



## PRESS RELEASE

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CGS Contact: Kelley Karnes  
602-791-8278 / [kkarnes@cgs.nche.edu](mailto:kkarnes@cgs.nche.edu)

### **Winners of 2024 CGS/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Awards Announced** *Awards recognize outstanding research by graduates in Chemistry and Psychology*

Washington, DC – Today the Council of Graduate Schools and ProQuest™, part of Clarivate™, presented the Distinguished Dissertation Awards to Katharine Daniel and Gabrielle Mandl during an award ceremony held at the CGS 64<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri. Since 1982, the awards recognize doctoral recipients who have made significant and original contributions to their fields.

Daniel received the 2024 award in social sciences for her dissertation, *Problems with Switching: Investigating the Sequence of Emotion Regulation Strategy Choices in the Daily Lives of Socially Anxious People*, which she completed at the University of Virginia. Her dissertation uses advanced quantitative methods to explore key questions about emotion regulation in daily life. She focuses on how anxious individuals adjust their emotion regulation strategies over time, and why some may continue using the same strategies, potentially reinforcing their anxiety. Traditional psychological research has often focused on understanding the effects for the "average person," which can overlook unique and situation-dependent effects. Daniel's dissertation improves our understanding of how to measure effective treatments for anxiety disorders while also developing new methods to analyze data that is specific to individuals and the context of their anxiety.

Mandl received the 2024 award for mathematics, physical sciences and engineering for her dissertation, *On the Development of Praseodymium-Doped Radio Luminescent Nanoparticles and Their Use in X-ray Mediated Photodynamic Therapy of Glioblastoma Cells*, completed at Concordia University. Her work explores the potential of radiotherapy and photodynamic therapy in treating glioblastoma, an aggressive brain cancer. She applied her biochemistry knowledge of 5-ALA to enhance PPIX production in cancer cells, confirming that X-ray radiation activates photodynamic therapy using Pr<sup>3+</sup>-doped nanoparticles. Mandl also developed a system combining these nanoparticles with 5-ALA to achieve the same therapeutic effects at a lower radiation dose. A key discovery was that X-PDT induces cell senescence, halting tumor growth and stimulating the immune system, offering promising implications for cancer treatment.

CGS President Suzanne T. Ortega stated that the work of Daniel and Mandl represents the best of graduate education and research.

“The CGS/ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Awards recognizes the innovative research of young scholars and their important impact on their disciplines and the broader graduate education community,” said Ortega. “Not only have Dr. Daniel and Dr. Mandl made significant contributions in their respective fields, but they were both lauded as leaders and collaborators across their campuses. It’s this type of dedication that will foster continued innovations from these scholars.”

“This prestigious recognition celebrates Gabrielle’s exceptional contributions to advancing therapies for glioblastoma, one of the most aggressive and treatment-resistant cancers,” said Effrosyni Diamantoudi, Dean of Graduate Studies, Concordia University. “Her research exemplifies the innovative and impactful work being carried out by Concordia’s graduate students and the profound societal importance of graduate research in tackling urgent global issues.”

“Developing a better understanding of Emotional Regulation strategies is key to improving clinical interventions that can have a high impact on mental health. In her dissertation, Dr. Daniel combines a novel quantitative methodological approach with real-world application that has the potential to not only lead to better clinical outcomes for those with anxiety, but also to impact future research in the field,” said Phillip Trella, Associate Vice Provost, Director, Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs University of Virginia. “We are absolutely thrilled that this award will recognize Dr. Daniel’s outstanding achievements to her field and the countless contributions that she has made in service and as a mentor.”

Chris Burghardt, Senior Vice President of ProQuest Information Solutions, Academia & Government for Clarivate said, “Dissertations are not only a critical milestone of accomplishment in the academy, but an important— and often underutilized— source of expertise, methodological innovation and intellectual insight. The integration between the Web of Science and ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global ensures that these valuable contributions are made accessible to researchers at institutions of higher education across the globe. I am proud to honor Dr. Mandl and Dr. Daniel with the 2024 Distinguished Dissertation Awards, and I am pleased to announce that their dissertations will be cross listed in the Web of Science and PQDT Global!”

ProQuest, part of Clarivate – whose ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global database (PQDT) features a vast collection of dissertations and theses – sponsors the awards, and an independent committee from the Council of Graduate Schools selects the winners. Two awards are given each year, rotating among four general areas of scholarship. The winners receive a certificate of recognition, a \$2,000 honorarium, and a travel stipend to attend the awards ceremony.

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### **About CGS**

*The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of approximately 460 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. The organization’s mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.*