Executive Board
Declaration of Candidacy
2014 - 2015

Name: Sharon Young  Department/School: Anthropology / Liberal Arts

Office sought:  ○ President  ○ Vice President  ○ Secretary  ○ Treasurer

Please list any relevant experience/qualifications for the position:
(GPSA experience, student government, extracurricular activities, or other interests).
I have been involved in the GPSA for the last 4 years, for 2 years as the Anthropology
Department representative on the council, and for 2 years on the GPSA Executive
Board. I served as the Vice President for one and a half years, during which time I
served as the acting president for two months during the President's absence, and for
the last 3 months as the current GPSA President. As such, I have become very familiar
with the role of GPSA on the UNLV campus, the role and responsibilities of the GPSA
President, and have had the opportunity to represent and advocate for graduate and
professional students in various capacities. During my tenure on the GPSA Executive
Board, I have served on over 15 GPSA, Graduate College, and campus-wide
committees and have worked hard in support of UNLV graduate and professional
students. In addition to experience with the GPSA, I have held leadership roles in
other campus organizations including 3 years as the Secretary/Treasurer of the
Anthropology Honor Society and 2 years in the UNLV Hormones and Disease Group.

Please explain why you are interested in serving in this position:
Over the past four years that I have been involved with the GPSA, I have seen the
positive impact that this organization has on graduate and professional students. This
experience not only enabled me to give back to the UNLV community that I care about,
it also provided valuable experience working within a university system, and taught me
leadership skills. As next year's GPSA President I will continue to support graduate &
professional students and advocate for their interests, while simultaneously honing my
own leadership skills and professional development. As current GPSA President, I am
well-prepared to continue leading the GPSA and working for UNLV student success.

Please attach letter of support from your faculty advisor to the application.
Graduate and Professional Student Association
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
4505 Maryland Parkway
Las Vegas, NV 89154

April 3, 2014

Dear GPSA Officers, Representatives, and Student Members,

I write this letter in the fullest possible support of Sharon Young’s re-election as your association’s President. Sharon is currently a seventh-year PhD student in our department and a person with whom I have worked extensively over the last five years. She has been a student of mine in a number of courses and seminars and I am also the chair of her graduate advisory committee. I have also been fortunate enough to have her serve as my teaching, research and lab assistant, and more recently, research collaborator. Thus, I know Sharon very well and can offer the association a well-informed evaluation of her academic abilities, accomplishments and relevant skills and experience that have made her such an outstanding GPSA Vice President.

Sharon is a friendly and exceptionally bright and dedicated graduate student. She has excelled in her graduate studies and is fully engaged in her scholarship, as evidenced in her peer-reviewed publication record, grant writing/awards, research forum and professional conference presentations, and in professional development and service activities offered through our department, the university, and professional organizations. Indeed, Sharon’s intellect, professionalism, dedication, and skill set make her much more of a junior colleague of mine than a graduate student in training.

Sharon is currently conducting her dissertation research. Her PhD project focuses on maternal health issues associated with a rare but growing postnatal practice of some new mothers – placentophagy – or the ingestion of the placenta after parturition. Beyond her dissertation research, one of the things that is most impressive about Sharon’s work as a PhD student is the breadth of her research interests and the number of interrelated projects on which she has previously worked, and is currently working. At present she is actively involved in lab-based research on human placental tissue (i.e., including hormonal, nutritional, and toxicological analyses), and experimental studies with human subjects investigating the visual and olfactory appeal of placenta. Findings from these projects have already been presented at several professional conferences, in some cases as papers in sponsored, invited sessions which Sharon co-organized. Still other research findings, from projects on which Sharon has taken key roles, have been published in peer reviewed journals – including a recently published survey of mothers who have previously engaged in placentophagy – that significant regional and national news media coverage. It is incredible to me that despite the demands of the work outlined above, Sharon still finds the time and energy to participate in (and publish) research on immunotoxicology in other laboratories on campus, and cross-cultural pet research with a colleague in my own department, in addition to her demanding responsibilities as GPSA Vice President. It is worth noting that Sharon also gladly ‘filled in’ for the GPSA President last academic year during extended periods of unavoidable absences during the fall semester. Finally, I would hasten to add that her extraordinary service as GPSA Vice President was recognized with a special service award at last year’s GPSA Research Forum awards ceremony.
In closing, it is on the basis of Sharon's personal qualities, her demonstrated abilities and commitment as a graduate student, and her professionalism that I enthusiastically recommend her to you as GPSA President. The GPSA has been, and will continue to be incredibly well served by a President with all of the qualities and skills possessed by Sharon Young. I strongly encourage you to support her candidacy.

Sincerely,

Daniel C. Benyshek, PhD
Associate Professor
Department of Anthropology
UNLV
Sharon M. Young

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Department of Anthropology
Las Vegas, NV 89154-5003
Office Phone: (702) 895-5231
Email: smith232@unlv.nevada.edu

Academic Background
2010-Present  PhD, In Progress, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Research Topic: An Investigation of the Effects of Human Maternal Placentophagy on Postpartum Affect, Health and Recovery

2007-2010  M.A., University of Nevada, Las Vegas, NV, Anthropology
Research Topic: In search of human placentophagy: a cross cultural survey of human placentas, disposal and beliefs.

