

Nora Bradford

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🌐 <http://norabradford.com>

Education

- 2020 – 2025 📖 **Ph.D. Cognitive Sciences, University of California, Irvine**
M.S. Cognitive Neuroscience, University of California, Irvine
Advisor: *Dr. Megan Peters*
- 2015 – 2019 📖 **B.S. Neuroscience, B.A. Psychology, B.A. Philosophy, University of Chicago**

Writing and Teaching Experience

- 2025-present **Full-Time Lecturer**, Critical Writing Program, UPenn.
- Develop course materials for three sections of first year writing seminars on clinical neuroscience and animal cognition
- Guide 48 students as they decide on a research topic and find relevant literature
- Instill self-editing and peer-review skills in students throughout six drafts of white papers and op-eds
- 2022-present **Science Writer**, Freelance.
- Write news and feature stories on science-related content for outlets like Scientific American, Science News, Discover, WIRED, National Geographic and Quanta Magazine
- 2025 **News Intern**, Scientific American.
- Wrote news stories on topics ranging from microbiology to social psychology
- Kept track of newly-published and embargoed papers, and pitch multiple story ideas to relevant editors every week
- 2024-2025 **Graduate Writing Consultant**, Writing Center, UC Irvine.
- Provided feedback during one-on-one consultations with graduate students at various stages of the writing process for manuscripts, grant applications, and job materials
- Researched and created resources on topics such as procrastination and PhD statements
- Developed and facilitated writing workshops on writing for the public and crafting op-ed stories
- 2020-2024 **Teaching Assistant**, UC Irvine
- Prepared and delivered discussion sections, lab sections, and review sessions for the following courses: Human Memory, Experimental Psychology, Principles of Learning Theory, Consciousness and the Brain, Perception Research, and Introduction to Psychology
- Evaluated exams, homework, and papers from over 1000 students
- 2023-2024 **Assistant Writer**, PBS Terra Hungry Planet.
- Researched topics related to food, science, and culture
- Collaborated with lead writer to create digital video scripts for the seven episode series, resulting in over 60,000 views on most episodes
- Pitched, developed, and wrote seven video scripts for TikTok shorts

Writing and Teaching Experience (continued)

- 2022 **Summer Science Writer**, Marine Biological Laboratory, Woods Hole, MA.
- Interviewed scientists and attended research seminars to identify seven budding science stories to highlight on institute website
 - Pitched, wrote and edited feature stories, press releases, and Q and As and regularly used WordPress to effectively display stories
- Science Writing and Communications Intern**, The Broad Institute, MIT & Harvard.
- Researched, reported, and wrote at least one news story per month as well as Q and As and funding announcements
 - Wrote a weekly research summary for the internal Broad Institute newsletter
 - Collaborated with designers and team members to create infographics, videos, and social media content

Research Experience

- 2020-2025 **Graduate Student Researcher**, Cognitive and Neural Computation Lab, UC Irvine.
- Created new analysis technique for metacognitive research in real-world settings
 - Planned, coded, and conducted online experiments on perceptual metacognition, leading to presentations at multiple conferences
 - Initiated and led a collaborative, inter-university project studying metacognition in a variety of types of tasks
 - Aided multiple collaborative research projects, developing cognitive tasks and survey questions and organizing Institutional Review Board materials
- 2023 **Data Research Intern**, McGraw Hill Plus, Online Learning
- Analyzed data from online math learning tools to explore predictive validity both within and between products
 - Created data summaries to inform assessment recommendations for students in middle and high school
 - Collaborated with and presented findings to stakeholders from marketing, customer experience, data science, and academic development teams
- 2019-2020 **Research Associate/Lab Manager**, University of Pennsylvania
- Conducted neuroscientific and behavioral research on child math learning and adult numerical reasoning
 - Recruited both child and adult participants for multiple simultaneous large-scale studies
 - Organized and analyzed behavioral data and supervised 10 undergraduate researchers

