

# GRADUATE COLLEGE TEACHING PROGRAM

Congratulations to  
our incoming cohort  
2016-2017

# BREANNA BOPPRE



Breanna (Bree) Boppre is a second-year Ph.D. student in the Department of Criminal Justice, supervised by Dr. Emily Salisbury. Her current research interests include gender-responsive correctional strategies, racial disparities and cross-national differences in female imprisonment, the implementation of evidence-based practices in correctional agencies, and the effects of emotive trial stimuli on capital jurors' sentencing decisions. Her dissertation research will explore intersectional differences in women's risk factors for recidivism. Her prior research has been published in *The Journal of Ethnicity in Criminal Justice* and *Victims & Offenders*.

# COURTNEY MCDANIEL



Courtney McDaniel is a second-year Master's student in the Communication Studies department. Her research interests focus on how deceptive communication can function as a form of social support within relationships. Courtney's future plans include pursuing a Ph.D. in Communication Studies.

# DAVID ALMANZA-CANAS



David Almanza-Canas is a second-year Master's student in the Department of Communication Studies, supervised by Dr. Donovan Conley, with an emphasis in the rhetoric of national anthems. His thesis research will address the persuasive implications of national anthems, and the importance of music as a cultural, political, historical, and national element. He hopes that by studying the anthems of the United States, Israel, and France, scholarship will gain insight as to how the masses derive and express their national identity through song.



# DAVID J. JOHNSON



David Johnson is a first year Masters student in the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs' Marriage and Family Therapy Program at UNLV. His research interests are varied though he is currently focusing his thesis research on the influence parents' smartphone use has on family systems. Following his Masters education he plans on pursuing a Ph.D. in Marriage and Family Therapy where he can further his research and teaching interests.

# DENISE N. COOK



UNLV PhD Student, Denise N. Cook researches Nonprofit Organizations, Volunteerism, Work and Occupations, Leisure, Culture, and Employee Engagement. Mrs. Cook has demonstrated resiliency in spite of quite a number of challenging life events.

Denise graduated from her alma mater California, State University, Sacramento where she earned her Bachelor of Arts, Summa Cum Laude. She later received her Master of Arts from UNLV.

# DOROTHY VANDERFORD



Dorothy Vanderford is a second-year Ph.D. student in English Literature. Her dissertation advisor is Dr. Evelyn Gajowski. Dorothy's concentration is in early modern English drama, with an emphasis on documenting how Renaissance plays resonate with contemporary culture. She has an additional interest in exploring how the Manhattan Project is presented in literature and drama.



# ERDOGAN KAYA



Erdogan Kaya is a PhD student in science education. He is working as a graduate assistant and teaching science methods courses. Prior to beginning the PhD program, he received his MS degree in computer science and engineering and holds a BS degree in chemical engineering. He coached robotics teams and was awarded several grants that promote Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). He is also interested in improving STEM education for minorities. He has been volunteering in many education outreach programs including Science Fair and Robotics programs such as First Robotics competitions. Over the past four years, he published several journal papers and presented at national and international conferences. Areas of research interest include engineering and computer science education, STEM, 3D printing and robotics in K-12 education. More information can be found at <http://kaya571.wix.com/unlv>



# GABRIEL QUIROZ



Gabe is perusing a master's degree of information science. His research and investigations focus on big data and entertainment technology. He's also involved in developing STEM education programs with Clark County nonprofits.

# JENNIFER GUTTMAN



Jennifer Guttman is a PhD candidate in the department of Educational Psychology and Higher Education with an emphasis in School Psychology. Jennifer received two Masters' degrees from Teachers College, Columbia University in 2011. She served as President of UNLV registered student organization and state non-profit, Student Affiliates in School Psychology (SASP), during the 2015-2016 academic year. Jennifer currently serves as a Doctoral fellow for the College of Education. Her dissertation research will address multicultural competence of school psychologists in Title I schools.

# LINDSAY RUSSELL



Lindsay Russell is a second year Ph.D student in the political science department with an emphasis in American Government Institutions. Her advisor is Dr. Daniel Lee and her research focuses both the gender wage gap in higher education as well as gender disparities in the U.S. Congress. Lindsay focuses on female and minority impact on voter turnout and retention rate in the U.S. House of Representatives. This research is important in understanding and potentially predicting election outcomes in terms of gender and race.



# MALAYKA NEITH CORNEJO



Malayka Neith Cornejo is a second year doctoral student in the Department of Teaching & Learning CSIEME program, advised by Dr. Christine Clark. A former DC teacher and administrator, her concentration is on integrated multicultural curricular design, teacher preparation, culturally responsive instruction, identity formation, and healing modalities. Her research addresses the school-to-prison pipeline, alternative disciplinary practices, Freedom Schools in secure facilities, and the successful community reintegration and passage to adulthood of female youth of color. She currently serves as an Academic Success Coach supporting incoming students with planning, reflecting, goal setting and developing strong academic habits for college & life success.



