Welcome to the debut edition of CAL Insight magazine from the College of Arts and Letters. We have included several articles that demonstrate the breadth of our activities and their impact on our communities. I hope you enjoy this edition of CAL Insight.

As we finish the 2018/2019 academic year, I have been reflecting on the tremendous success of the College. It has been a pleasure to be part of the developing work of our teachers, researchers, and community partners. While some of the most conspicuous indicators of these efforts are the quality of the scholarship we publish, the most rewarding indicator is the success of our students. This spring, for example, Andrea Padilla will graduate with a double major in classics and computer science. Andrea grew up in San Diego where she and her sisters are the first generation of their family to attend college. Andrea arrived at SDSU just as her sister, Stephanie Padilla, was finishing a B.A. in comparative literature (with a minor in Russian) before heading to UCSC to complete her doctorate. Andrea chose the humanities/science path, pursuing a 21st-century education that is reflective of and leverages the multiple excellences of SDSU across disciplinary fields.

Many new faculty and staff members have joined us in the last year as we seek to keep pace with the ever-growing number of students attending SDSU. Our diverse and talented faculty, to whom our students and alumni owe so much, are advancing knowledge in every realm of the liberal arts — and in every corner of the globe! I commend them for their dedication toward the pursuit of excellence and for their commitment to collaboration across disciplines. I also welcome all our new staff members.

One of the great privileges of my years as dean has been getting to know our alumni. I admire them for the remarkable contributions they make to society, and I am deeply grateful for their active support of the College of Arts and Letters. So far this academic year the College of Arts and Letters has received more than $9 million in philanthropy. These grants and donations help fund among other things: student scholarships, innovative research in Brazil, student internships in Cambodia, visiting Israeli scholars, summer teaching in the Czech Republic, and creative writing and poetry in the College.

The success of the College has long depended on the support we receive from our friends and donors. Our growing base of donors is enabling us to establish endowed faculty lines and provide professional development funds to support research and teaching excellence. Our donors are instrumental in creating scholarships that benefit our students. So far this academic year the College of Arts and Letters has received more than $9 million in philanthropy. These grants and donations help fund among other things: student scholarships, innovative research in Brazil, student internships in Cambodia, visiting Israeli scholars, summer teaching in the Czech Republic, and creative writing and poetry in the College.

It is with mixed feelings that I will be leaving SDSU at the end of the 2018/2019 academic year to take on the role of Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Drexel University, Philadelphia. I am personally grateful for the opportunity to have served the College of Arts and Letters as dean for the past four years. As I prepare to step down this summer, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone associated with our College for all you have done to advance our excellence in teaching and research to the benefit of our diverse and talented students. I am confident that the College is positioned well for continued success.

Since we are the College of Arts and Letters, I leave you with these timeless words from a poet of Northern Italy, the great Roman writer Virgil:

\[ \text{Nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbor; Nunc frondent sylvae, nunc formosissimus annus.} \]

(Every field, every tree is now budding; now the woods are green, now the year is at its loveliest.)


Norma Bouchard, Ph.D.
Dean, College of Arts and Letters
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MLK Luncheon “Unsung Hero” Award Winner

The annual Marin Luther King Jr. Luncheon held on January 25 in Montezuma Hall, was hosted by Dr. Adisa A. Alkebulan, Associate Professor in Africana Studies and Dr. Charles Toombs, Chair of Africana Studies along with Sandra Bullock, Center for Human Resources. SDSU President Adela de la Torre welcomed the crowd, Dorien Stovell led the Black National Anthem, and Councilmember Monica Montgomery, District 4 was the guest speaker.

Winning one of two Unsung Hero awards was Africana Studies Coordinator, Kaia Brown. “I was absolutely shocked, humbled, and appreciative to win the Unsung Hero award. Coordinating this event is a labor of love, and to be honored for my work in the department was truly remarkable,” Brown said.

It was a day of celebration, dance, food, community, and scholarship.
2018/19 Outstanding Graduates and Most Influential Faculty Winners

Every year each CAL department determines the outstanding graduates. Criteria vary by department; however, to qualify for distinctive honors, a student must have a minimum 3.50 GPA in upper-division major courses. Students choose the professor who most influenced them during their course of study. The overall CAL award winner is Latrel Powell, double majoring in Africana Studies and Political Science. Congratulations to all!

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History Students Win Accolades from SDSU’s Student Research Symposium

Cody Billock, Shannon Farnsworth, and Scott Thiele win President's Award

In its 12th year, the Student Research Symposium showcases the achievements of SDSU student research, scholarship and creative activity. The President’s Award for Research was given to a total of ten outstanding students from all colleges at SDSU — three of those winners were from the College of Arts and Letters. The President’s Award recipients represented SDSU at the California State University Student Research Competition on April 26-27, 2019 at CSU, Fullerton.

Cody Billock | Mentor: Pierre Asselin

“The Hu Massacre of 1968”

Although there is very little research on the subject matter, Cody believes this work is important because studying the massacre provides insight into how the “deep-seated divides within Vietnamese society stemmed from the French Colonial period and the Feudalist economic system that they sustained,” and, of course, it demonstrates the violation of basic human rights the Vietnamese suffered at the hands of the Hanoi.

“The massacre took place during the Vietnam War when the National Liberation Front revolutionary forces killed somewhere between 2,800 to 5,000 people. Most of the dead uncovered in the mass graves were political opponents, but also included their families including children,” noted Cody Billock.

Scott Thiele | Mentor: Eve Kornfeld

Thiele wins first-place at the 33rd Annual CSU Student Research Competition in Fullerton

After winning the President’s Award at SDSU, Scott Thiele headed to Fullerton to present “Constructing a Meaning of Freedom: A Gendered Perspective of the Actions of Formerly Enslaved Men in the American South, 1860-1880.” Thiele competed with seven students who presented thought-provoking work on a wide variety of topics in the Humanities and Letters category. Working with Professor Kornfeld was a “great experience” as she gave Thiele great leads for further exploration and encouraged him to develop his ideas related to gender theory and psychology. The competition gave him a chance to garner valuable feedback and support for his presentation, which is part of his thesis. “It was exciting to win, and I was honored given the caliber of the other presentations I saw,” Thiele said. “I'm even more motivated to get back into my research and see where it takes me.”

Cody Thiele

Governing with fear is something we have seen across history.
Shannon Farnsworth | Mentor: Andrew Wiese

As an SDSU senior double majoring in history and anthropology, Shannon Farnsworth has committed herself to the humanities. Her efforts have not gone unnoticed, as she recently received a Student Research Symposium President’s Award for her research, “The Fight for Tecolote Canyon and the Women Who Led It: Feminism and Environmental Politics in San Diego, CA, 1960s-1970s.”

When Shannon began to work with Andrew Wiese, chair of the history department, she had the opportunity to explore the history of San Diego canyon preservation. As she explored the struggles to preserve canyons, she “noticed that several women were involved in leading the movements to preserve the land.”

Her observation of the role of women in these fights greatly influenced her research. “I wanted to know why women seemed to be so connected to the environment,” she said.

As she researched the women who fought for San Diego’s Tecolote Canyon and consulted several scholarly works, Shannon emerged with theories about women’s participation and their motivations.

“I noticed three prominent theories: 1) Biological, which focuses on the physiological difference between men and women, especially those related to child-bearing. For example, if the home where the child was being raised and fed was threatened, say by toxic chemicals, the mothers would be driven to fight against it; 2) Cultural, which looks at the societal norms placed on women that can place them closer to nature than men. For example, industrialization took over many of the domestic duties that were associated as women’s work which allowed women more free time to explore and appreciate the environment; and 3) Theological, which connects women back to deities like Gaia, or women in the Bible to look at how these connections affect women in modern times.”

While her project earned her the prestigious President’s Award, it also gave her unique research opportunities and influenced her future. Shannon plans on using this project as her senior honors thesis and hopes to use her research in her future academic endeavors. Following her graduation this spring, Shannon will return to SDSU as a graduate student in the anthropology department and will be focusing on historical archaeology with Dr. Seth Mallios. Shannon plans to apply the skills she learned in her project to her future studies at SDSU. “These skills will be extremely helpful in my graduate program because historical archaeology looks at both artifacts and primary source documents,” Farnsworth said.

Shannon also hopes to apply her research to the larger picture. “I think ecofeminism is extremely interesting and important as we deal with current environmental problems,” she said.

“Hopefully women and men can read this story and be inspired or driven to stand up for a cause they believe in. I also hope more people visit the various protected canyon-lands in San Diego and appreciate what these activists fought for.”

Shannon Farnsworth

When asked how his project will be impactful, Cody said, “the massacre is pertinent to contemporary Vietnamese politics, as democracy advocates in Vietnam use the massacre to push for reforms.”

Furthermore, the most interesting part of Cody’s research, from his perspective, is “how the use of fear is used in insurgencies and how this discourages people from working with governing authorities.” Governing with fear is something we have seen across history. The more we study these type of events, the more we can prevent such regimes from occurring in the future.

