



University of California, Merced  
5200 N. Lake Road | Merced, CA 95343  
209-228-4723

GRADUATE DIVISION

August 24, 2018

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the fall semester! About 165 new graduate students are joining us this fall, raising the total number of graduate students over 650. This includes our first Management of Innovation, Sustainability, and Technology (MIST) cohort — welcome! We have many events planned for the year, and encourage you to periodically review our [events calendar](#).

I would like to call your attention to the [Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook](#), the Graduate Council's [Mentoring Guidelines](#) and the attached Mentoring Checklist, which I obtained at a workshop hosted by NSF, NIH and Nature on building healthy research teams. I strongly recommend that you review this checklist with students you are advising as it offers a quick and helpful means of aligning expectations.

I am excited to announce that our previously virtual [Graduate Resource Center](#) now has a physical home! It is located in Student Services Building (SSB), room 217. Our writing and statistical tutors can be found there, as well as our library of successful fellowship proposals for review by graduate students and postdocs. Please encourage your students to make use of these resources. In addition, our [Resource Center](#) web page provides lots of helpful information and links. This year, we will again offer our [GEARS](#) professional development [course](#) taught by Associate Dean Chris Kello, with some sessions opened to a broader audience. We will also host National Labs Day again this year, as well as Humanities Day in collaboration with the Center for Career and Professional Advancement, the Center for the Humanities, and the Interdisciplinary Humanities graduate group. As usual, [Dissertation Boot Camp](#) will be offered in January and May, [GradSLAM](#) in the spring, and our [GradEXCEL peer mentor](#) program will run throughout the year to help orient new doctoral students.

I am delighted to report once again on a series of successes in our grant applications. We have three major awards starting in September and two continuing grants:

- Chris Kello and I received a new NSF AGEP (Alliance for Graduate Education Program) grant starting in September with UC Santa Barbara, CSU Fresno, and CSU Channel Island. The AGEP award is designed to prepare UC students for academic positions in CSUs and similar institutions that focus on both teaching and research.
- SSHA Dean Jill Robbins and I, along with Nicola Lercari, Robin DeLugan, and Mario Sifuentes, were awarded a new [Luce Foundation grant](#) that will train humanities doctoral students in community-embedded research starting in September.
- Developing from our successful NSF INCLUDES launch and design and conference grants, we are now part of one of three inaugural NSF INCLUDES Alliance grants. Our project, which begins in

September, is designed to increase the number of Latinx students graduating from computer science programs nationwide.

- Our Council of Graduate Schools grant with the other UC Graduate Divisions will track doctoral alumni and examine how we can better prepare our doctoral students for the careers they are seeking.
- Our NSF National Research Training in Interdisciplinary Computational Graduate Education is entering its third year. Please encourage your domestic, first-year doctoral students who are interested in computational work to apply. We will advertise for the program in fall, hold a launch in December, and begin our program in spring semester. The program is designed to provide social support, multiple mentors, instruction in key programming languages and platforms, and instruction in project management and team science — all while students work in interdisciplinary teams on projects suggested by our advisory board members from industry and the National Laboratories. Ultimately, our goal is to decrease attrition, especially among underrepresented minority and first-generation graduate student in computational science-related fields, and prepare them for research positions in industry and national labs, as well as academia.
- A sixth proposal is now under review with the Mellon Foundation — more on that in September if we are successful!

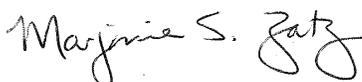
We have also been very proactive in seeking philanthropic support for graduate fellowships and graduate programs. I especially want to note the 120 gifts we received during last fall's Giving Tuesday campaign. Thank you to everyone who participated!

I also want to make you aware of a few technology improvements. We are transitioning to SLATE this fall for our admissions system and look forward to SLATE being a big improvement for our campus. We are also launching the Graduate Reporting & Information Platform (GRIP), a graduate student information system developed by the School of Natural Sciences, as a campuswide system this fall. You will be able to find information about your students more easily in this system. We also look forward to more forms moving to OnBase workflow this year, which will make the mounds of paper we all process simpler.

