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Scholars in Department of Spanish and Portuguese awarded for lifetime achievements

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August 18, 2025

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A pair of longtime professors in UC Santa Barbara's Department of Spanish and Portuguese have been recognized for their ongoing scholarship.

This fall, Distinguished Professor Antonio Cortijo Ocaña — an expert in medieval, Mediterranean, Catalan and Iberian studies — will become an honorary faculty member of Spain's University of Alicante.

"We wish to recognize the work carried out during more than three decades by professor Cortijo Ocaña in the study of Mediterranean classics," the Alicante award committee said in a statement. "His studies of medieval authors Ramón Llull, Roís de Corella and Jordi de Sant Jordi, Renaissance writer Carlos Coloma de Saa and contemporary figures, such as Joan Fuster . . . are superb contributions to the knowledge of the Mediterranean projection of the Crown of Aragon. His works have analyzed the ideological, cultural and religious history of the Aragonese Crown through its inquisitorial history, the evolution of its guilds and confraternities and the

reception of late medieval humanism.”

Cortijo Ocaña was also praised for his recent translation into English of three books of poetry by Salvador Espriu.

“Professor Cortijo’s contribution to research in the areas of medieval, Iberian and translation studies goes far beyond UCSB,” said Élide Valarini Oliver, chair of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. “He is one of the foremost medievalists working in this challenging field. Recognized internationally, his extraordinary output is matched by a meticulous and broad scholarship. A cherished figure among colleagues and students alike, his classes are a rare and extraordinary opportunity for students who wish to experience the teachings of a great professor.”

Also in the department, professor of literature and Iberian studies Silvia Bermúdez, who started at UCSB in 1992, has received an academic recognition award from the Asociación de Estudios de Género y Sexualidades (Association for Gender and Sexuality Studies), founded in 1974 by Costa Rican writer and intellectual Victoria Urbano.

In particular, the association praised her as “a true pioneer of feminist studies and one of the most internationally recognized scholars of cultural studies, Galician studies and migrations in the Hispanic world. She is a dedicated educator, researcher and mentor, demonstrating exceptional commitment to expanding knowledge in her research fields, advancing gender equality and promoting feminism in academia and Hispanic society and culture.”

“Bermúdez’s range of topics and the nimble, clever ways she mingles experience with practice offer students a unique experience,” Oliver said. “A true pioneer of feminist studies, her informed perspective is broad enough to encompass a large number of topics, including literature, culture and history.”

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