Cody spent an impressive seven months living in Vietnam and learning Vietnamese to study the massacre, so this award is well earned for him. He is very happy to receive such great recognition for his work, and hopes it will help him receive more scholarships, earn a place in future conferences, and help him gain admittance into a Ph.D. program of his choice.
Anthropology

Juliana Huaroc, Provost’s Award — “Examining Labor Policies for Women Farmworkers in Chile,” mentor: Ramona Pérez, Anthropology

*Tyler Linvill, Library Award — “Rompiendo Fronteras: A Qualitative Investigation of Mentors and Gang-Involved Youth in Cali, Colombia,” mentor: Ramona Pérez, Anthropology

English and Comparative Literature

Brenda Taulbee, Award for Outstanding Creative and Performing Arts — “Disappearing Act,” mentor: Blas Falconer, English and Comparative Literature

History

Benjamin Calabrese, Provost’s Award — “Caught between Two Worlds: The San Francisco Bisexual Center, 1976-1985,” mentor: Eve Kornfeld, History

*Sara Fakhoury, Library Award — “Jewish Immigrant Children in 20th-century America: Dangling between Two Worlds,” mentor: Eve Kornfeld, History


Eric Johnson, Dean’s Award — “The Sacramento Squatters’ Riots of 1850,” mentor: Eve Kornfeld, History


LGBTQ+ Studies

*Ethan Lopez, Research Award for Diversity, Inclusion, and Social Justice — “Review and Qualitative Analysis of Trans and Gender Nonconforming Experiences within Eating Disorders Treatment,” mentor: Jerel Calzo, School of Public Health

Philosophy

Michael Lin, Charles Wei-hsun Fu Foundation Philosophy Award — “Fictionalism and Creatures of Fiction,” mentor: Steve Barbone, Philosophy

Women’s Studies

Tiana Hodzik, Dean’s Award — “The Socialization of Resilience in Internally Displaced Persons Resettlements in Georgia,” mentor: Doreen Mattingly, Women’s Studies

*Denotes students invited to present at the SRS Showcase prior to the investiture of SDSU President Adela de la Torre on April 11, 2019.

Meet Undergraduate Research Journal of the College of Arts and Letters

Editor-in-Chief Jana Jarvis

Preparation for the job of editor began early in life for Jana Jarvis, an English and comparative literature major. When she was in high school in San Antonio, Texas, she was editor of The Jabberwocky, a literary magazine. In that capacity she learned how to analyze work and meet deadlines – skills she utilizes today as she reviews 3,000 to 7,000 word essays based on student research in humanities and social sciences for the Undergraduate Research Journal of the College of Arts and Letters (URJCAL).

For Jarvis, working on the URJCAL editorial team offers networking and professional development along with a camaraderie found nowhere else. Together, the staff reviews arguments, logical structure, and evidence-based facts. Jarvis offers feedback and advice on how to modify arguments. Along with the editorial board, she proposes edits and encourages students to strengthen perspectives. Feedback from faculty advisers allows for additional fact-checking.

“This is an amazing opportunity for an undergrad to be taken seriously as an author and scholar,” Jarvis said. For some students, an accepted submission to the journal offers a glimpse into being published for the first-time and holds the prestige of being recognized for their research. URJCAL is published every spring and highlights the work of eight to ten students.

“It’s a true stepping stone, no matter what,” Jarvis continued. “This is a chance to assert yourself and to be taken seriously.”
Majoring in sustainability in the nation’s most bio-diverse county has allowed me to have access to incredible resources and experiences for which I am continually grateful. SDSU has allowed me to discover my true passion and drive in life while being able to surround myself with a community of like-minded individuals in Epsilon Eta, Green Love, Voice4Veg and Sage Council. The environmental majors on this campus are constantly involved in amazing things to advocate for change, which has pushed me to keep striving for more during my four years here. The classes and professors that have been most influential to me have been Politics of the Environment taught by Professor Murren and Political Ecology of Latin America taught by Professor Carruthers. These two classes in particular gave an insight on the political atmosphere in countries when dealing with environmental issues and the steps they took to address them. Both of the professors have positively impacted my time at SDSU because they allowed me to experience an area of sustainability that I did not think a lot about beforehand. Their teaching styles consisted of mainly open discussion accompanied with weekly readings which allowed me to easily grasp the rather complicated material and still want to learn more afterwards. After taking both of these classes, my drive and determination to fix the issue was heightened. I knew that one day I had to be a part of making these extremely crucial decisions regarding our ecosystems, natural resources, and open land.

After graduation, I plan to attend law school in the hope of receiving a J.D. in environmental law concurrently with a master’s in public policy. My dream is to become an environmental policy maker, either on a local or national level, to implement laws and regulations to lessen the effects of climate change that our country is experiencing.

One key pivotal moment during my time at SDSU was switching my major to sustainability. I originally came into college as a liberal studies major, planning to follow in my mom’s footsteps. The outdoors was always close to my heart, but growing up in New York, I didn’t think I could dedicate my studies and future career to saving the environment. After living in San Diego, I knew I wanted to join the fight.

Interning abroad in Spain brought to my attention how other countries not only speak about sustainability but how their daily actions align with what they teach. Europeans have a significantly smaller ecological footprint than Americans and so while abroad, I wanted to adapt to their living standards so that I could bring back changes to the U.S.

I would recommend majoring in sustainability to any student because it affects everything we do in our daily lives. The College of Arts and Letters sustainability major works in a rather holistic way to incorporate sustainability within economics, business, political science, biology, geography, anthropology, and more. It offers students flexibility to customize their area of study.

I now have a greater understanding of the link between daily choices and global issues. I also learned about strategies to ensure a healthy future for generations to come.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Danny received the William R. Mundt Memorial Scholarship for International Internships in 2018 and participated in an environmental education internship in Granada, Spain. He also received the William R. Mundt Memorial Scholarship for Crosscultural/Peace Corps Internships this semester and is currently interning with Casa Cornelia. He has also been involved in environmental initiatives on campus, including co-founding and helping lead the new environmental honors fraternity, Epsilon Eta. He graduates on May 17, 2019.
Visiting Israeli Scholar | Luba Levin-Banchik, Ph.D.
Leading expert on world politics simulation

Dr. Luba Levin-Banchik is a political scientist and historian, studying the evolution of conflict and peace in contemporary international relations of the Middle East. Her expertise is in the field of global and regional security, international crisis escalation and recurrence, domestic and transnational terrorism, cooperation and violence between rivalries, and nonstate actors. Her current project focuses on what enemies do when they are not fighting and how their respite hostility affects crisis escalation into severe violence and wars. Dr. Levin-Banchik research has been published in *Terrorism and Political Violence, Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, and *Media, War & Conflict*.

Dr. Levin-Banchik’s expertise also includes design, application and study of active learning in higher education. Her book, *World Politics Simulations in a Global Information Age* (University of Michigan Press, 2015), coauthored with Hemda Ben-Yehuda and Chanan Naveh, examines face-to-face and cyber simulations in social science courses. Her recent study on a simulation of an Israeli security crisis over Iranian Plane is forthcoming in the *Journal of Political Science Education*. Dr. Levin-Banchik is a co-founder of the World Politics Simulation project. She has been recently elected as a member-at-large of active learning in international affairs (ALIAS) section of International Studies Association for the 2018-2019 years.

Dr. Levin-Banchik is completing a two-year postdoctoral fellowship with the Israel Institute at the University of Toronto and the University of California, Davis. She has taught political science and international relations at Bar-Ilan University, Israel, where she has developed online courses for undergraduate and graduate students. In 2017, Dr. Levin-Banchik won the Teaching with Impact Best Syllabus prize of Israel Institute for the course she developed on “Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Israel.”

Dr. Levin-Banchik will be teaching courses in the History and Political Science Departments. Her residency is also supported by the Lipinsky Institute for Jewish Studies endowment.

Schusterman Visiting Israeli Artist | Ronit Weiss-Berkowitz
Award-winning director, screenwriter, and literary editor

Ronit Weiss-Berkowitz currently teaches screenwriting at the Steve Tisch School of Film and Television at Tel Aviv University. She has been active in all aspects of television as well as having a substantial teaching background. She has been a writer on several television series; she has directed several documentaries for television and also served as a script editor on two series. From 1985 to 1993 she was a journalist and editor at the Israeli newspaper *Hadashot*.

**Selected Filmography:** Director and creator of documentary-historic art series “Frame Story” (Keshet); Creator and Head writer on Drama Series “A Touch Away” (Reshet); Creator of “A Place Under the Sun” – documentary about Israeli art (Telad); Head writer for drama series “A Matter of Time” - (educational TV) and creator of spinoff series (Reshet); Creator and Head writer, drama series “Good Intentions” (Reshet); Director, “Yona Wallach”, a documentary film about the poet’s final year (Channel 1); Director, “Biladi, Biladi”, a documentary film as part of the series “Revival” (Channel 1); Screenwriter and director of drama series, “Court” (Telad); Director, “Igen Migen”, documentary about Hungarian Jews in the Holocaust (Channel 1); Editor of current affairs and documentary programs on Channel 10 (London and Kirshenbaum, “Private Space” with Yael Dan, Ben and Rosen).

