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Spring 2023

## Graduate Studies Newsletter (Spring 2023)

CSUSB - Office of Graduate Studies

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# Graduate Studies Newsletter

Spring 2023

# Message from the Associate Dean

I hope the spring 2023 semester has been a productive one and that you all find some time to relax and enjoy the coming summer. As a graduate student, your studies are understandably at the forefront of your graduate education, but it is also important to take some time out for yourself, to enjoy loved ones, and to reflect on your many accomplishments this academic year.

With that in mind, I wanted to highlight our excellent Grad Slam: Three-Minute Thesis competition, which took place on April 10. All nine graduate students who competed were phenomenal, and we are so very proud of them. Please take the time to read more about these impressive students and the 2023 Grad Slam: Three-Minute Thesis competition in the newsletter.

To all of our graduating graduate students, we wish you all the best as you take your next steps. Please keep in touch with us. Even though you move on and up from CSUSB, you are always part of the Coyote family as an alum.

Speaking of moving on and moving up, Associate Provost for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies, Dr. Dorota Huizinga, is retiring in August 2023. Though we are happy for her and the wonderful plans that she has for retirement, we will miss her tremendously. A computer scientist, Dr. Huizinga has worked in the CSU system for more than 30 years as a faculty member at California State University, Fullerton, and more recently, as a visionary graduate education and research leader at both California State University, Fullerton and California State University, Dominguez Hills before coming to CSUSB.



*Dean Dorota Huizinga and Associate Dean Caroline Vickers*

Dr. Huizinga joined CSUSB over five years ago, and through this time, she has provided crucial guidance to enrich the graduate education experience, truly creating a graduate education culture at CSUSB. For example, Dean Huizinga's vision and support have been instrumental in the creation of CSUSB's Graduate Education Week and Research Week. Under her leadership, graduate education has grown and flourished at CSUSB through the implementation of new graduate program offerings, the Graduate Student Success Center, and increased graduate student enrollment.

We wish Dr. Huizinga a rewarding retirement. Fortunately for us, we do not have to say goodbye entirely just yet as Dr. Huizinga will lend her talents to the Information Systems and Technology Department through the Faculty Early Retirement Program next year. We will definitely be paying her many visits!

*Again, I wish you all an excellent summer!*  
Caroline Vickers

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# Grad Slam Competition

The Office of Graduate Studies was proud to host its second-annual Grad Slam: Three Minute Thesis competition, as the opening event of Research Week 2023!

This year, we had competing students across all five academic colleges, who came together to present their timely and engaging work, in just three minutes or less! The goal of the competition is to encourage students to be able to present their specialized work to lay audience, in a clear, concise, and accessible way, which will allow them to be better prepared when applying for jobs and higher education, apply for grant funding, pitch their ideas to business models and more!

This year we were happy to work with the following students as our 2023 competitors:

- Jocelin Monge-Communication Studies
- Sri Latha Pravallika Alapati-JHBC Business Administration-Cyber Security and Entrepreneurship and Innovation
- Ivannah George-JHBC Information Systems and Technology-Cyber Security
- Naja Faysal-JHBC Information Systems and Technology-Business Intelligence and Analytics
- Esther Cruz-Instructional Design & Technology
- Olivia Hart-Educational Leadership
- David Lopez Sanchez-Psychological Sciences

- Ashley Antonissen-Biology
- Yutong Liu-Computer Science

These nine students competing for a panel of esteemed campus and community partners including:

- Dr. Paz Olivérez, Vice President for Student Affairs at CSUSB
- Diana Z. Rodriguez, San Bernardino Community College District Chancellor
- Michelle Skiljan, Senior Director of Philanthropy, Foundation and Corporate Relations

We are so proud of all of our competing students, and we would like to give additional recognition to our competition winners!

