



The University of British Columbia

DFP Newsletter: January 2021

Directors' Check-In

It would be hard to find someone sorry to see the end of 2020. DFP is no different: we have a lot to look forward to in 2021. I am still amazed at what it feels like to be working with a honed team of talented staff (Joc, Zahra and now Laura) and two co-directors (Liisa and, briefly but valuably, Ian; soon Luanne) – p3. Meanwhile, as we enter Year 2 of the Great Pandemic, we have learned a great deal about not just coping, but finding benefits here and there (p6). While far from ideal, we'll keep some of this when we eventually are able to interact in person again. Finally, the major steps we've accomplished in our strategic planning have us in a much better place than even 6 months ago (p4), and excited about the future.

A New Year's request for all of our DFP community: take some time to write down your 5-year – or even 1-year – objectives. Think big, whatever that means for you (it might, for some of us, mean being brave enough to think small so we can regroup).

If from this, there is something that DFP or your fellow DFP-ers can help with, please share it with us. More on p4.

– *Karon MacLean*

Happy New Year everyone. I hope you were able to take some time for a break over the holidays. I know I had no withdrawal symptoms from Zoom other than relief! As I look forward to 2021, I am grateful to be working with our expanded Executive team who will help share the leadership load Karon has been carrying much of for the past 5 years. I am excited to see an excellent line up of speakers already scheduled for our monthly seminars. I'd like to ask for anyone who is interested in helping further our work on JEDI in DFP to please reach out to us as we move forward on this important work. Strategic planning is a key activity for us this year and we welcome any suggestions you may have for DFP to support your research; you are also welcome to join our strategic planning discussions so let us know if that is of interest! I wish you the very best for the new year and I hope that 2021 sees us meeting again in person."

– *Liisa Holsti*

FEATURED NEWS:

CREATE DESIGN SHOWCASE:
MAY 17-19, 2021 (P6)

DEVELOPING DFP'S
MANAGEMENT (P4)

PLANNING FOR DFP'S
FUTURE (P4)

C4 PROJECTS ANNOUNCED
(P5)

WELCOME TO THE TEAM
ZAHRA (P3)

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Visit us online at dfp.ubc.ca

Cluster Announcements

Congrats to Cristina Conati on becoming an ACM Distinguished Member for outstanding scientific contributions to computing! View the press release [here](#).

DFP CREATE Leadership changes: Ian Mitchell became Department Head of Computer Science (Jan 1) and stepped down as CREATE Co-Director. Luanne Sinnamon (iSchool) will move into this role on July 1; in interim, Karon is the sole CREATE Director. More on P3.

NEW DFP Funding Structure: DFP has moved from its Service Unit funding structure to a new model that focuses on recruiting exceptional students. More on P6.

New Affiliate Members: [Tibor van Rooij](#) (Digital Health, BCCHRI), [Stephanie Glegg](#) (OSOT, SunnyHill Hospital), [Tim Oberlander](#) (Physician-Scientist, Pediatrics).

Moving from Affiliate to Core: [Naznin Virji-Babul](#) (PT, UBC), Helge Rhodin, [Rachel Pottinger](#) (CS, UBC), [Suzanne Huot](#) (OSOT, UBC).

Access DFP Grant Writing Support!

Did you know that DFP offers support for grant writing? Our Research Facilitator, [Jocelyn McKay](#), has helped several DFP members prepare and write their grant applications (examples below).

- Karon MacLean, Liisa Holsti, and others: Faculty of Science Cluster Hire (*we would love to support another grant shot like this one*)
- Liisa Holsti, Heather O'Brien, and others "Calmer: A Novel Approach for Treating Infant Pain" – CIHR
- Dongwook Yoon & Julia Bullard "Gender Bias of Human Subject Sampling in Human-Computer Interaction Research" – New Frontiers in Research Fund

If you are thinking of applying for a grant, contact dfp-facilitator@dfp.ubc.ca for support.

CREATE Announcements

Attn. DFP Faculty: NSERC CREATE Report is due December 2021. Stay tuned for information requests.

Attn. DFP Grads: Remember to use your [Requirements Checklist](#) when planning your schedule. Please send your updated form to dfp-admin@dfp.ubc.ca by April 15.

