

# EXPAND PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

A NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION RESEARCH TRAINEESHIP (NRT)

Volume 1 / Issue 1

April 27, 2021

## GET IN THE KNOW... LEARN THE EXPAND LINGO

**NSF**- National Science Foundation

**NRT**- NSF Research Traineeship

**GSCI**- Mnemonic for interdisciplinary life science graduate courses

**Trainee**- any graduate student that participates in EXPAND opportunities

**Trainer**- faculty advisor working with EXPAND trainees

**IDF**- Interdisciplinary Doctoral Fellowship

**Fellows**- stipend graduate students from one of programs (IDF or NRT)

## 6 MONTHS IN, AND WE'RE MOVING FORWARD

As many of you know, back in September 2020, a group of faculty from the life sciences received a five-year National Science Foundation (NSF) research training grant. This grant establishes the EXPAND NRT program. The overall goals are to 'expand' a) the conceptual breadth of science, b) career and professional development opportunities for graduates, and c) the diversity of the UVA science community and scientists.

To get this grant off the ground, in the middle of a pandemic while navigating the virtual world, has been no easy feat. However, EXPAND is happy to share some of their successes.

- Hired a Program Manager, Christa Poindexter. When we return to grounds, Christa's office will be in PLSB Rm. 420
- Supported life science departments' recruitment efforts at national events (SACNAS & ABCRMS) and individual department recruitment days
- Engaged in listening tours with departments to learn about collaborative opportunities
- Held two program launches for faculty and students
- Created Program Curriculum Design committee
- Developed plans for new courses in the fall

The EXPAND PI team developed an [Interdisciplinary Doctoral Fellowship program \(IDF\), Reintegrating the Phenotype, with support from the College of Arts &](#)

[Sciences](#). The IDF will help enrich the development of EXPAND's commitment to diversity and interdisciplinarity. This Fall, EXPAND welcomes three IDF first year graduate fellows.

## 2021-2022 REINTEGRATING PHENOTYPE IDF FELLOWS

**Myles Davoll**

Biology

Advisor: Bob Cox

**Clara Sthalmann Roeder**

Biology

Advisor: Butch Brodie

**Taylor Hinton**

Psychology

Advisor: Jess Connelly

## NEW COURSES COMING FOR FALL 2021

EXPAND has developed three new courses for enrollment this Fall.

### **GSCI 8520, Integrative Studies of the Phenotype; Fall 2021**

Description: This course will explore case studies of research on phenotypes that emphasize the insights and advances gained by bringing a multilevel integrative approach to a target question. Students will be introduced to inferences possible when a problem is attacked across the spectrum of mechanistic to ultimate causes. Students will learn to apply this perspective to their own research topics by developing a research proposal that expands across levels.

Instructors: Butch Brodie and Ari Pani

### **GSCI 8540, Career Design for Life Sciences (1sc); Fall 2021**

Description: This course uses a student-centered approach to explore the diverse careers available to life science PhD students. Students will identify their skills and experiences that match with professional opportunities, and they will develop a career individual development plan (IDP) to guide their career planning. This class is open to all life science PhD students after their second year in their program. This class is part of the PhD Plus Career Design series.

Instructors: Sonali Majumdar and Deborah Roach

### **GSCI 8560 Professional Transitions Seminar (1sc); Fal2021**

Description: Students will develop the necessary skills and realistic plans for finishing their dissertations and acquiring a position. Career materials, e.g., website, curriculum vitae, cover letter, research description, teaching portfolio, and summary of professional experience, will be developed. A concurrent writing group that provides support, technical skills and discipline for dissertation writing and manuscript submission will be established.

Instructors: Laura Galloway

## 2021-2022 NRT FELLOWS ANNOUNCED!

EXPAND offers one-year fellowships to graduate students in the life sciences with a priority to those conducting interdisciplinary research on the phenotype. Fellowship support is intended, in part, to allow time flexibility for students to participate in an internship with the goal of exploring career options.

This year's applicant pool brings a diverse pool of fellows with research and career interests incorporating the Phenotype across the life sciences.

Congratulations to everyone! EXPAND looks forward to working with the fellows and their advisors over the next year.

## 2021-2022 NRT FELLOWS

### Biology

- Chris Robinson
- Taylor Nystrom

### BIMS

- Merci Best

### Environmental Sciences

- Kelsey Huelsman
- Clare Rodenberg

### Psychology

- Andrew Graves

### **Chris Robinson**

Advisors: Bob Cox & David Parichy



### **Taylor Nystrom**

Advisors: Alan Bergland & Sarah Siegrist



### Andrew Graves

Advisors: Jamie Morris & Jess Connelly



### Merci Best

Advisors: George Bloom & James Mandell



### Kelsey Huelsman

Advisors: Howie Epstein & Xi Yang



### Clare Rodenberg

Advisors: Kyles Haynes & Douglas Taylor



## EXPAND IS WORKING WITH AN EXTERNAL EVALUATOR

All NRT recipients must work with an external evaluator to evaluate various metrics of the program's development, implementation, and outcomes. EXPAND has partnered with Magnolia Consulting, a local woman-owned business to support evaluation efforts. Carol Haden (evaluator) will be working closely with Christa and they will reach out to stakeholders over the course of the grant with requests to participate in data collection activities.

## WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

EXPAND wants you to get involved. Below are several ways to get involved. Opportunities to contribute to EXPAND are not limited. If you have ideas, the EXPAND leadership team welcomes your contributions and looks forward to future collaborations.

### Faculty

- Mentor an EXPAND trainee
- Encourage your students to participate in EXPAND sponsored opportunities
- Host EXPAND trainees in your lab
- Connect EXPAND to former students in non-academic careers
- Teach a course, facilitate/attend an EXPAND seminar, or lead/attend an experiential workshop
- Join an EXPAND NRT Committee

### Students

- Take EXPAND sponsored courses
- Apply for funding support: fellowships, internship, professional meetings

- Participate in Career and Professional Development events and workshops
- Support outreach and recruiting events
- Join advisory panel

## WHAT'S NEXT?

The EXPAND team is working hard to moving the grant forward. There are plans for the following:

- Development of committees, including external advisory panel
- Hosting Fall-Kickoff (hopefully in-person)
- Fall Orientation for new fellows

## CONNECT WITH EXPAND

- Follow EXPAND on Twitter: @ExpandUva
  - Check out website for latest information: [expand.virginia.edu](https://expand.virginia.edu)
  - Email: [expand@virginia.edu](mailto:expand@virginia.edu)
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