Finally, three new graduate programs are undergoing systemwide review by the Coordinating Council of Graduate Affairs, and we anticipate new Ph.D. programs in BioEngineering, Materials and Biomaterials Science and Engineering, and Management of Complex Systems.

I look forward to working with all of you to further advance graduate education at UC Merced this year. Please feel free to contact me anytime with your ideas and concerns.

Best wishes for a wonderful semester!



Marjorie S. Zatz  
Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education  
Professor of Sociology, SSHA

## Questionnaire for Aligning Expectations in Research Mentoring Relationships

Mentor / Supervisor:		Mentee / Student:	
Time Period:		Dept / Program:	

Read each pair of statements and estimate your position on each. For example with statement pair #1, if you believe the ideal mentoring relationship focuses on the research interests, select 1, 2, or 3. Or if you think the ideal relationship focuses on the working and communication styles, select 4, 5, or 6. Avoid filling in "3.5" for your responses.

Early Stages of the Mentoring Relationship and Choosing Mentors/Mentees			
1	For an ideal mentoring relationship, it's important for both mentor and mentee to have similar research interests	1 2 3 4 5 6	For an ideal mentoring relationships, it's important for both to have similar working and communication styles
2	In an ideal mentoring relationship, mentors should provide close supervision and guidance	1 2 3 4 5 6	In an ideal mentoring relationship, mentors should provide much freedom and independence for the mentees to explore and learn themselves
3	Mentors should only accept mentees when they have specific & deep knowledge of the mentee's research topic	1 2 3 4 5 6	Mentors can provide overall guidance, and so should feel free to accept mentees from a broad range of disciplines
4	A personal and friendly relationship between mentor and mentee is important for a successful relationship	1 2 3 4 5 6	A professional relationship is advisable to maintain objectivity for both mentee and mentor during their work
5	The mentor is responsible for providing emotional support & encouragement to the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	Personal counselling and support are not the responsibility of the mentor
6	It is the mentor's responsibility to select a research topic for the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	The mentee is responsible for selecting her/his own research topic
7	When choosing research topics, I prefer to work on projects with potential for high payoffs, even if it involves high risk	1 2 3 4 5 6	When choosing research topics, I prefer to work on projects that have a strong & safe chance of success, even if the payoff is low
8	The mentor should decide how frequently to meet with the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	The mentee should decide when she/he wants to meet with the mentor
9	The mentor should provide the rules and guidelines for the program or dept to the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	It is the mentee's responsibility to gather and learn the rules and guidelines of the program or dept
10	The mentor is responsible for finding funding until the mentee graduates or completes the program	1 2 3 4 5 6	Mentees are responsible for finding their own sources of funding
Middle Stages of the Mentoring Relationship			
11	The mentor should be the primary guide for the mentee in their academic and professional goals	1 2 3 4 5 6	The mentee should gather multiple mentors as they work toward their academic and professional goals
12	The mentor should be the first place to turn when the mentee has problems with the research project	1 2 3 4 5 6	Mentees should try to resolve problems on their own, including seeking input from others, before bringing a research problem to the mentor
13	The mentor should check regularly that the mentee is working consistently and finishing tasks	1 2 3 4 5 6	The mentee should work independently and productively, and not have to account for their time
14	The mentor should develop an appropriate plan and timetable of research and study for the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	The mentee should develop their own plan and timetable of research and study, and seek input from the mentor only as needed
Advanced Stages of the Mentoring Relationship			
14	The mentor should initiate the preparation of presentations, thesis, papers, and reports	1 2 3 4 5 6	Presentations, thesis, papers, and reports should be initiated by the mentee
15	The mentor should insist on seeing all drafts of work (presentations, thesis, papers, etc) to ensure that the mentee is on the right track	1 2 3 4 5 6	Mentees should submit drafts of work (presentations, thesis, papers, etc) only when they want constructive criticism from the mentor
16	The mentor is responsible for providing career advice and professional connections to the mentee	1 2 3 4 5 6	Because professional options these days are numerous, mentees should seek career advice and connections from other sources



