UC SANTA BARBARA
THE Current

January 5, 2022
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On Screen and on Stage

Blending the recorded talk format used last year with the live events of past competitions, the graduate students participating in the 2022 Grad Slam at UC Santa Barbara will experience both this time around. Entrants will submit a 3-minute video presentation in the qualifying round for a chance to compete in the finals — in person.

Grad Slam, the award-winning annual competition for the best 3-minute talk by a graduate student, features students explaining the central points of their research in a clear, direct and interesting manner for a general audience.

“We had a virtual Grad Slam last year by necessity and found that our students rose to the challenge of making videos and, in the process, learned a lot,” said Interim Graduate Dean Leila J. Rupp. “But they missed interaction with other presenters, so this year the final round will be in person. In both modes, we have the chance to appreciate and celebrate the cutting-edge research our students do that makes a difference in the world.”

The deadline for students to submit their videos is Feb. 1; the final round is scheduled for March 11.

The Graduate Student Resource Center (GSRC) team will offer training workshops throughout January to help students craft the content of their talks and to plan the technical aspects of their video submissions. Videos will be judged by panels of faculty, staff and community members whose scores will determine the 10 students

who advance to the final round.

This year, qualifying round submissions will be made available to view via a public showcase hosted on The GradPost from Feb. 4–15. Additionally, students will have a chance to review feedback from the judges in peer groups during a Feb. 15 debrief session, where the finalists will be announced.

“Over the past two years, we have seen how the communication of science and research is absolutely critical to ensuring a safe and flourishing world,” said Shawn Warner, director of graduate student professional development. “Our hope is that this year’s Grad Slam competition not only prepares our students to communicate in a variety of media, but also that it helps broaden the impact of the amazing research being done by graduate students on our campus.”

The public is invited to attend the final round at 4:30 p.m. Friday, March 11, in Campbell Hall — and to vote for their favorite presenter in the People’s Choice category. The final round also will be livestreamed on the UC Santa Barbara Facebook page, and virtual viewers will be able to vote as well. The winner of the People’s Choice audience vote will receive $1,500. Organizers will award $5,000 for the grand prize, and $2,500 each to two runners-up.

UCSB’s Grad Slam champion will represent the campus at the UC-wide Grad Slam competition, tentatively scheduled for May 6.

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.