

January 2021

Welcome back to a new semester! We hope that the winter break was restorative, and that you are ready and eager to get back into the routine of classes, research, and life at Tulane. Though the beginning of a new semester may fill some of you with renewed motivation, we know that others may struggle to find the drive to keep going through another semester of your studies. It is totally normal to have periods of more or less drive and it doesn't mean that you're a bad student or researcher – just that you're human! This month, we've put together a few tips and resources that can help you find (or keep) your motivation.

In the midst of daily work, classes, teaching, responsibilities at home, and everything else that you're doing, it's easy to lose sight of your initial goals. Take a few minutes to think back to the time when you were applying for graduate school or your postdoc and what questions piqued your interest. Write down broad topics from your research that excite you so that you can easily reference them the next time your motivation wanes. Use those topics to create small, achievable goals for the days, weeks, and months ahead. While you're considering what your goals are, think about when you do your best work, what kind of schedule works best for you, and whether you are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. We don't have perfect control over our schedules, but you might be able to tweak your patterns to take advantage of the time of day when you do your best work. Knowing whether your motivation is more intrinsic or external allows you to establish checks – maybe you find an accountability partner to help keep you on task. If you find that time management is part of your problem, Dr. Lukkarila is offering workshops on time management this semester, which we encourage you to sign up for in Canvas.

It's hard to maintain motivation if you aren't taking good care of yourself. Finding balance is something that Americans in general, and academics in particular, often struggle with. (Unfortunately, this seems to be contagious, and international students and scholars may have just as much trouble achieving work-life balance!) On a small scale, remember to take breaks and eat while you're working or studying. Identify quick breaks that leave you refreshed – perhaps it's a cup of coffee that you drink anywhere but at your desk, or a short walk outside. More broadly, remember to take care of yourself! While gyms may be too risky right now, exercise outdoors in our mild winter can help you stay stronger and healthier, and apps such as Down Dog (free for students and teachers right now) create guided yoga, Pilates, and HIIT workouts which you can do at home. Creating and maintaining diverse support networks, such as your advisor, your cohort, or your friends and family members, is vital to staving off isolation. The Counseling Center has groups that are open for all students to work on mental health, and they offer both in-house counseling and a care coordinator to help you find mental health providers in the community if you think you need some help. Postdocs can take advantage of the Employee Assistance Plan, which provides similar help in finding community health providers.

Finally, celebrate the wins in your life! It could be as small as getting to the office on time every day this week or as big as turning in your dissertation. Celebrate your peers' and mentors' achievements too – it can help you refocus on your own goals and how you'll get there, as well as foster camaraderie within your cohort. Motivation will come and go, but there are ways to recapture it when you've gotten into a rut and we hope these are a good starting place.

Sincerely,

The OGPS Staff and Fellows



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Graduate Studies
and Research



Jennifer O'Brien-Brown,
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NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Conference of Southern Graduate Schools/Council of Historically Black Graduate Schools Annual Meeting

The annual CSGS/CHBGS Conference will be held virtually February 23-26, and registration is free of charge. The program is on "The Future of Graduate Education" and we encourage faculty, staff, postdocs, and students who are interested in graduate school administration to attend. The proposed schedule can be found [here](#). If you attend, we highly encourage you to watch the regional 3MT competition where our own Jessica Liddell will be presenting her work!

Registration is required by February 12; the form and more details about the conference can be found [here](#).

National Postdoctoral Association Conference

OGPS will be purchasing a bulk registration package for the National Postdoctoral Association Conference which will be held virtually April 15-16. If you are interested in attending, please send an email to ogps@tulane.edu. We have a limited number of spots, and priority will be given to postdoctoral fellows.

Career and Academic Resources

Our career and academic resources are all available on Canvas! We encourage you to visit the sites regularly as OGPS Staff and Fellows work to add new articles and information often.

One-on-one appointments are available with Dr. Lauren Lukkarila, Briana Mohan, and Jennifer O'Brien-Brown, which you can schedule through Canvas.

OPPORTUNITIES

Deadline for GSSA Travel Grants

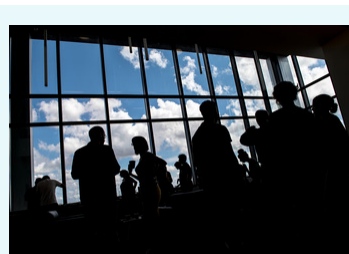
The deadline for students in the School of Liberal Arts and School of Science and Engineering to apply for funding for conferences in Spring 2021 has been reopened until February 15. The form is the same, found here on the [GSSA Travel Page](#), but some of the supporting documents and procedures have changed, so please talk to your representative if you plan to apply. Awards do not constitute permission to travel; if you will need to travel to a conference, you must apply for permission through the office of Academic Affairs.

BMSSA students have a rolling deadline for travel awards. For more information, please go to [their website](#).

Webpage for Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Fellow Opportunities

OGPS is notified periodically of opportunities for Tulane graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. These can range from part time work-study jobs to assistantships, to full time employment opportunities after graduation. This month we have received information about the Tulane Changemaker Institute, which is now accepting applications. Please check our [new webpage](#) frequently as we will try to update this page when we learn of new openings.

[Learn More](#)



IMPORTANT DATES

Notices in Canvas

We will be using Canvas to send a once-a-week announcement with upcoming workshops in OGPS, CELT, the Howard Tilton Memorial Library, and other university organizations as they come up.

Upcoming OGPS Workshops

Feb. 2, 2pm-3pm
Writing Research Statements

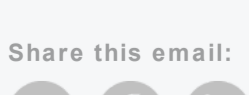
Feb. 9, 4pm-5pm
Improving Time Management

Feb. 10, 3pm-4pm
Resumes and Cover Letters

Feb. 25, 3pm-4pm
The PhD Journey from Coursework to Career

More workshops and more details about workshops will be included in the announcements from Canvas. All workshops in Spring 2021 will be held virtually, registration is required.

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