**Teaching Experience:** Professor, The Steve Tisch School of Film and Television, Tel Aviv University; A founder and former head of the screenwriting program at the Sam Spiegel Film and Television School, Jerusalem.

**Literary Work:** Editor in Chief at Ex Libris Publishing, an affiliate of Yedioth Books; Former Editor in Chief at Keter Publishing. Edited books by leading Israeli writers including Amos Oz, Shemi Zarhin, and Nava Semel, among others.
Insight | SDSU College of Arts and Letters

Marriage.

It is debated fiercely in Congress, at local coffee shops, in media, and in places of worship.

“Religious leaders, politicians, civic authorities, communities, and individuals continue to question the origins and meaning of marriage and attempt to define its parameters and purpose,” said Joanne M. Ferraro, Ph.D., the Albert W. Johnson Distinguished Professor of History Emerita who teaches in the faculty early retirement program in the History Department, College of Arts and Letters. Professor Ferraro is the general editor of six volumes of the forthcoming A Cultural History of Marriage from Antiquity to the Present, a scholarly anthology published by Bloomsbury Academic press.

Ferraro published her monograph, Marriage Wars in Late Renaissance Venice (Oxford, 2001) which won first prize from the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women as well as the Helen and Howard R. Marraro prize for the best book published in any period of Italian history in 2002. It was then that she realized the popularity of the subject and thought it was worth more investigation and research due to the importance of and interest in this sacred subject.

“Why marry? The question is timeless,” is the opening line in her own volume (the third in the series) covering the Renaissance and Early Modern Age, 1450-1650. Answers can be found in the exploration of themes: Courtship and Rites; Religion; The Family Economy; Love, Sex, and Sexuality; Breaking Ties; and Cultural Representation.

With 54 international scholars from as far away as Europe, Canada, and Israel, the work examines marriage practices around the globe, with a variety of subject matter and religious viewpoints that include Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. A Cultural History of Marriage explores the subject of marriage in six historical periods: Antiquity, The Medieval Age, The Renaissance and Early Modern Age, The Enlightenment, The Age of Empires, and The Modern Age. Each volume uses the same chapter themes to aid in comparing and contrasting each of the historical periods.

Interestingly we can “learn the ways in which people circumvent parental authority to take control of their lives in past centuries,” Ferraro pointed out. Marriage was often a financial arrangement ensuring that family members were custodians of the family estate. Of even greater interest is the ways in which the twenty-first century has ushered in sweeping changes in the institution of marriage; for some it is no longer necessary and for others it is no longer a heterosexual union, but rather a way to celebrate a same-sex commitment.

Professor Ferraro hopes A Cultural History of Marriage will “enhance the understanding of marriage by looking at the past and present; fostering tolerance; and celebrating diversity.”

JOANNE M. FERRARO HOLDS COURT WITH A GROUP OF RESEARCHERS ON THE SUBJECT OF MARRIAGE & HISTORY

Joanne M. Ferraro

Wikimedia commons: The Court of the Gonzaga family, 1465–75, fresco by Andrea Mantegna
The word “Amazon” conjures images of lush jungles, their trees perpetually dripping with moisture. Reality tells a different story.

The southern reaches of the Amazon River Basin were deforested decades ago and developed to sustain cattle ranching. Although the area is a rainforest, drought is a frequent problem, resulting in fire, forest dieback, and poor agricultural production. The World Wildlife Fund estimates a quarter of the Amazon biome will be without trees by 2030 if the current rate of deforestation continues.

Fifteen years ago, Geography Professor Trent Biggs’ doctoral research took him to the Amazon, the world’s largest tropical rainforest, where he studied how deforestation affected water quality in the region’s southern periphery.

“It was like the Wild West, where environmental regulations were not closely followed, and there was a distinctive frontier atmosphere of ranching and possibility,” he recalled. In the years since, Brazil has developed sophisticated environmental enforcement using satellite data and geographic information technology. As a result, deforestation rates have been reduced dramatically.

Now, Biggs is preparing to return to the Amazon with fellow San Diego State University geographer Fernando De Sales as part of a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant to examine the impacts of agricultural-related deforestation on water cycles and regional climate change.

The five-year, $1.45-million study will contribute to understanding land use and land cover changes by advancing basic scientific knowledge of the dynamic interaction between deforestation, water stress, and land use decisions by small farmers and ranchers.

Biggs and De Sales are co-principal investigators on the grant along with environmental scientists and economists from Salisbury University (Maryland) and New York University. Katrina Mullan from the University of Montana is the principal investigator.

The NSF award comes at a time when Brazilian government restrictions on land use may be subject to change. The country’s president-elect Jair Bolsonaro, who will take office Jan. 1, is a vocal climate change skeptic and a staunch supporter of agribusiness. Recently, Brazil reneged on its offer to host the 2019 UN Convention on Climate Change.

Fruits of the Brazil Program

Biggs’ preliminary field research for the NSF project was funded through a grant from SDSU’s J. Keith Behner and Catherine M. Stiefel Program on Brazil. Created in 2014, it is the university’s first endowed program with an international focus.

The Brazil Program also supported engineering professor Matthew Verbyla’s successful efforts to secure a three-year, $300,000 NSF grant for SDSU student and faculty research in Brazil’s southeastern state of Minas Gerais. The students will work with university researchers in Brazil to examine the benefits and risks of recovering water, energy and nutrients from wastewater.
“The grant will allow students from engineering, social science, and other areas of study to learn how sustainability is defined by professionals in other disciplines and cultures, as they assess the performance and perceptions of wastewater treatment technology,” Verbyla said.

Upon returning, the students will lead local outreach activities at K-12 schools in San Diego to motivate the next generation of STEM professionals.

Natalie Mladenov, SDSU professor of environmental engineering, and Erika Robb Larkins, professor of anthropology and director of the Brazil Program, are co-PIs on the grant.

Environmental concerns
SDSU’s portion of the NSF Amazon research grant will enable Biggs and De Sales to look at the climate impacts of past and future land use in the state of Rondônia, Brazil. There, deforestation of the Amazon rainforest to create cropland and pasture has increased agricultural production but simultaneously raised environmental concerns, including reduction of rainfall that is generated partly by the forest itself.

Investigators will take soil samples, collect data on land cover, climate and hydrology, leverage remote sensing data and interview farmers—with the goal of understanding how deforestation of tropical rainforests impacts humans through changes in the water cycle.

For example, milk production on Rondônia farms falls by half during the dry season, a possible reason why farmers, looking to supplement their income, increase deforestation and add to their herds.

“The project’s main goal is to advance the understanding of how deforestation of tropical rainforests affects humans so we can improve the well-being of individuals that live in those areas,” De Sales said. “It will also foster collaboration between U.S. and Brazilian institutions and ultimately enhance infrastructure for research and education on rainforest biomes.”

The five-year, $1.45 million study will contribute to understanding land use and land cover changes by advancing basic scientific knowledge of the dynamic interaction between deforestation, water stress and land use decisions by small farmers and ranchers.
Milton and Me: The New Milton Criticism

The story of how I teach Milton is intimately tied up with my epic quest to find a tenure-track job. I had come to the end of a five-year contract, and I had yet to find a permanent position. It was hard not to think that everything I had worked for my entire life was for naught, which gave me an inkling of how I imagine Milton must have felt after the Restoration. So with my own situation in mind as much as, if not more than, Milton’s, I packed all my insights about Milton and uncertainty into an article, and in a kind of Hail Mary move, I sent it to Texas Studies in Language and Literature, because John Rumrich, one of the few who thought differently about Milton, was the editor. He quickly accepted it. I thought the piece would be a fitting end to my career.

But I was wrong about my academic prospects; I got a job that year. Through an immense stroke of good fortune, I was offered and accepted in a nanosecond a tenure-track position at San Diego State University (where I’ve happily taught for the last twenty years).

Generally speaking, the students at SDSU find Milton almost impossible to read, let alone understand. In between the convoluted syntax, the strange genres, and the non-stop classical allusions, they think that Milton writes in a language as alien and as incomprehensible as Martian.

But I’ve found that the New Milton Criticism, which focuses on how Milton creates problems without solving them, really helps bring students around because this approach allows them to understand how Milton was not a monolith of certainty. Instead, Milton was groping for answers just as they are, and he was critical of many of the same things they are.

For example, the problem of cause. Paradise Lost starts with Milton asking why the Fall happened “What cause,” asks the first narrator, traditionally associated with Milton, “Moved our grand parents in that happy state, /… to fall off/ From their Creator, and transgress his will?[?]” (1.28-30). The Muse has an immediate answer: it’s all Satan’s fault, and he tricked Eve because his pride led to his revolt in heaven.

