



PHI SIGMA NEWS

The Official Phi Sigma Newsletter

Fall 2019

Second Annual Weigel Seminar

By: Madi Rittinger

The 2019-2020 Phi Sigma executive board is excited to host the second annual Weigel Seminar! This seminar series is distinct from our regular weekly seminars as it provides members of Phi Sigma the opportunity to meet with an extraordinary researcher in biology. This year's Weigel seminar will take place on **Thursday, September 26th**. We look forward to hosting this year's speaker and be on the look out for scheduling a meeting with her.

This Year's Weigel Seminar Speaker: Robin Tinghitella

By: Madi Rittinger

Our second annual speaker for the Weigel Seminar is Dr. Robin Tinghitella from the University of Denver! Dr. Tinghitella studies how changing environments affect animal communication, specifically the communication involved as animals secure mates. In Dr. Tinghitella's lab, students conduct research on both insect and fish model systems. Dr. Tinghitella is also interested in science education and science communication as she led a project during her post-doc that partnered ecology graduate students with K-12 teachers and students to improve science teaching and communication skills. Join us at our second annual Weigel seminar series, and don't forget to sign up to meet with Dr. Robin Tinghitella!



IMPORTANT DATES

FALL 2019

September 1

Travel Grant Deadline for the National Office

September 9

Last day to submit Phi Sigma membership applications for the fall

September 26

Weigel Seminar

September 28

Fall Picnic

SPRING 2020

April 3

University Research Symposium

April 10

Phi Sigma Research Symposium

More important dates to come!

Information and photo were taken from Dr. Tinghitella's website at <https://tinghitellalab.weebly.com/people.html>

2019 Grant Award
Recipients

Mockford-Thompson

Kiley Hughes

Casey Gähns

Kylie Hampton

Honorable mention:
Ian Rines

Weigel

Chance Bainbridge

Brad Smith

Logan Sauers

Kara Baldwin

Bri Ocegüera Perez

Madi Rittinger

Tim Martin

Visa Veerappan

Josselyn Gonzalez

Kara Hodges

Abigail Benson

Tony Breitenbach

Austin Calhoun

Maggie DeMaegd

Rachael DiSciallo

Kate Evans

Casey Gähns

Kylie Hampton

Rosario Marroquin-
Flores

Kris McIntire

Ashley Waring

Phi Sigma thanks all the faculty members who helped review Mockford-Thompson applications. In addition, we would also like to thank **Dr. Jan Dahl** for serving as the Chair on the Mockford-Thompson review committee. Finally, we thank all those who helped to review Weigel applications.

Phi Sigma Welcome Week & TA Training

By: Madi Rittinger

This year Phi Sigma continued the tradition of hosting gatherings during TA training week to bring together both new and current biological graduate students to celebrate the start of the school year. Thursday and Friday Phi Sigma hosted two dinner party's on campus to provide a convenient location for all students to gather and have a good time. Thursday Phi Sigma provided sandwiches from Avanti's and Friday a pizza party was hosted!

Instead of the usual TA training week this year's TA training took place all in one day on Friday. New TA's started training in the morning and were joined by all graduate students for an afternoon of continued training. One of the highlights from the session was the portion dedicated to handling stress presented by counseling services. This session provided valuable tips and resources available to graduate students for maintaining both mental and emotional health. Information for counseling services can be found below:

Location: 320 Student Services Building
<https://counseling.illinoisstate.edu/contact/>



Presentation during TA training from Ben Sadd about graduate student life



Biology graduate students attending training session.

Welcome To Our New Biological Sciences Graduate Students!

