

# PEER BEYOND GRADUATE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

SUMMER 2025

# **Peer Beyond Graduate Research Conference (PBGRC)**

## **Issue 1**

**Conference Proceedings for the Peer Beyond Graduate Research Conference hosted  
February 19 and 20, 2025 at the University of Calgary**



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## Statements from the Organizing Team

As Vice President Academic of the UCalgary Graduate Students' Association (2024-2025), I had the honor of collaborating with our academic events team to plan and execute the 2025 Peer Beyond Graduate Research Conference, held on February 19 and 20. Since 2018, the Peer Beyond Graduate Research Conference has been a cornerstone event for UCalgary graduate students, offering a supportive interdisciplinary space for presenting their research and receiving valuable peer feedback.

This year's conference welcomed over 150 participants and showcased an impressive range of research. Topics ranged from using cartoons or participatory art exhibitions to simplify and communicate complex research ideas, to pioneering methods for supporting the mental health of depressed individuals in long-term care, to examining bull trout population structure and the extent of hybridization with brook trout across Alberta's Eastern Slopes. The event underscored the vibrant interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary work at the University of Calgary, connecting researchers from diverse fields.

We appreciate the work of previous GSA Vice Presidents Academic and planning committees and are proud to introduce this inaugural conference proceedings publication which enables graduate students to share their work beyond the conference. Spearheaded by our exceptional publication chair Ayoola Oladele, this initiative involved the drafting and revision of nearly 30 graduate student submissions. We are thrilled to add this new offering to the Peer Beyond Graduate Research Conference, further enriching the value of the event for UCalgary graduate students.

----- **Alexandria Poppendorf (Vice President Academic - GSA)**

As an immigrant and international student at the University of Calgary, it is an honor to co-chair AEC and engage with many beautiful souls during Peer Beyond. As grad students, we are often faced with isolation and a lack of confidence. We find solace in community building, having these moments where we can safely share our thoughts and hard work with people who understand us. I want to express my sincere gratitude to Alex's impeccable leadership, my co-chair Kristal and our vice-chair Ayoola, all the volunteers and participants who helped create a space that we need now more than ever. Peer Beyond exists because of you, because of us! And what a beautiful two-day journey it was!

----- **Fabielle Rocha Cruz (Co-Chair Academic Event Committee - GSA)**

It has been an honor to co-chair AEC with Fabi, and work with Alex and Ayoola on Peer Beyond. As the volunteer coordinator for Peer Beyond, I also want to express my thanks to all the volunteers who took time out of their busy schedules to make the event a success. Community is what makes the graduate experience bearable in the darker times, and I am happy to share community with you.

----- **Kristal Turner (Co-Chair Academic Event Committee - GSA)**

Serving as the Vice Chair of the Academic Committee has been an immensely rewarding experience. I have been able to work alongside a dedicated and visionary team, including Alex, Fabi, and Kristal, committed to fostering the academic development of graduate students across the University of Calgary. Witnessing the ideas that we had carefully curated come to life through the Peer Beyond Graduate Research Conference (PBGRC) with vibrant discussions and interdisciplinary presentations was both humbling and inspiring. I am deeply honoured for the opportunity to chair the inaugural publication of the PBGRC, a role that allowed me to contribute to shaping a meaningful platform for scholarly dialogue and innovation. I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to the reviewers whose dedication, insights, and meticulous work have been instrumental in bringing this publication to life. This experience has deepened my appreciation for collaborative leadership and reaffirmed the power of academic gatherings in driving progress and dialogues across disciplines.

----- **Ayoola Oladele (Vice Chair Academic Event Committee - GSA)**

## Reviewers

We gratefully acknowledge the following scholars for their time, insight, and scholarly contributions in reviewing submissions for this publication.

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