

UC SANTA BARBARA

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George Foulsham

UCSB Graduate Programs Among Top in U.S., According to New NRC Assessment

The National Research Council (NRC) has published its long-awaited report evaluating over 5,000 doctoral programs in 62 fields at 212 universities in the United States. UC Santa Barbara has significantly improved its position among research universities in this new NRC assessment.

The NRC's evaluations of research-doctorate programs are conducted by the National Academies every 10-15 years. Previous evaluations appeared in 1982 and 1995. This year's NRC report uses a new methodology designed to show the full complexity of the data and the difficulty of giving a unique ranking. Each program and department was given a wide range of possible rankings, depending on how much weight was given to the different components used in the ranking.

"UC Santa Barbara is very proud that among our 31 doctoral programs assessed by the NRC, 10 programs, or nearly a third, have a range of rankings reaching into the top five in the country; 14, or 45 percent, are in the range of the top 10; and 20, or nearly two-thirds, are in the range of the top 20," said Chancellor Henry T. Yang. "These new rankings reflect UC Santa Barbara's rapid rise in our world-class stature over the decades, and serve as a resounding affirmation of the quality and diversity of our doctoral programs, which form the fundamental basis of a strong research university. Our top-notch faculty, outstanding students, and dedicated staff are all to

be credited and thanked for this highly interdisciplinary and collaborative achievement."

In the 1995 NRC report, four campus departments and programs were ranked in the top 10 in the country, and one ranked in the top five. Most departments and programs improved their standings over the 1995 report, some very dramatically.

Using information from key indexes presented in the study results, 10 departments and programs across the disciplines at UC Santa Barbara were given ranking ranges that extended into the top five. Leading these programs was the Materials Department, which was ranked number one over its entire range, and was the only department in the country to be ranked so highly in any field of engineering. Other campus graduate programs with ranking ranges in the top five included Chemical Engineering, Communication, Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, Geography, Marine Science, Mechanical Engineering, Physics, and Theater and Dance. Of these, Theater and Dance, Marine Science, and Communication were not evaluated previously by the NRC.

UCSB's programs in Anthropology, Ecology, Evolution and Marine Biology, Hispanic Languages and Literature, and History received rankings reaching into the top 10. Art History, Chemistry & Biochemistry, Comparative Literature, English, Psychology, and Religious Studies had ranking ranges reaching into the top 20.

"I am very pleased that the NRC Assessment of Research Doctoral Programs has reinforced the very high quality of our graduate programs," said Gale Morrison, dean of the Graduate Division. "This assessment has provided a wealth of data about our programs, and others across the nation, which will be used to direct continued improvements and to ensure excellence in all of our programs.

"Together, our 47 graduate programs -- 31 of which were participants in this study -- invite 800 new graduate students per year to study with world-class faculty at UC Santa Barbara," Morrison said. "Our university currently has nearly 3,000 graduate students. Building on the current outstanding programs in which these students study, we need to continually examine our goals as they relate to national and worldwide societal and scientific developments and challenges. The information from this study will be used for ongoing conversations about how to continuously improve our programs and ensure the success and professional impact of our graduates."

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About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.