

NEXUS: 2019 Interdisciplinary  
Studies Graduate Conference

*wicked* PROBLEMS  
AND  
INTERDISCIPLINARY  
SOLUTIONS

*We can't solve it. How do we move forward?*

Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Program  
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# About the Conference

*wicked* problems cannot be solved. Incomplete, contradictory, or evolving information makes it impossible. Like a spiderweb, no single element can be teased apart without taking everything into account. The more we learn or do, the more we change the problem or come to understand how little we know. So, where do we start?

This conference creates a space for interdisciplinary and cross-campus dialogue and elevates opportunities to reclaim the complex problems that cause us to fail, and the failures that challenge us to succeed.

To address our own *wicked* problem of communication and engagement across disciplines, we asked our presenters to move away from traditional academic or discipline-specific presentation formats. Morning presenters will explore their learning and share innovative strategies gained from interdisciplinary and solutions-oriented projects. Afternoon speakers will bravely share their own failures in an effort to embrace risk-taking and creativity as necessary components of graduate research. The skill-building workshop will support students and faculty in their efforts to meet wicked problems head-on.

Look around the room.

You'll notice interactive activities inviting you to share your ideas. We built breaks into the schedule so that you have time to engage with these elements and contribute to this ongoing conversation. Your perspectives will enrich the learning in the room throughout the conference, and help us plan other interdisciplinary initiatives that best reflect your experiences. As you look around the room, you'll notice that you're not here alone.

A *wicked* problem of academia is that it can be siloed and isolating. So, we made some interdisciplinary friends and mentors for you. All you have to do is introduce yourself.

*Go on...it's okay.*

# 2019 Conference Team



*emergent methodologies,  
action research, ethics*

**Maya Lefkovich (Co-chair)** is a 4<sup>th</sup> year Ph.D. candidate in Interdisciplinary Studies at UBC. Her research explores collaborative and anti-racist strategies for digital storytelling in journalism and health research. She is a Public Scholar at UBC and holds a Master's degree in Public Health from the University of Toronto. Maya firmly believes in taking risks in research – especially when it means challenging disciplinary conventions for scholarship. Maya's favourite way to fail is in pottery, where everything is destined to crack, smooch, topple, and explode anyway. Anything that survives is a win!



*arts-based research, ethics,  
implementation science*

**Jennica Nichols (Co-chair)** is a Ph.D. candidate in Interdisciplinary Studies at UBC. Her research focuses on research-based theatre as methodology to do knowledge translation and promote public scholarship in ethical and innovative ways. She holds a Master in Public Health (Epidemiology, Global Health) from the University of Toronto (2012) and the Credentialed Evaluator designation from the Canadian Evaluation Society (2015). Jennica enjoys collaborative and reciprocal approaches to research, teaching evaluation, scuba diving, camping, the Washington Capitals, and hole-in-the-wall restaurants.



*rationality, empathy,  
embodiment, Human Rights*

**Dr. Barbara Weber** is the Director of the ISGP program, an Associate professor in the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and an Associate of the Philosophy Department at UBC. Dr. Weber has a PhD in Philosophy, Psychology and Education from the Ludwig-Maximilian University (LMU) in Munich, Germany. During her graduate studies at LMU she worked as a performance artist, choreographer, and dancer of ballet, German expressionist dance, Bharatanatyam and Butoh. In her performance works, she combined poetry and philosophical aphorisms with embodied 'answers' conveyed through the dancer's movements.



**Enid Ho** is the ISGP program coordinator (and the best advocate, support system, and motivator for ISGP students). After finishing her Bachelor of Arts degree in Art History at UBC, Enid worked with international students in a Vancouver language school, and spent some time in Europe, submerging herself in the world of art and ancient civilization. Shortly after returning to Vancouver, where she calls home, Enid joined the Faculty of Education, providing guidance to graduate students on program admissions and awards. Enid brings with her a wealth of knowledge on UBC policies and procedures.