# MICHAEL CURTIS



- A native of Oakland, CA, Michael Curtis is a first-year M.A. student in the Department of Marriage and Family Therapy supervised by Carissa D'aniello. His thesis research will address the effects of employment in the commercial sex industry on couple functioning. He hopes that by studying commercial sex workers it will provide some insight into the lives of individuals who are a part of the highly marginalized industry.

# REBECCA J. GATES



Rebecca J. Gates is a fourth-year Ph.D. student in Higher Education Administration, advised by Dr. Doris L. Watson. Her dissertation research is focused on policy implications for Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs). Rebecca is interested in the intersection of access and success within the higher education policy landscape.

# SANAE EL IBRAHIMI



Sanae El Ibrahimy is a third-year doctoral student in Public Health with an emphasis in Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the School of Community Health Sciences under the supervision of Dr. Paulo Pinheiro. Her dissertation research examines the association of type 2 diabetes and colorectal cancer risk, stage at diagnosis and survival in elderly Americans using population-based data covering all Medicare beneficiaries living in the Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Results regions. She hopes to advance public health knowledge about the association between these major causes of morbidity and mortality among seniors.



# SHELLY VOLSCHE



Shelly Volsche is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Anthropology, supervised by Dr. William Jankowiak, with an emphasis on subcultural identities, including pet parents and the childfree. She has coauthored papers receiving international media attention, including one of the AAA's Top 10 Downloaded Papers of 2015. She is passionate about teaching and currently teaches COLA 100E, a first year seminar for exploring majors through the Department of Academic Transitions. She looks forward to balancing her research experience with continued education in pedagogy and curriculum development.



# TAYLOR PALMER



Taylor Palmer is a second year M.A. student, and Graduate Teaching Assistant in the Communication Studies Department. Her area of interest falls primarily in the realm of family communication about sexual health. Her master's thesis project, advised by Dr. Tara Emmers-Sommer, examines the impact that parent/child "sex talks" have on a child's sexual risk taking behaviors. She hopes that by examining these communication patterns, researchers can identify the most effective ways of communicating with adolescents about their sexual health in hopes of reducing the rate of sexually transmitted infections in the adolescent population.

# LISA DAVIS



Lisa Davis graduated from UNLV in 1997 with a Bachelor's of Arts in Environmental Studies and continued her education at UNLV, earning her MBA in 1999. She is currently pursuing her PhD in Workforce Development in Organizational Leadership.

Currently the Associate Director of the MBA Program at the UNLV Lee Business School, She has worked in higher education for more than fifteen years. She has an extensive understanding of university mechanics with experience in multiple areas including recruitment, external relations, enrollment and program management. She worked for many years in the Lee Business School undergraduate office as an advisor before moving into the MBA program in 2000. Her experience in both graduate and undergraduate programs allows Lisa to have a unique perspective when assisting students.

Lisa currently serves as the co chair of the UNLV Sustainability Council and an elected Administrative Faculty Council member. Lisa has been a member of the National Association of Graduate Admission Professionals (NAGAP) for over seven years and has served as the 2008 Annual Conference Chair and as the External Relations Chair from 2008 until 2010.

She has a strong sense of community and in association with her interest in environmental studies; she served as the Energy Education Grant Coordinator for the UNLV/Southwest Gas Cooperation from 1998 until 2010. She supports the Super Summer Theatre group, first volunteering in 1999 and eventually serving as board member and Publicity Chair since 2008.

# Yuliya Yurashevich



Yuliya Yurashevich is a second-year M.A. student in the Department of Communication Studies, supervised by Dr. Tara McManus, with an emphasis in Interpersonal and Intercultural Communication. Her thesis research will address communication strategies that Kazakhstani and American students use to maintain their romantic relationships. She hopes to shed the light on the distinctiveness of Kazakhstani students' communication behaviors, which will contribute to the existing literature and facilitate a better understanding of possible ways to improve intercultural communication in general.



# ZHENI ATANASOVA



Zheni Atanasova is an international student from Bulgaria. Currently, she is a third year Doctor of Musical Arts Degree (DMA) student in the School of Music, supervised by Dr. Mykola Suk, with an emphasis in Piano Performance. Zheni has been focused on her piano performance concentration and academic excellence since the beginning of her program. She has various interests in the piano performance field. Her research interests include Eastern European music and its elements implemented in Western Classical Music and more specifically in Bartok's compositional style, and the influence of Gamelan Music in the Music of Debussy.