



Spring 2022 Newsletter

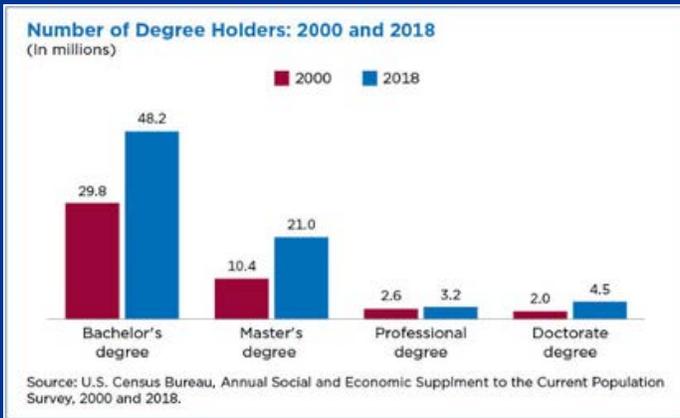
Incredible Investment or a Promise with Perils?

Increased student debt among master's degree seekers has amped warnings by A. Fuller on "hobbled for life," set alarms by K. Carey's piece on the "great master's-degree swindle," heightened cautions by A. H. Petersen of "the Master's trap" on predatory graduate programs.

Contrast these views with "...thousands of graduate alumni who say getting a master's degree was the best decision they ever made..." particularly at California public universities (G. R. Hayes, Nov. 2021, Insidehighered.com).

Our 19 master's degrees and Doctorate degree in Education Leadership offer great opportunities and great value to all CSUB prospective, qualified students. The journey is well worth it, dare to dream, earning a graduate degree from CSUB.

We at the Graduate Student Center stand ready to assist and support you as you become part of our graduate studies family.



"In 2017, on average a person with an advanced degree earned 3.7 times as much as a high school dropout." ([U. S. Census Bureau](http://U.S. Census Bureau), 2019).



GSC DIRECTOR

Dr. Luis Vega



ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR

Martha Manriquez



GRADUATE ADVISOR

Adrienne Silva

STUDENT ASSISTANTS

Eileen Diaz, Jay Shyamdasani, & Jennifer Paulsen, *Newsletter Editor*



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GSC OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday 8 AM -5:00 PM
& By appointment 5 PM -7:00 PM

LOCATION – Numenor (West Dorms) & Virtual
www.csub.edu/graduatestudentcenter

CONTACT US

Main: (661) 654-2786
Fax: (661) 654-2791
Email: gsc@csub.edu

A warm welcome and wishes of wellness this spring semester 2022. The Graduate Student Center stands ready to facilitate and foster your graduate success, via virtual or in-person. Look forward to exciting workshops, funding grant options, research engagement, and emerging opportunities through our Title Vb grant.

If the world were perfect, it wouldn't be.
-Yogi Berra

GSC Spring 2022 Workshops

All workshops will be through Zoom, Fridays, 3-4 p.m.
RSVP at gsc@csub.edu or 661.654.2786

1/20/2022 - New Graduate Student Orientation - GSC Staff

2/25/2022 - Money Matters for Graduate Programs - Kimber Wellman

3/25/2022 - Mental Illness and Recovery: a Re-Conceptualization -
Natalia Salinas, MSW, LCSW, SAP

4/22/2022 - Expectations of the Grad School Application - Dr. Luis Vega &
Adrienne Silva

5/6/2022 - CSUB to Host the 2nd CSU Grad Slam - a Must See Event

Academic Programs and GSC Staff invite the CSUB campus community to attend this virtual event, featuring the first- and second-place winners of each CSU campus that holds a Grad Slam, or 3MT (3-minute) competitions. The event will take place on Friday 6 May 2022 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. These research presentations highlight some of the best research in the CSU and attendees will be treated to an unforgettable experience of research processes and products done by CSU graduate students. Please visit csub.edu/GraduateStudentCenter for updates and for an RSVP link, in addition to ongoing publicity as we get closer to the event.

