



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
Graduate School™

**Historical List of Texas Tech University  
Outstanding Thesis and Dissertation Award Recipients**

**2022**

**Mathematics, Physical Sciences, and Engineering**

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Christian Dieling</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Mario Beruvides	Department of Industrial, Manufacturing & Systems Engineering	Techniques for Calibration of Hailpad Material
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Sevgi Arca</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Rattikorn Hewett	Department of Computer Science	Protecting Data Privacy with Anonymity: Quantifying Instinctive Measures and Intelligent Effective Search for Optimal Anonymized Data
1st Place Thesis	<b>Owen Smith</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Branimir Sevgic	Department of Geosciences	Mineral Origin and Siderite Cementation Processes in the Missourian Clastic Rocks of the Anadarko Basin, OK
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Jacob Young</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Jacob Stephenson	Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering	An Experimental Apparatus and Diagnostics for the Study of Vacuum Surface Flashover

## Social Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Olamide Olajide</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Sarah Asebedo	Department of Personal Financial Planning	Three Essays Examining the Financial Wellbeing of Older Americans
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Cari Carter</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Mellinee Lesley	Department of Curriculum & Instruction	"Fanfiction: Adult literacy impressions and the influence of fandom on educational practices"
1st Place Thesis	<b>Nathan Holtman</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Stephen Devadoss	Department of Agriculture & Applied Economics	The Effects of Domestic and Trade Policy Interventions on Global Agricultural Trade
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Khurul B. Mim</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Tun-Min Jai	Department of Hospitality & Retail Management	Is Sustainable Positioning the New Path to Achieve Brand Loyalty? An Investigation on the Gen Z Market of the U.S. Apparel Brands

## 2021

## Biological Life Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Kalhara Menikdiwela</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Naima Moustaid-Moussa	Department of Nutritional Sciences	Mechanisms Linking the Adipocyte Renin Angiotensin System (RAS) to Obesity, Inflammation and Endoplasmic Reticulum Stress
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Armando Elizalde-Velazquez</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Jaclyn Canas	Department of Environmental Toxicology	Sorption, Uptake, Trophic Transfer and Immunotoxicity of Microplastics and Nanoplastics in the Aquatic Environment
1st Place Thesis	<b>Kristen Heath</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Warren Conway	Department of Wildlife, Aquatic, & Wildlands Science Management	Population Trends and Connectivity of Snowy Plovers on the Southern Great Plains of Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma

2nd Place Thesis	<b>Courtney Ramsey</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Warren Conway	Department of Wildlife, Aquatic, & Wildlands Science Management	Pronghorn Fawn Survival, Bed-Site Characteristics, and Adult Doe Habitat Selection in Southeastern New Mexico
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## Humanities/Fine Arts

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Jonathan Verbeten</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Christopher Smith	Department of Music	“Trashy Music” in the Halls: A Cultural-Geographical History of Music Making in San Francisco During the Gold Rush Years (1849-1869)
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Leah Heilig</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Michael Faris	Department of English	Ways to Move, Ways to Map: Neurodiversity in Interaction Design
1st Place Thesis	<b>Alexander Claman</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Christopher Witmore	Department of Classical & Modern Languages & Literatures	Toward a Morphic History of Landscape

## 2020

### Mathematics, Physical Sciences, & Engineering

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Md Jasim Uddin</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Harvinder Gill	Department of Chemical Engineering	Allergen-free Pollen Shell as a Novel Biomaterial for Oral Vaccine Delivery: Development, Characterization, In Vivo Efficacy, and Mechanistic Insight
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Yeqin Wang</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Beibei Ren	Department of Wind Science & Engineering	Control of Power Electronic Converters for Microgrids