2003-2005  B.S., Magna Cum Laude, University of California, Riverside, CA, Anthropology
Senior Research Topic: A comparison of Homo floresiensis to pygmy mammals and modern human dwarfs to determine the possibility of a dwarf species.

Professional and Academic Interests
Biocultural Anthropology, Human Reproductive Ecology, Evolutionary Toxicology, Women's Health, Human Placentophagy, Nutrition, and Evolutionary Medicine

Professional Experience
2012  Instructor, Summer Advanced Gifted Education (SAGE) Program, Honors College, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
- Designed the course, People, Plants, and Animals, and monitored and instructed advance middle school students.
- Created course assignments, in class activities, lab-based projects, and field trips.
- Created and graded quizzes and assignments.

2010-2012  Graduate Research and Teaching Assistant (Strategic GA), Anthropology Department, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
- Instructor for ANTH 101, Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
- Engaged in human placentophagy research for the following projects:
  - Placental Tissue Analysis: Participated in protocol design, participant recruitment, sample preparation, sample analysis
  - Olfactory and Visual Appeal of Human Placental Tissue: Participated in protocol design, participant recruitment, ran experiments with participants
  - Effect of Human Placentophagy in Postpartum Women, Internet Survey: Participated in protocol design, survey design, analysis of results
- Monitored and instructed students in physical anthropology lab
- Created and graded exams and quizzes

2008-2010  Graduate Assistant, Anthropology Department, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- Teaching Assistant and Grader: Assisted students with course material, assisted course instructor in administration of exams, and graded exams and assignments

2008  Graduate Assistant, Women’s Studies Department, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. January - May
- Editor of department newsletter
- Assisted in planning, coordinating and publicizing events
- Transcription of verbal interviews to written documents

2005-2007  Long Term Substitute Teacher, Etiwanda School District, Etiwanda, California
- Prepared Lesson Plans
- Taught students individually and in small and large groups
- Managed classrooms of up to 30 students

- Excavation
- Artifact Analysis
- Assisted in writing Field Report

Research Experience
2008-2013  Student investigator for ongoing research on human maternal placentophagy, including laboratory-based placental tissue analysis, internet-based survey, experimental research with human participants, placebo-controlled trial, and cross-cultural analysis using database and ethnographic literature sources

2010-2013  Research assistant for laboratory-based experimental immunotoxicology research investigating the health effects of toxic substances and environmental contaminants using rodent models.

2010  Assisted with data collection for behavioral research including questionnaire administration and collection of salivary samples for hormonal analysis

Presentations
Professional Conferences and Academic Forums


2011 Gray, P.B., Escasa, M. and Young, S.M. Peripartum Shifts in Female Sociosexuality American Association of Physical Anthropology Meetings, Minneapolis, MN, April 12th-16th (presented by Peter B. Gray)

2011 Young, S.M., and Gray, P.B. Human Pet Relationships in Cross-Cultural Perspective University of Nevada, Las Vegas Graduate and Professional Student Association Research Forum, Las Vegas, NV, March 6th - 10th, poster presentation


2010 Young, S.M., and Benyshek, D.C. *Human Placenta: From Biohazard to Food and Medicine for Mom* Society for the Anthropology of Food and Nutrition Conference, Bloomington, IN, June 2nd - 5th

2010 Gray, P.B., and Young, S.M. *A Cross-Cultural Perspective on Human-Pet Dynamics* American Association of Physical Anthropologists annual meeting, Albuquerque, NM, April 14th - 17th (presented by Peter B. Gray)

2009 Young, S.M., and Benyshek, D.C. *Human Placentophagy: Maladaptive or Misplaced Cultural Taboo?* Human Behavior and Evolution Society Conference, Fullerton, CA, May 27th - 31st, poster presentation

2009 Young, S.M., and Benyshek, D.C. *Human Placentophagy: Maladaptive or Misplaced Cultural Taboo?* Southwestern Anthropological Association Conference, Las Vegas, NV, April 30th – May 3rd

2009 Young, S.M., and Benyshek, D.C. *Placentophagy: A Universal Human Taboo* University of Nevada, Las Vegas Graduate and Professional Student Association Research Forum, Las Vegas, NV, March 28th, awarded second place prize in poster competition

2005 *Were the Hobbits really human? A comparison of H. floresiensis to pygmy mammals and modern human dwarfs to determine the possibility of a dwarf species.* James C. Young Colloquium, Riverside, CA, February, and Southwestern Anthropological Association Conference, San Jose, CA, April 28th - 30th

**Guest Lectures**

2013 *Grants and Other Funding: What, Where, When?* (with John Crandall) University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Workshop for the Lambda Alpha Society, Las Vegas, NV, September

2013 *Human Placenta as Maternal Medicine* International Academy of Design and Technology, Introduction to Physical Anthropology Course, Henderson, NV, September
2012  *Human Placenta as Maternal Medicine* University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Medical Anthropology Course, Las Vegas, NV, November

2012  *The Emergence and Dispersal of Homo sapiens*, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Introduction to Physical Anthropology course, Las Vegas, NV, November

2012  *How Diet Changed Human History* Trinity International School, Las Vegas, NV, September.

