Enhancing Postbaccalaureate Opportunities at Cal State Fullerton for Hispanic Students (EPOCHS)

Cal State Fullerton was recently awarded a $2.8 million Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans (PPOHA) grant from the U.S. Department of Education to implement its Enhancing Postbaccalaureate Opportunities at Cal State Fullerton for Hispanic Students (EPOCHS) program.

It is no surprise that nearly one-third of Cal State Fullerton’s student population is Hispanic, as it is the largest campus in the California State University system. What is surprising, however, is that among postbaccalaureate students only 15.5% are Hispanic. With the ever-pressing economic crisis in California today, the need for a well-educated workforce is critical—including an education that goes beyond the Bachelor’s degree. Workforce trends show that more jobs in the future will require the master’s degree. EPOCHS will help to improve graduate education achievement among Hispanic/Latino students at CSUF by creating a stronger culture for graduate education through a variety of activities and services. Among the many offerings to graduate students, EPOCHS provides $13,000 in grants to graduate students for research projects and conference travel, as well as graduate assistantships. The grant will also provide graduate students with writing tutors, workshops (on stress management, academic skills, resume writing, time management, editing, life-skills, etc.), orientation programs, faculty-student mentoring, and other activities. The grant funds a graduate program admissions coordinator and faculty/staff workshops.

IN THIS ISSUE:

* Learn more about the Graduate Student Research Fund competition and this year’s recipients!

* Meet the recent EPOCHS Hires!

* Doctorate of Nursing Practice being proposed!

* MBt program graduates first class!
Thanks to the U.S. Dept of Education’s recent grant to Office of Graduate Studies, CSUF now offers grant money to graduate students to support their research and conference travel.

The EPOCHS Graduate Student Research Fund has already awarded nearly $16,000 to fifty graduate students in American Studies, Anthropology, Art, Biology, Business Administration, Chemistry, Civil Engineering, Education, Electrical Engineering, English, Environmental Studies, Geology, History, Kinesiology, Political Science, Psychology, Public Administration, Public Health, and Sociology.

The deadlines are monthly, throughout each semester. The amount of money awarded ranges, depending on the proposed project and/or research needs, but usually runs between $200 and $400. Money awarded must be for research and/or travel to conferences to present research (and will not be awarded for tuition, fees, or course books). The application process is easy and there is no reason why anybody should let an opportunity like this pass them by.

To apply, see Office of Graduate Studies website: www.fullerton.edu/graduate
BECAS DE INVESTIGACION PARA
ESTUDIANTES EN POSGRADO

Gracias al Departamento de Educación Estadounidense, CSUF ahora ofrece becas a estudiantes de posgrado para financiar investigaciones académicas y viajes a conferencias.

Hasta hoy el fondo de Investigaciones de Estudiantes Posgrado EPOCHS ha otorgado casi $16,000 a cincuenta estudiantes de los departamentos de Estudios Americanos, Antropología, Arte, Biología, Administración de Negocios, Química, Ingeniería Civil, Inglés, Estudios del Ambiente, Geología, Historia, Kinesiología, Ciencia Política, Psicología, Administración Publica, Salud Publica, y Sociología.

Cada semestre tiene plazos mensuales. La cantidad de dinero otorgado depende del proyecto propuesto y/o las necesidades de la investigación, pero usualmente es alrededor de $200 a $400. El dinero debe ser para investigaciones y/o viajes a conferencias para presentar investigaciones (y no será otorgado para pagar clases, cuotas o libros). La aplicación es simple y cada estudiante posgrado es elegible, y no hay ninguna razón porque alguien debería dejar pasar esta oportunidad.

TUTORS- New Program in ULC--JUST FOR GRADS!

The University Learning Center is now the home to two new Graduate Learning Specialists. In addition to one-on-one tutoring, the Specialists will be offering workshops designed to meet the extended needs of any and all graduate students. The two new Specialists, Helen Alexander and Gerardo Arellano, are available for walk-in appointments as well as workshops Monday through Thursday, 4pm-8pm. All workshops will be held in H-516.