1st Place Thesis	<b>Yves Tchatchoua</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Yu-Chun Donald Lie	Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering	Software Defined Radio (SDR) based Non-Contact Vital Signs (NCVS) Sensor System
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## Social Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Cary Oldham</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Sylvia Niehuis	Department of Human Development & Family Studies	A Longitudinal Study of the Timing of First Sex in Romantic Relationships and Subsequent Relationship Quality
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Cara Lawson</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Courtney Meyers	Department of Agricultural Education & Communication	The Media's Influence on Public Perceptions and Attitudes Toward the Rural Opioid Epidemic
1st Place Thesis	<b>Ethan Sabala</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Stephen Devadoss	Department of Agricultural & Applied Economics	Essays in Trade Policy Analysis: Chinese Tariffs on US Agricultural Markets

## 2019

## Biological Life Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Kembra Albracht-Schulte</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Naima Moustaid-Moussa	Department of Nutritional Sciences	Hepatoprotective Mechanisms of Eicosapentaenoic Acid in High-Fat Fed Mice and Identification of Biomarkers for Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease in Humans
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Vimal Kumar Balasubramanian</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Venugopal Mendu	Department of Plant & Soil Science	Understanding the Genetic factors involved in Cell wall biosynthesis and Biomass production.
1st Place Thesis	<b>Jasmine Neupane</b>	Department of Plant & Soil Science	Cotton yield variability in relation to irrigation rates, soil physical properties and topography

Major Advisor: Dr. Wenxuan Guo			
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Kendall Blanchard</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Ron Kendall	Department of Environmental Toxicology	Regional Surveillance and Seasonal Variation of Eyeworm ( <i>Oxyspirura petrowi</i> ) and Caecal Worm ( <i>Aulonocephalus pennula</i> ) Infection in Northern Bobwhite Quail ( <i>Colinus virginianus</i> ) of Rolling Plains, TX

### Humanities/Fine Arts

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Candice Holley</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Angela Mariani Smith	Department of Music	Marian Devotion in Music: Three Settings of the Ave Maris Stella by Selected Composers at the Santissima Annunziata, Florence (1700-1900 A.D.)
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Brian Larsen</b> Major Advisor: Dr. William Wenthe	Department of English	Pilotage: Poems
1st Place Thesis	<b>Heather Turbeville</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Abigail Swingen	Department of History	Spices, the East India Company, and the Origins of Anti-Dutch Sentiment in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

### 2018

### Mathematics, Physical Sciences, & Engineering

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Molla Hasan</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Golden Kumar	Department of Mechanical Engineering	Decoupling the Effects of Surface Roughness and Chemistry on the wetting of Metallic Glasses
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Sara Calandrini</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Eugenio Aulisa	Department of Mathematics & Statistics	Fluid-Structure Interaction Simulations for Medical Applications

## Social Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Raymond March</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Adam Martin	Department of Agricultural & Applied Economics	Self-Regulation in the U.S. Pharmaceutical Market
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Gail Alleyne Bayne</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Fethi Inan	Department of Instructional Technology	Effects of Online Course Design Elements on Undergraduate Students' Mental Fatigue
1st Place Thesis	<b>Alyssa Bonorden</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Brett Houk	Department of Anthropology	Comparing Colonial Experiences in Northwestern Belize: Archaeological Evidence from Qualm Hill Camp and Kaxil Uinic Village

## 2017

## Humanities/Fine Arts

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Joy McMurrin</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Sam Dragga	Department of English	Negotiating the Supermarket: A Critical Approach to Nutrition Literacy Among Low-income Consumers
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Jeannie Bennett</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Amy Koerber	Department of Communication Studies	An Unhealthy Drama: A Burkean Analysis of Mental Illness Rhetorics
1st Place Thesis	<b>Garret McDonald</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Alan Barenberg	Department of History	Prisoners at War: Soviet Forced Labor and the Second World War
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Aaron Wood</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Dorothy Chansky	Department of Theatre & Dance	Performing Masculine Perfection: Eugen Sandow's American Male Ideal