Elyse McCormick
Sadd

Shannon Barbarek
Wilkinson/Gatto

Ploy Freebairn
Vidal-Gadea

Whitney Green
Vogel/Bowden

Jessica Burkhart
GSAL- A. Mortimer

Sadia Sultana
Dahl

Elliot Lusk
Casto

Danny Marchiafava
Sedbrook

Dana Niswonger
A. Mortimer/Vidal-Gadea

Jaclyn Everly
Juliano

Bryan Sierra-Rivera
Sadd

Omid Zare-Mehrjerdi
Kirik

Liisi Vink-Lainas
Stein

Liza Gautam
Sedbrook

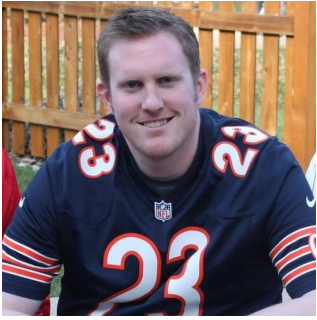
Sabrina Wollmuth
GSAL- Bowden

Kevin Hoffmann
GSAL- Dahl

Shana Border
Dugas

Ethan Cossio
GSAL

Meet the 2019-2020 Phi Sigma Executive Board



President: Brad Smith

I am a second-year M.S. student in the Garris Lab with a research focus on stimulant use disorder. I use a technique called fast-scan cyclic voltammetry to examine dopamine signals in the rat brain in response to amphetamine and other drugs of abuse. I completed my undergraduate at ISU in Biochemistry/Molecular Biology in 2010. After graduation, I spent time at the McLean County Health Department working on the Emergency Preparedness Team and then worked in the Emergency Department at Advocate BroMenn Medical Center. I moved back to the Chicago suburbs and worked as a Paramedic for several years before becoming interested in addictions counseling. I completed clinical rotations in addictions counseling at Gateway Foundation in Aurora, Illinois and became a Certified Alcohol and other Drug Counselor (CADC) in 2018. Since coming back to ISU, I have discovered a passion for teaching and am currently pursuing secondary teaching licensure. I am proud to serve as the 2019-2020 President of Phi Sigma and look forward to a great year.

Social Chair: Amanda Klingler

I am a member of both the Darner lab and the (Nate) Mortimer lab. My research interests include understanding what makes science communication effective, the role of implicit biases in the practice of science, and the behavioral ecology of social behavior, cognition, and individual behavioral variation in animals. Outside of science, I am a regular grandma. I enjoy baking, crocheting, reading, binge-watching Netflix and Marvel movies, and ingesting a copious amount of both coffee and pizza. When I am feeling less grandma-like, I also enjoy hiking, yoga, and meditation. As social chair, I am excited to serve our department by planning events that help us remember that we are people, as well as scientists, and events where we can learn how to be even more



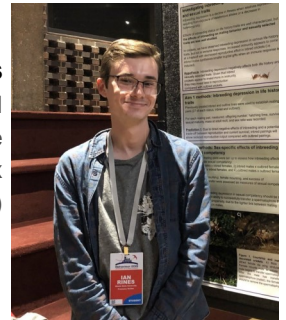
Vice President: Daniel Goldberg

I am a Ph.D. student in Angelo Capparella's lab, where I study the ecological and evolutionary factors that influence vocal behavior in wetland birds called rails. Outside of work or the classroom, I spend my free time bird watching, swing dancing, reading, and playing video games, Dungeons and Dragons, or the occasional X-Wing tabletop miniatures game (as I am a die-hard Star Wars fan in general). I have been a Phi Sigma member for the last three years, and as Vice President, my goals are to attract and recruit a talented, diverse batch of undergraduates and graduate students, plan and run a Research Symposium that is even better than our last two, and teach our President Brad Smith the differences between wild turkeys and geese. In the proud tradition of past ornithologist officers Greg Tito and Beth Weber, I also aim to convince our Secretary Madi Rittinger to cram as many bird-related items into this year's Boobologist as possible.



Treasurer: Ian Rines

I am a second year Ph.D. student, co-advised by Drs. Ben Sadd and Scott Sakaluk. I research sexual conflict in decorated crickets, specifically I look at how male-derived compounds manipulate female behavior and physiology after mating. Outside of school, I enjoy watching various cooking and Netflix shows while eating frozen pizza, hanging out playing board games and drinking cheap beer, and (mild) hiking.



