



Environmental Science & Policy Graduate Student Association

ESP-GSA
Orientation
Fall 2021

**ENVIRONMENTAL
SCIENCE & POLICY**



Welcome!





Who are we?



Chelsea Gray,
President



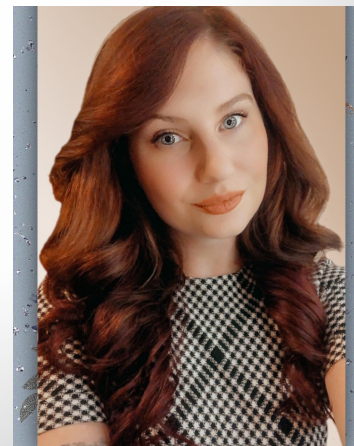
Sarah Weber,
Vice President



Daya Hall-Stratton,
Secretary



Sam Mohnhey,
Treasurer



Megan Gisonda,
Student Rep



ESP Department Vision



In the next decade, the Department of Environmental Science and Policy will be a major force academically and professionally focused on understanding and implementing the science and policy of biodiversity conservation, sustainability of water and watershed ecosystems, and the application of the one health approach to ecological and social interactions, and sustainability.

Our graduates are highly qualified and sought-after individuals making important contributions to solving complex environmental issues that challenge the integrity and sustainability of global systems through research, transdisciplinarity, and engagement. Our faculty are internationally recognized for their innovative research and their outreach and communication to the public and private sectors.



ESP Department Mission



Environmental Science and Policy is an interdisciplinary department spanning the domains of the natural and social sciences.

- We strive to provide diverse learning experiences using state-of-the-art research facilities, diverse field sites, and nationally recognized research grants.
- We offer flexible programs in undergraduate and graduate environmental studies to accommodate traditional and non-traditional students.
- We are committed to the creation of an academic culture of mutual respect and intellectual collaboration to foster truly productive interdisciplinary research approaches that better mirror the environmental problems we seek to address.
- Our graduates and faculty are active in the formulation and implementation of policies and solutions in government, industry, and nonprofit organizations.



Keanah Turner

Espgrad@gmu.edu



- ESP Graduate and Undergraduate Programs Coordinator
- Office: David King 3039 (virtually for now)
- Invaluable resource!
- Advice:
 - Meet with her once/semester to verify paperwork, credits, progress in your program, etc.
 - Point of contact to set meetings up with Dr. Ahn



Other “who’s who” of ESP



- Keanah Turner: ktur2@gmu.edu- Undergraduate/Graduate program coordinator
- Dr. Changwoo Ahn: ESP Graduate Program Director – Oversees graduate student advising.
- Dr. Alonso Aguirre: ESP Department Chair
- Dr. Esther Peters : ESP-GSA Faculty Advisor
- List of faculty, staff, and affiliate faculty: <https://esp.gmu.edu/faculty-staff/>



ESP Department and Degree Program



- Familiarize yourself with the ESP website
 - General page: <http://esp.gmu.edu/>
 - Forms and policies:
<http://esp.gmu.edu/academic-programs/graduate/forms-and-policies/forms/>
- Review the guidelines/timelines and other documents here:
 - <http://esp.gmu.edu/academic-programs/graduate/forms-and-policies/guidelines/>
 - Very important information about paperwork, policies, degree progression, etc.

ESP Graduate Student Annual Report



- New MANDATORY graduate student annual report
 - Due annually by September 1
 - Is now a fillable online form. Can be found here:
<https://science.gmu.edu/academics/departments-units/environmental-science-policy/graduate-programs/graduate-student-annual>
- Returning Students Only



ESP-GSA: Our goals



- Foster a sense of community
- Increase communication with faculty, the department, and the College of Science
- Advocate for graduate student interests and concerns
- Plan social and academic extracurricular activities for graduate students, faculty, and staff
- Offer resources for graduate students
 - Travel Grants, funding for professional memberships in societies/associations
 - Postings: jobs and funding opportunities