Our 20 Graduate Programs Await New Student Applicants with Open Arms

Administration (MSA)

Biology (MS)

Business Administration (MBA)

Computer Science (MS)

Counseling Psychology (MS)

Education - Curriculum & Instruction (MA)

Educational Administration (MA)

Educational Leadership Doctoral Program (EdD)

Educational Counseling (MS)

English (MA)

Geology (MS)

Health Care Administration (MSCHA)

History (MA)

Interdisciplinary Studies (MA)

Kinesiology (MSK)

Nursing (MSN)

Public Administration (MPA)

Social Work (MSW)

Spanish (MA)

Special Education (MA)

Correct Decision - Choose CSUB!

CSUB ranked as a "best value" in four-year colleges:

"Best Value Schools ranks CSUB in affordability University ranked No. 21 out of 25 most affordable four-year colleges" (J. Luiz, 3 November 2021, news.csub.edu [link]).

Affordable graduate education is within reach for CSUB graduate students:

"Washington Monthly ranks CSUB in affordability, master's programs -- CSUB ranks No. 25 in Best Bang for the Buck, No. 68 in Master's University lists" (J. Luiz, 3 September 2021, news.csub.edu [link]).

Social mobility is a reality of a CSUB education:

"CSUB ranked among top schools in CollegeNet's 2021 Social Mobility Index -- CSUB makes top 20 along with nine other CSU campuses" (J. Luiz, 18 November 2021, news.csub.edu [link]).

In the News

“Biology grad student earns second degree at CSUB -- **Jacob Spriester** graduates this month with master’s degree.” (by K. Ardis, 13 December 2021, news.csub.edu [\[link\]](#)).



Many students have encouraging professors who guide them in their college journey. Jacob credits Emeritus Biology Professor Dr. Maynard Moe, who encouraged him to pursue a master’s degree. Earning his MS in Biology this past December was further facilitated by the mentoring of Dr. Brandon Pratt, who described Jacob as a “model graduate student.” Jacob’s collegiate journey chronicles professors’ eagerness to help students, and the blend of science and application to career, as next step for Jacob is a job with the US National Parks Service. Read about his fascinating graduate journey and groundbreaking research he conducted as part of his master’s thesis [\[news.csub.edu link\]](https://news.csub.edu).

“A guiding hand -- **Adrienne Silva** supports CSUB students seeking graduate degrees.” (by J. Luiz, 4 November 2021, news.csub.edu [\[link\]](#)).



Adrienne is an exemplar of balancing career, family, and the daily pressures of life. In addition to serving as the Graduate Student advisor, Adrienne serves our country as a reservist in the National Guard, is earning her second graduate degree in Public Administration, and is the proud mother of three, including a toddler. Adrienne’s duty to service on behalf of our graduate students encumbers recruitment, admissions/enrollment information, and running workshops related to standardized test preparation and graduate student professional development. She coordinates our Graduate Studies Summit every fall semester. She also sees to our graduate students’ academic needs and has allocated late in the day hours for our graduate students who work during the day. Learn more about Adrienne’s remarkable accomplishments at news.csub.edu [\[link\]](#).

“Health care administration master’s program gets national recognition.” (by J. Luiz, 15 November 2021, news.csub.edu [\[link\]](#)).



CSUB graduate programs might be small, but they pack a punch, garnering national recognition and accolades. Our programs ensure quality measures through accreditation, meeting requirements for state licensures, credentialing, research accomplishment recognitions, and distinguished faculty ranks. In this vein, the Health Care Administration master’s program was recently ranked 32nd by the Best Accredited Colleges of 39 Best Master’s in Health Care Administration Degrees. According to Graduate Director, **Dr. BJ Moore**, “Any recognition of the program is to the university’s benefit and to the benefit of the community.” Read more on the Program’s recognition at news.csub.edu.

In the News

“Winners announced for third annual Grad Slam -- Students give research presentations in competition hosted by Graduate Student Center.” (by L. Vega, 16 December 2021, news.csub.edu [link]).

Once again, the third Grad Slam competition was a great success, as reported in news.csub.edu.



Autumn Corrow was awarded first place in the competition for her presentation titled “The effects of fire on bat activity in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park.” Her research mentor is Assistant Professor of Biology **Dr. Anna Doty**.