Visit www.fullerton.edu/ulc or call 657-278-8629 for more information.

GERARDO ARELLANO

Gerardo completed his undergraduate studies in Comparative Ethnic Studies at UC San Diego. While at UCSD he was a Ronald E. McNair scholar, student activist, and co-founder of Spiderwebs (i.e. a multicultural student zine). Gerardo went on to receive his M.A. and Ph.D. from UC Berkeley in Ethnic Studies. As a true inter-disciplinarian, he currently researches and publishes in the areas of human rights, U. S. immigration policy, Latina/o subcultures, border studies, music, historical blocs, and subaltern movements. Equally important to his breadth as a scholar is his love for teaching. Gerardo believes in critical pedagogy and teaches at different universities in Southern California. Some classes that he teaches are Critical Race Theory and Marxism at UC Riverside. He also teaches Chicana/o and Latina/o history for the department of Chicana/o Studies at UC Irvine. He teaches history courses for the Chicana/o studies department at CSU Fullerton.

HELEN ALEXANDER

Helen Alexander has a B.A. in English Language and Literature and a B.A. in French. She received her M.S. Ed. TESOL from CSUF, and also completed a Postsecondary Reading and Learning Certificate, which qualifies her to teach college-level reading, study skills, and critical thinking courses. She has taught an upper division writing course for the Modern Languages Department, has developed a critical thinking course curriculum specifically geared to meet the needs of ESOL students seeking to continue their education at an American university, and currently teaches for the intensive English program on campus, the American Language Program. Her liberal arts background, pedagogical training, and years of experience that include being a grad student, a writer both creatively and in her professional field, and a teacher of writing afford her a unique relationship to the written word and the ability to pin-point how it can enrich, or detract from, the author’s intended meaning.
TERTULIA

Tertulia is a Spanish word that describes a social and cultural gathering of like-minded intellectuals and creative types. Tertulias originally started as a type of Spanish literary salon that was popular in Spain from at least the 17th century, and eventually replaced the more formal academies. Tertulias were held in private homes at first, but in the early 19th century they met in clubs and cafes. Cal State Fullerton's recent Tertulia was met with open arms as dozens of creatives and intellectuals gathered in the Clayes Performing Arts Theater ready to engage in intelligent conversations, activities, and debates. There were performances by a classical quartet, poetry readings, and even live painting by Kevin Stewart-Magee, MFA student in Painting and Drawing.
This spring CSUF launched a Faculty-Graduate Student Mentoring Program. Twenty-five faculty members from our eight colleges formed the first cohort. As research emphasizes that mentors need to take into account differences in culture, ethnicity, and gender, our mentors received training on a wide range of issues pertaining to diversity, designed a training curriculum, and interacted with one another and graduate students at a “Tertulia” event which featured live performances.

“My mentor consistently goes beyond what can be expected from a professor—truly, she is a mentor by nature. ... Her passion for student success does not limit itself to just me. ... Just recently, at the ... Tertulia, she invited a student from an entirely different department to sit in on our advertising discussion. ... [This] student has since guest attended lectures in the Communications department [and] ... [as a] result of ... [my mentor’s] introduction ... may attain an internship. [My mentor] ... regularly motivates people to shun their fears! She encourages people to think outside of the box, pushes them to pursue goals and facilitates relationships that make opportunities possible!” - A female CSUF M.A. student (Communication)

“Exploring opportunities with ... [my mentor] encouraged me throughout the process. Most importantly, my focus is much clearer with his shared perspective and for that I am eternally grateful. Now, I am the first to graduate with a Master’s degree in my entire family.” - A Hispanic female CSUF Credential student (Mathematics)

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“Having [her] ... as my mentor has helped me develop not only career wise, but also as an individual. She was able to advise me on what classes I should take and more importantly, she provided me with resources that will help me succeed in the future as a high school teacher.” - A Hispanic female CSUF Credential student (Mathematics)