1st Place: David Lopez Sanchez

2nd Place: Olivia Hart

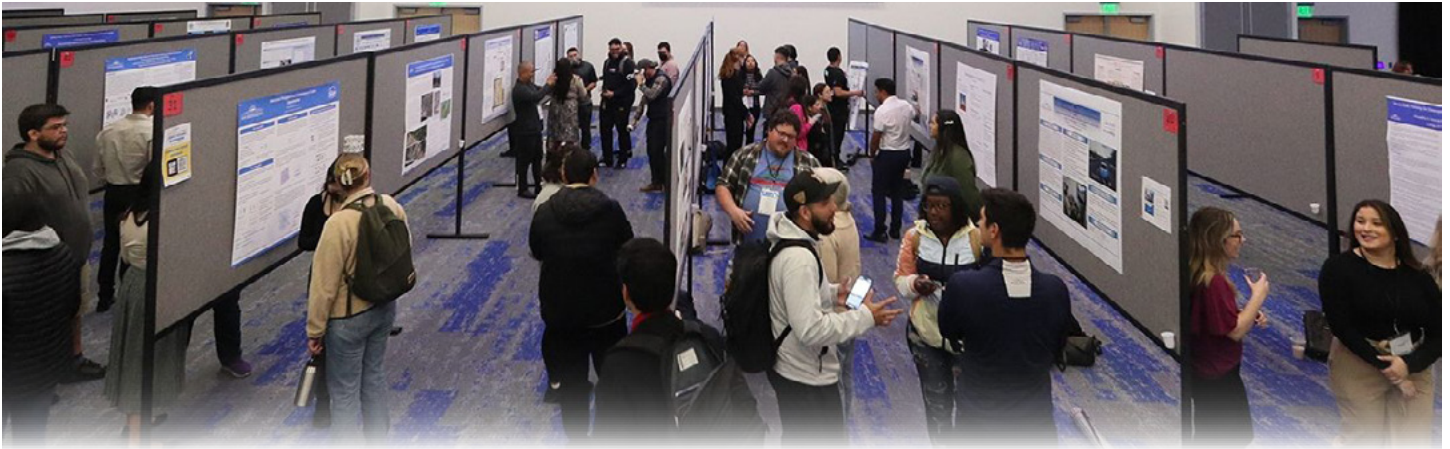
3rd Place: Naja Faysal

People's Choice Awardee: Jocelin Monge

As our first and second place winners, David Lopez Sanchez and Olivia Hart will have gone on to compete in the system-wide CSU Grad Slam, as the representatives for CSUSB! We wish them the very best of luck and will be cheering them on at San Diego State University!

If you are interested in joining us for the Grad Slam 2024, please contact us at [gradstud@csusb.edu](mailto:gradstud@csusb.edu)





# Congrats to the 12th Annual Meeting of the Minds Student Research Symposium Awardees

Each year, the Office of Student Research hosts the Meeting of the Minds Student Research Symposium – a full day of oral and poster presentations and art exhibits presented by CSUSB graduate and undergraduate students. Held this year on April 13th in the new Santos Manuel Student Union North, the event is fantastic opportunity for students to share their research and creative activities with the university and surrounding community.

## Congratulations to our Graduate Student Winners:

### Oral Presentations

Alondra Aleman, Information Systems and Technology  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Sepideh Alavi  
Title: The Impact of COVID-19 on Fan Attendance to Sports Events: The Case of Major League Baseball

Emely Lugo, Child Development  
Faculty Mentor, Dr. Eugene Wong  
Title: Implementing Cognitive Training in Two School Settings: Evidence for the Efficacy of a Working Memory Intervention

Emily Connard, Psychology  
Faculty Mentor, Dr. Kelly Campbell  
Title: Why We Leave: The Role of Approach and Avoidance Goals in Romantic Dissolution

Alejandro Garcia and Nicole Kaleinani, Psychology  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Brittany Bloodhart  
Title: Sexual Harassment in Science: Increased Experiences Predict Negative Professional Outcomes for Women but not Men

David Lopez Sanchez and Jordan Taylor: Psychology  
Faculty Mentor: Dr. Cynthia Crawford  
Title: Single-Trial Fentanyl Sensitization and Conditioned Activity in Juvenile Rats

### Poster Presentations

Arts & Letters: Jocelin Monge

Natural Sciences: Breanna Alexis Ramirez

Education: Alexandria Schmidt and Barbara Alegria

Business & Public Administration: Cristina Ruiz

Social and Behavioral Sciences: Jordan Taylor and David Lopez-Sanchez

# Rangel Velez Zarate Named Outstanding Doctoral Student

**R**angel Velez Zarate, Doctorate in Educational Leadership, was honored as the College of Education's outstanding doctoral graduate for 2023. His work focuses on developing equitable teaching strategies by recognizing and amplifying the voices of ethnically marginalized groups.

Zarate is a multiple recipient of the Educational Doctoral Grant at CSUSB and was selected for the inaugural year of the university's Holmes Scholar Program. As a graduate research assistant for Dr. Karen Escalante, he focused on advocating for antiracist and equitable teaching strategies for pre-service teacher education.

Much of Zarate's work is informed by his identification as a biracial Filipino and Mexican student in the Inland Empire and his experiences of identity formation as part of an ethnically marginalized group. His dissertation, *From the Lens of (In)visibility: A Photovoice Inquiry into how Community Colleges can Advance Filipino/A/X American Student Resilience*, studies the academic experiences of nine Filipino American students who attended community college.

The students participated in an online photovoice project which visualized their personal reflections and specific academic needs through photos and written narratives. Rangel's committee was comprised of: Dr. Karen Escalante, Chair; Dr. Edwin Hernandez; and Dr. Jason Magabo Perez.

