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With a suite of summer programs, Graduate Division prepares undergraduates to pursue advanced degrees

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It's not too early to start thinking about graduate school. In fact, this summer might be the perfect time.

Undergraduate students at UC Santa Barbara who have their eye on an advanced degree can apply now for research and mentorship summer programs — run by the Graduate Division — meant to help them prepare.

Applications are being accepted through February for the [UC Santa Barbara UC LEADS program](#), the [Academic Research Consortium \(ARC\)](#), and the [UCSB-California State University Channel Islands \(CSUCI\) Summer Research Experience](#).

Stewarded by Graduate Division's Admissions, Outreach, and Diversity team, these programs provide undergraduates and master's students throughout California with

research opportunities, academic support and career development to access and succeed in graduate school.

“By recruiting promising undergraduates and preparing them for graduate programs throughout the UC system, we are building cohorts of diverse scholars, teachers and mentors who will, we hope, elect to stay in California,” said Leila J. Rupp, Interim Dean for the Graduate Division.

A pipeline to the UC

Fresh from its inaugural summer last year, the [UCSB-CSUCI Summer Research Experience](#) provides mentored research experiences in all disciplines to CSU Channel Islands students in order to prepare them for master’s and doctoral programs at UC Santa Barbara and other UC campuses. Students can [apply online](#) by Feb. 25th.

Led by Carlos Nash, director of diversity initiatives in the Graduate Division, the program aims to recruit UC graduate students from UCs and CSUs. It also strengthens the relationship between the two systems, and supports the state’s effort to foster an inclusive and diverse workforce that is prepared to tackle future challenges. “The summer of 2023, we were able to pilot the program with three CSUCI students who had wonderful experiences and provided me with valuable feedback,” he said. “For summer 2024, I hope to bring 12 CSUCI students by working closely with CSUCI faculty and staff members.”

All program participants receive a \$5,000 stipend for 7 weeks of summer research, mentorship from a UCSB faculty member and graduate student, as well as academic enrichment and professional development. On-campus housing will be provided for students who need accommodations and those commuting to UCSB will receive a \$2,500 travel stipend.

Supporting leadership in STEM

Available to undergraduate students throughout the University of California system, the [UC Leadership Excellence through Advanced Degrees \(UC LEADS\) program](#) is designed to engage and educate California’s future leaders by preparing promising students for advanced education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). UCSB students can [apply](#) for placement in our newest campus cohort of UC LEADS scholars by the Feb. 20 deadline.

“UC LEADS is designed to identify UCSB undergraduate students who wish to attend doctoral programs and who have the potential to succeed in these disciplines, but who have also experienced situations or conditions that have adversely impacted their advancement in their field of study,” said Karen van Gool, assistant director of outreach in the Graduate Division and coordinator for UCSB UC LEADS. “UC LEADS helps provide exacting preparation for successful graduate admissions as well as foundational support for successful completion of advanced degrees.”

UC LEADS scholars receive \$5,000 for each of two summers, first to do summer research at UCSB, and then for summer research at another UC campus (with housing costs also covered), mentorship from UC faculty to design a research plan, and individualized academic and career enrichment activities. All UC LEADS scholars have the opportunity to present their research at the [annual systemwide UC LEADS Symposium](#) as well as to receive annual funding toward attending professional and scientific society events.

Empowering scholars from Hispanic-Serving Institutions

Among other Hispanic Serving Institutions, UCSB’s [Academic Research Consortium \(ARC\)](#) offers a summer mentorship and research program for undergraduates at the junior level and graduate students at the master’s level from any discipline. Students from across California [can apply](#) for the 2024 summer research program by the Feb. 29 deadline.

“The Academic Resource Consortium at UC Santa Barbara is dedicated to fostering the academic success and career development of talented and motivated students from Hispanic Serving Institutions,” said program lead Walter Boggan, Graduate Division’s director of admissions, outreach, and diversity. “Our commitment extends to supporting individuals pursuing a Ph.D., as we recognize the unique potential and aspirations of these students. ARC aims to provide essential academic support, empowering them to excel in their educational journey and beyond.”

ARC Scholars are funded for a 7-week summer program of research and graduate school preparation at UC Santa Barbara. With guidance from Graduate Division staff, the scholars are matched individually with UCSB faculty and graduate student mentors who provide training and support to explore their discipline, experience research and open up opportunities for future study.

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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.