“[My mentor has] provided valuable advice and support. He suggested, and even persuaded me, to apply for the M.A. program in Spanish. ... Before entering the program I had the opportunity to prepare myself with readings and literary criticism suggested by my mentor. ... Having someone to guide me was fundamental in my success. Not only have I completed my M.A. program successfully, but I developed a marvelous interest and passion for Spanish and Latin American literature.” - A Hispanic male CSUF M.A. student (Spanish)
DOCTORATE IN NURSING PRACTICE BEING PROPOSED

In the past few years, CSUF has made great improvements and expansions to its School of Nursing, which now boasts about 900 majors making it one of the largest nursing schools in the Cal State University system. Some of those improvements included nursing degree programs for students who do not have a background in nursing leading to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing as well as a Master of Science in Nursing. Within the master’s program, concentrations have been expanded to include women's health care with nurse practitioner and midwifery emphases, school nursing, and nurse educator. CSUF is proposing to offer a Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) starting in Fall 2012.

With the approval of the Assembly Bill 867 a few months ago, CSUF became one of three California State Universities to offer the DNP as a practice pilot program. CSUF will partner with Long Beach State and CSU Los Angeles to offer the program jointly; another will be offered jointly by Fresno and San Jose; and San Diego State will have the third DNP pilot program.

The DNP is distinguished from the PhD in that it integrates research and practice; the Cal State University DNP curriculum will also have courses in pedagogy. California hopes that the newly implemented nursing program will help decrease the nursing shortage. By 2015, all nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, clinical nurse specialists, and nurse midwives will all have to achieve a doctorate degree to become licensed, according to nursing accreditation standards. This new level of required education amongst our nurses and in our hospitals can only benefit our health care system in California, raising the bar in medical practice. In addition, nurses with the DNP will be qualified to teach within a college or university.

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CSUF GETS ITS FIRST NSF FELLOW!

The National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) has an extensive history in science and engineering education, and is the oldest fellowship of its kind. GRFP, widely considered the most competitive fellowship program for any master’s or doctoral student, supports extraordinary graduate students pursuing research-based master’s and doctoral degrees. Recipients of this fellowship have a reputation for becoming important contributors within their field of study. Past fellows include numerous Nobel Prize winners, U.S. Secretary of Energy Steven Chu, Google founder Sergey Brin, and Freakonomics co-author Steven Levitt.

Beena Ajmera, who earned her Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering in Spring 2011, has honored CSUF with being the first enrolled NSF fellow in the history of this university. An undergraduate, Beena trumped over master’s and doctoral students from all over the country to win this fellowship. She will receive an annual stipend of $30,000 for three years, and a $10,500 cost-of-education allowance. This support will help Ajmera continue her research, and fund her master’s degree as well as her doctoral program, according to Dr. Mallela Prasada Rao, chair of the Department of Civil Engineering at CSUF. Dr. Prasada Rao notes that Ajmera plans on finishing her masters in one year, and will spend the last two years—with help from the NSF fellowship award—in her doctoral program at Virginia Tech.

Ajmera won the GRFP because of her diligent research, now more than a year, on water-saturated slopes of various types of soil and their strength under the weight of large buildings or housing developments. She says, “I am working on how the strength of a soil changes with the construction of a building or during an earthquake. I also am working on an environmental-friendly ground modification technique using saline water,” she said. Ajmera also won first place in the American Society of Civil Engineers Geo-Institute’s first national student poster competition in Florida for the same research. “Right from the beginning, Dr. Tiwari encouraged me to use the equipment in the labs. His confidence in me was inspiring.” The NSF GRFP allows the student to attend any accredited U.S. institution for his/her degree, and it certainly speaks highly of CSUF’s civil engineering program that Ajmera chose this program above all others. Dr. Prasada Rao says that this may be in part thanks to her mentor Dr. Binod Tiwari, who has helped her throughout her undergraduate education, and throughout her research for her project and application process. Dr. Tiwari, assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering and Ajmera’s faculty adviser, said he “couldn’t contain his tears when her name was called at the competition.” Dr. Prasada Rao hopes that this award will help encourage students and faculty to take advantage of opportunities like this one, and will help people to recognize the quality of education that CSUF has to offer.

