have lots of people read it!
- Save old drafts and title them with the month and year so you know when they're from (ASmith_CV_May 2018)
- Can be more than one page!!!

HOW MUCH RESEARCH IS ENOUGH RESEARCH?

- Quality over quantity
- Breadth of research

THE GRE

- Take the GRE when you have 2-3 months to study regularly
 - Recommended books: ETS book for practice problems, Princeton Review for familiarization of test
 - Above 80th percentile is great!
 - 4 free score reports when you take it, \$27 for each report after
 - \$195 for test, \$150 for subject test
 - Fee waiver for low income students

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE/PERSONAL STATEMENT

- A summary of research and goals + who you want to work with
- Include
 - Relevant experience
 - Your research and interests
 - How you can add to your potential advisor's work and the department as a whole
 - What's your ultimate goal (should be research based)

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

- In an ideal world: 3 people who can speak to your research abilities
- Most common: 2 people who can speak to your research or clinical experience, 1 who can speak to your academic ability
- Should not be: a supervisor in a non-academic job, personal reference, etc.
- Recommenders should know you well! Ask your recommenders if they think they can write you a **strong** recommendation.

WHAT TO SEND TO RECOMMENDERS

- Make it easy for them
- Excel sheet with the school, program, due date, and how to submit.

1	Developmental Psychology (Ph.D.)								
2	School	Faculty Member	Faculty Research Interest	Deadline	Research Lab	Method	Directions	Contact Info	Notes
3	USC	Henrike Moll	Dr. Moll studies social cognition in infancy and early childhood. Her work is particularly concerned with the emergence of joint attention and the question of how children come to learn that objects can be viewed from different perspectives and can be placed under various concepts.	November 15th	https://domsife.usc.edu/	Electronic	Once invited, the recommender will receive directions on how to upload their letter.	USCinfo@liaisoncas.com	
4	Rutgers	Vanessa LoBue	Dr. LoBue is interested in the development of infants and young children in multiple domains, including emotional, cognitive, and perceptual.	December 1st	https://www.childstudyce	Electronic	Once invited, the recommender will receive directions on how to upload their letter.	gradprogram@psychology.rutgers.edu	
5	UC Irvine	Nadia Chernyak	Dr. Chernyak's research interests lie in the realm of the development of social cognition in infants and children (e.g. morality, prosocial behaviors, and interpersonal interactions)	December 1st		Electronic	Once invited, the recommender will receive directions on how to upload their letter.	WebMaster@grad.uci.edu	
6	UC Merced	Alexandra Main	Dr. Main's research focuses on social and emotional development of children and adolescents within the family context. Specifically, she is interested in the development of empathy and emotion regulation and how these processes are shaped by temperament, family, and culture.	January 15th	http://faculty.ucmerced.edu	Electronic	Once invited, the recommender will receive directions on how to upload their letter.	gradadmissions@ucmerced.edu	This application has not opened yet, once it opens I'll send the invitation to upload your letter.
7	Virginia Tech	Julie Dunsmore	Dr. Dunsmore's interests include parents' emotion socialization and its influence on children's developing social cognition, affective social competence, and prosocial behavior	December 1st	http://www.psyc.vt.edu/	Electronic	Once invited, the recommender will receive directions on how to upload their letter.	grads@vt.edu	
8	UT Dallas	Jackie Nelson	Dr. Nelson's research examines parent-child conflict interactions and how mothers' and fathers' experiences at work, home, and in relationships are related to interactions with their children.	December 1st	https://www.utdallas.edu	Electronic	Once invited, the recommender will receive directions on how to upload their letter.	psychological.sciences@utdallas.edu	
9	Penn State	Erika Lunkenheimer	Dr. Lunkenheimer's research program revolves around risk and protective processes in the parent-child relationship, with the dual goals of (1) understanding how mother-child and father-child interaction patterns contribute to developmental psychopathology and (2) uncovering malleable relationship processes that could aid in the tailoring and improvement of preventive intervention programs for families at risk.	December 1st	http://pcd.la.psu.edu/	Electronic	Once invited, the recommender will receive directions on how to upload their letter.	erp3@psu.edu	Recommenders will only receive an email once I have completed and submitted the application. I will try to do that by November 15th. Please let me know if sooner is better.
10									
11									
12									

BEFORE YOU APPLY

- Make a list of programs and faculty you want to work for and identify at least two other faculty members in the department whose research interest you
 - Read!
 - Who's doing the work you want to do?
 - Typical range 7-10
 - Once you have your list, reach out to them and see if they're accepting students*

CONTACTING ADVISORS

- Ideal time: September - October
- Include
 - Who you are
 - Quick 1-2 sentence research summary
 - Why you're interested in them (Was there a recent paper? Is it their current research?)
 - Ask if taking students* and if they'd be willing to speak with you about their research
 - Attach CV
- If they respond and are taking students, see if they'll Skype with you or meet with you at an upcoming conference (e.g. CDS)

CONTACTING ADVISOR QUESTIONS

- What if they aren't taking students?
- Is it risky to work with new faculty members?

GRADUATE SCHOOL APPLICATION TIMELINE

➤ Summer

- Personal statement, GRE, make long list of schools, update CV
- HAVE PEOPLE READ YOUR STATEMENT AND CV!!
- Decide if the NSF GRFP is the right fit for you

➤ August - September

- Edit personal statement, shorten list, contact advisors, decide on recommenders + ask for letters
- Optional: work on GRFP proposal

➤ September - October

- Edit personal statement, check in with recommenders (do they need anything?)
- Optional: work on GRFP proposal

➤ October - November

- Work on tailoring personal statement to specific programs
- Send transcripts, GRE scores
- Start applications
- Submit: GRFP proposal

➤ November - January

- Submit applications

AFTER APPLYING

- **December - January**
 - Interview invites go out
 - Sometimes it's a first round Skype or phone call
- **January - early March**
 - In-person interview days
- **Late February - early April**
 - Decisions go out (also for the GRFP)
 - Deadline to decide April 15th

WHAT DO I DO NOW?

