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UCSB Spanish Scholar Elected to Mexican Academy of Language

Sara Poot-Herrera, professor of Spanish and Portuguese and director of UC-Mexicanistas at UC Santa Barbara, has been elected a corresponding member of the Mexican Academy of Language, a cultural organization that aims to maintain the purity of the Spanish language. She was cited for her scholarly and cultural accomplishments.

One of only a few females — and the first female from California — to be elected to the academy, Poot-Herrera ranks among the most distinguished scholars in Mexico.

“Being elected to the Mexican Academy of Language is one of the highest honors to which any writer or scholar can aspire in the Hispanic world,” said Jorge Checa, professor and chair of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. “Professor Poot-Herrera’s students and colleagues at UCSB should feel very proud that she has been publicly recognized with such a distinction, as it enhances a brilliant career devoted to the study of Mexican literature and culture of the last three centuries. Her appointment is a recognition of excellence for the department, our campus and the University of California at large.”

“This acceptance means a great deal of responsibility, happiness and satisfaction. Above all, it means representing a Mexican state — Yucatán — that has a great cultural tradition ranging from the Mayas and Mestizo culture to that of today. At the same time, it means accepting that I live in California and that the Spanish spoken

here also influences the Spanish of Mexico,” Poot-Herrera said. “I look forward to bringing the experience of teaching my classes to the Academy and helping preserve the Yucatec Spanish language.”

Poot-Herrera joined the faculty at UCSB in 1988 and teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in 16th-, 17th- and 18th-century colonial Spanish-American literature, Mexican literature from the 19th century through present day and courses on Mexican culture, female writers and contemporary Mexican short story.

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.