
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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NAME: Thompson, Cora

eRA COMMONS USER NAME (credential, e.g., agency login):

POSITION TITLE: Graduate Student Research Assistant

EDUCATION/TRAINING BS Biology/BA Spanish, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point,

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE (if applicable)	Start Date MM/YYYY	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point	BA	09/2017	05/2021	Biology
University of Wisconsin-Madison	BS			Spanish
	PhD	09/2022	05/2027 (Expected)	Endocrinology and Reproductive Physiology

A. Personal Statement

I began my formal research career as an undergraduate researcher at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. I was selected to join the lab of Dr. Karin Bodensteiner while taking her Honors Animal Biology course. My project focused on the reproductive parameters of female mice transgenic for CCL2. This experience taught me project planning, experimental design, and how to communicate findings. During these four years, I presented my work at three different conferences and won numerous awards and scholarships. Because of this experience, I decided to further study female reproduction in graduate school. Before entering my PhD program, I took a gap year working in the UW-Madison mouse Breeding Core. This experience taught me more about the research processes and the utility of mice as a model species. I also learned more about mammalian reproduction and how to responsibly conduct animal research. I decided to continue my PhD at UW-Madison in September 2022 in the Endocrinology and Reproductive Physiology graduate program. I am currently under the mentorship of Dr. Joan Jorgensen in the department of Comparative Biosciences. My project focuses on the role of Cdc42 and Rac1 during the processes of germline cyst breakdown and primordial follicle development. So far, I have characterized immunofluorescent staining, learned Western Blotting, and developed new imaging techniques. I have also been fortunate to present my research and be able to TA this coming semester. In the future, I hope to teach at a smaller university and to be able to share my love of science with others.

B. Positions, Scientific Appointments, and Honors

Positions and Scientific Appointments

2022 – Present	Graduate Research Assistant, UW-Madison
2022– Present	Member, Graduate Women in Stem
2021– 2022	Research Specialist, UW-Madison
2017– 2021	Undergraduate Researcher, UW-Stevens Point

Honors

2021	Brian Eagon Memorial Research Scholarship, UW-Stevens Point
2020-21	Academy of Letters and Science Distinguished Achievement Award, UW-Stevens Point
2020	Office of Student Creative Activity and Research (OSCAR) Grant, UW-Stevens Point

C. Contributions to Science

- 1. Undergraduate Research:** All four years of my undergraduate degree, I did research in the lab of Dr. Karin Bodensteiner at the University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point. Her lab is part of the Biology Department and focuses on female reproductive physiology. My project centered around characterizing reproductive parameters, such as estrous cycle length, fertility, and pup survival for female mice transgenic for the gene *CCL2*. We found that females transgenic for *CCL2* had heavier pups on average than their wild-type counterparts and that female pups with a transgenic mother went through puberty later regardless of genotype than females born to wild-type mothers. In total, this experience allowed me to conduct research in a rigorous and ethical manner, but also led me to my future career goals.
- 2. Research Specialist:** Before going to graduate school, I took a gap year and worked at the Biomedical Research Model Systems Mouse Breeding Core. In this position, I managed the generation of experimental animals for over two dozen PIs. I also performed experimental procedures as requested by PIs such as weight checks, intravenous injections, and blood draws. In this position I learned about various mouse strains and how mice are a valuable research tool. In addition, I learned how to read and review protocols, how the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committees work, and how the research process works at larger universities.
- 3. Graduate Research:** My current project is titled is centered around the role of two GTPases, *Cdc42* and *Rac1*, in the processes of germline cyst breakdown and primordial follicle formation. This research is conducted under the mentorship of Dr. Joan Jorgensen at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. To do this, we use techniques such as immunofluorescence, Western blot, and live imaging. This project allows me to further investigate female reproduction, but focused on perinatal development and how these processes impact the rest of an individual's reproductive lifespan. In addition, as part of the Endocrinology and Reproductive Biology Graduate Program, I have met and connected with other students and faculty interested in reproductive biology.