- Read!
- Talk to everyone you can in all different disciplines
- Volunteer based on your interests
- Build relationships early!
- Apply for funding and conferences whenever you can
(undergraduate travel grants, directed study funds, anything that you're able to!)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- Is there any advice you were given after the application process or something you learned along the way that you wish you knew before hand?
- What's the most important part of your application?
- How specific does your interest have to be in order to apply to graduate school?
- How does funding work?
- What if you don't get into graduate school or a lab manager position?
- How does cross-department collaboration work? (i.e. what if you're interested in the combination of two very different things? How does this effect the application process?)

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- How do you talk to professors when you're not an expert in their research?
- How much do undergraduate classes factor into the application process? Not GPA, but the actual course.

AFTER YOU GET IN QUESTIONS

- How does funding work?
- What are classes like? What types of classes do you take?
- When do you start working on your dissertation?
- How does life change when you enter grad school?
- What is teaching like in graduate school?

OTHER RESOURCES

- Purdue University Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>
- Mitch's Guide to Applying to Clinical Graduate School: <http://www.unc.edu/~mjp1970/Mitch's%20Grad%20School%20Advice.pdf>
- APA Applying to Graduate School: <http://www.apa.org/education/grad/applying.aspx>
- APA Careers in Psychology: <http://www.apa.org/careers/resources/guides/careers.aspx>
- APA Accreditation (important for clinical programs): <http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/>
- Grad School Guru: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/grad-school-guru>

INTERVIEWS

THE INTERVIEWS

- You will interview with many people: grad students, post-docs, faculty that you didn't apply to work with
- Reimbursement varies across programs and schools
- Send thank you emails within 24 hours even if you're exhausted - draft ahead of time!

INTERVIEWS: QUESTIONS TO PREPARE FOR

- Tell me about yourself.
- If you're not accepted into graduate school, what are your plans?
- Why did you choose this career?
- Why did you choose to apply to our program?
- What other schools are you considering?
- In what ways have your previous experiences prepared for your graduate school?
- What do you believe your greatest challenge will be if you are accepted into the program?
- Describe any research project you've worked on. What was the purpose of the project, and what was your role?
- How will you make a contribution to this field?
- What are your hobbies?
- Explain a situation in which you had a conflict and how you resolved it. What would you do differently? Why?
- Describe your greatest accomplishment.
- What are your career goals? How will this program help you achieve your goals?
- What skills do you bring to the program? How will you help your mentor in his/her field of research?
- Why should we take you and not someone else?

INTERVIEWS: QUESTIONS TO ASK YOU POTENTIAL ADVISOR

- What is your mentoring style?
- How does one earn authorship in this lab?
- How do students select research topics for their own thesis/dissertation, and what role do you play in this process?
- What role do you see me having in this lab if I come here? Would I work on a specific grant?
- What types of jobs have graduating students from the program received in the past few years?
- Are your students typically funded through a research or teaching assistantship? Are there opportunities for summer funding?
- What opportunities are there to get involved in research collaborations with other labs?
- To what extent can my interests as a student be incorporated into the broader interests of your lab? How much would I be expected to carry out an existing line of research?
- What supports exist in the department for students wishing to write their own grants?
- What are the current projects in this lab, and in what directions do you expect the lab research to go over the next five years?
- Come up with specific questions about the program and your mentor's research!

EXTERNAL FUNDING

NSF GRFP

.....

- 3 years of full funding (2,000 awarded, ~12,000 applications)
 - Personal Statement & Graduate Research Statement (together, address bigger goals of federally funded grants)
 - 3 Reference Letters (can include more and rank them)
 - Transcript (think about this if you are applying before receiving grades in grad school!!!)
- Intellectual Merit & Broader Impacts (this is a federal grant; these portions are very important)
 - advancing knowledge within & across field(s) (hinges on the perceived ability that you can carry out this work)
 - proposed research benefits society/advances society (concerns you as a “model citizen,” not just your research)

The applicant has had two substantive research experiences: one in her undergraduate program at Cornell and one post-bachelors as a research coordinator. These experiences have lead to a number of publications and presentations that is very strong for her career stage. Grades from undergraduate study are not as stellar but this appears to be due to a heavy workload while in college and the choice to pursue a pre-med track. All letters of reference strongly endorse the applicants capabilities to excel in graduate school and in a research career. The proposed research is clearly and concisely outlined with testable hypotheses and predictions. It is a logical but novel extension of ongoing work in the PhD mentor's lab. The results have the potential to further our understanding of very early learning mechanisms, opening up additional, follow-up questions.

The applicant was a good citizen in her undergraduate institution, she was the president for the Association for Students of Color. She continued her social involvement work while being at Barnard and now she is doing outreach at Hopkins. There is no doubt that she can become a model for other students.

This application proposes to study the role of surprise in learning for infants. The applicant's academic record is not ideal, although the courses taken by the applicant were challenging. She has a strong research background and has the necessary training to carry on the proposed research. Her references also offer strong evidence of the applicant's potential for success.

OTHER

PsyD

- Less competitive application process than a PhD
- Is not funded
- 4-5 years
- First four years is an integration of classwork and fieldwork
 - Concentration options - specialization
- Fifth year is an APA internship
- Post-Doc
- Licensure