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August 24, 2018

Dear new and continuing UC Merced graduate students,

Welcome to the Fall 2018 semester! As the year begins, I thought it would be helpful to tell you about a few new initiatives in the Graduate Division and provide some broader campus updates regarding graduate education.

About 165 new graduate students are joining us this semester, raising the total number of graduate students over 650. This includes our first Management of Innovation, Sustainability, and Technology (MIST) cohort — welcome!

We have many events planned for the year, starting with An Evening with the Chancellor and Senior Leadership 5:30-7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 12 (more information to follow). We encourage you to look periodically at our [events calendar](#).

I am excited to announce that our previously virtual [Graduate Resource Center](#) now has a home! It is located in Student Services Building (SSB), room 217. Our writing and statistical tutors can be found there, as well as our library of successful fellowship proposals which is available for review by graduate students and postdocs. I hope you will stop in and take a look at these proposals and work with our writing and statistics tutors because they are there for you! And remember — when you apply for a major national predoctoral fellowship or other fellowship/grant of \$12,000 or more, Graduate Division will give you a \$200 [Incentive Award](#) just for applying! Be sure to check out information on internal and external fellowships on our [funding](#) website.

And while you are there, take a look at our [Resource Center](#) web page for helpful information and links about mentoring, career planning, writing, and other tips. This year, we will again offer our [GEARS](#) professional development series [course](#) taught by Associate Dean Chris Kello, with some sessions open to a broader audience. We will host National Labs Day again, as well as Humanities Day in collaboration with the Center for Career and Professional Advancement, the Center for the Humanities, and the Interdisciplinary Humanities graduate group. And, as usual, [Dissertation Boot Camp](#) will be offered in January and May, [GradSLAM](#) in the spring, and our [GradEXCEL peer mentor](#) program will run throughout the year to help orient new doctoral students.

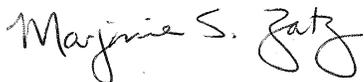
We know that the transition to the UC Path financial system has been bumpy. We are in close contact with the school staff, the campus and Office of the President UC Path coordinators, and UC Riverside (the other campus piloting UC Path) and everyone is working to fix problems as they arise. If you run into problems with underpayment, overpayment, or anything else, please let your school's staff and also [gradfunding@ucmerced.edu](mailto:gradfunding@ucmerced.edu) know immediately.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our annual graduate student survey. We're using this information to help us identify what is working well, and where there are systemic problems we need to address. The individual responses are seen only by Institutional Research and Decision Support staff. They analyze the data and provide me with summary reports.

We know, for example, that food security is a concern for a number of our students, and we are pleased to participate in CalFresh, a nutrition assistance program which provides low-income individuals and families a monthly monetary stipend in the form of electronic benefits that can be used to buy most foods at many grocery stores. Another concern was advisor-advisee relations, and as a result we brought in a theatre troupe to help faculty and students think more about the mentoring relationship, participated in a program led by NIH, NSF and Nature on building healthy research teams, and held conversations about mentoring with faculty in each graduate group. We are also pleased to offer additional mentoring information and resources on our [website](#).

I look forward to working with the Graduate Student Association, the Graduate Dean's Advisory Council on Diversity, and other graduate student groups this coming year. My door is always open, and I welcome conversations with each and every one of you! I hope you always feel comfortable contacting me anytime with your ideas and concerns.

My very best wishes for a wonderful semester!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marjorie S. Zatz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "Z" at the end.

Marjorie S. Zatz  
Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education  
Professor of Sociology, SSHA