Beena has received multiple awards and honors since attending CSUF. Some of her honors include:

- Group Scholarship recipient, Los Angeles Section, Geotechnical Engineering 2011
- Second place, Pacific South West, American Society of Civil Engineers 2011
- First place (Women in Science), 22nd annual Science Conference 2011
- Third place, GeoFrontiers 2011
- Ranked number one in the nation, GeoChallenge Student Competition 2011
- Dwight D. Eisenhower Transportation Fellowships 2009 and 2010
- First place, California State University Student Research Competition 2010
- Second place, Orange County, American Society of Civil Engineers scholarship 2010
- First place, National Student Research Poster competition 2010
I heard about the Office of Graduate Studies receiving the U.S. Dept. of Education’s grant Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans at the 2010 Chicano/Latino Faculty and Student Scholarship dinner. President Gordon described the low number of Chicano/Latino students with a graduate degree (2% in California) and laid out the importance of the grant. Knowing what it is to be a woman of color in graduate school, I was excited to hear that more resources would be given for outreach and retention of Latina/o graduate students. The grant, called EPOCHS at CSUF, makes essential steps to create a culture for postbaccalaureate education. Currently, only 15.5% of postbaccalaureate students at CSUF are Chicano/Latino. In order to better ensure CSUF continues to be an accessible institution for students of all socio-economic backgrounds, a conversation addressing specific experiences of students of color in academia is needed.

Much of the research conducted on Chicano/Latino students points to a number of obstacles in pursuing higher education: “social integration, language barriers, lack of cultural capital, racism, lack of educational leadership, impersonal educational environments, low teacher expectations, insufficient parental support, negative peer pressure, lack of mentors, and financial shortfalls.” The more I discuss educational experiences with other students, the more important I find the above-mentioned factors.

I moved to Fullerton during summer 2009 to enter the M.A. American Studies program. I was excited to pursue a graduate degree, something only one other person in my entire extended family has done. My parents are both immigrants from Michoacán, Mexico and were campesinos most of their lives. Although they were supportive and proud of my educational accomplishments, they did not have the tools to guide me in pursuing higher education. One of the largest challenges in my graduate education is the physical distance between my family and I (they live outside San Francisco); however, regardless of the distance between a student and family, feelings of isolation are echoed by a majority of Chicano/Latino graduate students. A Latino Policy and Issues brief asserts, “Chicana/o students often describe graduate school as a place where they feel invisible—like outsiders or imposters. They experience racial and gender microaggressions, lowered academic expectations from faculty, and pressure to be the spokesperson for all Chicana/os or People of Color. Such experiences cause many Chicana/os to doubt their academic abilities, question the value of their scholarly contributions, and reconsider their decision to pursue a graduate degree.” Part of the isolation that many students experience is due to distance from family, lack of support and resources, and inability to connect with students who share their own world view.

A former CSUF student (choosing to remain anonymous) describes her experience as something she “survived”—a revealing testimony as ones graduate experience should be empowering. Testimonies such as these affirm the need to create a more accessible, culturally sensitive, and enriching environment. One solution to facilitate student interaction is to create spaces where students can share their research with the larger student body, for example, a colloquium that exhibits student research from all fields and contributes to the Chicano/Latino community.

