UC SANTA BARBARA
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Speed Learning

Get ready to have your minds blown, three minutes at a time: UC Santa Barbara's Grad Slam 2019 is here. Seventy-eight of the campus's finest young researchers are giving brief, TED-style talks on their ideas, projects and passions in this intense, two-week tournament-style competition. The winner from this competition will receive a grand prize of $5,000 and move on to the UC system-wide competition.

"This is the seventh year of the Grad Slam and each year seems even better than the last," said Carol Genetti, dean of UC Santa Barbara's Graduate Division. "This is one of the most exciting ways to enjoy the luxury of learning for its own sake and to appreciate being a member of one of the world's great research universities."

Beginning Monday, April 8, graduate students from disciplines across campus will expound upon their research, as the preliminary rounds commence. Two hourlong rounds of presentations will occur each day, through Friday, April 12, in the multipurpose room of the Student Resource Building (SRB). The morning rounds begin at 11 a.m., and the afternoon rounds take place at 3 p.m.

All Grad Slam presentations are free and open to the public. In fact, in-person attendance is highly encouraged whether you want to support your favorite grad student, hear the latest news on your favorite research topic, or simply expand your mind with new ideas. The preliminary round schedule can be found here.

Winners of the preliminary rounds will move to the semifinals a week later. They will be held in the SRB multipurpose room from 11-noon Monday and Wednesday, April

15 and 17, and from 3-4 p.m. Tuesday, April 16.

Winners of the semifinal rounds advance to the finals, which will take place in Corwin Pavilion at 3 p.m. Friday, April 19. The winner of that round will represent UC Santa Barbara at the system-wide competition in May. This year, the audience has a chance to help bring in the campus's *third* systemwide People's Choice Award for its champion, by voting at gradslam.universityofcalifornia.edu on May 10.

Behind all the excitement of competition and buzz of new ideas lies a deeper purpose.

"The ability to distill one's research to its essence and present it in a compelling way is a critical skill," Genetti said. "It is necessary for networking, job interviews, and grant writing, in addition to enabling academics to share their research with the broader public."

To this end, the participants have been training in the art of public speaking, connecting with the audience and distilling their research into three information-packed minutes. While only one becomes the champion, everyone who participates, wins.

"Grad students are often called upon to talk at length about their research to specialist audiences," said Shawn Warner-Garcia, director of professional development in UCSB's Graduate Division. "The Grad Slam is unique because it gives them a chance to develop a different kind of public speaking skill set. Being able to convey the core message is a useful tool in all kinds of settings, both inside and outside of academia."

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.