Events



- ESP-GSA Happy Hours & Social Hours
 - Monthly (Virtual for now)
 - See email/facebook for announcements
- Other events TBD (announcements will follow)
 - Holiday Party (usually at a nearby restaurant)
 - End of Year Event (usually at a winery)



<https://science.gmu.edu/academics/departments-units/environmental-science-policy/graduate-programs/esp-gsa>



GMU ESP GSA



Coffee/Happy Hours



- Thursday Sept. 2 at 4pm at Oh George's. Ask for Sarah Weber.
- We're open to your suggestions for online activities
- We will be planning mostly online events, due to shifting health/safety requirements



<https://science.gmu.edu/academics/departments-units/environmental-science-policy/graduate-programs/esp-gsa>



GMU ESP GSA



GSA membership



- Membership dues are payable by cash or check made out to “George Mason University”, with “ESP-GSA” in the note section
- This semester: Cash or check can be mailed directly to Sarah Weber, dropped off in our mailbox, or mailed to the ESP office at:

Department of Environmental Science and Policy, **MSN 5F2**, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030-4444



<https://science.gmu.edu/academics/departments-units/environmental-science-policy/graduate-programs/esp-gsa>



GSA membership



- Dues: \$10 for semester, \$20 for full year
- Membership provides you with access to conference grants, professional membership grants, and catering for thesis/dissertation defense
- Dues fund events and support grants for members



<https://science.gmu.edu/academics/departments-units/environmental-science-policy/graduate-programs/es-p-gsa>



GMU ESP GSA



Travel Grants



- \$250 to attend conferences
- Applications due Oct 1st, 2020 and April 1st, 2021 to Cgray21@gmu.edu (see our website for details)
 - For Oct 1st deadline, conference should be 10/28 or later
 - For April 1st deadline, conference should be 5/5 or later
- Applicant must be an ESP-GSA member (dues paid) and attend at least **one** of our events
- GSA may have own funds to assist in travel, please apply with GSA if your conference doesn't fall within this deadline.



<http://esp.gmu.edu/students/graduate-students/esp-gsa-club/>



Travel Grants



- Costs are reimbursed **after** travel through the Student Funding Board
- Funds need to be requested **before** money is spent
- Students who receive funding are responsible for managing paperwork (with our help) in a timely manner or funding will not be allocated
- Seek other sources of funding, including the Graduate Student Travel Fund and volunteer opportunities



<http://esp.gmu.edu/students/graduate-students/esp-gsa-club/>

Professional Membership Awards

- Current and active GSA members are encouraged to apply for a professional membership award.
- This award will provide funding for one year of membership or a maximum of \$40.
- Applications reviewed on October 15th and April 15th annually.
- <https://esp.gmu.edu/students/graduate-students/esp-gsa-club/#ProfMembership>

Thesis Defense Catering

- Current and active GSA members that are defending their master's or doctoral thesis are encouraged to inquire about our catering services.
- Application found here:
<https://esp.gmu.edu/students/graduate-students/esp-gsa-club/#ThesisCatering>
- The deadline to apply will vary by applicant, as applications are due at least 2 months prior to the defense date.



Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation (SMSC) Courses



- Courses are 1-2 week intensive residential programs held throughout the year
- offering 1-3 graduate credits
- at SCBI in Front Royal, Virginia

<http://smconservation.gmu.edu/upcoming-courses/>



Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation (SMSC) Courses



- Tuition scholarships for **graduate courses offered by the Smithsonian-Mason School of Conservation at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI)** are now available! Note that funds will NOT cover the housing and dining package.
- Funding will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis.
- Preference will be given to students who are GTAs/GRAs.
- Application instructions can be found at:
 - <http://esp.gmu.edu/academic-programs/graduate/courses/>



Funding Opportunities



- Teaching Assistantship
- Research/Professional Assistantship (through your advisor or an office on campus)
- Presidential Scholarship/Provost's Award for incoming students (not offered every year)
- Provost office also provides limited funding for:
 - Dissertation completion grants
 - Summer stipends (for PhD candidates)
 - See website for more:
provost.gmu.edu/graduate-education/grad-ed/