## Biological Life Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Mandana Pahlavani</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Naima Moustaid-Moussa	Department of Nutritional Sciences	Cellular and Molecular Basis for Omega 3 Polyunsaturated Fatty Acid Regulation of Brown Adipose Tissue
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Amanda Cano</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Jaclyn Canas-Carrell	Department of Environmental Toxicology	Determination of carbon-based nanomaterial distribution, toxicity, and trophic transfer in aquatic environments
1st Place Thesis	<b>Hannah Ashbaugh</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Warren Conway	Department of Natural Resources Management	Environmental availability and potential influences of heavy metals on snowy plovers in the Southern Great Plains of Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma

## 2016

## Mathematics, Physical Sciences, & Engineering

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Jie Ding</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Xinzhong Chen	Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering	Extreme response and fatigue damage analysis of wind-excited structures considering non-Gaussian load effects
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Alaa Darabseh</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Akbar Namin	Department of Computer Science	Cyberspace Security Use Keystroke Dynamics
1st Place Thesis	<b>Travis Hall</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Yu Chon Donald Lie	Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering	The Design of a Robust and Intelligent Phased Array Non-Contact Vital Signs (NCVS) Sensor System
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Travis Hall</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Kerry Griffis-Kyle	Department of Natural Resources Management	The role of isolation in Sonoran Desert water site connectivity-based conservation strategies

## Social Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Sungwon Chung</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Jongpil Cheon	Department of Educational Psychology & Learning	An Investigation of the Effects of Emotional Visual Aids on Learning Performance and Mental Effort in Online Health Education
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Paulina Velez-Gomez</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Nancy Bell	Department of Human Development & Family Studies	Identity Negotiations of Colombian International Students
1st Place Thesis	<b>Girsea Martinez</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Jennifer Dunn	Department of Sociology, Anthropology & Social Work	Identity & Ambiguity: The Moral Career of Undocumented Young Adults from Mixed-Status Immigrant Families
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Kenna Neitch</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Kerry Griffis-Kyle	Department of English	The Nature of Satire: Essentialism, Gender, and Purpose

## 2015

## Biological Life Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Sanaz Shafian</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Stephen Maas	Department of Plant & Soil Science	Estimation of soil moisture status in the Texas High Plains using remote sensing.
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Matthew VanLandeghem</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Reynaldo Patino	Department of Natural Resources Management	Environmental Factors Regulating Toxic Blooms of Golden Algae ( <i>Prymnesium Parvum</i> ) and their Effects on Fisheries Resources
1st Place Thesis	<b>Aakriti Sharma</b> Major Advisor: Dr. David Weindorf	Department of Plant & Soil Science	Characterization of Soils via Portable X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometer
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Cody Sultenfuss</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Samuel Prien	Department of Animal & Food Sciences	A Novel and Inexpensive Semen Thawing Device Designed to Improve Efficiency in a Production Agriculture Environment



## Humanities/Fine Arts

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Michael Palmer</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Dennis Covington	Department of English	Baptizing the Dead: Creative Nonfiction Essays
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Heath Wing</b> Major Advisor: Dr. John Beusterien	Department of Classical & Modern Languages	States of Exception on American Frontiers: Biopolitics, Violence, and Nation in Martin Fierro, Os Sertaes, and Blood Meridian.
1st Place Thesis	<b>Tiffany Gonzalez</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Julie Willett	Department of History	Chicana Politics: Maria Cardenas and La Raza Unida Party, 1935-1993

## 2014

### Mathematics, Physical Sciences, & Engineering

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Yunzhe Ma</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Harvinder Gill	Department of Chemical Engineering	Microneedles for Drug Delivery into Oral Cavity
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Jared Gragg</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Jingzhou Yang	Department of Mechanical Engineering	Investigating the onset of slip in gait by employing probabilistic theory and optimization-based motion prediction
1st Place Thesis	<b>Jason Post</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Perry Carter	Department of Geosciences	Environmental Inequality in Lubbock Texas