BUT, I ask the class, does Milton provide any other causes for the Fall? Causes that might not be quite so orthodox and expected? The short answer is yes! For example, Satan is supposed be forever in Hell, locked in by “thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass, / Three iron, three of adamantine rock, / Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire, / Yet unconsumed” (2.645-648). So how did Satan get out? When God directs the Son to look at Satan, who has just managed to get out and is winging his way toward Heaven, He describes Satan as an unstoppable force who somehow has burst out of Hell: “seest thou what rage / Transports our Adversary, whom no bounds / Prescribed, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains / Heaped on him there, nor yet the main abyss / Wide interrupt can hold” (3.80-84).

But, I ask the class, is this accurate? And we quickly discover that God leaves out a crucial factor: “the fatal key, / Sad instrument of all our woe” (2.871-872). As the Muse says, this key is absolutely crucial to the Fall. Without it, nothing happens as there is no possibility of Satan’s exit. God, however omits from His narrative that He, first of all, created a key, and second, God gave the key to Sin! True, God tells Sin not to give the key anybody, but as she says, “what owe I to his commands above / Who hates me?[?]” (2.856-857).

We draw two crucial conclusions from this discussion. First, there are going to be multiple causes of the Fall, since in addition to Satan’s pride, we have to include the key as a crucial, contributing cause of the Fall. Second, Milton leads us to look skeptically at God, since His version of events leaves out essential details. Far from a monument to orthodoxy, Paradise Lost encourages us to read deeply and question authority (not a bad lesson for today’s undergraduates).

Causes pile up as we continue reading, and by the time we are done, we’ve come up with about eleven different ones. So what do the students get out of this? I hope several things. The first is an appreciation of how older, difficult literature can speak to contemporary concerns and provide a model for how to deal with them. Rather than making the complex simple (i.e., reducing complex matters to a soundbite), Milton makes the simple complex, and he is not afraid to challenge the orthodoxies of his age. We should do the same.
**SDSU Press** is an independent scholarly press, founded in 1960 as San Diego State College Press. It is the oldest publishing house in the CSU system. SDSU Press is guided by Director William Nericcio,* plus an editorial board made up of six scholars within SDSU's College of Arts and Letters and eight scholars from other universities.

Its divisions and imprints specialize in manuscripts focused on border studies, critical theory, literary criticism, Latin American studies, cultural studies and graphic novels, and comics.

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* William Nericcio is also the director of the Master of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences (MALAS) program, professor of English and Comparative Literature, and Chicana/o Studies, and faculty of the Center for Latin American Studies.

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Q: This is an interesting time in the Department of Chicana/o Studies. Tell me how current border/political issues are changing the landscape of your research and class conversations?

A: Being that we are located near one of the world’s busiest border crossing, the region has always been a generative space or “laboratory” for research and at times contested classrooms discussions. Research points to the “militarization” of the border since 1978, with aggravated effects being felt in San Diego upon the inception of Operation Gatekeeper in 1994. For border communities affected by the bipartisan political consensus of the latter part of the 20th century, it is important to point out the disconnect between policies crafted in Washington, DC and the lived experiences of border residents. What has changed has been the attempts to construct a new normal that consolidates the intensification of militarized control and alienation. The constant concern that the border might be shut down has made transborder students and commuters nervous about not being to get to class on time or return home after school or work. We see this reflected in attendance and even performance, unfortunately. On the other hand, developments such as the refugee exodus has allowed my research to further elucidate the limitations and contradictions of the interstate system, U.S. foreign policy, national-territorial borders, and the identities they engender. This includes the disjuncture between policies and practices in the handling of asylum-seeker cases, and the processing, detention and deportation of refugees in contravention of international accords at a time when national politics become further entrenched along partisan lines.

Q: What courses have been most compelling this past semester? What is the feedback you are receiving from students?

A: Teaching a US/Mexico Border history course amidst the changing border politics has meant a careful balance of maintaining our conversations historical in nature without the temptation of wanting to address the pressing present. Equally compelling has been the necessity to properly historicize and contextualize the present, as we otherwise run the risk of speaking passed each other without any real understanding of the complexities of our current political moment. Students often appreciate the sense of long history that I insist on as I draw attention to the premises and foundations of our taken-for-granted common sense around border security and human migration. In a different vein, my Introduction to Chicana/o Studies course has been a productive and engaging undertaking, as students have had the opportunity to work with the Chicana/o Archive in Special Collections and developed a deeper connection to the campus and department in the process.

Q: Tell me about the upcoming 50th anniversary of the department.

A: The process of preparing, alongside our students, for the 50th anniversary has revealed that the work of our department’s faculty has always had a transborder and, indeed, international edge.

"...students have had the opportunity to work with the Chicana/o Archive in Special Collections and developed a deeper connection to the campus and department in the process."

Dr. Roberto D. Hernández is an associate professor of Chicana and Chicano Studies at San Diego State University and an actively engaged, community-based researcher, scholar, teacher and writer. Born in Mexico, but raised in San Ysidro, within blocks of one of the busiest ports of entry in the world, the U.S./Mexico border has figured prominently in his intellectual, political and professional development and commitments.
In Europe, 92 percent of students study a foreign language before university. In the U.S., only 20 percent of students do so. Indeed, university enrollment in foreign language classes is declining as people fail to understand language as a public good worthy of public funding.

Clarissa Clò, Ph.D., Chair, European Studies, believes that language study is vital in the 21st century for equity, diversity, and democracy. Studying a second or third language creates a deeper understanding of our postcolonial, globalized world, and it also develops a wide range of skills such as critical thinking, interpersonal communication, self-awareness, and transcultural competence.

“There are things about being a human that are important, and learning a language fulfills those types of interests” Clò states.

Susanne Forrayi, a current graduate student in French and aspiring Ph.D. candidate and teacher, poignantly summarizes that learning languages simply makes us “better humans.”

Fortunately for students, becoming a better human also comes with some concrete benefits for entering the workforce. “Employers are looking for workers who are curious, capable of understanding both local and global contexts,” Clò comments. “They’re looking for soft transferable skills that include listening and communicating, empathy. They want people who understand the value of different points of view.” Jordan Ford, an undergraduate student double majoring in information systems and French, says that second or third language competency is particularly useful for job applications, since it provides proof of skills that can be difficult to demonstrate only in a resume. He also notes that when networking, cultural understanding can result in deeper connections.

In addition to these soft skills, modern workplaces actively seek to hire people who can speak more than one language. Before starting her graduate program, Forrayi worked for six years in bilingual customer service and technical support. “If you’re able to work in another language then you do have job security, and this is definitely something that is sought-after—for international companies, for people who work with different clients for different parts of the world.” Ford says his language study will open his opportunities to over 100 million more people, enabling him to work with companies like Microsoft to support the growing economies of French-speaking Africa. “When you add the mass of AI research coming from Paris,” he remarks, “it’s apparent that French will be instrumental to leveraging this technology for IT innovations and growth.”

CAL language departments are devoted to enhancing student learning through small class sizes that build community between peers and encourage participation in class. Students can also participate in one-on-one mentoring and can join co-curricular clubs, like the French club in which Forrayi is president. A highlight at SDSU is high-impact practices (HIPs), which are intensive teaching and learning experiences that are aimed at helping students succeed during and after college. Opportunities include: learning communities, service-learning courses, undergraduate research with a faculty member, internships, field experience, student teaching, study abroad, and a culminating senior experience. According to Clò, “Language learning is HIP.”

All of these benefits come only as a result of the students’ dedication and perseverance to the challenging work of attaining another language. From both a graduate and undergraduate perspective, Forrayi and Ford agree that speaking is one of the most difficult and intimidating aspects of language learning. However, after overcoming the fear of making mistakes in class, or after being immersed in a study abroad program, confidence grows naturally. “A simpler reason for learning a language,” Clò notes, “is that it makes you a more beautiful person, better able to understand yourself and relate to others.”

Greater confidence, greater beauty, greater humanity—studying a foreign language is an investment in self-growth as well as in career security and opportunities. In our increasingly globalized world, it is something that is hugely advantageous not only to individuals but to society as a whole.
Message from the Dean | SDSU-Georgia

SDSU came to the country of Georgia five years ago with an objective to provide an American university education in Georgia, focused on STEM disciplines that would improve human capital in the Georgian labor force, and to battle the critical shortage of STEM professionals educated to current international standards.

Since 2014, when SDSU-Georgia first introduced its STEM programs, interest in STEM fields has grown dramatically among high school graduates. SDSU-Georgia prides itself on student success and high demand for its graduates on the job market in Georgia. In 2019, SDSU-Georgia will have its first graduates in three STEM U.S. degree programs. We are focused on making sure that the students who successfully graduate this year and in the future, will have every opportunity to succeed.

By introducing American degree programs to the Georgian education system, SDSU-Georgia has also brought a novelty of a broad education by including a General Education module for STEM students. It is an important component for preparing graduates, equipped to accommodate the rapidly changing economic environment and needs of the developing job market. The general education program places specialized disciplines into a wider world, enabling students to integrate knowledge and to make connections among fields of inquiry.

Our students will live and work in the context of globalization, scientific and technological innovation, cross-cultural encounters, environmental challenges, and unforeseen shifts in economic and political power. Through this program, students will acquire knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world that will enable them to engage significant questions, both contemporary and enduring.