2012  *Investigating Human Maternal Placentophagy* University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Introduction to Physical Anthropology course, Las Vegas, NV, May


2011  *Migration* University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Introduction to Cultural Anthropology course, Las Vegas, NV, April.


2010  *Maternal Placentophagy in Non-Human Mammals* University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Food and Culture course, Las Vegas, NV, September.


2010  *Migration* University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Introduction to Cultural Anthropology course, Las Vegas, NV, April.

2009  *Evolution of Brain and Behavior* University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Introduction to Physical Anthropology course, Las Vegas, NV, November.


Young 5
Organized Symposia


Publications

Peer reviewed journal articles:


Book Chapters


Conference Proceedings:


Young 6

Service

2013 Presidential Student Ambassador

2013 UNLV Anthropology Department Graduate Student Peer Mentoring Program Coordinator and Mentor

2012-2013 Anthropology Department Open House
  - Metabolism, Anthropometry and Nutrition Lab Volunteer

2012-2013 UNLV Graduate and Professional Student Association Vice President, Fall 2012 through Spring 2014
  - Acting president, September – November 2012, December – January 2013
  - Sponsorship Committee Chair
  - Research Forum Chair
  - Government Relations Committee member
  - Graduate College Professional Development Committee member
  - Graduate College Faculty and Student Issues Committee member
  - UNLV Foundation Distinguished Teaching Award Selection Committee member, 2012-2013
  - GPSA Graduate Student Research Brown Bag Series, co-organizer
  - Graduate & Professional Student Commencement Speaker Selection Committee, Fall 2012
  - Commencement Student Marshal, Spring 2013
  - Selection Committee for UNLV Graduate College Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Fall 2013
  - Selection Committee for UNLV Vice President for Research and Economic Development, Fall 2013

2012 Society for Cross Cultural Research
  - Graduate Student Events Committee member
  - Student volunteer for annual meeting, February

2011 Career Day, UNLV Anthropology Department representative, Mannion Middle School, Henderson, NV, December

2011 Ad hoc reviewer, Ecology of Food and Nutrition

Young 7
2010-2012  UNLV Graduate and Professional Student Association Council Member, Department of Anthropology representative
- Grants Committee member
- Research Forum Committee member
- Summer Liberal Arts College representative, 2011

2010-2013  UNLV Student Conduct Hearing Board member

2009-2012  Lambda Alpha Honor Society, UNLV, Las Vegas, NV.
- Secretary/Treasurer, Fall 2009 - Spring 2012

2008-2010  Hormones and Disease Group, UNLV, Las Vegas, NV.
- Fundraising Committee Member
- Newsletter Editor, 2009-2010

Academic and Professional Organization Memberships
2010-2014  American Anthropological Association

2010-2014  Evolutionary Anthropology Society

2010-2012  Society for the Anthropology of Food and Nutrition

2009-2013  Southwestern Anthropological Association

2009-2014  Lambda Alpha Honor Society, UNLV, Las Vegas, NV.

Awards /Scholarships
2013  Graduate and Professional Student Association Sponsorship Award, GPSA at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Amount: $1250.00

2013  Graduate and Professional Student Association Service Award, GPSA at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Amount: $300.00

2012  UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees Research Fellowship, Graduate College at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Amount: $60,000.00

2011  Alumni Association Sterling Award, Graduate College at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Amount: $5,000.00

2011  Dean’s Graduate Student Stipend Award, College of Liberal Arts, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Amount $2,000.00

2010  Graduate and Professional Student Association Travel Grant, Graduate College at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Amount: $690.00
2010 Patricia L. Rocchio Memorial Scholarship Fund for Anthropology, Department of Anthropology, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Amount: $400.00

2010 Graduate and Professional Student Association Travel Grant, Graduate College at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Amount: $580.00

2009 Eleanor F. Edwards and Max Olswang Scholarship Fund for Anthropology – Archaeology, Department of Anthropology, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Amount: $350.00

2009 University of Nevada, Las Vegas Graduate and Professional Student Association Research Forum Social Sciences Poster Competition, Second Place Prize, UNLV GPSA, Las Vegas, NV. Amount: $125.00

2009 Graduate and Professional Student Association Research Grant, Graduate College at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Amount: $750.00

2005 Senior Thesis Research Grant, Office of Undergraduate Research at the University of California, Riverside. Amount: $400.00

2005 Mary G. and Rawley J. Miller Scholarship for Academic Achievement, Department of Anthropology, Chaffey Community College, Rancho Cucamonga, CA. Amount: $5,000.00

2003-2005 Dean’s List, University of California, Riverside, CA

2002-2003 Dean’s List, Chaffey Community College, Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Media Coverage
2013 Fox Channel 5 News, May 8

2013 Fox News, April 4

2013 KNPR State of Nevada, March 7

2013 Las Vegas Sun, March 1

2013 UNLV Magazine, February 27

References
Available on Request