DFP Projects Announced: 554K (Project) is now in full swing. View the project descriptions on P5.

COVID-19 Changes to DFP Project (554K): Read about our creative COVID-pivot on P3 & P6.

DFP Seminars - Winter

Jan 13	Miguel Nacenta (Uvic)
Feb 10	Alexandra To (Northeastern)
Mar 10	Joanna McGrenere (UBC)
Mar 31	Tibor van Rooij (BCCHRI)
Jun 09	Manon Ranger (UBC)

[View all events on our website](#)

CREATE Workshops

Jan 20	Video Workshop #1 Narrative
Feb 03	Video Workshop #2 Technical
Feb 18	Literature Review Workshop #1 <i>An Introduction</i>
Mar 03	Literature Review Workshop #2 <i>Advanced Search</i>
tbd	Portfolio Workshop

Open to all DFP Students, from all cohorts!

Goodbye (and Congratulations!) to Ian Mitchell

We would like to say a big thank you to Ian Mitchell, who in his 4 months as CREATE Co-Director has been instrumental to restructuring the DFP CREATE funding allocation model and planning for the future. Ian has taken over as Department Head in Computer Science, and therefore stepped down as CREATE Co-Director as of Dec 31, 2020. Ian will continue to be a core DFP faculty member.



Welcome Back Luanne Sinnamon

We are thrilled to welcome back Luanne Sinnamon, who has been on administrative leave this past year. Luanne's leave will end June 30, 2020, at which point she will step into the role of CREATE Co-Director. Luanne has been a longtime leader in DFP: she sat on the Management Committee for 3 years, and supervised several students in the CREATE, and has played a large role in DFP's strategic planning.



COVID 19 Pivots: 2020 certainly tested our adaptability and flexibility. The importance of community, especially now, has been our driving force, motivating us to move events online rather than to cancel. Successes like our first online Design Showcase demonstrate our community's creativity and eagerness to support one another; we are lucky to belong to such a great group of people. A huge COVID-Pivot, that of moving the Project course online, has been expertly managed by our new Program Manager Laura Ballay (more on P6).

Our Seminar Series has also undergone a big change. While it's now more accessible, we lose much of the networking value that comes with a shared lunch. Not to mention the lost opportunity to bring guests speakers into our labs. We continue to look for meaningful ways to build community with our seminar during COVID.

In the last several months, DFP has brought on 2 new staff members, welcomed new faculty members, and attempted to build cohesion in new cohort of DFP grads. The challenge of building community when in-person meetings aren't possible is a topic that impacts all of us.



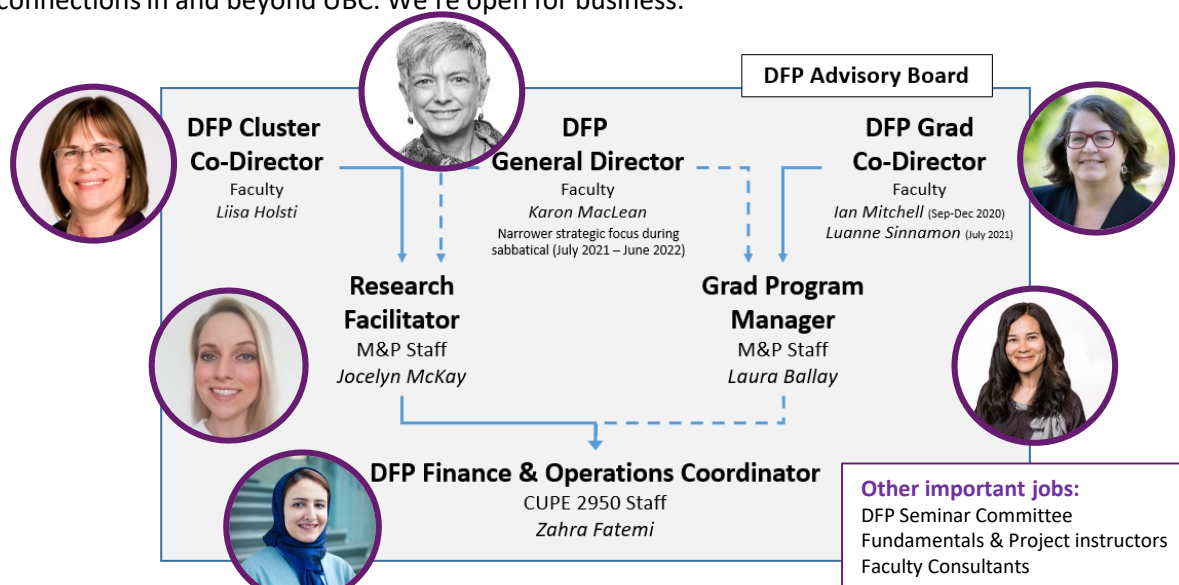
Welcome to the DFP team Zahra Fatemi!