Business & Bookstore Manager: Kat Coburn

I am a member of the Juliano lab. My research interests center on the effects of climate change and environmental pollutants on biotic interactions with the goal of contributing to the knowledge of anthropogenic impacts on nature. Outside of lab, I love walking and training my dog, hiking, and finding insects. On less active days, I enjoy cooking, food and nature documentaries (big David Attenborough fan), and bullet journaling. As a board member and transfer student, I look forward to helping build a sense of community and connection in the school of bio.



Secretary: Madi Rittinger

I am a M.S. student in Thompson-Sakaluk lab studying the sex-specific effects of hatching order and synchrony on corticosterone levels in house wrens. When I'm not in the field spending time with the birds I enjoy playing board games, hiking, and spending time with my newly adopted cat Ollivander (why yes his name is a Harry Potter reference). This year I look forward to being a part of the Phi Sigma exec board and am very excited to record each and every embarrassing event that happens for our annual edition of the Boobologist.



Social Event Survey

By: Amanda Klingler

As social chair, my job is to plan events that provide opportunities for professional development, networking, and fun! To better understand what you as members are hoping to gain from your participation in Phi Sigma, and what types of events you would be interested in attending, I created a survey. Keep an eye out in your inbox in the coming week, and please take the time to provide feedback on past events that will continue, and ideas for new traditions we can start!

Thank you all, and I look forward to hearing your input!

Outreach Near You

By: Madi Rittinger & Amanda Klingler

One of the goals of Phi Sigma is to provide outreach opportunities to our members, and whenever possible to give back directly to our community. Here is a list of some outreach opportunities that are either coming up or are currently available.

Skype a Scientist: This program allows scientists to communicate with students and entire classrooms virtually. For more information go to <https://www.skypeascientist.com/>

Ecology Action Center (September 26, Sugar Creek Stewards Workday): The Ecology Action Center will be improving Sugar Creek throughout Blono by clearing invasive plant species and managing other non-invasive species. For more information go to: <https://ecologyactioncenter.org/bngreenevents/>

Nachusa Grasslands Workdays (9 am - 12 pm most Saturdays): Volunteers will help maintain the Nachusa Grasslands by performing a variety of tasks such as spreading herbicide, burning brush, or collecting seeds. If enough people are interested car pools can be organized through Phi Sigma Social Chair- Amanda Klingler. For more information go to <https://www.nachusagrasslands.org/saturday-morning-workdays.html> .

Illinois Science and Technology Coalition's Mentor Matching Engine: This program provides an opportunity to virtually mentor students as they conduct projects over a variety of STEM related topics. For more information contact Amanda or go to <https://www.istcoalition.org/education-programs/mentor-matching-engine/>

A Letter From Our Advisors

By: Matthew Dugas

Ryan and I are looking forward to a great year serving as Phi Sigma advisors. We are focused on supporting the Phi Sigma board in their efforts to foster student research, scholarship, and professional development. We are also excited to be a part of Phi Sigma's continued excellence in philanthropic and social events, both central to building the sense of community that makes this organization so special. Phi Sigma is run by student volunteers, and we hope that, as advisors, we can help board members maintain balance between the excitement of serving and the sense of existential dread imposed by thesis committees and other professional obligations. We are more than impressed by the things Phi Sigma has accomplished at ISU, and welcome the opportunity of be a part of what comes next.



I am an assistant professor of ecology, and in my second year at ISU. I completed my Ph.D. in 2010 at the University of Oklahoma, and held post-doctoral positions at Tulane University, Case Western Reserve University, and Murray State. I study the evolution of communication, in particular between offspring and parents, and work with a variety of vertebrates.

Matthew Dugas



I am a third year faculty member here at ISU but I am by no means new to ISU. I started in the Ph.D. program in 2004 and was the vice president of Phi Sigma during that time. After receiving my Ph.D. in 2010, I held post doc positions at ISU and the University of Illinois. My research focuses on how vertebrate embryos regulate their exposure to maternal steroids during development.

Ryan Paitz

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