Opportunities for students of color to network with one another are necessary to develop a stronger system of support and in turn minimize feelings of isolation. In addition, more guidance from administrators and faculty is needed to ensure first-generation college students have adequate support. CSUF is a diverse campus—to ensure that students from all backgrounds, identities, and generational status have opportunity to pursue and succeed in graduate school, a strong climate for graduate education needs to be strengthened and developed. I am excited EPOCHS can contribute to this foundation for students at CSUF.
Durante la cena de Asociación Chicano/Latino para Facultad en el 2010, escuche que el departamento de Educación le había otorgado a la oficina de estudios posgrado la subvención PPOHA - Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans (Promoviendo oportunidades de pos bachillerato a Hispano Americanos). El Presidente Gordon habló sobre el bajo porcentaje de estudiantes Chicanos/Latinos en estudios posgrado (2% en California) y discutió la importancia de la subvención. Como mujer y estudiante Latina, me alegro escuchar que más recursos se crearían para asistir con la retención de Latinos en estudios posgrado. La subvención ha creado el programa EPOCHS y está tomando pasos esenciales para crear una cultura de campus para la educación posgrado. En este momento, solo 15.5% de estudiantes posgrados en CSUF son Chicoano/Latino. Para mejor entender estas estadísticas y asegurar que CSUF continúe siendo una institución accesible, es necesaria una conversación sobre las experiencias específicas de estudiantes de color en la academia.

La mayor parte de investigaciones sobre la educación de estudiantes Chicanos/Latinos, señalan varios obstáculos en seguir una educación avanzada; “integración social, barreras de idioma, falta de capital cultural, racismo, falta de liderazgo educativo, ambientes educativos no adecuados, maestros con bajas expectativas, no tener suficiente apoyo de los padres, presión social negativa, falta de mentores, y déficit financiero.” Entre más discuto experiencias educativas con mis colegas, encuentro que estos factores son de gran importancia.

Yo me transferí a Fullerton durante el verano del 2009 después de ser admitida al programa de posgrado en Estudios Americanos. Fue muy emocionante continuar mis estudios posgrado ya que es algo que solo otro miembro de mi familia a logrado hacer. Mis padres son inmigrantes de Michoacán, México y fueron campesinos la mayor parte de sus vidas. Aunque me apoyaron y están orgullosos de mí, no tenían las herramientas para dirigirme en perseguir una educación más alta. Uno de los desafíos más grandes en mi estudio posgrado es la distancia física entre mi familia y yo (ellos viven afuera de San Francisco); sin embargo, aunque estudiantes tengan cerca a su familia, la mayoría de estudiantes Chicano/Latino tienen experiencias de aislamiento. La publicación, Leyes y Temas Latinos, afirma, “los estudiantes Chicana/o describen sus estudios posgrado como un tiempo cuando se sintieron invisibles-como intrusos o impostores…. Sus experiencias incluyen micro agresiones raciales y de género, expectativas bajas de la facultad, y presión de ser la portavoz de Chicana/os o Personas de Color. Estas experiencias causan a Chicana/os que duden sus habilidades académicas, el valor de sus contribuciones escolásticas y que reconsideren sus decisiones de seguir sus estudios posgrado.”

Parte del aislamiento que sienten se debe a la distancia de la familia, falta de ayuda y recursos, e inhabilidad de conectar con estudiantes que comparten su visión del mundo.

Una alumna anterior de CSUF (quien quiso mantenerse anónima) describe su experiencia como algo que ella “sobrevivió”—una revelación porque la experiencia posgrado debería empoderar. Testimonios como éstos afirman la necesidad de crear un ambiente más accesible y cultural en CSUF. Una posible solución para facilitar la interacción entre estudiantes es crear espacios donde puedan compartir sus investigaciones. Por ejemplo, un foro puede ser creado para que se discutan los temas que contribuyen a la comunidad Chicana/Latina.

Oportunidades para que estudiantes de color se conozcan e interactúen son necesarias para desarrollar un sistema de ayuda sólido y reducir las experiencias de aislamiento por que pasan los estudiantes. Además, más orientación y dirección de los administradores y de la facultad es necesaria para asegurar que los estudiantes tengan acceso a información adecuada sobre estudios posgrado. CSUF es un campus diverso y para asegurar que estudiantes de todas identidades y de cada generación tengan la oportunidad de seguir con estudios posgrado, un ambiente inclusivo tiene que desarrollarse. Estoy alegre que EPOCHS ha comenzado a crear esta fundación para los estudiantes de CSUF.