“My study examines how structural habitat changes due to fire affects the activity pattern of forest-dwelling bats and I seek to understand how bats are adapting to fires which can encourage appropriate habitat management and conservation efforts,” Corrow said. “I was fortunate to work alongside Dr. Doty this summer, conducting field research that will prepare me to work as a wildlife biologist for a government agency when I finish graduate school.”



Isabella Ozuna placed second in the competition. Her presentation was titled “Flashy fluorescence” and involved an investigation of the adaptive functions and roles that glow and color in some species serves.

“Understanding biofluorescence may help us understand how [biofluorescent species] reproduce and find mates or protect themselves from predation, which may help us better understand how to protect their habitats,” Ozuna said.

Ozuna’s research adviser is Associate Professor of Biology, **Dr. Amber Stokes**.



Corrow will represent CSUB at the Western Association of Graduate Schools' (WAGS) sixth annual 3MT competition on March 23, 2022, which will be held virtually from Denver, Colorado. Ozuna will join Corrow to also represent the university in the statewide Grad Slam this spring, where 22 of the 23 CSU campuses will participate.

Presentations were rated by a distinguished panel of judges, which included Hall of Fame alumni inductees who continue their endless commitment of service to our campus: Raji Brar, Sheryl Chalupa, Terri Church and Bakersfield Attorney Dennis Beaver, who is a writer for a nationally syndicated newspaper column and is a fervent supporter of CSUB and our students.

These presentations are available for viewing on CSUB's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLqI7IOYFEg>

Master of Arts in Spanish



¡Sí, Se Habla Español! -- Yes, We Speak Spanish!

Choquequirao Archaeological Park
(Google Images)

Program Description

The Master of Arts in Spanish program enables students to further advance their communication skills in the fundamental areas of listening, reading, speaking and writing in Spanish. The Spanish M.A. is designed for a range of individuals and seeks to provide: (1) graduate-level training for those whose primary aim is to teach at a community college; (2) advanced training for teachers who wish to improve their professional skills and status; (3) a variety of courses for students who plan to continue toward a Ph.D. degree at another institution; and (4) continuing education for those who wish to extend their knowledge as an end in itself through an interesting and stimulating series of courses in literature, linguistics, and culture.

Program Objectives

Goals for the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures M.A. program are to:

- (1) provide enhanced study of the literatures, cultures, and linguistic practices of Spain, Latin America, and U.S. Latinos,
- (2) provide instruction in theory and research,
- (3) provide training in second-language pedagogy, and
- (4) offer development in professional areas like translation and interpretation.

These goals are accomplished in coursework that challenges students through critical exploration and further refinement of linguistic proficiency.

A Message from the Department of Modern Languages and Literature

Welcome! ¡Bienvenidos! Bienvenus! We believe that the study of other languages is essential for the twenty-first-century global citizen. Immersion in another language fundamentally shapes the way one thinks. The Department offers a wide variety of courses and Programs in the fields of modern languages, literature, linguistics and culture. They are designed for students who wish to major or minor in Spanish or French; to obtain a Graduate Degree; for students who seek a broad liberal arts education in preparation for a variety of professions; and for students whose careers will be furthered by the knowledge of another language and culture. The Department's Programs serve and promote all academic divisions of the University in providing students the language and cultural training necessary to support international and intercultural endeavors.

**For updates and application information, please visit:
[The Spanish Department's CSUB webpage](#)**

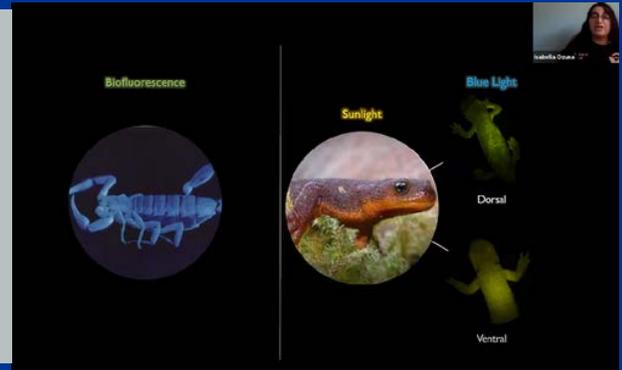
KUDOS!