As an educational leader, Zarate is advancing AAPI advocacy for college students and building on his transformational work that validates these students' experiences and amplifies their voices in higher education. We look forward to his continuing contributions in the field of education.



## Interested in Earning a Doctorate in Education?

The Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership is a program framed around questions of equity, ethics, and social justice to bring about solutions to complex problems of practice. The program is designed to prepare educational leaders with the knowledge base and skills to lead reform efforts that result in improved student outcomes and educational transformation, particularly for our Inland Empire region.

For more information, contact Graduate Studies at [gradrecruitment@csusb.edu](mailto:gradrecruitment@csusb.edu) or visit [csusb.edu/doctorate-educational-leadership](https://csusb.edu/doctorate-educational-leadership)

# The Wellness Connection

## A Brief Overview of Resources for Graduate Students

I hope the spring 2023 semester is going well for you. As a graduate student, finding a realistic balance between work, life and school can be challenging, but finding that balance can be beneficial to your personal, professional, and academic growth and well-being. In past editions I've written about several aspects of wellness including Financial, Socials, and Physical wellness, and these are all important, but what about wellness within your graduate program? Well, keep reading to find out more!

The **Coyote Graduate Student Guidebook**: This handbook is chock-full of helpful information. Including resources and university policies, requirements, and procedures. It is updated each academic year so be sure to download a copy from our [website](#) or find it in the Graduate Studies Weekly Roundup newsletter.

The Graduate Studies Weekly Roundup: is a weekly newsletter emailed to all enrolled graduate students every Tuesday morning. Check your campus email and take a few minutes to scroll through the newsletter for important events, dates and deadlines, events, and resources relevant to graduate students.

The **Graduate Studies Forms page**: Here you will find a list of our most commonly requested forms. Most are available to complete through Adobe Sign or fillable pdf form formats. To expedite the processing of forms please read instructions carefully.

A few examples are below:

- Continuous Enrollment for Graduate Candidacy Standing: While this form is not processed by the Office of Graduate Studies, the link will direct you to the College of Extended and Global Education page where you can learn about this budget-friendly opportunity to complete your culminating

experience (thesis, project, dissertation, or Comprehensive Exam) and have access to university resources.

- Discount of Previous Grade: Graduate Students who retake a course are able to replace the previous grade with the new grade one time during their program. Work with your program coordinator to determine how best to utilize this option, if needed.
- Leave of Absence: To be absent from the university for one or more semesters, postbaccalaureate students must file a leave of absence request to preserve their current catalog right. Complete this request if you will not enroll for one, or more, terms (fall/spring).
- Request for a Retroactive Withdrawal: Complete this request to withdraw from a previous term. If approved the grade(s) for that term will be replaced with a W (Official drop from the course) which is not calculated in the GPA.

This is in no way an exhaustive list of resources available to our postbaccalaureate students, so feel free to reach out with any questions you may have. You can find my contact information, and additional resources, on the **Graduate Student Resource Specialist page**.

Wishing you all a restful and enjoyable summer!



By April Lane,  
MPH, CHES

# New Physician Assistant Program Secures Additional Funding

With the recent appropriation of 2 million in federal funding, the new Master of Science in Physician Assistant (MSPA) program is well on its way to welcoming its first cohort in Fall 2025. The funding is part of the federal fiscal year 2023 appropriations package and will be designated to purchase teaching and lab equipment. Pending a successful accreditation review, the program plans to enroll its first class of 40 students in August 2025.

The funding was secured through the support of U.S. Senator Alex Padilla, D-California, and Congressman Pete Aguilar, D-San Bernardino.

"This is great news that will not only help fund our MSPA program, but also shows the strong support of the federal government," said CSUSB President Tomás D. Morales. "I'd like to offer my thanks to Senator Padilla and Congressman Aguilar for their ongoing help as they recognize

and understand the importance of the program to help the people of the inland region."

The MSPA program is under development and is currently under the guidance of founding director Sonia Otte. The program is expected to help address the shortage of health care professionals in the Inland Empire while offering CSUSB students the opportunity to enter the growing field of physician assistants.

Read more about the MSPA program in the January 3rd edition of [Inside CSUSB](#). To learn more about the program, including admission requirements, program outcomes and goals, visit the CSUSB Master of Science in Physician Assistant website at [csusb.edu/mspa](https://csusb.edu/mspa)

# New Graduate Programs Opening in Fall 2023

CSUSB's renowned MBA program has expanded its offerings to include two new concentrations: Human Resources Management and Hospitality Management. The MBA program is accepting applications to these new focus areas beginning fall 2023. To learn more, contact the MBA office at (909) 537-5703 or visit [csusb.edu/mba](https://csusb.edu/mba).

The Master of Arts in Educational Administration has added a new concentration: Community College/Higher Education. The program continues to offer its TK – 12 concentration as well. The M.A. in Educational Administration prepares students for leadership roles

in education. Both concentrations are available in fall 2023. Contact the College of Education Master's and Advanced Credentials Office at (909) 537-5293 for more information or visit the [program website](#).