*This conference was made possible with help from peer-reviewers and volunteers, including Nevena Rebić, Msc Candidate, who generously helped to coordinate volunteers and logistics.*

# Schedule

- 8:30 am – 9:00 am Registration  
Morning engagement activities
- 9:00 am – 9:25 am **Welcome**  
*Barbara Weber, ISGP Director*  
**Opening Remarks**  
*Maya Lefkovich & Jennica Nichols, Co-Chairs*
- 9:25 am – 10:25 am **Case Studies**  
How do you use interdisciplinary approaches to address wicked problems in your work?  
  
Sarah Shamash  
*Indigenous film and video, Brazil, Decolonize*  
  
Darielle Talarico  
*deliberative democracy theory, the gamification of civic engagement practices*  
  
Linda Horianopoulos  
*fungal pathogenesis, Microbiology, Molecular Biology*
- 10:25 am – 10:40 am **Morning Break**  
*(enjoy the coffee, try out an activity, and make a new friend)*
- 10:40 am – 12:00 pm **Case Studies Continued**  
  
Júlia Clímaco  
*rare diseases, motherhood, experience*  
  
Evelyn Elgie  
*asexuality, deconstruction, poethics*  
  
Linda Strubbe  
*astronomy, science education, developing countries*  
  
Shenaz Shahban  
*wellbeing, governance + policy, strategic design*
- 12:00 pm – 12:05 pm **Morning Respondent**  
*Dr. Barbara Weber*
- 12:05 pm – 1:00 pm **Lunch**  
*(enjoy the food, stretch, try another activity, make another friend)*

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

### Failing Forward

How have you failed (at addressing a *wicked* problem) and what interdisciplinary learning did you gain?

Dr. Tamara Vanderwal

*brain development, movies, dynamics*

Naseeb Bolduc

*philosophy, ethics, teamwork*

Surprise Professor

Gil Barros

*design toolkits & agile methods, distributed cognition in design*

Surprise Professor

2:00 pm – 2:15 pm

### Afternoon Break

*(maybe decaf, find a surprise activity, make a third friend)*

2:15 pm – 3:15 pm

### Failing Forward Continued

Maria Chen

*animal welfare, human-animal relationships, ethics*

Surprise Professor

John Ames

*emotion, articulation, symbol*

Surprise Professor

Dr. Tamara Vanderwal

3:15 pm – 3:30 pm

### Afternoon Break

*(maybe switch to tea, take some time to reflect, hang out with all your new friends)*

3:30 pm – 4:30 pm

### Workshop: Communication your Research Effectively to Diverse Audiences

Kaylee Byers

*wildlife health, urban ecology, human-wildlife interaction*

4:30 pm – 4:50 pm

### Afternoon Respondents

*Rena Del Pieve Gobbi (poetic respondent)*

*Dr. Barbara Weber*

### Closing Remarks

*Maya Lefkowich & Jennica Nichols, Co-chairs*

5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

### Social at Gallery Lounge

*(cheers to all your new friends, and debrief the day)*

# Case Study Bios and Abstracts

**Sarah Shamash** | *Indigenous film and video, Brazil, Cinema Studies, decolonize*

Sarah Shamash lives on the unceded and ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil Waututh First Nations. She is a media artist and PhD candidate in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program at UBC. Her doctoral research is on Brazilian Indigenous film and video. She writes on, researches, and teaches film studies and film culture; she also programs films for the Vancouver Latin American Film Festival. Her work as an artist, researcher, educator, and programmer can be understood as interconnected and whole; they all revolve around a passion for cinema in all of its plurivocality.