On December 3, 2021, ten graduate students presented their research to a panel of distinguished panel of judges and attendees from the university and community. The high quality of the students' research was manifested through all presentations. We, at the Graduate Student Center, offer our strongest congratulations to the 2021 Grad Slam competition participants, attendees, and judges. We are grateful to **Ernie Hashim** at CSUB ITS for editing the video, time-stamping presenters, and posting it at CSUB youtube channel:

<https://youtu.be/zLqI7IOYFEg>



First place winner, **Autumn Corrow** (left). Second place winner, **Isabella Ozuna**. More fantastic student presenters mentioned on page 7!



CSUB's 3rd Annual Grad Slam 3-Minute Research Competition



**Friday
December 3rd, 2021
at 3:00 pm**



What is the Grad Slam?

The Grad Slam, or 3MT, showcases graduate student research through short TED Talk-style presentations. Master and Doctoral students display one presentation slide, and they have three minutes to present their research using language their peers and non-specialists will understand. Students who participate learn how to:

- ✓ Articulate their research concisely and effectively by honing their communication and presentation skills.
- ✓ Explain their research and its potential impact to an audience outside their disciplinary field.
- ✓ Enrich their curriculum vitae (CV) and expand their network by meeting other researchers in their respective fields.

How are the presentations scored?

A team of guest judges will score each presentation along two different categories: **comprehension-content** and **engagement-communication**.

How do the presenters prepare?

To help students prepare for the CSUB Grad Slam, a series of workshops are offered to interested students. These workshops provide a basic overview of the Grad Slam competition rules and judging criteria, as well as guidance.

Who is eligible to participate?

Currently enrolled master's or doctoral students at CSUB. Individual presenters (group presentations are not permitted at this time).

KUDOS!

How is the winner of the competition honored?

The winner of the CSUB Grad Slam will be invited to participate in the sixth annual regional Grad Slam hosted by the Western Association of Graduate Schools (WAGS) at its conference in Denver Colorado, March 20-23, 2022. Collegiate competitors include students from Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, North Dakota, Utah and New Mexico as well as other CSU campuses.

In addition, CSUB Grad Slam top two ranked students will be invited to compete in the second annual CSU Grad Slam competition, involving all our CSU campuses and to take place in May 2022.



This year's student presentations:

Jadd Bahaaldin - Biology

"Triggering Tetrodotoxin Movement in Newts with LH RH"
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amber Stokes

Autumn Corrow - Biology

"The Effects of Fire on Bat Activity in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park"
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Anna Doty

Amy Fetters - Biology

"Plastic and Natural Leaf Breakdown in Aquatic and Terrestrial Habitats"
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Rae McNeish

Julian Jordan - Biology

"Searching for Valley Fever in Marine Mammals and on the Channel Islands"
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Antje Lauer

Lauren Miller - MSN Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Program

"Do Nurses Provide Comprehensive Diabetic Education on Medications, Diet, Exercise and Preventative Measures?"
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Annie Boehning

Isabella Ozuna - Biology

"Flashy Fluorescence"
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amber Stokes

Ricco Reynolds - MSN Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Program

"Assessment of Self Perceived Stress Levels Among Adults During the COVID 19 Pandemic"
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Annie Boehning

Jared Shorten - Biology

"Unknown Unken"
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amber Stokes

Alex Slabey - Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership (CDEP)

"Examining Faculty Attrition During the Pandemic"
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Brian Street

Jenny Torres MSN Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Program

"Burnout/Compassion Fatigue Before and After the COVID 19 Pandemic"
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Heidi He



Special Thanks to...



Guest Judges

Raji Brar,
MS Healthcare Admin. '02

Sheryl Chalupa,
MPA '05

Terri Church,
MS Nursing '99

H. Dennis Beaver, Esq.

Workshop Presenters

Kristin Vartan,
On-Camera Reporter at
23ABC News.

Dr. Luis Vega,
Interim Associate Dean of
Graduate & Undergraduate
Studies

Graduate Student Center Staff:

Eileen Diaz
Martha Manriquez
Jennifer Paulsen
Jay Shyamdasani
Adrienne Silva

Application Review Committee

Dr. Carol Dell'Amico, English
Department

Dr. Juterh Nmah, Educational
Counseling

Dr. Luis Vega,
Interim Associate Dean of
Graduate & Undergraduate
Studies

FACULTY PROFILE, DR. ZACHARY ZENKO, M.S. IN KINESIOLOGY



Dr. Zachary Zenko has finished his first semester as Graduate Director of the M.S. in Kinesiology program, which this past December 2021 saw its first ever two students earn their M.S. degrees. It was a festive moment for Dr. Zenko, as he has high ambitions to place the program amongst the best in the CSU system.