## Social Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Leah Carruth</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Carole Janisch	Department of Education	Interactions in Kindergarten Writing Workshop: Writing Development and Social Development
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Sungwon Jung</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Todd Chambers	Department of Education	Motivated cognition in video games: the influence of emotional video game content on cognitive processing of billboard advertisements embedded in first-person shooter games
1st Place Thesis	<b>Megan Ohlmann</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Stephanie Jones	Department of Education, Psychology, & Leadership	A Quantitative Analysis of Factors Affecting Undergraduate Business Students' Choice of Major: Testing a Proposed Model of Academic Major Choice Identity Development.
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Nellie Hill</b> Major Advisor: Dr. David Doerfert	Department of Agricultural Education and Communications	A Social Network Analysis of Texas Alliance for Water Conservation Producers

## 2013

## Biological Life Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Song Tang</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Greg Mayer	Department of Environmental Toxicology	Toxicity of cadmium quantum dots compared to cadmium and zinc ions in zebrafish ( <i>Danio rerio</i> ) and water flea ( <i>Daphnia pulex</i> )
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Jose Thekkiniath</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Michael San Francisco	Department of Biological Sciences	Molecular responses of <i>Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis</i> following exposure to thyroid hormone

1st Place Thesis	<b>Rebecca Perkins</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Clint Boal	Department of Natural Resource Management	Anti-predatory Behavior of Northern Bobwhite in the Rolling Plains of Texas
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Komal Kunder</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Susan San Francisco	Graduate School	Molecular Landscape of Cotton Fibers in Early Elongation

## Humanities/Fine Arts

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Henrietta Goodman</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Greg Mayer	Department of English	Hungry Moon (Poems)
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Dorothy Maria O'Connell</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Sara Spurgeon	Department of English	Them Boys Just Ain't Right: Masculinity, Myth, and Social Systemic Communication in Cormac McCarthy's Novels
1st Place Thesis	<b>Justin Kirkland</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Abigail Swingen	Department of History	From Rite to Right: How Holy Days Became A Natural Right in Medieval England

## 2012

## Social Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Nicole Gilinsky</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Hansel Burley	Department of Educational Psychology	Physical Activity and Self-regulatory Capabilities: Examining Relationships with Academic Self-efficacy and Academic Outcomes
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Matthew Russell</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Nancy Bell	Department of Human Development and Family Studies	Women's Counter Narratives of Redemption

1st Place Thesis	<b>Shawn Brackett</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Stacy Jacob	Department of Higher Education	Advancing Women in Education: Colorado State Normal School and the University of Colorado, 1870-1920
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Josh Novak</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Douglas Smith	Department of Marriage and Family Therapy	The association between the experience of abuse in childhood and perceptions of safety in current adult intimate relationships

### **Mathematics, Physical Sciences, & Engineering**

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Yingying Chen</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Karlene Hoo	Department of Chemical Engineering	An Analysis of Model Parameter Uncertainty on Online Model-based Applications
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Brian Miller</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Lourdes Juan	Department of Mathematics and Statistics	On the Integration of Elementary Functions: Computing the Logarithmic Part
1st Place Thesis	<b>Kristine Seaman</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Mara Neusel	Department of Mathematics and Statistics	Kryptos
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Valiantsina Laurushchyk</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Mara Neusel	Department of Mathematics and Statistics	Orbit Chern Classes in Invariant Theory

2011

## Biological Life Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Adcharee Karnjanapiboonwong</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Todd Anderson	Department of Environmental Toxicology	Long-Term Fate of Pharmaceuticals and Personal Care Products in the Environment
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Colin Bell</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Jon Zak	Department of Biological Sciences	Soil Microbial Responses to Increased Precipitation in the Desert Grasslands of Big Bend National Park
1st Place Thesis	<b>Eric Howell</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Lou Densmore	Department of Biological Sciences	Chemotherapeutic Challenge of the Chernobyl Rodent <i>Apodemus flavicollis</i>
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Shawna Nations</b> Major Advisor: Dr. George Cobb	Department of Environmental Toxicology	Acute and Developmental Toxicity of Metal Oxide Nanoparticles (ZnO, TiO <sub>2</sub> , Fe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> , and CuO) in <i>Xenopus laevis</i>