Funding Opportunities



- Office of [Research Development](#)
- Office of [Graduate Fellowships](#)
- List of [fellowship opportunities](#)
- Online [database of fellowships](#)
- Questions about external funding?
- Contact Dr LaNitra Berger
(lberger2@gmu.edu) in the fellowships office
and/or Akitta Robertson (arober17@gmu.edu)
for the grad Ed awards



Webinar Service



- You should have your own [zoom](https://zoom.us) account.
Login via your GMU ID.
- It can be used for: seminars, committee meetings, orientations, GSA workshops, other relevant events
- A user guide is available on our website
<https://esp.gmu.edu/students/graduate-students/esp-gsa-club/>
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Graduate Handbook



- Environmental Science and Policy Department
Graduate Handbook:

<https://science.gmu.edu/academics/departments-units/environmental-science-policy/graduate-programs/guidelines>

This document is maintained and updated by the GSA. If you want to add something to it, please let us know! (cgray21@gmu.edu)



Graduate Handbook contents



- Graduate Policies
- Mason ID
- MyMason
- Textbooks
- Libraries
- Health Services
- Important Forms
- Student Organizations
- Financial Aid
- Teaching Assistantships
- Graduate Student Resources
- Smithsonian Courses
- Transportation
- Housing
- Dining



Graduate Policies: Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area



- Students enrolled in a degree program may take graduate courses at **another accredited institution** and apply these credits to a master's or doctoral degree with prior approval
- First semester students are not eligible for registration in this program
- A max. of 6 consortium credits can be taken
- George Mason Consortium students pay the George Mason tuition rate



Mason ID



- Free **Cue Bus** Rides
- Discounts and/or priority seating at certain **Patriot Center events**
- **Library card** for GMU & the Washington Research Library Consortium
- Free entry into **Fitness Centers** on campus
- **Photo copying** and computer lab **printing**

& MORE...



Websites

MyMason



- List of week's events & announcements
- Access to:
 - Masonlive (e-mail)
 - Patriot Web (self-service)
 - Blackboard (class resources)

<https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>



Websites

Patriot Web



- Independent webpage
- A self-service website for students
 - manage personal information
 - register for classes
 - view transcripts,
 - review charges & make payments
 - apply for and review status of financial aid

<https://patriotweb.gmu.edu/>



Websites

Blackboard



- A tool that allows faculty and teaching assistants to post class resources
 - readings
 - homework
 - class grades
- Not all professors use it



Websites Environmental Science & Policy



- Abstracts
 - MS Theses
 - PhD Dissertations
- Forms and Policies
 - Forms
 - Guidelines
 - Important Dates
- Graduate Courses
- Graduate Programs

<http://esp.gmu.edu/>

...and more!!



Textbooks



- GMU bookstore
 - Buying or renting textbooks
 - Supplies
 - Clothing
- Library
- Other online providers



Libraries



- Two libraries on Fairfax campus
 - **Fenwick** (north of campus center near the quad)
 - **Johnson Center (JC)**, (second floor on the south side of the building)
- Offer workspace carrels - need to reserve online in advance
- Website: <http://library.gmu.edu/>



Library Workshops



- Zotero
- Writing Groups
- Library Skills
- Library Tours
- Website: <http://library.gmu.edu/>



Libraries Liaison Librarian



- Collaborates with students and faculty, instructs classes, and provides one-on-one research assistance

Helpful science librarians:

- [Kathy Butler](mailto:kbutle18@gmu.edu): kbutle18@gmu.edu
- [Kimberly Hoffman](mailto:khoffma@gmu.edu): khoffma@gmu.edu



Libraries Thesis & Dissertation Service



- All theses and dissertations have to be in a **specific format**
- Workshops are offered
- **Sally Evans**, University Dissertation & Thesis (UDTS) Services Coordinator
 - Fenwick Library, C203