Dr. Zenko is interested in promoting physical activity and exercise behavior and reducing sedentary behavior. Dr. Zenko adopts a dual-process theoretical framework in which physical activity, exercise, and sedentary behavior are influenced jointly by both rational, deliberate and nonrational, automatic processes.

Dr. Zenko's work has focused on (a) making the experience of physical activity and exercise more pleasant and enjoyable, (b) understanding decision-making processes that influence physical activity and exercise behavior, and (c) understanding automatic associations with exercise (sometimes called "implicit associations" or "implicit attitudes"). Dr. Zenko further adds in a feature highlighting his research (K. Ardis, 8 October 2021, news.csub.edu [link]), the phrase "no pain, no gain" does a disservice to motivating individuals to engage in exercise, for the focus should be in the associative joys of physical activity.

His research has been published in several journals including Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, Psychology of Sport and Exercise, and Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology. Dr. Zenko welcomes student research assistants and greatly enjoys mentoring students as they take leadership of their own research projects related to exercise and sport psychology. Students are encouraged to reach out to him if they are interested in research opportunities and graduate school in Kinesiology.

Dr. Zenko earned his BS in Health and Physical Education from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, his MS in Health and Physical Activity from the University of Pittsburgh, and his PhD in Kinesiology from Iowa State University. He also trained as a postdoctoral associate at Duke University's Center for Advanced Hindsight. Since joining CSUB in 2018, Dr. Zenko has taught KINE 1018 (Lifetime Fitness), 3000 (Motor Growth and Development Across the Lifespan), KINE 3010 (Measurement and Evaluation in Kinesiology), KINE 3020 (Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity), KINE 4220 (Behavioral Aspects of Physical Activity and Exercise), and independent study courses. In the graduate program, Dr. Zenko is teaching KINE 6040, Advanced Behavior Change, in addition to other courses.

Dr. Zenko is a member of the American College of Sports Medicine, North American Society for the Psychology of Sport and Physical Activity, and the Society for Transparency, Openness, and Replication in Kinesiology.

Source: Extended Education Programs-- extended.csub.edu/programs/online-ms-kinesiology/faculty/zachary-zenko

Apply Now | Online M.S. in Kinesiology | CSUB Extended Education

Fall Semester Admission:

Priority Deadline: May 1
Regular Deadline: June 1

APPLY NOW



Spring Semester Admission:

Priority Deadline: October 1
Regular Deadline: November 1

Summer Semester Admission:

Priority Deadline: February 1
Regular Deadline: March 1

Updates to CSUB Title Vb Grant: STEM Graduate Excellence

STEM Graduate Excellence program activities, supported through a Title Vb grant from the U.S. Department of Education, continue to supplement our vibrant, high-quality CSUB graduate programs that serve all our students, particularly from underserved populations. Program directors, Drs. Anna Jacobsen and Debra Jackson, are overseeing activities that will (a) increase graduate research-oriented activities, (b) develop faculty-student mentorship programs to increase graduate research activities, and (c) expand services in our Graduate Student Center, especially with new specialized computer programs to support graduate student computing needs.

Special congratulations go to the 'Graduate student-faculty collaborative research program' (GCRP) student participants and their mentors for a job well done in the fall 2021 Grad Slam competition. See the news release summarized on page 4.

A call for proposals for new GCRP research proposals for the 2022-2023 will be coming soon. The GCRP is funded by our CSUB Title Vb grant and supports student-faculty teams with a monetary award to conduct and complete a research project within the academic year.