To put their breadth of knowledge to work, students gain intellectual and practical skills such as inquiry and analysis, creative and critical thinking, written and oral communication, scientific and quantitative literacy, and technological-information proficiencies. Students practice these skills in progressively challenging venues, mastering learning outcomes from a series of courses drawn from the following four sections: Communication and Critical Thinking; Foundations of Learning; American Institutions; and, Explorations of Human Experience.

The general education component of the SDSU-Georgia’s STEM programs help build essential skills of writing, speaking, and thinking in a broad sense. Foundations courses introduce students to the basic concepts, theories and approaches offered by disciplinary and interdisciplinary areas of study, whereas Explorations courses take the goals and skills earned with Foundations courses to a more advanced level. As a result, SDSU-Georgia students dissolve prejudice about engineers and scientists not being able to present and market themselves and their ideas in a consistent and argumentative manner.
Journey from SDSU-Georgia to Facebook and Final Stop – Google

SDSU computer engineering senior Luka Lomtadze, a member of the first cohort of students in the SDSU-Georgia program, lights up with a broad smile when he speaks about his path and life in California.

Lomtadze came to SDSU’s main campus in fall 2017 as part of an exchange program between the SDSU-Georgia and SDSU. Lomtadze was selected to intern at Facebook during the summer of 2018. When he completed the internship, which he said, “was the best experience of my life,” he was invited to join Facebook full-time after graduation, however, the roadmap changed when he was invited to interview with Google simultaneously. “They offered me a team, which was my dream team. Ever since I was a 15-year-old building apps in Kutaisi, Georgia, I dreamed of working for the top companies of the world. It was a really hard choice, but after brainstorming arguments for both sides, in the end I signed up with Google,” Lomtadze said. He’ll work on the new Android OS.

Lomtadze said, “I’ve learned throughout life that I should always do my best in everything I do. That’s why I focused on my education. I tried to maximize my experience in Georgia and San Diego. My professors shared their experiences and I shared mine. It was enjoyable.” He also mentored incoming Georgian transfer students in order to help them navigate their new lives in America.

While at SDSU-Georgia, his general education included a philosophy course and he thought Lecturer Kevin Siefert was particularly inspiring. “I was exploring on my own and interested in philosophy, but it was Kevin who was a live expert in front of me.” Lomtadze said

“They say that the longer the path, the more you enjoy it,” Lomtadze continued, “I am glad I made the choice to go to SDSU-Georgia. I am grateful for everyone who supported me along the way. All the staff members and the professors were like a family and they were focused on success.”

Lomtadze said, because of his chosen path, “I see farther away than I could ever see before!” And, that vision of success will follow him as he joins his “dream team” at Google in Mountain View, California later this year. ✈️
Q: Why did you choose to teach in Georgia?

A: I chose to teach in Georgia because, as someone whose academic focus is on pedagogy, I was interested and eager to teach students who were not raised and cultivated in American academic culture. I also love to travel, and I have always wanted to teach abroad, so this program was the perfect opportunity for me to pursue that dream. I also love the outdoors, and Georgia is known to be a haven for nature lovers and outdoors enthusiasts. I began researching everything I could about Tbilisi, and I immediately fell in love with the beauty of not only the city, but also the surrounding regions. From the moment I saw a photo of the colorful “old city,” I could not wait to move there.

Q: Tell me about how your LING 100 and 200 courses enable students to demonstrate the ability to ask complex questions in order to enhance critical thinking (and writing) skills.

A: The SDSU 100- and 200-level linguistics courses have written assignments that revolve around themes and ethical issues—such as the development and use of robotics, the existence and impact of “fake news,” etc.—that students navigate by either taking a personal position, analyzing the rhetorical components of an argument, or synthesizing commonly discussed issues within the topic. This allows them to separate subjective opinion from objective discussion. The 100-level course focuses particularly on rhetoric and argument—allowing the students to develop their analytical skills—while the 200-level course moves more toward research-based writing—allowing the students to develop higher level research skills.

Q: Tell me two or three differences in your teaching approach – with Georgian students vs. American students.

A: Georgian students are completely different from American students.

First, teaching Georgian students involves a lot more than simply teaching the course’s subject. I feel more like I am teaching them how to be students, as they have not really developed the educational standards, work ethic, and classroom behavior that would seem like common knowledge to an average American student. So, I spend a lot more time teaching them things like the value of actually attending class, time management skills, raising their hand to speak, and defining and emphasizing the severity of cheating and plagiarism.

Second, the border between teachers and students seems to be a lot smaller in Georgia than in America. When I taught at SDSU’s main campus in San Diego, I definitely put a lot of effort into learning all of my students names—they were not just a “number” to me. The student body at the Georgia campus is extremely small. When I have students in a class, I not only remember their names for that semester, but for the entirety of their university career. Even when students finish all of their LING requirements, I still see them almost every day, since the campus is very small, so our relationship goes beyond just the teacher-student-inside-the-classroom dynamic.

Third, Georgian students are so much more motivated. American students are often attending university just because their parents told them to, or because society told them to (that’s just what you do when you finish high school), so they do not really care about being there. Georgian students, however, are highly motivated because they really recognize higher education as something of great value—they see it as a very important opportunity of which they want to take full advantage. This means they ask a lot more questions in class, and they visit me during my office hours much more regularly, than the average American student.

Q: Do you have any examples of what Georgian students tell you that they like about your courses? What do they appreciate about an American university experience?

A: They appreciate the consistency, organization, and pedagogical methods of my courses.

By consistency, I mean that, often, Georgian courses at other universities are irregularly held, canceled, etc., and the importance of actually physically attending class is not
emphasized. American university attendance/participation standards are different, so the classes are consistently held and valued.

By organization, I mean that every day is thoroughly planned well in advance. They know when assignments are due, as well as when exams are held, by the first day of the semester, which, in the Georgian education system, seems to rarely happen.

By pedagogical methods, I mean that I split the class up into different styles of teaching to emphasize a more student-centered learning model. I often split the class up into larger groups or pairs for discussions or activities, or for independent writing reflections or brainstorming activities, and then I bring it back to a whole-class discussion about whatever they discussed or worked on. This puts more emphasis on the students learning by doing, either from one another or independently, and even when we have whole-class discussions, they are the ones speaking, while I am simply the moderator. While this is pretty standard for an American university writing class, it is atypical in the Georgian education system, as Georgian instructors tend to stick to a lecture-heavy (instructor-centered as opposed to student-centered) pedagogical method.

Q: How has your experience in Georgia informed and expanded your perspective and approach to teaching?

A: My experience teaching in Georgia has drastically changed the way I view and treat my students. As mentioned above, there is a very different relationship between teachers and students in Georgia—it is much more casual—and I actually see this as a great thing. I have a closer relationship with my students, which I think is very important. If they see me as a mentor—as almost a friend—they are more encouraged to learn and progress. This is especially significant for writing courses, since university-level writing can be so daunting for the average student (especially for STEM students—all SDSU-Georgia students are studying in the STEM fields). With a closer relationship to my students—while still maintaining a high level of respect and authority—I have been able to “get through” to my students more easily than I had prior to teaching in Georgia. I hope I can maintain this teaching personality when I go back to the U.S.

Q: What surprised you most about the country?

A: I was most surprised at the incredible, genuine Georgian hospitality. Georgians are so welcoming to foreigners. They just want to show the whole world how remarkable their country, land, language, and culture (especially food and wine!) is. They are so willing to share it with everyone, and they do so with such immense passion that you cannot help but fall in love with anything and everything Georgian. When I first moved here, I was really intimidated, since I was moving to a foreign developing country completely alone. However, Georgia very quickly began to feel like home, and now I am so comfortable here—so in love with it—that it actually feels like home, and I will be very sad when I leave.

Q: What do you like best about teaching at SDSU-Georgia?

A: My favorite thing about teaching in Georgia is the relationship I have with my students. SDSU-Georgia is having its very first graduating class this summer, and it has been so amazing to watch the students learn and grow over the years, which is something that you really do not get the opportunity to do as an instructor at an American university.
Lecturer James Ingram, Ph.D.
Connects with Georgian Students in Tbilisi

On his first day in his classroom in Tbilisi, Georgia, Dr. James Ingram made an effort to connect with students by writing on the board in Georgian; he eventually even changed his name to Professor "Ingramishvili." His tactic worked. SDSU-Georgia students were impressed with his effort. They also taught Ingram a new alphabet and helped him with a new language to be used periodically during his two classes — Introduction to American Politics and Urban Politics.

Ingram, a political science professor at SDSU College of Arts and Letters since 1993 and lecturer at SDSU-Georgia since May 2018, found a welcoming home in Tbilisi during his summer there, 7,100 miles away from San Diego. The experience opened his eyes to diversity and open expression not seen in the U.S. “The public art and social commentary, along with mixed architectural styles all showcase a rich diversity in a country the size of San Diego County,” Ingram said.

SDSU-Georgia, since its inception in 2015, focuses on STEM programs and offers a General Education path. Ingram's courses are part of the Social and Behavioral Sciences area of study and fulfill the American Institutions General Education requirement.

