

## WELCOME



Hey Grad Groups,

You've done it – it's holiday time after what has to have been one of the most challenging semesters in living memory. Well done!

We don't know about you, but it feels amazing to us that it's only July. 2020 has felt like an eternal rollercoaster of change, limbo and stress affecting

all facets of Uni and work life. Our normal support networks have undergone so many challenges as well. Having started the year feeling off kilter already after the horrendous bushfire season, it wasn't long before all of your activities, member recruitment, and meetings had to move into the virtual sphere. Yet, the amount of work, care, and commitment that each leadership team has demonstrated in terms of keeping your groups together, supporting your members, and trying to facilitate much-needed fun and connected down time, is something you all can be so proud of. It's been our greatest pleasure hearing about your projects, and doing our best to help you get them off the ground.

Here at GSA we've been working hard to adapt our support of you and the broader graduate student community to the current circumstances. Our Representation team, committed as always, has been advocating on behalf of graduate students, representing their concerns to the University Senate, and presenting recommendations to address issues surrounding assessment, placements and resources that have all arisen due to COVID19. Their regular '[Student Issues Report](#)' identify key concerns that are consistently brought to GSA's attention. If you or your members have anything you'd like to contribute, don't hesitate to raise it with us, and we'll put you in touch with Representation.

Our Student Engagement team has been facilitating some fantastic virtual events to keep our community connected and engaged. These include the weekly GradChat forums, which so many of you have been a part of, and which have really shone a light on the fantastic work done by Grad Groups. As well, in keeping with GSA's focus on student health and wellbeing, Engagement has run discussions on [stress management](#) and [academic skills](#), and holds weekly Drop In Dance sessions and Feel Good Friday DJ sets – making it easier to get those study breaks you all deserve!

For us, the Grad Groups Engagement Team, keeping in touch with all of you has been our biggest priority. Our [FAQ](#) and '[How To Guide](#)' were written as resources for you to refer to and have fun with. And our COVID19 Special Grants have, we hope, been helpful in your adjustment to these unprecedented times.

We're excited to see what next semester will bring for you all, and the fantastic projects and activities we have no doubt you'll continue to develop and facilitate. Have a browse through the rest of these pages and see who's new to our Grad Group community, some fabulous things a few of you have been getting up to, and our Picks of the Semester – what to cook, read and watch [together](#) over the break.

Take care, enjoy that winter sunshine, and spend the time you need re-booting for what will be another challenging, absolutely not-routine, but hopefully rewarding second semester.

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**Subah and Clare**

*Grad Groups Engagement Team*

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## NEW AFFILIATES

It's fantastic to be able to welcome some new Grad Groups to our community. The enthusiasm and hard work each of these groups have shown in getting started during such a difficult time has been inspiring. Well done and we can't wait to see what you've got in store for the rest of the year.

### SPCR-P



"The Students in Primary Care Research Publishing Group (SPCR-P) was formed to provide professional and skills development to our high achieving member base in the Department of General Practice. It focuses on assisting members to communicate and disseminate their research in

innovative, engaging and meaningful ways and to foster collaborations in primary health care research. We also provide members with opportunities for peer support and peer-to-peer collaborations. Graduate research students make up the majority of our member base, with the recent inclusion of Honours, GP registrar and MD Research Project students. Students conducting research in primary care are welcome to join the SPCR-P by contacting the Treasurer at [spcr-p@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:spcr-p@unimelb.edu.au)."



### FTV

"The Film and Television Graduate Students Group provides social events and networking opportunities for students at the VCA Film School. We aim to promote a sense of community and foster collaboration among students across all Film and TV disciplines. Our core membership consists of students pursuing film degrees at Master's level. However, we also welcome graduate students, alumni, and staff from other VCA and University of Melbourne programs with an interest in collaborating with Film and TV students. Please get in touch via [ftvgradgroup@gmail.com](mailto:ftvgradgroup@gmail.com) to join."

## SPOTLIGHT

If ever there's been a time for creativity, commitment and supportive positivity, it's been this last semester of complete upheaval. Check out some of the great things Grad Groups have been getting up to, and getting through with, during these months of pandemic.

## IGSWG



"The International Graduate Student Wellbeing Group (IGSWG) is a non-for-profit society affiliated with the GSA. Founded in 2017, we are dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of international graduate students. As international students, we recognise the hardship of studying and living away from home.

During the COVID19 pandemic, IGSWG has had to cease all physical events. However, our team, in particular the two event team managers, have worked hard to continue to support our members.

Wendy Wu's team began weekly online posts about student wellbeing. These include introductions to health-related organisations such as Beyond Blue, Melbourne Uni Health Hub and Thorne Harbour Health, updates on COVID19-related living and studying changes and tips and strategies to improve wellbeing during isolation.

Maggie Zhuang's team created the innovative routine challenge. Members join in small groups online and share daily photos of their goals. These include breakfasts, exercise, music, language learning and many more exciting routines. We have had over 50 participants in total, helping our members to establish positive daily routines.

Next semester we plan to continue our online events. We are also in preparations to invite guests and host online seminars on health-related topics. More excitingly, IGSWG will be recruiting new members and committees. We look forward to meeting other international students and like-minded people passionate about student wellbeing.

Our team has made a short video show-casing our [routine challenge](#)!