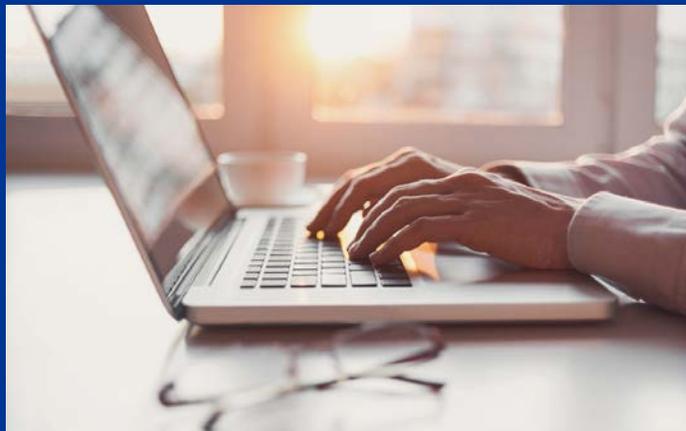
In fall 2021, two well-attended workshops were offered for the GCRP research group: Psychology Professor, Dr. Rich Zamora, presented on Preparing a Personal Statement for Graduate School Applications. A second presentation was offered by Dr. Anna Jacobsen and Brandon Pratt on the topic of doing research in graduate school and importantly, how to publish the research in order to cultivate dividends that manifest in program prestige, admission into doctoral programs, and contributing scientific progress. Both workshops were highly anticipated and well attended. More workshops will be offered in spring 2022. Please look for announcements about these events. These are student-centered events that are designed to support the success of our graduate students.

Attention CSUB Graduate Students!

We have Dell laptops available for checkout!

They are first come, first serve, so contact us ASAP to begin the process or find out more information!

You must be graduate student enrolled in classes for the Spring 2022 semester. Please contact our office prior to arrival to make sure we are open to walk-in visits.



CSUB Student Faculty-Mentor Collaborative Initiatives

The Graduate Student-Faculty Collaborative Research program is funded by CSUB Title Vb and will support student-faculty teams with a monetary award to conduct and complete a research project within the 2022-2023 academic year.

Open to biology, geology, nursing, & kinesiology graduate students submitting a research proposal.

For more information, visit our website:

[Graduate Student Center | California State University, Bakersfield \(csub.edu\)](https://www.csub.edu/graduate-student-center)

or email us at gsc@csub.edu

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Jay Shyamdasani is our newest addition to the Graduate Student Center. He stands ready to answer questions and assists our walk-ins and students needing assistance by phone or through email. He is studying Business Administration and hopes to work for a multinational company upon graduation, returning to get this MBA degree, and start his own business in the future. He loves helping students and will be happy to answer questions related to the GSC and graduate student services offered (gsc@csub.edu).

WELCOME TO THE TEAM, JAY!



Jennifer Paulsen has been with the Graduate Student Center for two years now. During this time, she earned her MA degree in History and was accepted into the Kern High Teacher Residency Program through CSUB. She has been working at South High School as a resident teacher since the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, and she truly enjoys teaching! Jennifer has expressed how thankful she is to be given the fantastic opportunity to get a jumpstart on her career with the Kern High School District. After finishing up the credential program, she is hoping to secure a position as a high school social studies teacher with KHSD.

“My passion to teach comes from a deep love of history. I think it is very important for us to understand the past, and I think it is important to teach it in a meaningful way. I am very grateful to CSUB, KHSD, and my mentor, David Gonzalez (who is currently working on his MA in History at CSUB), for giving me the opportunity to learn invaluable on-the-job skills this school year.

I am also very grateful to the Graduate Student Center staff. We have worked tremendously well together, and we have supported one another throughout this pandemic. I am sad to leave, but I will be forever grateful to my GSC family for the support, love, and encouragement they have all shown me. They are all truly remarkable and unforgettable people!”

All of us at the Graduate Student Center will miss her dearly but are comforted that she will live in our community help us prepare future undergraduate and graduate students who will see their way to her alma matter, CSUB. Best wishes Jennifer! We will miss you dearly.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Virtual Graduate Studies Summit of October 2, 2021

The Graduate Student Center held the first ever graduate studies summit during the fall semester 2021. It was by all measures a success! Featured speakers were distinguished faculty, alumni, and GSC staff. **President Zelezny** and **Provost Harper** launched the day-long summit on a sunny Saturday.

The first workshop was held by alumni, who provided lessons learned and best practices of their graduate studies. Topics covered included choosing a graduate school, difficult aspects of graduate education and how to navigate around them, most rewarding aspects of their graduate studies, and words of wisdom to new generations of students.

