UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

June 10, 2024

Sonia Fernandez

Creative Studies students mark major milestone in the first of UCSB's Commencement ceremonies

The students of UC Santa Barbara's College of Creative Studies (CCS) kicked off the campus's commencement season, with a ceremony at Campbell Hall Sunday, June 9. Seventy-three undergrads, the CCS Class of 2024, marched across the stage to mark this important milestone, cheered on by friends and family.

"During your time here, you have demonstrated to all of us how very special you are," UCSB Chancellor Henry T. Yang said in his opening remarks. "You have amazed us with your curiosity, your imagination and of course your accomplishments."

These accomplishments include 26 group art exhibitions, 10 individual exhibitions and six solo exhibitions, in addition to four computer applications. This, on top of authoring three peer-reviewed publications and contributing to 10 others. Members of this class also presented posters and gave talks spanning four international conferences.

"Moreover, you've participated in a diverse array of practical experiences," said CCS Interim Dean Tim Sherwood, "through 43 internships, securing 33 grants, embarking on 24 undergraduate research fellowships, all fueling innovation and creativity in the college, while contributing to your fields with passion."

Known as a “graduate school for undergrads,” CCS was established more than 50 years ago to serve and support self-motivated students who demonstrate talent for original work in art or science. CCS students are trained to follow their diverse curiosities, according to physician-author and alumni speaker Dr. Wes Fields ’76.

“The college and its culture unleashed my curiosity and encouraged me to learn how to learn,” said Dr. Fields, who leaned on the skills gleaned in his literature major to learn the languages of his medical training. He exhorted the students to stay open and curious.

“The problem — the human condition, if you will — is that we find ourselves increasingly trapped in the idioms we inhabit as artists and scientists,” he said. “The more narrow the niche we create, the more secure we feel. But the specificity of our so-called knowledge gets in the way of our ability to communicate with each other.”

Student speakers Julia Ong (chemistry & biochemistry) and Sasha Senel (writing & literature) were also present to congratulate and inspire the class, while composers Joseph Alvarez and Lucian Parisi presented their work. Guy Wilks (computing) and Ashley Yeh (biology) each received the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research. Meanwhile, Elaina Smolin (writing & literature) received the Sara Sterphone Student Service Award.

Media Contact

Sonia Fernandez

Senior Science Writer

(805) 893-4765

sonia.fernandez@ucsb.edu

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.