UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

April 18, 2019

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In Distinguished Company

UC Santa Barbara professors Alison Butler, José Cabezón, Brenda Major and Rachel Segalman have been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. They join 210 other new fellows and international members of the prestigious organization. Their selection brings to 41 the number of UC Santa Barbara faculty members who have been named fellows of the academy.

The academy is an independent research center convening leaders from across disciplines, professions and perspectives to address significant challenges. Founded by John Adams in 1780 during the American Revolution, the academy named luminaries such as George Washington and Benjamin Franklin among its first fellows. Since then, more than 13,000 individuals have been elected to academy membership, including Thomas Jefferson, John James Audubon, Willa Cather, Jonas Salk, Eudora Welty and Edward K. (Duke) Ellington.

“Our UC Santa Barbara community is so proud and thrilled to congratulate professors Alison Butler, José Cabezón, Brenda Major and Rachel Segalman on their election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of the oldest learned societies in the country,” said Chancellor Henry T. Yang. “This prestigious honor is a deeply meaningful recognition from their peers of their inspirational leadership in advancing research and scholarship, their dedication to teaching, and their commitment to making significant contributions to our society.”

Alison Butler

A professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, Alison Butler's expertise lies in bioinorganic chemistry and metallobiochemistry, investigating, for example, how microbes acquire the metal ions they need to grow, how they break down the tough, woody parts of plants, and how the proteins secreted by mussel "feet" stick to irregular surfaces under wet conditions. Butler is the 2018 recipient of the Alfred Bader Award in Bioinorganic or Bioorganic Chemistry from the American Chemical Society (ACS). She also is a fellow of ACS, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. At UC Santa Barbara, Butler has been recognized with the 34th Harold J. Plous Memorial Award.

José Cabezón

Religious studies professor José Cabezón is the inaugural holder of the XIV Dalai Lama Chair in Tibetan Buddhism and Cultural Studies at UC Santa Barbara, an endowment created in honor of His Holiness the Dalai Lama following the religious leader's visit to campus in 1991. Since Cabezón's appointment in 2001, shortly after he joined the Department of Religious Studies, he has worked to create what today is one of the top programs in Tibetan Buddhist studies in the country. He specializes in Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, monastic culture and the study of gender and sexuality. A 2015 John Simon Guggenheim Fellow and also a 2015 recipient of the Robert H.N. Ho Family Foundation Collaborative Research Fellowship in Buddhist Studies for the American Council of Learned Societies, Cabezón has focused his work largely on Sera, one of the largest and most important monasteries in Tibet.

Brenda Major

A Distinguished Professor at UC Santa Barbara's Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, Brenda Major is an international expert on the psychology of stigma and how people cope with stigma and discrimination. She has authored more than 160 articles and book chapters and has edited two books on the topic. A core theme of her work is psychological resilience — how people maintain their sense of self-esteem, psychological well-being and physical health despite exposure to discrimination, negative events and adversity. Major is a past president of the Society of Experimental Social Psychology (SESP) and of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP), the largest professional society of personal and social psychologists in the world. She is the recipient of multiple honors for her work, including the SPSP 2015 Donald T. Campbell Award and the SESP 2014 Scientific Impact Prize.

Rachel Segalman

Rachel Segalman, a professor of chemical engineering and of materials, is the Edward Noble Kramer Professor and the current department chair of the UC Santa Barbara College of Engineering's Department of Chemical Engineering. Segalman's group works on controlling the structure and thermodynamics of functional polymers including polymeric ionic liquids and semiconducting and bioinspired polymers. Among other awards, Segalman received the Journal of Polymer Science Innovation Award, the Dillon Medal from the American Physical Society, the Presidential Early Career Award in Science and Engineering, is an Alfred P. Sloan Fellow and a Camille Dreyfus Teacher Scholar. She is also a Fellow of the American Physical Society.

"With the election of these members, the Academy upholds the ideals of research and scholarship, creativity and imagination, intellectual exchange and civil discourse, and the relentless pursuit of knowledge in all its forms," said David W. Oxtoby, president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. "We are pleased to recognize the excellence of our new members, celebrate their compelling accomplishments and invite them to join the Academy and contribute to its work."

The new class will be inducted at a ceremony in October 2019 in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

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.