In this presentation, I will share my doctoral research on the Video in the Villages project, a non-governmental organization in Brazil, founded by the French Brazilian activist Vincent Carelli in 1986. Through an overview of my dissertation and methods of inquiry, I will be discussing some of the questions, complexities and issues I encountered: positionality engaging with Indigenous cultural objects such as films; how to contribute to the field of cinema studies and Indigenous media in a meaningful way; how to apply anti-oppressive research methods; how to decolonize cinema studies. Using an interdisciplinary lens which considers visual and representational sovereignty (Raheja, Rickard, Graham) as an overarching framework (based in Native American Indigenous art and film theory), I argue that film and video are cosmopolitical technologies that are unsettling established conceptions of nature and culture, of politics and representation, both on and off-screen. By means of my scholarly analysis of VNA and contemporary Brazilian Indigenous media as well as my background as a filmmaker and film programmer, I interrogate cinema's potential for decolonizing the imaginary and the currently western centric cinematic canon and field of Film Studies in a hemispheric dialogue between Abya Yala to Turtle Island.

**Darielle Talarico** | *deliberative democracy theory, the gamification of civic engagement practices*

Darielle Talarico is an interdisciplinary Ph.D. student at UBC Okanagan who is interested in deliberative democracy theory, civic engagement practice, and ecology. Her thesis research will address ethical decision-making, political theory, and the use of online civic engagement tools. Darielle has a Bachelor of Science in Zoology (Hon.) from UBC, and a Master's of Science (Education) from SFU. Before starting her Ph.D. Darielle had an extensive working career addressing a variety of public policy issues in Canada's north.

Deliberative democracy has inspired the use of a variety of public participatory processes, including the involvement of citizens in the discussion of wicked problems, such as climate change. One form of practice called the deliberative mini-public involves citizen-to-citizen exchanges that are facilitated problem-solving and decision-making exercises. This process, however, is confined to small numbers of people and has limited ability for mass public participation. By deliberation, I mean listening to differing views and perspectives to gain a form of mutual understanding to set the context for civic and public policy problem-solving and decision-making. However, without a mass accessible facilitation tool like the deliberative mini-public, citizens must navigate on their own the influences of in-person and digital forms of news, opinion pieces, and sponsored events. In my research, I theorize there is an epistemic gap that situates between experts and the public with regards to wicked problems. Not that experts know best, but that the public is disadvantaged from gaining a deeper understanding of wicked problems similar to that achieved by public policymakers. In response, I am researching the use of an online gamification tool that might mimic the in-person facilitation process of a deliberative mini-public to enable mass online public deliberation of wicked problems.



ADMITTED TO UBC!

Linda Horianopoulos | *fungus pathogenesis, microbiology, molecular biology*

I'm a PhD candidate working on a human fungal pathogen called *Cryptococcus neoformans* which causes meningitis in over 200 000 individuals each year. This fungal disease presents an interesting challenge as the drugs used to treat it are limited and have many side effects, furthermore the inability to diagnose it early results in a need to administer antifungals for upwards of a year! I am working on understanding what is going on in the cell that allows this fungus to establish infection and cause disease so that new targets for drug development can be identified.

In my research I try to figure out how certain proteins contribute to a fungal pathogen's ability to cause disease. This usually requires me to let whatever I observe guide what my next experiments will be. Throughout this process, I have come across certain research questions which have required me to conduct experiments that my lab did not have expertise in. In my efforts to answer these questions and conduct these experiments I often received the most insights and help from unexpected sources. This ultimately resulted in setting up a new collaboration with a lab in Germany. The take home message from this experience for me is to talk to others about the problems you are facing in your research. Make no assumptions about who can and can't help you find the answers because you may miss out not only on finding the correct solutions but also on exciting opportunities and formative experiences. In my experience, the old adage "A problem shared is a problem halved" can be extended to say that a problem shared was a problem solved!

