

Graduate student profile:

Terrence Chang

*Current info (Grad program, Year of study, lab group):
PhD, 2nd year, Mason Lab*

Previous degrees:

MSc (U of T), BSc (University of Western Ontario)

Tell us about your research at UTSC:

*I study male-male competition in crickets, specifically in the hump-winged grig, *Cyphoderris monstrosa*. In other words, I film insects fighting and then take various measurements to try to make sense of why winners are winners. Aside from the behavioural stuff, I've started to delve into physiology and metabolomics.*



Tell us about why you chose your graduate program or lab:

UTSC is a satellite campus, nested in a suburban area right next to the Rouge River watershed. During the summers, walking through the valley and taking stock of all the insects is a good way to take a break from working...

The main reason I chose to come here (and stay) is because of the people. From the beginning, I got the sense that the department is tight-knit and very supportive. The diversity of labs, research interests, and perspectives always generate interesting conversations and force you to think about your project from different angles.

What are your future career goals and how has your graduate work set you up to achieve those goals?

I'd like to continue to do research in some capacity – the ideal would be to continue in academia. Graduate work in the department involves a balance of research, courses, and teaching. Because of the smaller class sizes at UTSC, we're able to interact with students on an individual level and this provides a unique teaching experience. The diversity of courses helps me maintain a plethora of interests. In addition, our department has a good record for inviting local or international researchers to give seminars.

Complete the sentence:

In my free time I like

Travelling abroad, spending time with family, checking out the local comedy scene (sketch or stand-up), escaping into a good fantasy novel, and collecting comic books.

Do you have any advice for prospective students?

Figure out what you like to do and work hard at it. If you like the idea of research and are in your undergrad, it's a good idea to do a thesis project (if your school has an option) because this will be a brief and intense introduction to research. When applying to grad school, find a lab that does what you want to do, make sure you've done your homework and read at least one of their recent papers. If you're still interested, send an email and ask for an interview. At the interview, make sure you get to meet students in the lab as well – they're a representation of what you will be and it's best to hear what they have to say.