Another workshop included tips on how to apply to CSUB graduate programs, tricks of the trade, and processes, procedures, and policies in need of focus. Graduate directors with first-hand experience in admissions and responsible for graduate students' success provided workshops on how to request letters of recommendation, how to craft an award-winning personal statement, and academic experiences that will need to be in place for a competitive application to a graduate program.

Concurrent sessions were held on finding the right program/graduate school, providing information for international graduate students, preparing for the GRE, LSAT, and applying for financial assistance.

Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Academic Programs, **Dr. Debra Jackson**, brought the summit to a close by holding a questions/answers session that further clarified the graduate studies journey. The recordings of the summit are accessible through:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCP9J_YKgCGxALNftnVKXsvg

SAVE THE DATE!

FRIDAY 6 MAY 2022 10:30 A.M. - 2:30 P.M

CSUB HOSTS SECOND CSU-WIDE GRAD SLAM

Last year, this event was hosted by SJSU, and now it is CSUB's turn! You do not want to miss this historic event for our university! Mark your calendars now, register for the event, and get ready to witness the ground-breaking research of tomorrow demonstrated by CSU graduate students of today! CSUB graduate students **Autumn Corrow** and **Isabella Ozuna** will be there to represent!

Please visit [csu.edu/GraduateStudentCenter](https://www.csu.edu/GraduateStudentCenter) for updates and for an RSVP link, in addition to ongoing publicity as we get closer to the event.

Biology graduate student Jaycie Fickle wins distinguished ProQuest, Thesis Award in STEM



Jaycie Fickle, now in the Ph.D. program at the University of Utah, is no stranger to academic accolades. Last June she graduated with an MS in Biology and was chosen as the Outstanding Graduate student in the School of Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering (NMSE).

Her thesis, “Xylem structure and hydraulic function in the roots and stems of chaparral shrub species occurring at high and low elevation sites in the southern Sierra Nevada,” was awarded the first prize in a large field of competitors by the 2021–2022 Western Association of Graduate Schools (WAGS) and ProQuest’s Distinguished Master’s Award in STEM Disciplines.

She will receive this award and a \$1,000 prize at the Annual WAGS conference to be held on March 24, 2022, at the University of Denver, Colorado. ProQuest Dissertation Publishing sponsors this competition that sees the best graduate student research at each of 20 plus universities in the western United States, with over 50 entrants, many of them doctoral-level institutions. Thus, winning this award is no small feat, according to **Dr. Luis Vega**, Interim Associate Dean of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies.



Fickle is honored by the recognition, and the validation it confers to her passion for research on plant Biology. In her words, “Drought conditions require that we have knowledge of the structure and function differences between roots and stems that are so important in understanding whole-plant response to stress.”

Her research helps identify types of shrub species and sites that can inform conservation management planning and even fire prevention measures.

Dr. Anne Jacobsen was Fickle’s graduate thesis research advisor. She praised Fickle’s work ethic, dedication, and motivation in conducting difficult, innovative research in the field, where excavating roots from large plants requires diligence as to not damage the plants. Knowledge derived from this research has implications for our ongoing droughts and fires impact on our plant ecosystems.

Dr. Brandon Pratt was a professor for several of Fickle’s classes and a thesis committee member. He also references Fickle’s research passion, knowledge of nuanced methods, and the vigor and rigor she brings to the established culture of research by graduate students in the biology master’s program.

One of our students winning this distinguished ProQuest Thesis Award in STEM signifies the growing reputation of graduate studies and how groundbreaking research can be done at CSUB, adds **Dr. Debra Jackson**, who is the Academic Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Academic Programs.

Dr. Jackson, who serves in the governing council of WAGS, praises our outstanding faculty who “... bring prestigious grants to our university, from the National Science Foundation and the US Department of Education, allowing us to increase the prestige of our university, graduate programs, and most importantly, our graduate students who are afforded great opportunities for academic success, as demonstrated by Jaycie’s prestigious award.”

Story by GSC staff writers

Read more on Fickle in the CSUB article published on January 20, 2022

["Alumna wins regional graduate student award by California State University, Bakersfield \(csub.edu\)"](#)