With classes as large as 125 students, Ingram's goal was to relate to students by offering experiential learning to aid in the understanding of course material. On one occasion, Ingram orated the conclusion of Dr. Martin Luther King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech, garnering the attention of not only the students, but the security guards in the building. On another day, he lectured in "rap" style to make class concepts more memorable. Luckily the noise and laughter was deemed acceptable by the authorities.

A guest lecture for the program at which most of Ingram's 300-plus students attended, was entitled, “Me Va Kartveli” or “I Am Georgian” modeled after JFK's famous 1963 Cold War speech, “Ich bin ein Berliner.” He also referenced Georgia's famous national poet Shota Rustaveli who wrote Knight in the Panther's Skin. Ingram's speech solidified his effort to engage with a diverse student population of Georgians, Persians, and Turks.

A notable difference that surprised Ingram was the way in which students in Georgia work in a cooperative manner. When he assigned study groups, he noticed a sense of familial sharing among group members, which is counter to the competitive American-style of group work.

Ingram started a weekly Poli Sci Movie Club after class in the Central Library of the TSU campus. Students watched and discussed popular and important movies in American culture, such as “Full Metal Jacket,” “War Games,” and “The Lion in Winter.” It became an enjoyable group activity and students were invited to write critical analyses of the movies for extra credit.

SDSU-Georgia offers students “cultural capital” as it provides a world-class education from an American university and a nationally-ranked leader in research and STEM degrees. Ingram can see, firsthand, that "we will be turning out top flight successful graduates doing eye-opening, quality work.”

“Ingramishvili” returns for his final teaching stint in Georgia during five weeks of summer in 2019 to engage his students with more stories, songs, and movies. He'll enjoy his favorite
dish, *khachapouri*, a traditional cheese-filled bread, head to class via the 60-meter-deep subway, a taxi, or a *marshrutka* (mini bus), and maybe dip his toes in the famous hot springs in “The Land of the Kartvelians.”

Lecturer Kevin Siefert, M.A.: First-Person Perspective

I first arrived in Tbilisi in September of 2016. I’ve come to learn that Georgian people are extremely hospitable when you are welcomed as a guest and want to ensure that you are feeling welcomed and well fed. There are some cultural differences on the street level that took some getting used to, such as people cutting in lines at the market or not holding doors open, but nothing that would constitute a strong culture shock. Perhaps the most “shocking” aspect of living here is the driving. Georgian driving appears to be quite lenient in terms of not only what is legally permissible, but culturally accepted as well. There have been many times that my taxi drivers have cut the entire line of traffic to go right to the front and no one seems to mind this at all. Another main component to Georgian culture is not just their love of their food, but their love of hospitality. They enjoy their toasts and making sure that your glass is always full. Very good company, indeed.

The students here with SDSU-Georgia are all STEM majors. None of them are studying philosophy “professionally” outside of the courses they have taken with me. But many of them show a natural inclination towards thinking philosophically and understanding the ideas presented to them. While they may not have the knowledge of the history of philosophy as such (they may not know Plato’s dialogues, for instance), they are able to grasp the ideas quite quickly and with considerable passion. Perhaps it is due to Georgia’s strong religious background, but the “grand” questions of philosophy interest them greatly.

I think that if I have had any success with the students here in Tbilisi it is because I am passionate about what I teach. The students here respond quite well to the enthusiasm and excitement I feel with regard to philosophy. I think they also appreciate that I try to remove any of my own personal philosophic beliefs from the classroom and allow them to struggle through the arguments and reach their own conclusions. My class is not necessarily centered around providing answers, but rather the questions. I leave it to the students to form their own answers, or semblance of an answer.

I have enjoyed my time in Georgia, and I think it is largely due to the sense of freedom one finds here. You can more or less do anything that you want. It is also quite safe here, despite the driving which would leave the impression of impending death. Overall the experience has been quite positive.
DONORS

SDSU students from a variety of disciplines will head to Phnom Penh, Cambodia for eight-week internships this summer, thanks to a philanthropic gift of the William R. Mundt Peacemakers Fund that developed, along with the College of Arts and Letters, the Mundt Peace Fellowship Program.

The vision and purpose of the program is to help create “future new leaders who will make a difference in the world.” The Mundt Peace Fellowship provides students the opportunity to participate in and observe first-hand the work of NGOs, governmental aid agencies, combined public/private aid/peace efforts, humanitarian organizations, or social entrepreneurial efforts in helping create a stable, healthy environment that ultimately supports peace and security and/or seeks to alleviate social and economic inequalities.

Why send students to Cambodia for internships? “Andrew and I were attracted to Cambodia for the diversity of opportunities the participating nonprofits in the country would provide students,” said, Davida Huchel, who serves as a co-trustee of the Mundt Peacemakers Fund with Andrew Mundt. “We were also conscious of Cambodia’s recent history of genocide and reconciliation. We hope that Cambodia will stand as a cautionary tale, but also offer insight into how a nation heals.” Students will work at Cambodian organizations within five career disciplines: art and music; education; environment and sustainability; law and social justice; and healthcare and welfare. Moving forward, every year students will be invited to apply for the internships.

William R. Mundt’s Legacy

William Mundt became interested in peace from a young age. He felt personally affected by the violence he witnessed in World War II and the ensuing Cold War. After completing a master’s degree in theology, he earned his master’s in psychology from SDSU. Upon receiving his degree he took a position as a student adviser at the Wesley Center on the SDSU campus. When he passed in 2014 he made a gift to the San Diego Foundation and named his son, Andrew Mundt, and his good friend, Davida Huchel, as advisors to continue and put into action the many discussions about peacemaking he had with them while he was alive.

More than 100 students submitted 1,000-word essays and 15 finalists were interviewed by a panel to determine the final cohort of nine 2018-2019 fellowship awardees:

**EDUCATION**  
Grace Megginson, child & family development major, and Samuel Hagos, ISCOR major will assist in daily operations of the People Improvement Organization which provides education and shelter for disadvantaged children who live in the area and aims to break the cycle of poverty.

**ART & MUSIC**  
Bilal Mohamed, comparative literature major, and Britney Budiman, urban studies major will engage in activities at the Cambodia Living Arts organization which was established by a genocide survivor and musician. This NGO supports talented people developing their careers in the arts, along with traditional and endangered performances and rituals.

**HEALTHCARE**  
Madilynn Reynoso, interdisciplinary studies major: chemistry/biology/psychology, and Veronica Coen, cell molecular biology major will assist doctors, nurses, and dentists in delivering at One-2-One, a nonprofit that aims to meet holistic needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable children who are orphaned, people living in urban slums, families who can’t afford medical care, prisoners, and people with HIV.

**ENVIRONMENT/SUSTAINABILITY**  
Maya McHale, ISCOR major, and McKenna Avery, sustainability major will assist in the development of community forest, fishery, and eco-tourism projects for Culture and Environment Preservation Association (CEPA), an NGO focused on environmental, community-based natural resource management, biodiversity conservation, water governance and climate change.

**LAW & SOCIAL JUSTICE**  
Gabriel Wahl, journalism major will support projects spearheaded by Legal Aid of Cambodia (LAC), a highly respected, well-connected NGO providing free legal services in both civil and criminal cases to vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

First Mundt Peace Fellowship Scholarship Recipients Announced  
Nine SDSU students to engage in service-learning internships in Cambodia this summer
Huchel met with the first cohort of awardees to learn about their goals and to share her hopes for them. “You are the future leaders and this is your opportunity to discover and get involved in another culture,” she said. “You can help others understand the best of our culture. You are now the face of U.S. humanity, and maybe you can change their minds and hearts.”

When asked what she’s most looking forward to, Madilynn Reynoso said, “I’m excited to help people that don’t have options. When we live in our bubble, we don’t have a chance to see underdeveloped countries and this will give me a chance to make an impact.”

“I now have a purpose and intrinsic motivation to apply my digital photography and video skills,” Gabriel Wahl said. Wahl hopes that the work he completes in Cambodia will gain notice by a government affairs organization or science magazine in the future.

If you’d like to make a donation for future projects developed by the College of Arts and Letters, please contact Janee Shaw, Senior Director of Development, College of Arts and Letters at (619) 594-1562 or janee.shaw@sdsu.edu. For details, visit cal.sdsu.edu/give-to-cal/ways-to-give.
Rabbi Aaron Gold (1920-2001) was not just a religious leader, he was a teacher who sought to inspire people to learn more about Judaism. A learned man, Rabbi Gold dedicated his life to the principles of education and outreach. One year, he led four seders, each for a different community group.

To honor his legacy, Jeanne Gold has decided to support the expansion of the Jewish Studies program at SDSU with a generous gift. She wants this program to inspire both students and faculty, to help them bring new ideas and new innovations to this program.