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1 Leo Estrada, Latino Issues Forum (2009).
In 2005, the State of California passed legislation allowing Cal State University campuses to offer the first doctorate, Ed.D. in Educational Leadership. CSUF was one of seven “first wave” campuses that started programs in the fall of 2007; CSUF first cohort had 18 students in the PreK-12 Leadership concentration. Fall 2008 and Fall 2009 cohorts were started in both the PreK-12 and the Community College concentrations, and there are now 91 total students in the Ed.D. program. The Ed.D. is a 60-unit, three-year degree program for mid-career professionals that requires that the entering students already have a master’s degree in education or a closely related field.

“The mission of the Ed.D. Program is to prepare informed and reflective educational leaders”
-Department of Educational Leadership, CSUF

The Department of Educational Leadership states that “The mission of the Ed.D. program is to prepare informed and reflective educational leaders who ethically apply critical skills of evaluation, analysis, synthesis, and action to ensure excellence and equity in educational practice as they serve as stewards to the education community.“ Current Ed.D. students are working professionals from community colleges and pre-kindergarten through grade 12 schools and districts. For example, the third PreK-12 cohort, from 2009-10, includes several students who work in private schools and one who works at a charter school, a chief information officer for a school district, and an assistant superintendent for human resources. The second Community College cohort, also from 2009-10, includes a vice president of student services, a director of EOPS, two counselors, vocational-technical faculty, and a director of a nursing program.

The Ed.D. program is governed in partnership with practitioners who are our partners and serve on our Executive Board, Admissions Committee, and Advisory Committee along with faculty. In addition, the E.d.D program has supported the launch of a new research center: Center for Research Educational Access and Leadership (C-REAL). C-REAL specializes in developing strategies to help educational access and leadership through practice, policy, and change. It is a partnership between local educational agencies, schools and colleges, and the College of Education faculty and graduate students from CSUF.

2ND ANNUAL GRAD FORUM

The Pollak Library was taken over by swarms of academically driven people on March 22 at Cal State Fullerton’s second annual Graduate Forum. This year’s theme was Diversity & Graduate Education. The Forum, an all day event, encompassed all aspects of graduate education, while highlighting the benefits of diversity. The Forum covered many facets of diversity in this particular area of education, including cultural diversity, diverse areas of interest and study, different programs and resources for higher education offered at Cal State Fullerton as well as other universities, and many diverse first-hand accounts of the graduate student experience.

In preparation for the full day of events for the Graduate Forum, the Office of Graduate Studies also offered graduate student workshops the night before, held in the library. In a more casual setting, speakers were invited to come and work with graduate students and University professionals.

Workshops covered financial aid in many forms, the graduate student experience, and all the possibilities and requirements of higher education goals even beyond graduate school.

The events at the Forum were packed full of speakers, guests, and students. The turn-out was impressive, and the panels were of high interest. The Student Resource Fair in the Salz-Pollak Room in the main lobby of the library held vendors poised and ready to help every student walking through. The Resource Fair highlighted not only what Cal State Fullerton had to offer grad students on their journey through higher education, but also what other institutions might have to help students looking to get into Master’s or Doctoral programs. Kaplan and Princeton Review came out to help; even CSUF’s own Grand Central Art Center came out to support the event.

Read more about it at www.fullerton.edu/graduate
As an Administrative Support Coordinator, Norma performs a variety of administrative support tasks for the EPOCHS grant and the Office of Graduate Studies, including managing the Graduate Student Research Fund, outreach events, and orientation. She received a B.A. in Spanish Literature from University of California, Irvine, a Master of Public Administration from California State University, Dominguez Hills, and most recently a Master of Higher Education from the University of Washington, Seattle. Her research interests include the retention and persistence of Latinos and underrepresented students in higher education, particularly looking into the obstacles students face during their college experience, and how the college environment, as well as the external environment, has an impact on student outcomes.