## Humanities/Fine Arts

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Stephanie Eckroth</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Ann Hawkins	Department of English	Anonymity, Celebrity and Authorship, 1780-1823
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. John Southard</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Ron Milam	Department of History	The Marine Corps Way: Combined Action Platoons in the Vietnam War
1st Place Thesis	<b>Leslie (Micah) Branson</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Dorothy Chansky	Department of Theatre & Dance	And Footlights Lit the Path of the Righteous: Theatricality and Performance in the Second Great Awakening
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Cody Lass</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Ethan Schmidt	Department of History	Read All About It: Nationalism During the American Revolution

2010

**Mathematics, Physical Sciences, & Engineering**

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Dinesh Ekanayake</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Ram Iyer	Department of Mathematics and Statistics	Robust Control of Saturating, Non-Monotone Hysteretic Systems with Non-Linear Frequency-Dependent Power Losses
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Brett L. Moore</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Larry Pyeatt	Department of Computer Science	Reinforcement Learning for Closed-Loop Propofol Anesthesia: A Human Volunteer Study
1st Place Thesis	<b>Kathryn Brausch</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Jonathan Maul	Department of Environmental Toxicology	Effects of Fullerenes and Functionalized Fullerenes on Daphnia Magna: Behavioral Responses and Interactions of Functionalized Fullerene with Hydrophobic Organic Contaminants
2nd Place Thesis	<b>Peilin Cao</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Shameem Siddiqui	Department of Petroleum Engineering	Three-Phase Unsteady-State Relative Permeability Measurements in Consolidated Cores Using Three Immiscible Liquids

**Social Sciences**

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Kevin Gosselin</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Hansel Burley	Department of Educational Psychology and Leadership	Development and Psychometric Exploration of the Online Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Jose Antonio Lopez</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Jaime Malaga	Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics	The Mexican Meat Market: An Econometric Analysis of Demand Properties and Trade
1st Place Thesis	<b>Andrea V. Roets</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Anisa Zvonkovic	Department of Human Development and Family Studies	Personality, Work Demand, and Romantic Relationships

2nd Place Thesis	<b>Abigail McCulloch</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Scott Burris	Department of Agricultural Education and Communications	A Preassessment for Developing a Food Safety Training Program for Self Service Food Bars in Grocery Stores
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## 2009

### Biological and Life Sciences

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Jennifer Huddleston</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Randall Jeter	Department of Biological Sciences	Natural Transformation in Aeromonas Species
1st Place Thesis	<b>Julie Weathers</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Samuel Prien	Department of Animal & Food Science	Early Indications of Breed Differences for Cryopreservation of Embryos in Cattle
2nd Place Thesis	<b>I-Huei Tsai</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Shane Blum	Department of Nutritional Sciences	Cytotoxicity of Selenocyanobiotin Against MDA-MA-231 Breast Cancer Cells

### Humanities/Fine Arts

1st Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Jordan Cofer</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Jim Whitlark	Department of English	Flannery's Bible: Biblical Recapitulations in the Fiction of Flannery O'Conno
2nd Place Dissertation	<b>Dr. Ian Rollins</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Christopher Smith	Department of Music	Ritmo Caliente: Cal Tjader, 1950s Dichotomies, and the Story of Latin Jazz
1st Place Thesis	<b>Kyle Conway</b> Major Advisor: Dr. Dorothy Chansky	Department of Fine Arts	Will Eno: The Page, the Stage and the Word

2nd Place Thesis

**Brian Yost**

Department of English

Globalization, Commercial Culture, and Contemporary U.S. Fiction

Major Advisor: Dr. Michael Borshuk