UC SANTA BARBARA
THE Current

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Inspiration and GRIT

Specializing in areas of study that range from communication, economics and linguistics to engineering, chemistry and geography, the speakers are among UC Santa Barbara's most accomplished faculty members. And in a series of lectures beginning Wednesday, June 23, and continuing through the month of July they will introduce their current research to summer students and to the community.

The series, Ground-breaking Research & Innovative Technology — otherwise and better-known as GRIT Talks — is presented by the Office of Summer Sessions. The annual program gives notable university researchers an opportunity to share their vast and diverse expertise with a broader audience.

The talks, which begin at 5:30 p.m., are free and open to the public and will be delivered via Zoom. Click on the speaker's name below for registration information and to receive the Zoom link.

"GRIT Talks introduce students in our summer programs, as well as other members of the UC Santa Barbara community, to the amazing breadth of research happening on our campus," said Leesa Beck, director of Summer Sessions. "They often inspire students to think beyond the bounds of the classroom — or Zoom call — and incorporate research opportunities directly into their own educational plans."

GRIT's new season begins Wednesday, June 23, with Todd Oakley, an associate professor in the Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Marine Biology, giving a talk on "Taking the Fork in the Road: Adventures in the Origins of Biodiversity."

The other presenting researchers, their departments and lecture titles and dates are:

• Walid Afifi, a professor of in the Department of Communication, will speak on "Uncertainty Diaries: The Story of What, Who, Why, and How," Monday, June 28.

• Javier Birchenall, an associate professor in the Department of Economics, will discuss "Disease, Society, and the Economy," Wednesday, June 30.

• Song-I Han, a professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, will speak on "Controlling Protein Shape Transmission in Aggregation: Why Does It Matter?" Wednesday, July 7.

• Adele Doyle, an assistant professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, will give a talk titled "Decoding Molecular Network Cells Use to Interpret Physical Cues," Monday, July 12.

• B.S. Manjunath, a professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, will give a talk titled "Computer Vision and Deep Learning: Facts and Myths," Wednesday, July 14.

• Simon Todd, an assistant professor in the Department of Linguistics, will speak on "Building Linguistic Knowledge: The Surprising Amount You Can Pick Up by Listening," Monday, July 19.

• Susan Cassels, an associate professor in the Department of Geography, will discuss "Moving HIV Interventions into the Right Places: HIV Self-testing and Geographic Mobility Among Sexual Minority Men," Wednesday, July 21.

Launched in 2013, GRIT Talks is now in its ninth year and is overseen by Lina Kim, director of pre-college programs in the Office of Summer Sessions. The audience for the lecture series ranges from UC Santa Barbara faculty, staff and students to the broader Santa Barbara community.

"Dr. Kim always puts a great deal of thought into selecting the researchers she invites to give GRIT Talks," Beck said. "As we start to emerge from an extremely challenging year, she's chosen a wonderful mix of topics that will give us opportunities both to process and reflect on how our world and our lives have been impacted, as well as to look ahead to the possibilities of a brighter future."

Previous years' GRIT Talks can be viewed at https://www.uctv.tv/grit/.

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.