Jeanne chose SDSU because she is deeply impressed by the program and she attends Jewish Studies events regularly. She particularly remembers the Noel Izon’s documentary, “An Open Door: Holocaust Haven in the Philippines,” which focuses on testimony from Holocaust survivors who were given a safe haven in the Philippines. The film also documents how efforts by the Philippine people saved the lives of more than 1,300 Jews as they fled the pogroms in Nazi Germany.

The evening of Jewish music, led by Yale Strom and his group, Hot Pastrami, in October 2009, was also particularly memorable. Going to these events is always a pleasure, Jeanne says.

Throughout his life, Rabbi Aaron Gold was a student and a scholar. Jeanne hopes this gift will honor his memory by supporting and encouraging scholarship in the Jewish Studies program.
San Diego State University is expanding its curricular and research focus on Brazil, increasing opportunities for students to study and work abroad and strengthening partnerships with universities and nonprofits in the world’s fifth most populous country.

The interdisciplinary J. Keith Behner and Catherine M. Stiefel Program on Brazil, created in 2014 and housed in the College of Arts and Letters, is SDSU’s first endowed academic program with an international focus.

Now, a second gift to the program from Behner (’71) and Stiefel (’92) will increase its impact, not only at SDSU, but also in Brazil and within the Brazilian diaspora living in the United States.

The new gift funds the Endowed Chair and allows the Program on Brazil to become the Behner Stiefel Center for Brazilian Studies.

“The tremendous success and progress of the Program on Brazil to date has led Cathy and me to double down on our original $2.5 million endowment aimed at creating one of the best comprehensive Brazilian studies programs in the nation,” Behner said. “When Brazil and Brazilian issues are discussed, SDSU and the Program on Brazil will increasingly be a significant part of the conversation.”

Behner’s fascination with Brazil stems from his years living there as a teenager. Stiefel also lived abroad as a child – in Puerto Rico. Through the years, both developed a profound respect and affection for the language, culture and peoples of Latin America.

Key collaborations

SDSU President Adela de la Torre expressed the university’s “incredible gratitude” for the continued support of donors such as Behner and Stiefel. “This program will give our students increased opportunities to study abroad and to research issues that affect urban and rural communities, including social, environmental and economic topics,” de la Torre said.

“These important collaborations with Latin America are key to our vision of graduating the global citizens, compassionate leaders, and ethical innovators who will ultimately make a positive impact in society – from San Diego to our transborder communities and around the world.”

New opportunities

The interdisciplinary Program on Brazil funds new coursework design and offers seed money to enhance collaborative research projects for scholars from Brazil and the U.S.

“Our program serves the entire university, involving faculty and students around issues of health, sustainability, urban development and the arts and culture,” Larkins said.

Endowed Chair, Erika Robb Larkins.

Larkins, a cultural anthropologist, leads an annual study abroad expedition to Salvador de Bahia and Rio de Janeiro to learn firsthand how local activists and nonprofits in Brazil are working for change in the areas of environmental sustainability, education, and housing and land rights.

Other students will complete summer internships with Brazilian nonprofits focused on community development, conservation, sustainability, and eco-tourism.
Three CAL alumnae are serving the state through the Capital Fellows Program in Sacramento

By Lainie Fraser // SDSU News Center

Three College of Arts and Letters alumnae are currently working alongside state legislators, senior-level executive staff, and court administrators in Sacramento as part of the Capital Fellows Program. Administered by the Center for California Studies at California State University Sacramento, the program gives recent graduates opportunities to engage in policy-making and public service as preparation for their future careers. Selected fellows work as full-time staff members in the State Assembly, the State Senate, the Executive Branch or the Judiciary. These students get firsthand experience in the governance and leadership of the state of California.

**SDSU’s 2018-2019 Capital Fellows are McKinley Thompson-Morley, Erin Huddleson and Nicole Cropper.**

Huddleson, a political science major, is now an assembly fellow in Assembly member Phillip Chen’s office. She works on potential legislation and meets with constituents and interest groups. Her goal is to help make a difference in California by improving people’s lives through public policy.

Cropper, an English major, created a successful nail salon in Bankers Hill and then decided it was time to pursue an education at SDSU. She is now an executive fellow in the Department of Health Care Services working with staff who oversee benefits and eligibility. This exposes her to state service and allows for professional development and networking with people from all walks of life.

Thompson-Morley majored in political science at SDSU. She graduated with honors and was named the Outstanding Political Science Graduate of 2018. While at SDSU she was a resident advisor, a student in the Weber Honors College and an intern in Governor Jerry Brown’s Office of Legislative Affairs. She now works in Senator Steve Glazer’s office as a legislative staffer.

To be eligible for the Capital Fellows Program, students must have a bachelor’s degree by September 1 of the fellowship year, a GPA of 2.5 or higher and must be 20 years or older by September 1 of the fellowship year.

More information on eligibility and how to apply can be found here: csus.edu/calst/programs
2019 Quest for the Best Honorees Named

For more than three decades, San Diego State University’s Quest for the Best Vice Presidential Student Service Award has recognized outstanding student leaders. The annual award celebrates student achievement in four key areas: academic excellence, student service and activities, community service and leadership development. The student winners are asked to nominate a faculty or staff member who had a significant and positive impact on their personal growth and development during their time at SDSU. Of the ten winners from all colleges, four students from CAL were honored.

2019 honorees: from the College of Arts & Letters:

Richard Amaechi
is a junior majoring in international business with an emphasis in Japanese and finance, with minors in honors interdisciplinary studies and cultural proficiency. His involvements include the Afrikan Student Union, Aztec Mentorship Program Advisory Board, Black Business Society, Harambee Scholars Program and International Business Society. He has volunteered at the A.S. Food Pantry and the San Francisco-Marin Food Bank. He has been honored with the African-American Faculty/Staff Scholarship and is an SDSU Presidential Scholar. After graduation, Amaechi plans to work as a financial analyst before attending graduate school to earn his master’s degree in business administration. Faculty/staff honoree: Dr. Sandra Cook.

Morgan Newport
is a senior majoring in international security and conflict resolution with an emphasis in environment and security. She is involved with Delta Beta Tau, Environmental Justice Committee, Green Love, Best Buddies and the Brave Project. She has volunteered with Mental Health Awareness Week, Chicano Park Day, Food Redistribution and Bali Wise and serves as a refugee tutor. She has been honored with the Achievement Award for Alpha Chi Omega, and she is on the Dean’s List. After graduation, Newport will work in Yosemite National Park and begin a year of service in AmeriCorps, focusing on environmental stewardship. Faculty/staff honoree: Dr. Cheryl O’Brien.

Latrel Powell
is a senior double majoring in political science and Africana studies, with a minor in honors interdisciplinary studies. His involvements include the College of Arts and Letters Student Council, California State Student Association, Associated Students Board of Directors, Mortar Board Honor Society and Pi Sigma Alpha. He has volunteered with Miracle League, City Heights Prep Charter School, YMCA basketball and the Southern California Immigration Project. He has been honored by all campus interdisciplinary honors societies with the Dr. Henry L. Janssen Honors Council Award. Faculty/staff honoree: Dr. Martha Enciso.

Renata Valente
is a senior majoring in economics with a specialization in quantitative analysis and minors in sociology and leadership development. She is active with the Economics Student Association, SDSU Rotaract, Brazilian Student Association and Leadership Minor Peer Advisers. She has volunteered with Life Rolls On, More Than Music Fest and Harriet Tubman Charter School. She has been honored with the Center for Public Economics Scholarship and the Daniel Weintraub Endowment. After graduation, Valente will work in the United States before returning to Brazil to help with the financial investigation of corruption in public agencies. Faculty/staff honoree: Dr. Lisa Gates.
Arts & Letters Alumni Chapter (ALAC) Scholarship Winners

With 224 applicants, determining the top two scholarship awardees was challenging. The scholarship committee asked the Arts & Letters Alumni Chapter to assist them by interviewing six finalists. ALAC committee members enthusiastically agreed and recommended the final two applicants, who were ultimately awarded scholarships.

Zenaib Mohamed, a sociology major and Mikael Jutyar, an international business major each received a $2,500 scholarship.

Mohamed attended the award presentation and spoke about how thankful she feels to receive recognition for her work. She is pursuing her degree in sociology and plans to continue her studies at SDSU with a master’s in counseling.

In her essay, Mohamed stated, “My main goal is to become a community figure who creates a support system to the upcoming youth in my community who may face language barriers, identity crises, lack of a support system in terms of mental health and educational resources. I want to create opportunities that lead to internships or mentorships for my community.”

Jutyar plans to earn a master’s in international business along with a Ph.D. in international business administration.

“I graduated as an honor student from Cuyamaca College and I transferred to SDSU.” Jutyar said in his essay, “It is very difficult for me as a disabled person far away from family and without family love and support to live and continue as a full-time student ... but I have decided to continue with my education in the hope of making this world more peaceful.”

Since 2012, the ALAC has granted nearly $30,000 in award money and continues to fund scholarships for deserving students through donations and support from the community.

Geography Student Named One of Ten Inamori Fellows

Blaire O’Neal, Geography

As part of the annual Kyoto Prize Symposium, the Inamori Foundation recognized 10 SDSU graduate students and Ph.D. candidates during an all-campus event. The selected students, recommended for the fellowship by SDSU faculty advisers, are named Inamori Fellows and receive $5,000 scholarships.