Júlia Clímaco | *rare diseases, motherhood, experience*

Psychology bachelor at the University of Brasilia (2005), master degree in Social Sciences and Education at FLACSO/AR (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, Sede Argentina). Experience in Psychology and Social Sciences, with emphasis on Disability Studies, Feminisms and Cultural Psychology, working mainly with Rare Diseases, Motherhood Studies, Gender and Feminisms. Currently a PhD student in the Postgraduate Program in Human Development Processes and Health and a visiting scholar at the W. Maurice Young Centre for Applied Ethics, UBC, supervised by Dr. Susan Cox. Science and Technology Analyst at CNPq, working with Psychology and Social Service areas

This presentation will discuss a venture to study narrative motherhoods and self-interpretations of women who had children with Tay-Sachs, a rare neurodegenerative disease that causes death in early childhood with no acknowledged cure. Its diagnosis is given as a death sentence so when mothers receive their children's diagnosis of Tay-Sachs, they have to transform the meanings they had so far known as motherhood, for its main narratives are stated towards the future: caring for your children so they may live long and fulfilling lives. This can only be done in an interdisciplinary way, and here I attempt to balance medical anthropology and sociology with developmental and cultural psychology. The main problem is to find ways to balance their peculiar stories with the social norms, without pathologizing their experience or rendering the social discourses over determinant, that is, find ways to analyse these experience without falling into two common paths when discussing motherhood: overemphasising the truth and knowledge web that produces compulsory mothers trapping women in the private domain of care work; and, on the other hand, naturalizing the care and love invested in the relationship of a mother and her child in over psychologising ways. Thus, only alternating between these two extremes may we begin to understand their own meaning making with the grammar their positionality provides them.

**Evelyn Elgie** | *asexuality, deconstruction, poethics*

Evelyn Elgie is a queer settler-culture Canadian. She is a poet, writer and editor whose work deals with landscape, embodiment, and dislocation. As a Master's student at the Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice, her current research is focused on asexuality, the split-attraction model, and essentialist discourse surrounding (a)sexuality as identity, as well as gendered understandings of intimacy and family structures. As a white settler descendant, Evelyn is working to become more informed and aware of her own intersectional privileges, while at the same time attempting to create space for different kinds of queer and asexual voices.

City of Fountains is an ongoing poetry project geographically tracing Vancouver's fountains through a poetic reflection on difficult knowledge. City of Fountains aims to explore the tensions that I and my peers, as students of social justice and carriers of difficult knowledge, feel as we balance our internalized and normalized beliefs against the truths we are learning. It is a lens through which I interrogate my own privilege and perspective as a white settler-culture Canadian, and attempt to think about my own complicity in the colonial and capitalist project, as a settler living in a major Canadian city on unceded Musqueam territory. Using multiple media, the project aims to externalize the weight of colonial complicity through poetry, tracing Vancouver's geography via a poetic engagement with its fountains. When we speak of carrying difficult knowledge, or engaging with our own complicity in it, we often use water-evocative terms; drowning, sinking, washing over me. Even the idea of difficult knowledge itself often seems to be fluid. The works of poetry that make up the body of the project take up this fluidity in their transformation, turning the knowledge that weighs us down into something to carry us forward.

**Linda Strubbe** | *astronomy, science education, developing countries*

Linda's interest in astronomy was sparked star-gazing with her dad in middle school; she went on to earn her Ph.D. in theoretical astrophysics from UC Berkeley studying black holes. Along the way, Linda became interested in science education particularly in developing countries, which led her to shift career directions and become a Science Teaching & Learning Fellow at UBC (until July 2018). Linda now happily wears several science education hats: Physics Education Researcher with Kansas State University, Educational Consultant for the University of Central Asia, and Co-Director for an astronomy summer school in West Africa. She still loves to star-gaze!

Central Asia is a stunning region of the world with beautiful high mountains and significant development challenges. The new University of Central Asia (UCA) spans Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, with a mission to promote social and economic development in the region through higher education. UCA's model is to partner with recognized Western universities to create Western-style curricula to be taught by UCA's international faculty. This model brings exciting opportunities and also challenges. Take physics — How do you tailor a Western-style curriculum to the educational and cultural background of Central Asian students? And how do you bring together a diverse international faculty around a common vision of teaching? I will tell you my story of working on these two questions, combining my background in astrophysics with my more recent work in education research.