Libraries **ZOTERO**



- A citation management program (GMU's version of Endnotes)
- It is strongly suggested that you start using and familiarizing yourself with Zotero now as **you will be using it for your thesis or dissertation.**
- Workshops are offered

<http://www.zotero.org>



Important forms



- **Environmental Science and Policy website**
under “Forms and Policies”:
<http://esp.gmu.edu/academic-programs/graduate/forms-and-policies/forms/>
 - ESP Graduate Blooms Evaluation Form
 - required for doctoral proposal defense, master’s thesis defense, doctoral dissertation defense
 - <https://esp.gmu.edu/academic-programs/graduate/forms-and-policies/forms/>
- **Registrar’s site:**
 - <https://registrar.gmu.edu>



Your bio on the ESP page



- There is a space for your bio on the ESP page:
- <https://science.gmu.edu/academics/departments-units/environmental-science-policy/meet-our-students>
- If you would like to update your bio, please email the text of your new information to Cgray21@gmu.edu
- Follow the format of the existing bios on this page:
- We will send these updates to the web manager



ESP Seminars



- Special guest lectures on campus
- Student presentations
 - open to any grad students
- Lightning talks
- See ESP emails for scheduling/announcement
- All virtual!



ESP Social Media



- [Comment box](#)
- Facebook –
 - Our page (request to join and we will add you) <https://www.facebook.com/groups/espgsa>
 - Departmental page:
<https://www.facebook.com/ESPMasonU/>
- Twitter @ESPMasonGSA; @ESPMasonU
- Instagram @georgemasonesp (dept page)
- Follow for information about events, seminars, funding opportunities, etc.



Graduate and Professional Student Association (GAPSA)



- A GMU wide group that attempts to unite graduate and professional students across the university
- The GAPSA website is very helpful for general information about this area, housing, transportation etc.
- Graduate Student “Travel” Fund (\$50 - \$1000)
 - <http://gstf.gmu.edu/>



Stearns Center for Teaching and Learning (formerly CTFE)



- Professional development opportunities for graduate students
- Free courses (competitive admission):
 - [PROV601](#): navigating through grad school
 - [PROV701](#): navigating the job search
- Offer other workshops and events throughout the year and other teaching resources

<http://stearnscenter.gmu.edu>



Writing Center



- [Weekly write-ins](#)
 - Fridays 9:30am to 1:00pm in the JC Library
 - A quiet space to focus on writing
 - Currently on zoom
- [All day write-in](#)
 - Fall 2020: Saturday, November 7, 8:30am-5:00pm
 - Deadline to register is October 26
 - In person and online
- Writing Assistance/Tutoring services
writingcenter.gmu.edu



OSCAR



- Office of Student Scholarship, Creative Activities, and Research
- OSCAR provides funds for undergraduate researchers to work with graduate researchers on a competitive basis
- See website for more details:

<http://oscar.gmu.edu/>



Journal of Mason Graduate Research



- Publish in or review for a peer-reviewed journal for GMU graduate students!
- <http://journals.gmu.edu/jmgr>



Open-Access publishing



- Mason offers an Open Access Publishing Fund to cover the costs of publishing in an open access journal
- Grad students are eligible
- Up to \$3,000
- See stipulations on [their website](#)



Graduate Student Life



- Many workshops, events, opportunities for free food!
- Upcoming:
 - [Gradstravaganza](#)! Aug 21, 9:00-4:00PM
 - [Workshops](#)
 - Graduate school reading strategies
 - Overcoming procrastination
 - Strategies for concentration
 - See their website for more

<http://gradlife.gmu.edu/>



Parking and Transportation



- See this website for parking information
- <http://parking.gmu.edu/>
- Transportation
- <http://transportation.gmu.edu/>
- The DC Metro: <http://wmata.com/>
- Check the repairs schedule (Safe Track) for delays and shut downs:
<http://wmata.com/rail/safetrack.cfm>?



Fitness at GMU



- Fitness centers, classes, personal training:
- <https://recreation.gmu.edu/fitness/>

Questions?