Chandinie Francis, comes to us with her B.A. in Psychology and Anthropology, her Master’s of Science in Social Work, and is currently entering her third year of doctoral study in the Ed.D program at USC with a concentration in Educational Psychology. Chandinie last worked as a Counselor at the Disabilities Services and Programs office at USC and has an extensive professional work history as a social worker in various organizations. She was a field instructor for graduate students, and worked as a program coordinator and therapist in the non-profit sector. She is excited to join the Office of Graduate Studies team as the Graduate Student Support Specialist and to be able to offer support and guidance to graduate students at CSUF. Chandinie will be conducting various workshops to support students such as stress management, test anxiety, leadership, and time management. She is also available for one-on-one counseling and support for graduate students and can be reached at cfrancis@fullerton.edu. Her walk-in hours in Office of Graduate Studies are Tuesdays and Wednesdays 5-7pm.

Daphne Jones is the new Graduate Admissions Coordinator working in the Evaluation section in the Admissions Office. She will work entirely on admissions for graduate and postbaccalaureate applicants. She is the principal contact in the Admissions Office for application processing for graduate students. In addition, she will be working with each department/program over time to improve website information to applicants and other processes for graduate applications. Daphne’s position is funded by the EPOCHS grant. Prior to CSUF, she worked as a Graduate Admissions Counselor for Point Loma Nazarene University for the School of Education’s Satellite campus in Arcadia, CA. Daphne’s B.A. is in Africana Studies from CSULB, and received her M.A. in Guidance and Counseling from Loyola Marymount University.
What We Do
The Office of Graduate Studies provides leadership in graduate student affairs, programs, and policies, administering EPOCHS federal grant as well as several scholarship programs: Graduate Equity Fellowship, CSU Pre-doctoral Fellowship, Giles T. Brown Thesis Award, and EPOCHS Research Fund. All master’s theses and doctoral dissertations are reviewed in the Office of Graduate Studies, an important final step before graduation for many students. The Office of Graduate Studies serves as an authority on state regulations and campus policies overseeing procedures, including enrollment, classification, leave of absence, academic standards, and assisting department graduate program advisers. Central to the Office’s service is the evaluation of each graduate student’s study plan for classification status, as well as review for graduation check and posting the awarding of the graduate degree.

Who We Are
Dorota Huizinga, Associate Vice President
Katherine Powers, Director
Lynn Winter & Cathy Hess, Evaluators
Debra Stewart, Thesis/Dissertation Reader
Norma Ramirez, Administrative Support Coordinator
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Graduate Assistants: Irene Lin (designer), Devora Orantes (designer), Jessica Ordaz (event planner), Brittany Ramirez (coordinator), Hector Sahagun (Webmaster), Evan Senn (editor).

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DEADLINES & FAQs

**JULY 8**  Last day to submit your thesis or dissertation to Thesis/Dissertation Reader for August 2011 graduation.

**AUGUST 29**  Last day to apply for Fall 2011 graduation check.

**SEPTEMBER 19**  Last day to enroll in Grad 700 for Fall 2011.

**QUESTION:**  What if I have finished all my classes, but I am still working on my project. Do I have to be enrolled?

**ANSWER:**  Yes, during Fall and Spring semester, you must be enrolled. If you have no other classes to take, then you enroll in GRAD 700. You might be able to enroll in GRAD 700 via University Extended Education. Come to the Office of Graduate Studies at the start of the semester to pick up the paperwork.

**QUESTION:**  I am graduating in Summer and applied for a grad check, but I haven’t heard anything. Is there something wrong?

**ANSWER:**  Grad checks are processed by Graduate Studies sending a grad check and study plan to the adviser during the student’s final semester, usually about week 8. Once the grad check is returned from the adviser, Graduate Studies will send an information copy to the student.

**QUESTION:**  What if I need to take a semester off?

**ANSWER:**  To take a semester off, file a Leave of Absence form. All graduate students need to be enrolled every semester, or they will be discontinued. Form is available at www.fullerton.edu/graduate

**QUESTION:**  I thought I would graduate in Summer, but now I realize I won’t be finished. What should I do?

**ANSWER:**  Come into the Office of Graduate Studies and ask to “update” your grad date to Fall 2011 or later.