We are thrilled to have Zahra Fatemi join the team as our Cluster Finance and Operations Coordinator! Zahra joined us in October 2020, and has been diligently working to get up to speed with DFP's many initiatives. Zahra is working remotely right now due to COVID-19.

New DFP Organization and Strategic Progress

In our last GCRC proposal, we asked for 2 years of lower-level support, giving us a stable window to (a) ‘get our house in order’ organizationally, (b) investigate possibilities for a **sustainable** future which **meets our needs**, and (c) get going on such plans. We are one year in.

We declare emphatic victory on (a). We said goodbye to the **CREATE Management Committee** in Sept 2020 (thank you to Luanne S., Kosta B., Leanne C., Joanna M. and Karon M. for past service). Enabled by effective (but arduous) recruitment and onboarding of key staff, we have in place the **DFP Executive Team** diagrammed below: faculty and staff leads focused specifically on Cluster and CREATE leadership, allowing a General Director to focus on inter-DFP bridging, and strategy and connections in and beyond UBC. We’re open for business.



Strategic Planning

As the end of our Cluster and CREATE funding approaches (March 2022 and Aug 2023, respectively), the Exec is investigating paths forward – **and seeks your assistance and voices**.

At our June 2020 Cluster Retreat we discussed collective **needs and aims**: support of our research and its translation, graduate talent and recruitment, collaborative potentials. We considered **vehicles** by which DFP could best support these objectives: becoming an institute or centre, a unit within a CS school, leading a national network, or even declaring victory and decentralizing.

The Executive’s role here is to facilitate and integrate – to bring the big picture and provide glue.

As an example, with high involvement from DFP members outside the exec, we have made strides on a DFP + Health theme: submitted a Faculty of Science Cluster Hire proposal (Wasserman, Siden, + 4DFP’ers; highlighted for consideration in Round 2, coming year), explored a BC Digital Supercluster partnership, submitted and won a research proposal (Oberlander+ 2 DFP’ers) and welcome two first-time co-supervisions bridging this area (Pediatrics + OSOT with CS, respectively).

We are now in Dean-level discussions about **broader fund-raising** (e.g. major donors), with specific ideas about forms this could take. For DFP + Health, we have specific research and translation objectives – and compelling stories; we will work to broaden this for other DFP areas.

What are your dreams and stories? Share them with any of us so we can build out the umbrella.

CREATE Cohort 4 Projects Announced!

This year our CREATE students will be working on COVID-19 themed research projects suggested by our faculty. The projects range from data viz, to neurodevelopment disabilities, to human geography, to learning. Read the full project descriptions [here](#). Laura Ballay (DFP CREATE Program Manager) is teaching Project this year.

NewFlow for Newcomers

Student Composition: 2 (CS); 2 (iSchool); 1 (Rehab)

In consultation with [Dr. Suzanne Huot](#) (UBC, [OSOT](#)) and [Alysha Baratta](#) ([Options Community Services](#)), this team will investigate ways to improve the processes Immigrant Services front line workers and staff use to communicate and deliver information and resources to newcomers to Canada. This might mean a device that allows newcomers easy access to information; an improved online learning platform; a tailored guide; an app to assist vulnerable clients with their medication schedules/reminders; or an app to assist our vulnerable clients to manage wellness.