Professional Service

- 2022-2024 **Cognitive Sciences Representative**, Campus Diversity Council (DECADE), UC Irvine.
- Developed department-wide climate survey, analyzed results, and shared findings with the department
 - Collaborated with fellow representatives to host inclusion-focused events, such as an introduction to conference attendance and reimbursement

Professional Service (continued)

- 2024 **Writing Mentor**, Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship, UC Irvine.
- Advised seven undergraduate student researchers throughout the summer
- Provided guidance and feedback on PhD application materials including statements of purpose and personal statements
- Writing Coach**, National Science Policy Network.
- Guided ten student writing projects - including policy briefs, journal papers, and popular science pieces
- Led "Kickstarting a SciCom Career" workshop for an audience of over 30 students
- 2023 **Organizer**, ComSciCon, Science Writers Conference.
- Evaluated applications from over 30 graduate students and selected 10 attendees
- Organized the two-day workshop followed by week long projects, including mentorship pairings, travel, logistics, and guest speakers

Selected Accolades

- 2025 ◇ **Storytelling Fellow with Travel Grant**, Diverse Intelligences Summer Institute.
 ◇ **Early Career Scientist Travel Grant**, National Eye Institute.
 ◇ **Science In Real Life Grant**, Skype A Scientist.
- 2024 ◇ **Graduate Dean's Dissertation Fellowship**, Graduate Division, UCI.
 ◇ **AAAS Graduate Travel Fellowship**, National Association of Science Writers.
 ◇ **WAC + WID Graduate Scholar**, UC Irvine Writing Center.
- 2023 ◇ **Science Journalism Workshop Acceptance**, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, NJ.
- 2022 ◇ **Professional Development Award**, DECADE.
 ◇ **Norman Weinberger Award**, UCI Center for the Neurobiology of Learning and Memory.
 ◇ **Inclusive Excellence Award**, UCI Graduate Division.
- 2021 ◇ **NASW Travel Fellowship**, Council for the Advancement of Science Writing.
 ◇ **Award for Public Writing**, UCI School of Social Sciences.
 ◇ **Graduate Innovation Fellowship**, UCI Beall Applied Innovation.
- 2020-21 ◇ **Science Communication Fellowship**, Loh Down On Science Podcast, NPR.

Research

Symposia, Workshops, and Invited Talks

- 1 ComSciCon and Kavli Foundation, *Stories of Ethics, Engagement, and Dialogue in Science Guest Talk*, Jan. 2026.
- 2 UPenn Mindcore, *Beyond Academia Panel*, Jan. 2026.
- 3 Science Forward at CUNY, *Research Writing Workshop*, Oct. 2025.
- 4 Science Teaching Through Art at University of Rochester, *Abstract Writing Workshop*, Sep. 2025.
- 5 GPS-STEM UCI, *Science Writing Mini Retreat*, Feb. 2025.
- 6 GPS-STEM UCI, *Science Writing for the Public*, Nov. 2024.
- 7 Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness, *Funding and Sharing Consciousness Science*, Tokyo, Jul. 2024.

- 8 SoundMind Collaboratory at Northeastern University, *Science Communication Workshop*, Jul. 2024.
- 9 National Science Policy Network, *Kickstarting a SciCom Career*, May 2024.
- 10 Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program, *Crafting an Abstract*, Apr. 2024.
- 11 Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness, *Communicating Consciousness Science to Funders and the General Public*, New York, NY, Jun. 2023.
- 12 Science Writers meeting, *ComSciCon-SciWri Workshop*, Memphis, TN, 2022.