Follow us on Facebook: [International Graduate Student Wellbeing Group](#). And [sign up for membership](#) for free 😊 "

## AWSSUM



"AWSSUM stands for Animal Welfare Science Students of UoM. We founded this group in 2018, with the aim of creating a community to connect graduate student researchers from the Animal Welfare Science Centre. All of AWSSUM's planned activities have the intention of providing support to and promoting interaction between animal welfare graduate students.

Pre-COVID, our group was a fairly cohesive one; if you wanted a coffee, had a question about coding in R or needed to cut words out of an abstract, there was always another student in the office who could help you out! Not

surprisingly, we found the transition to WFH really difficult in the initial stages but a few of our COVID19 special initiatives have helped us to adapt. These include:

- Implementation of a virtual workspace – daily at 10am and 2pm we have an open Zoom session for anyone wanting to talk to a human not in their household. The goal of the virtual workspace initially was to keep us all accountable while WFH, but it has also been a really nice way to catch up, keep up to date and meet everyone’s animals!
- Switching face-to-face monthly journal clubs to virtual meetings conducted through Zoom
- Sending out Corona Care Kits, courtesy of GSA! Recently, we received a special grant from GSA to send a personalised care package to each of our members. Many of our members were facing personal/financial/general PhD hardship at the time, and it really brightened everyone’s day.
- Weekly steps challenges – since we can’t all walk to get coffee together to break up the day, we run weekly competitions through a pedometer app to encourage us all to get out and about.
- Netflix movie nights – We use Netflix Party to chat and watch movies at the same time, to pretend we are together!
- Virtual knock off drinks - via Zoom on Friday afternoons here and there, a good way to unwind from the week that's been.

Next semester, our biggest hope is that we are able to reconnect face to face (safely). If safe to do so, we hope to organize a writing retreat for later in the year to smash out some papers and thesis chapters!

Keep up to date with AWSSUM through our [Facebook](#) page, where you’ll be sure to find some pet and animal love to see you through!”



## CALL OUT



Does your group have a fantastic virtual event coming up? Are you in the middle of a great project?

Want the broader student community to check it out, or maybe even get involved?

We’re dedicating a fortnightly profile on our GSA Instagram channel especially to showcase Grad Groups. If you’d like to see your Group showcased on this platform, please get in touch at [gradgroups@gsa.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:gradgroups@gsa.unimelb.edu.au).

## DON'T MISS

It's a world of constant change out there. But there's still so much to get involved in at GSA, and in the broader community. Check out these links for some dates to mark into your group's calendar for (lockdown-safe) events and projects which are by turn interesting, enlivening and exploratory.



- [GSA Engagement events](#)
- [Unimelb events](#)
- [Broader community events](#)

## PICKS

Now more than ever we're relying on comfort cooking, reading, listening and viewing. But it's also important to use these fora as ways to keep informed, and prompt deep thinking about the pressing issues we're constantly confronted with and challenged by. Here are some of our top picks which your group might like to make, tune into or get talking and thinking about.



## Cook - for warmth and sustenance

### Feeling Sweet

- [Cardamom Buns](#) - If you're not sure what green-podded cardamom tastes like, there's no better way to find out than by tasting a Swedish kardemummabulle, a sweet bun perfumed with the southern Indian spice.

Or *Savoury*

- [Soups](#) – The most nurturing sort of food for body and soul. Check out these bowls of goodness, aroma and sustenance from Anna Jones.

#### Read - for expansion

- [The Overstory](#) by Richard Powers – This beautifully-crafted, urgent novel takes you up, out and away, into canopies of chestnuts and redwoods. After reading Powers' *Overstory*, in which all sorts of characters develop special relationships with trees and forests, you will never look at trees the same way again. A means of re-connecting with and appreciating nature after so much time spent indoors.

#### Listen – for keeping informed and keeping calm

- [The Daily](#) – Insightful commentary on news and events that matter now. Produced by *The New York Times*, *The Daily* includes interviews and stories by the paper's journalists and experts in various fields, and keeps you up to date on the world at large.
- [No Anxiety](#) – A soothing playlist for what can turn into a stressful time

#### Watch – for discovering unknown stories

- [The Last Dance](#), Netflix – What has been helmed a modern classic, this docuseries gives the definitive account of Michael Jordan's career and the iconic 1980's Chicago Bulls
- [The Bureau](#), SBS On Demand – A French spy-thriller series with quiet arthouse vibes, *The Bureau* refers to contemporary tensions between Europe, the Middle East and Africa, and is based on true accounts from French spies. Suspenseful and engaging, this series is as much about personal human relationships as it is about politics and espionage.

## A FINAL PIECE OF NEWS

Here at GSA you've just elected a whole [new Council](#). Meet Emily de Wind - Vice-President and Grad Group Rep.



*Hello! I'm Emily, this year's Vice-President and a first year Doctor of Physiotherapy student. I'm a member of MUPSS (the physio student society) and even in the short time I've been a member, they've added so much value to my student experience. Grad groups enrich student life and I believe this is how most students will get value from GSA. Part of my role as VP is to represent grad groups to the council and keep you up to date on council matters that affect you, so please don't hesitate to let me know if there is anything I can assist with. I'm looking forward to hopefully meeting many of you over the next year!*

You can contact Emily via email at [gsa-vicepresident@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:gsa-vicepresident@unimelb.edu.au)