**Shenaz Shahban** | *well-being, governance + policy, strategic design*

Shenaz is a PhD student committed to improving the lives of ordinary Canadians. She researches how Canadian federal policy can improve psychological well-being for citizens and has developed the Federal Settlement Platform™. This matters because it can help restore Canada's place globally, as an innovator in peace and human solutions.

This case study will illustrate how an interdisciplinary approach was used in qualitative research, and how it was successful in addressing the wicked problem of refugee well-being services.

One thing I know now that I wish I knew when I started...



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To:  
The next generation of  
interdisciplinary graduate  
students

# About ISGP (Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Program)

The main purpose of the ISGP is to enable qualified graduate students to pursue advanced interdisciplinary research exceeding the provisions of existing departmental programs. There are no restrictions regarding the topic and in many cases the student draws upon expertise from several distinct faculties. ISGP is designed only for a highly motivated and superb student who can steer an independent course. It facilitates neither avoidance of academic/administrative requirements in extant graduate programs nor operates to recruit outstanding candidates in pursuit of a particular definition of interdisciplinarity.

The Interdisciplinary Studies Graduate Program at the University of British Columbia was established in 1971, the first of its kind in Canada. It is one of the only Canadian programs to offer doctoral degrees in interdisciplinary studies, and is possibly one of the largest of its kind in North America. That said, almost every university hosts and fosters interdisciplinarity so that something comparable can be found across the map. Indeed research centres and/or graduate programs in such fields as genetics, women's studies, applied ethics, health and society, cultural studies, etc. are commonplace. Moreover most if not all academic researchers are interdisciplinary to one degree or another. This is no more or less true for someone in engineering, information studies, or mathematics, as it is for a scholar in sociology or philosophy. But few universities explicitly recognize the kind of unbounded interdisciplinarity that is offered by ISGP, whereby a student can bring together three seemingly unrelated fields from across disparate faculties. They might, for example, combine law, medicine and anthropology, or music, psychology, and electrical engineering. In principle, there are no restrictions on the combination, provided the research project is well motivated and grounded in a sufficient training in each subject.

The program in its early stages was motivated by two desiderata: to allow and facilitate the creation of new subfields, and to serve those students who wished to combine one or more existing disciplines in their advanced research efforts. There was a time, fifty or so years ago, when such a program might have been needed to pursue biochemistry, astrophysics, or comparative literature.

More recently, the program has helped spawn many separate programs, such as Women's Studies, European Studies, and First Nations Studies. As students continue to find hitherto unoccupied interstices on the frontier of knowledge, there is the potential that these too will one day become recognized programs, research centres, or even separate departments. At its boldest and broadest reach, ISGP serves to bridge the two cultures of science and art, or more precisely, the four cultures of the physical sciences, life sciences, social sciences and humanities. Students must thus be highly motivated, to take their research beyond recognized boundaries, or cultivate new methods and techniques. One of the hardest tasks that they face is not the actual combination of subjects per se but the professional barriers that separate disciplines erect. They must in effect learn to be ambassadors, to learn new languages, both to learn from each community, and to carry their message abroad. To be interdisciplinary, students must first know several disciplines on their own terms, and then find the ways and means to establish links and validate new discoveries.

In the Program as it now exists, the prospective student has to bring together three or four qualified faculty from different departments or units. Because there are no constraints on which fields are brought together, there are virtually no two students in the same sub-field. Students must also have a home department, which in principle gives them full citizenry in terms of access to financial and physical resources (if these are available in their designated Home Department). Students are also strongly advised to be strategic about their post-doctoral placement, since most must find a job in an existing more traditional field.