Flagging Misinformation

Student Composition: 3 (CS); 1 (iSchool)

With consultation from [Dr. Luanne Sinnamon](#) (UBC, [iSchool](#)), the Misinformation team will focus on challenges arising from the COVID19 infodemic. The team will investigate ways to help college-aged users recognize misinformation through the design of content flags and reporting systems in search and/or social media platforms. Design outcomes might take the form of a browser plug-in or app that flags known misinformation in search engine results. This project will focus on the design of flagging or feedback components.

KidsAction Coaching

Student Composition: 3 (CS); 1 (iSchool)

Consultants [Dr. Stephanie Glegg](#) (UBC, [OSOT](#)) and [Dr. Liisa Holsti](#) (UBC, [OSOT](#)) will guide this team in designing a web-based tool to support coaches in developing individualized, home-based, physical activity programs for children with neurodevelopment disabilities, based on each child's abilities and needs. The solution should be user-friendly, enabling coaches to select appropriate activities and to assign realistic goals to evaluate progress over time for each child they coach, as well as relay this information to each child's family



Data Viz for Teen Patients with Pain

Student Composition: 2 (CS); 1 (Civil Eng); 1 (MECH); 1 (EDU)

With consultation from [Dr. Tim Oberlander](#) (UBC, [Pediatrics](#)), [Postdoctoral Fellow Katelynn Boerner](#) (UBC, [Pediatrics](#)), and [Dr. Karon MacLean](#) (UBC, [CS](#)), the Personalized Data Viz team will take inspiration from existing smartphone-generated, real-time data collection and visualization methods and apply them to a population of kids living with a complex reality of chronic pain and anxiety. The team will design and develop individualizable data visualization concepts that should ultimately lead to optimizing a youth's engagement and health behavior through real-time data collection, as well as conversations with the youth's care team about their data and what it means for them.

554K Project Course Changes during COVID-19

Our Projects course quickly adapted to remote constraints last spring, and with these learnings in mind, we've made a few adjustments. This year we selected Faculty Consultants to propose four relevant problem spaces for students to investigate. While the format of the course largely remains the same, we wanted to actively address and respond to the "Zoom Fatigue" that we've all come to know so well. Some notable adaptations include modifying our workshops into smaller sessions, and taking care to ensure our community Design Reviews are high value but not overly long. Be sure to watch the video presentations that students will share prior to the Design Reviews, so that we may focus on dialogue about the Projects during the Reviews. We look forward to seeing you at the Design Reviews on Feb 10 and Mar 17!

CREATE Design Showcase

Asynchronous Gallery:

Mon-Tues May 17-18, 2021

Live Showcase Event

Wed May 19, 2021

Mark your calendar!

DFP's New Funding Model

DFP is discontinuing the previous CREATE graduate funding allocation model based on "service units" earned by faculty in return for DFP service. Instead, we have implemented a new **Graduate Entrance Scholarship (GES) voucher plan**. Each December, DFP faculty can apply for one of these \$13,000 vouchers. The purpose of this change is to equip DFP faculty with the means to create a competitive funding package offer for exceptional students while recruiting for the CREATE.

In another major change, DFP faculty who supervise a student in C5 will receive \$5,000 to incorporate into the student's funding package.

Phasing out the fully service-based system

We will continue to track DFP service, and treat it as an important criterion in allocating GES Voucher requests. No further SU credits will be allocated, but existing ones may still be spent up until Aug 31, 2021.

GES Recipients for Fall 2021 application season

We had great response to our first call for GES vouchers with 11 applications submitted in December 2020. Congratulations to all 11 DFP faculty who were awarded a 2021 GES: Antony Hodgson, Dongwook Yoon, Heather O'Brien, Lisa Nathan, Luanne Sinnamon, Naznin Virji-Babul, Helge Rhodin, Ivan Beschastnikh, Rachel Pottinger, Sheryl Staub-French, and Tamara Munzner.

New DFP CREATE Supervisors

We are thrilled to have four DFP faculty with students in the DFP CREATE for the first time in Cohort 4: Jillianne Code (Education), Ivan Beschastnikh (CS), Suzanne Huot (OSOT), and Helge Rhodin (CS).