Winners from CAL Take Office in Associated Students Elections

Two students from the College of Arts and Letters were elected to develop student policies for campus. Congratulations to: Angelica “Angie” Espinoza — vice president of external relations and Dustin Adkins — vice president of financial affairs.

Congratulations to the newly elected CAL representatives Jacob Tuchband, Aidan Winter, Fnu Mumtaz. They serve as liaisons between the college and Associated Students.
CAL Excellence in Teaching Awards

In selecting recipients of the award, the evaluating committee determines winning faculty within two areas: 1) Assistant professors who show exceptional promise for significant research achievement; outstanding capability to publish in quality venues and who secure grants and/or awards; 2) Tenured faculty who show a continuous record of research activity; provide quality of publishing venues; receive grants and/or awards; and have a national and international impact and reputation.

Ahmet T. Kuru, Ph.D., Professor, Political Science; Director, Center for Islamic and Arabic Studies


Atsushi Nara, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Geography

Atsushi Nara received his Ph.D. from Arizona State University in 2011. His research interests focus on Geographic Information Science, spatiotemporal data analytics, complex adaptive systems and geo-computation approaches, applied to study human mobility, urban dynamics, and interdisciplinary fields.

Jenny Sheppard, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Rhetoric and Writing Studies

Jenny Sheppard’s research focuses on theory, practice, and pedagogy in digital writing, visual and multimodal rhetoric, and professional communication. She teaches a wide range of courses, including visual rhetoric, advanced writing, and graduate seminars in rhetoric, literacy, and technology.

Michael Caldwell, Ph.D., Lecturer, Religious Studies & Classics and Humanities

Michael Caldwell teaches in both the Humanities and Religious Studies departments. His Ph.D. is from the University of Chicago and he is currently working with Johns Hopkins University Press to bring his manuscript on teaching to publication.

CAL Excellence in Research Awards

In selecting recipients of the award, the evaluating committee determines winning faculty within two areas: 1) Assistant professors who show exceptional promise for significant research achievement; outstanding capability to publish in quality venues and who secure grants and/or awards; 2) Tenured faculty who show a continuous record of research activity; provide quality of publishing venues; receive grants and/or awards; and have a national and international impact and reputation.

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The Center for Islamic and Arabic Studies Director Dr. Ahmet Kuru and Undergraduate Advisor Dr. Hisham Foad have been working diligently on a degree program revision for more than two years. Today, their persistence and steadfast commitment has paid off as their work has resulted in a new major degree program – the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Islamic and Arabic Studies. No other university in this region offers such a major.

For the past decade, a major in Islamic and Arabic Studies was housed within the Social Sciences program at SDSU. After determining that the program could benefit from an update and reimagining, Kuru and Foad set to work to recreate it. “The improvements we made to the major were definitely informed by interactions with students in terms of the courses they desired and in identifying any potential obstacles to them completing the degree,” Foad said. Several reviews by the CSU Chancellor’s office allowed opportunities to refine it, and in the end, according to Kuru, “The degree became an elegant and well-defined program with long-lasting relevance to students.”

This interdisciplinary degree program promises to allow a growing population of students, interested in Middle Eastern topics, to focus on relevant research and a robust curriculum.

“The major is very timely. Our student body with a Middle East background has extended given the increasing number of students whose families migrated from the region as well as international students,” Kuru said. Foad added, “Students can access a broad sense of history and culture. We found there is a large population of students with interest in heritage, foreign service, and the military.”

The new collectively revised degree program offers a broad range of subjects to include economics, linguistics, women’s studies, history, religion, political science, and culture. Students will discover a cohesive common core that represents both Islamic and Arabic emphases.

Beginning in fall 2019, students will be awarded a degree in Islamic and Arabic Studies, rather than one in Social Sciences — further defining a niche area of study.

This major enables students to pursue a multitude of career opportunities in the U.S. and abroad. These include work in Non-Governmental Organizations, the public sector including the Foreign Service, and the corporate world. The presence in San Diego County and other urban centers in the nation of large communities from Muslim-majority countries opens opportunities for careers. Students who wish to pursue further studies are well-prepared by this major to pursue M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in multiple disciplines, as well as professional degrees such as law and library science.

“The Arabic-speaking and Muslim-majority countries have played an increasingly important role in the geo-politics of the United States especially over the last few decades. However, these countries and their peoples are misunderstood by a large number of people (both in the U.S. and abroad). Anything we can do to present a broad and factually based curriculum in Arabic and Islamic studies serves a social good in creating more informed global citizens,” Foad said.

More about Kuru and Foad

Ahmet Kuru teaches courses on Middle East politics, Islam and politics, and religion and politics in comparative perspective. Kuru’s new book Islam, Authoritarianism, and Underdevelopment: A Global and Historical Comparison will be published by Cambridge University Press this summer.

Hisham Foad, chair of the Economics department, teaches a course on the Economics of the Middle East as well as courses in international finance, and health economics. His research on this topic focuses on Arab-Americans, looking at the enclaves in which they live, their assimilation into American society, and their connections to their native or ancestral countries.
Women’s Studies Department 50th Anniversary

In 1969, students from SDSU’s Women’s Liberation Group, in cooperation with faculty and community members, formed an ad hoc committee for women’s studies. They collected signatures from over 600 students in support of establishing the SDSU Women’s Studies Program. By the fall of 1970, SDSU formally established the first women’s studies program in the United States which offered 11 courses. In spring 1974, the faculty advisory committee undertook a nationwide faculty recruitment campaign to strengthen women’s studies as a truly academic department.

In celebration of this major milestone the department is presenting events all year long. In addition, a Gender and Social Justice Festival will take place on April 25, 2020.

Chicana & Chicano Studies 50th Anniversary

In April 1969, the historic Plan de Santa Barbara – which established the blueprint for Chicana/o Studies programs and departments across the nation – was signed. To mark this foundational moment in history, the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies at SDSU, one of the first of its kind in the nation, plans a yearlong celebration.

This interdisciplinary and transnational program of teaching, research, and public service provides students with the opportunity to explore the history, politics, culture, and ethics of Chicana/o-Latina/o communities on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border.

More than 50 events and lectures are planned during the year, so check the website often for details of upcoming events.

Lavender Graduation & LGBTQ Studies 10th Anniversary

On May 8, at the Lavender Graduation, the achievements of undergraduate and graduate students who are part of SDSU’s LGBTQ+ campus were celebrated along with faculty, staff and administrators who have enhanced the campus climate for LGBTQ+ students. Students received a certificate and rainbow cord to wear with their academic regalia during commencement.

At the first ceremony in 2010, there were only 26 graduates and by 2018, 59. This year more than 100 graduated in the 10th annual Lavender Graduation ceremony.

“It is wonderful to see the diversity of students, the diversity of majors and programs, and the excitement of the families and guests,” said, Women’s Studies Professor and co-founder of the Lavender Graduation, Esther Rothblum.

In 2009, the LGBT studies minor was created, and that same year SDSU was (and continues to be) voted one of the top LGBT-friendly campuses by CampusPride.org.
### RESEARCH GRANTS | Fall 2018-Spring 2019

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The Center for Health Economics & Policy Studies (CHEPS)

Joseph J. Sabia // Director, Center for Health Economics & Policy Studies

CHEPS is an interdisciplinary research center that supports impactful, policy relevant scholarship in the areas of health economics and social policy analysis. Housed in the College of Arts and Letters, CHEPS brings together faculty and graduate students engaged in complementary research in the areas of national defense policy, economic demography, the economics of crime and punishment, and the economics of risky health behaviors.

The mission of the CHEPS is to strengthen the community of scholars at SDSU conducting cutting-edge, externally funded research in health economics and public policy and to facilitate integration of faculty scholarship with our student research community. CHEPS will encourage cutting-edge scholarship in the economics of health, labor, and public economics via:

- the CHEPS Seminar Series, which includes leading applied microeconomics and public health scholars;
- a publicly available CHEPS Working Paper Series;
- research fellowships, which will allow graduate and undergraduate students the opportunity to work with faculty on high quality, impactful, research;
- student academic conference travel, which will help expose students to ongoing cutting-edge scholarship on relevant public policy topics;
- one-on-one and team-based mentorship of students pursuing doctoral degrees in Economics, Public Policy, and Public Health;
- instruction on the role of incentives, free markets, and cost-benefit analysis to understand optimal policy creation and the link between economic liberty and human freedom;
- grant writing to public agencies and private foundations to support scholarly activities, including funding student research assistantships;
- engaging the media and policymakers with evidence-based policy recommendations.

For more information, visit cheps.sdsu.edu

Congratulations to M.A. students on their admission to Economics Ph.D. programs

Andrew Dickinson // University of Oregon
Toshio Ferrazares // University of California, Santa Barbara
Alex Chesney // University of California, Davis
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- Ellie Levenson, The Independent -

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- Max Nisen, Business Insider -

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