Dear Prospective Graduate Student,

Congratulations on deciding to delay getting a real job for at least a couple more years. One day, in the winter of 2009, I (P.M.) set out to create a document to let prospective students get a feel for Calgary and the university. When I was coming to Calgary, I was apprehensive about moving and I still was unsure about what the department would be like. So, to help new incoming students, I asked current psychology graduate students to let me know what they wish they had known before they came here, and also generally what they like about the city. The responses I got back reflected the diversity of the students here as well as the diversity you will find in Calgary (Calgary is a big city now, and no matter what niche you are looking for, you will find it here).

I know this will probably read as departmental propaganda, but seriously, almost everyone had nothing but positive things to say about the city (yes, housing can be more expensive than some places but it is on par with most large cities) and the university, and, I think the positive responses go beyond the effects of cognitive dissonance. We all think Calgary is a great place to call home.

Before I get to the responses one important note: Please talk to graduate students in your lab who will likely be able to answer any additional questions you have.

The following sections summarize students’ comments and answers some questions you may have:

**Does Calgary = Fun? Yes, we believe it does.**

**Things to know about Calgary that you may not have known:**

- Calgary gets the most sunlight out of the 100 largest cities in Canada (333 Sunny days per year)
- Calgary has many parks (many are dog friendly) and an extensive pathway system
- Many students commented on how friendly people in the city are
- Calgary is within one to two hours of some of the best skiing in the world, as well as amazing trails for hiking and camping in the summer
- As previously mentioned, Calgary is a big city now and as a result, has many different festivals throughout the year (music festivals, food festivals, film festivals, Stampede), a thriving arts scene (visual, dramatic, dance), as well as countless musical acts (both big and small) that come through the city.
- The size of the city also means that there are a wide variety of political viewpoints represented by the citizens of Calgary
- Calgary has many sports teams (Flames, Stampeders, Hitmen & Roughnecks) so you can often check out live games
- Calgary winters aren’t that bad. They are long and there are some very cold days, but these are broken up by warm winds that come from the West [called Chinooks] that can sometimes raise the temperature into the 10s and 20s in the winter.
- Calgary has a great zoo
- Calgary has two great rivers you can float down in the summer
- Calgary has one of the youngest and best educated populations in Canada
- Calgary has many malls as well as small independent boutiques throughout the city for those who like to shop
- There is no way to describe Calgary for everyone, as we all are different, but if you think you might like living in a large city, you will likely be happy with what Calgary has to offer
Ok, so the city of Calgary sounds good, what about the department?

Here are some of the things students mentioned that they liked:
- Relatively small department = a lot of attention and assistance available for students
- Very friendly atmosphere among students, staff and faculty
- No, seriously: there is a strong sense of cooperation among students as opposed to competition
- Guaranteed funding
- All administrative stuff (ex: paying tuition) can be done online, which helps avoid waiting in long line-ups

Some comments directed towards Clinical Students:
- Practica are set up by a practicum director, making obtaining great practicum placements relatively easy
- The breadth and quality of the community-based clinical experiences was mentioned by many of the students, as well as the fact that practicum experiences begin early on in the program
- High rates of internship placement
- You will take courses in both Child and Adult psychopathology/assessment/treatment, giving you a wide breadth of experience and knowledge

Note: This section is relatively short for a reason. You will find out more about the department from talking to your supervisor and graduate students directly. The role of this document is more geared towards letting you know what you can expect upon moving to Calgary. We hope this document was helpful and we wish you the best of luck.

In addition to square dancing and barn raisings, are there places to go out in Calgary?

As you are already figuring out, there are lots of things to do in Calgary. Calgary is an active city with many events and festivals going on throughout the year. Calgary also has a very active night life. From trendy lounges to pubs, bars, sports bars, and clubs, there is something for everyone.

But I like to dance to metal or obscure indie-rock...is there a place for me to go out?

No matter what you like to shake to, there is someplace spinning it. Selections include: 80's pop music, 90's alternative, indie rock, metal, country, hip-hop, rap, top-40, dub-step, house, electro, drum and bass, jungle, and of course tons of live music throughout the week.

What's the housing situation in Calgary?

There are many cool neighborhoods to live in, and many areas that are perfect for families. As previously mentioned, rent is is similar to other large cities. Transit could be better, but one grad student had the following great advice: "This is a difficult city to live in without a car, so proximity to a train line, or close enough to the university to walk is best. I recommend that people look at the transit website before deciding on a place (www.calgarytransit.com) to see if commuting by bus and train will be an option - you'll save a bunch on parking because you get a transit pass with tuition."

In general, students recommended either living in the Northwest of the city (ex: in neighborhoods such as Brentwood, Dalhousie, Edgemont) or near downtown (ex: in neighborhoods such as, Beltline, Kensington, Mission, 17th). This link will help you explore all the different areas in Calgary you can call home: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_neighbourhoods_in_Calgary. For individuals who are not bringing a partner with them to Calgary, there are also graduate residences that you can live in at the University. These apartment buildings are for graduate students only and are clean, quiet and about a 5 minute walk from classes. Family housing is also a great option for individuals with partners or children, while the waiting list can be several years long, the inexpensive cost and proximity to campus makes it worthwhile to sign up now, even though you will have to find housing somewhere else in the meantime.

Are there good places to eat out in Calgary?

I received over 40 different recommendations of places to eat in Calgary, far too many to list. This does speak, however, to the abundance of great places to eat. If you are coming for a visit, ask a grad student for a recommendation.

Some of the cuisine available in the city is: Chinese, Dutch Pancake House, Ethiopian, French, Greek, Lebanese, Indian, Italian, Pub food, Japanese, Thai. The variety is amazing!