Learn more at [www.isgp.ubc.ca](http://www.isgp.ubc.ca)

# Failing Forward Bios and Abstracts

**Dr. Tamara Vanderwal** | *brain development, movies, dynamics*  
(Failing Forward Session Chair)

Dr. Tamara Vanderwal is originally from Vernon, BC. She attended medical school and graduate school at Yale University before moving back to BC this past summer. In addition to practicing as a child psychiatrist, she runs a neuroimaging lab that focuses on the use of "naturalistic stimuli" such as movies to study functional brain responses to complex, dynamic conditions. Her lab is committed to open science endeavours, and to fostering interdisciplinary collaborations. Her work on science and art has been shown at MoMA Studios in New York City and at the Imagine Science Film Festival in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Failures in academia are as much a part of the landscape as successes, but they are harder to discuss, and certainly harder to incorporate into our academic narratives and identities. This session will attempt to define failing and failures in a useful way, and to provide a framework for thinking about and dealing with failure in one's academic development. In particular, I will talk about my own failure-ridden publication saga, and my resultant belief in incrementalism. Throughout the session, we will try to glean ideas for approaching failure that might help contribute to academic growth and sustained personal satisfaction. The goal is not to glorify or candy-coat failure, but to name, engage with, and discuss it.

**Naseeb Bolduc** | *philosophy, teamwork, ethics*

Naseeb is a first-year MSc student at the UBC School of Population and Public Health. She completed her bachelor's degree in philosophy, and her research interests are at the intersection of public health and philosophy, which includes public health ethics and the philosophy of medicine and science. She is currently involved with the SSHRC Insight project "Distinct Concepts of Diversity and their Ethical-Epistemic Implications for Science", lead by Dr. Daniel Steel at the W. Maurice Young Centre for Applied Ethics at UBC.

Thousands of rural communities in Chiapas, Mexico, rely on river water for drinking and agricultural purposes. One of these rivers is the Rio San Vicente: a river that receives pesticide and herbicide runoff, and travels beneath a large landfill before being used by 137 communities. Through a partnership between UBC, a local NGO, and the San Vicente River Conservation Committee, an interdisciplinary group of students was sent to conduct qualitative research to learn about the values, desires, and consequences faced by some of these communities due to the pollution of the Rio San Vicente. This group of students was meant to visit 12 communities over 13 weeks to conduct individual interviews and focus groups, in order to produce a report that could be used by the River Conservation Committee. This did not happen. As a member of this interdisciplinary team, I'll present the challenges and barriers that led to this failure, including language barriers, cultural misunderstandings, and poor communication between stakeholders involved in this research. I'll also talk about the unexpected ways our team was able to succeed despite these challenges: our diverse experiences, skills, and disciplinary knowledge allowed us to make a meaningful contribution to the river conservation effort, despite our failure to produce a report. I'll conclude by talking about how we grew as people and as researchers by failing together, as an interdisciplinary group.

**Gil Barros** | *relation between design toolkits and agile methods, distributed cognition in design processes*

Gil Barros is a licenced architect in Brazil and assistant professor at FAUUSP - Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, University of São Paulo, Brazil. He holds a degree in Architecture and Urbanism from FAUUSP (1999) and a master's degree in electrical engineering from Poli-USP (2006). He completed his PHD and conducted postdoctoral research at FAUUSP, focusing on the use of physical and conceptual models as support tools for the design process.

The objective of this presentation is to demonstrate a real-world situation where a clash between design and management perspectives made evident the need for better interdisciplinary exchange when dealing with wicked problems. It will be describe as a story and illustrated with images from the project. While working as a designer lead I presented a screen mock-up and a project schedule on a first meeting. Four weeks later I presented an evolution of these products and the manager of the project made two significant complains: a) he couldn't understand why I was still working on a screen which seemed "finished" before, and b) the structure of my schedule changed frequently, so he couldn't predict how my team was evolving. This demanded that I "translated" design methods into management logic, and eventually led me to some important research questions for my PhD and recent research. Based on this situation I plan to illustrate: 1. Project failure: being used to several iterations in design practices, I didn't expect that other stakeholders would find it unnatural, and that it would cause problems for them. 2. Key lesson learned: not only I didn't expect the negative impact, I didn't anticipate that I had to justify something I took for granted, as the iterations were considered ineffective and pointless. 3. This situation made me modify my relation to the design process in ways that non-designers can participate and understand how they can contribute in more interesting ways.