Publications and Conference Proceedings

- 1 L. Montgomery, **N. Bradford**, and M. Lee, "The wisdom of the crowd with partial rankings", *Behavior Research Methods*, 2024.
- 2 **N. Bradford**, A. Shen, B. Odegaard, and M. A. K. Peters, "Aligning consciousness science and u. s. funding agency priorities", *Nature Communications Biology*, 2024.
- 3 **N. Bradford**, Y. Xu, and R. Garg, "Transparency enhances positive perceptions of social artificial intelligence", *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2023.
- 4 Y. Xu, D. Wang, M. Yu, D. Ritchie, B. Yao, T. Wu, Z. Zhang, T. Li, **N. Bradford**, B. Sun, T. Hoang, Y. Sang, Y. Hou, X. Ma, D. Yang, N. Peng, Z. Yu, and M. Warschauer, "Fantastic questions and where to find them: FairytaleQA— an authentic dataset for narrative comprehension", *Association for Computational Linguistics*, 2022.
- 5 G. Grasselli, H. Boele, H. Titley, **N. Bradford**, L. van Beers, L. Jay, C. De Zeeuw, M. Schonewille, and C. Hansel, "Learning deficit associated with a selective and cell-type specific impairment of intrinsic plasticity in cerebellar purkinje cells", *PLoS Biology*, 2020.

Selected Talks

- 1 **N. Bradford**, B. Maniscalco, and M. Peters, *Model-based approach for extracting performance-independent metacognitive sensitivity from meta-learning data*, New York, NY, Jun. 2023.
- 2 **N. Bradford** and M. Peters, *Metacognition and learning: Bridging the gap between the lab and the classroom*, 2023 International Conference on Learning and Memory, Huntington Beach, CA, Apr. 2023.
- 3 M. Lee, **N. Bradford**, and H. Tejeda, *Using thurstonian ranking models to find the wisdom of the crowd*, European Mathematical Psychology Group Meeting, Rovereto, Italy, Sep. 2022.
- 4 **N. Bradford** and M. Peters, *Effects of perceived numerosity on confidence*, Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness Annual Meeting, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, Jul. 2022.
- 5 **N. Bradford** and M. Peters, *Investigating metacognitive sensitivity in online learning tool for undergraduates*, Neuromatch Conference, virtual, Dec. 2021.

Selected Posters

- 1 **N. Bradford** and M. Peters, *Investigating the domain-generalty of metacognition among memory, perception, and intuitive reasoning*, Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness meeting, Tokyo, Japan, Jul. 2024.
- 2 **N. Bradford** and M. Peters, *Metacognition and learning: Bridging the gap between the lab and the classroom*, 2023 International Conference on Learning and Memory, Huntington Beach, CA, Apr. 2023.
- 3 **N. Bradford**, E. Tao, V. Nguyen, and L. Kay, *Testing piriform cortex inputs to granule cells as modulators of excitability leading to beta oscillations*, Midwestern Psychological Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL, Apr. 2019.

- 4 **N. Bradford**, E. Tao, V. Nguyen, and L. Kay, *Testing piriform cortex inputs to granule cells as modulators of excitability leading to beta oscillations*, Midstates Consortium for Math and Science Undergraduate Research Symposium on Biological Sciences and Psychology, Chicago, IL, Nov. 2018.

Training

- 2023 **Science Journalism Workshop at the Institute for Advanced Study**, Selected Participant.
- 2021 **ComSciCon-SciWri Workshop** , Selected Participant.
Mentoring Excellence Program, UCI Graduate Division Certificate Holder.
Knight Science Journalism @ MIT, Fact-Checking Workshop Certificate Holder.
UCI as a Minority Thriving University , Inclusive Excellence Certificate Holder.
- 2020 **Neuromatch Academy, Computational Neuroscience Course**, Interactive Student.
- 2019 **MRI Technician Level II Training, University of Pennsylvania** Certificate Holder.

Selected Science Writing

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| National Geographic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pregnancy transforms the brain—and some changes last forever Getting your baby to sleep can be a nightmare. Sleep experts know a better way. |
| Scientific American | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humans Can Spot Tiny Numerical Differences Octopuses Are Colorblind. Here's How They See the World Soft Robots Take Steps toward Independence How Octopus Arms Bypass the Brain |
| Quanta Magazine | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What Your Brain Is Doing When You're Not Doing Anything |
| Science News | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stimulating spleens with ultrasound hints at a treatment for inflammation The classic map of how the human brain manages movement gets an update Scientists have now recorded brain waves from freely moving octopuses |
| Discover | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research on Psychedelics and How Mushrooms Can Help Combat Depression |