**Maria Chen** | *Animal welfare, human-animal relationships, ethics*

My name is Maria Chen and I am an animal welfare researcher who uses qualitative research methods to understand people working with animals. My goal is that through research, we can find better ways to improve the welfare of people and the animals they work with. I have previously examined laboratory users' perceptions of rats, dairy farmers plans to improve calf welfare, and mahouts' (elephant guardian) relationship with elephants

My presentation will focus on the wicked problem of respectfully working with communities from a different culture. Last summer, I had the chance of working with mahouts (elephant guardians) and Asian elephants in a Karen hill-tribe in Northern Thailand, in order to understand the unique relationship between these mahouts and their elephants. During this project, I had to obtain informed consent through written documents, and I failed to consider how this method of obtaining consent was inappropriate for the local culture. I will explore how I went about working with the local people with good intentions but in an unsuitable way, and how we can learn from this experience for future interactions with people from different cultures.

**John Ames** | *emotion, articulation, symbol*

John has taught literature at Simon Fraser University and the University of Alberta, and worked in the BC government public sector. He has also researched and taught labour education and rights with the BC Government and Service Employees' Union and served as Trustee with the Pacific North-West Labour History Association. As a BC teacher, John is presently completing a doctoral study in special education, as well as helping to foster urban forest learning with the Vancouver Park Board and Champlain Heights Community Association. John is a Companion of the Guild of St. George, a charity founded by John Ruskin in 1871 for the improvement of society through the arts, crafts & rural economy.

Conventional writing strategies focusing on form over content for children with developmental delays often lack student emotional buy-in and efficacy. Through a non-conventional approach of visual and performative storytelling instruction and place-based learning, classroom observations revealed increased levels of student engagement, creation of authentic play-based storytelling, and greater emotional investment motivating student writing improvement.

## Workshop

### Finding Your Message: Tools to Communication your Research Effectively to Diverse Audiences

**Kaylee Byers** | *wildlife health, urban ecology, human-wildlife interaction*

Kaylee Byers is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies. A self-proclaimed "rat detective", her thesis is part of the Vancouver Rat Project ([vancouverratproject.com](http://vancouverratproject.com)) and involves studying the risks posed by rats to human health, with a particular focus on understanding urban rat ecology and rat-human interactions. Kaylee is a passionate Science Communicator. She is the co-founder of Nerd Nite Vancouver, a monthly seminar-style series which provides a venue for scientists and artists to share their passions with the community.

Effective communication is necessary to share your work. However, engaging diverse audiences can be challenging. How do you share your work? Who do you share it with? How do you convince them to care? In this interactive workshop, we will cover two important areas of communicating your research effectively. First, we will talk about finding your message, that inner kernel of knowledge that you want to share and shout from the rooftops. Second, we'll practice sharing that message with different audiences and discuss how your choice of audience can impact your approach. Throughout the workshop we will work together and in small groups to identify and overcome issues in the messaging of your own work, and we will identify your own next steps to telling your story.

## Poetic Respondent

**Rena Del Pieve Gobbi** | *resilience: anti-stigma: higher-education*

Del Pieve Gobbi is a second year Interdisciplinary studies PhD Student at the University of British Columbia. Her research is in psychiatry, psychology and education working to raise resilience for student with mental health disabilities in higher education. Del Pieve Gobbi brings experience in mental health, in fine arts and storytelling to bear in her work creating a curriculum for use in her research. Del Pieve Gobbi is the editor of the ISGP student run journal. In 2016 she worked under Dr. Leslie Roman to teach a photography course to students with disabilities culminating in an exhibition: Insight's Unseen and Unheard: 'our UBC' and in 2017 presented "When Mental Health and Education Collide: there is no reason to stoop Dancing" at the 5th EDCP Graduate Students Conference: The Tangle and/or Tango of Curriculum and Pedagogy.