The new Master of Arts in Business and Data Analytics takes off in fall 2023. Offered through the College of Global and Extended Education, the online program teaches students to analyze data and incorporate it into successful business strategies. Email [pace@csusb.edu](mailto:pace@csusb.edu) for more information or visit the [Business and Data Analytics](#) web page.



# Alejandro Garcia Gandara Leaves an Important Pawprint at CSUSB

I was very pleased to have the opportunity recently to speak with Alejandro Garcia Gandara, MA candidate in Psychological Science and the recipient of the 2023 CSUSB Outstanding Graduate Student Research and Creative Activities Award.

In our conversation, Alejandro let me know that he has accepted an offer to study in the Ph.D. Program in Experimental Psychology with a minor in Statistics at the University of Mississippi starting in fall 2023 under the mentorship of Dr. Grace Rivera. Alejandro's long-term goal is to pursue a career in academia, an interest that he has developed as a master's student teaching research methods labs here at CSUSB. In this experience he has taught about 100 undergraduate students. As their instructor, he has taken great pleasure in mentoring these students as they pursue graduate school and receive admission offers to their programs of choice.

Alejandro's research has focused on social issues, and though his research has changed somewhat since he started his master's program, his passion has always been, as he stated,

“Creating research in a way that I could essentially position what I was doing to cultivate some sort of positive changes.” Alejandro asserted that the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the protests around police brutality, particularly the cases of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, resulted in a situation in which “the whole world just kind of erupted.”

He became focused on the protests happening around the world as well as in his own community and how these issues affected members of his community. He began to ask, “how do I position the knowledge that I have to be able to bring some understanding to what's going on and

then hopefully make some sort of changes?” Growing out of his experience witnessing these events, his thesis project examines group membership in relationship to participation in protests. His original interest in protests around Black Lives Matter has expanded to include the LGBTQ+ movement as well as abortion rights. Alejandro has developed his own measures to assess the risks and benefits of participation in these movements.

As a master's student, Alejandro has also worked on other research projects, including one on the COVID-19 pandemic, which he is excited to present at the upcoming Western Psychological Association conference. He found that group membership was associated with feelings of deprivation with regard to prioritization of access to the vaccine. Additional research projects he has worked on include sexual harassment in STEM field research, which he presented at Meeting of the Minds, receiving the award for best oral presentation.

Alejandro has always had a drive to contribute to his community. Growing up in south Los Angeles, he was involved in helping his community, such as activities around homeless services and food insecurities as well as working to build networks among community members to address the issues facing their communities. At CSUSB, he has been involved in Leave your Pawprint and has received the Do Good Award from them every semester since he has been at San Bernardino. As he said, “they do such great work, and I love the slogan of leave your pawprint. Wherever you're at, make sure that you leave a part of you. Now that I'm soon going to be leaving Cal State, San Bernardino, I feel like I'm doing just that.”

He is grateful for the supportive mentors he has worked with at CSUSB. He mentioned Dr. Jody Ullman, who taught him Statistics, which he struggled in at first.



*Associate Dean Caroline Vickers and Alejandro Garcia Gandara*

He said that he went to Dr. Ullman's office hours and talked to her about imposter syndrome and his feelings of inferiority. As he said, "I just felt so small, and I remember just telling her all these things, and then she asked me what are you doing to improve these skills? What are you doing outside the classroom? What are you doing outside of the lab? Are you going to the Tutoring Center? I didn't even know about these things." According to Alejandro, this push from Dr. Ullman and her continued support and mentorship as he progressed through the master's program and prepared his Ph.D. applications was instrumental to his success. He also expressed gratitude for the valuable mentorship he has received from Psychology faculty, Dr. Miranda McIntyre, Jacob Jones, and his thesis advisor, Dr. Brittany Bloodhart.

In reflecting on his CSUSB experience, Alejandro mentioned competing in the Grad Slam: Three-Minute Thesis Competition in spring 2022. Though he confessed that he initially participated in the competition as a way to build his credentials, at the end of the day, his preparation for the competition was incredibly helpful in homing in the most important aspects of his work. In fact, his ability to speak concisely and clearly about his research, a skill he

gained as a Grad Slam: Three-Minute Thesis competitor, was instrumental in his ability to be successful in Ph.D. interviews.

I asked Alejandro if he could make one major change in the world, what would it be? He said that he gives a talk to his students every semester and tells them those pointers that he wishes people had told him when he was an undergraduate. He mentioned that there is not always a manual or supportive community helping people to take the next step in life. As Alejandro asserted, "If you cannot find that supportive community, you become that supportive community." So the change he would make in the world is to create an environment of unselfish sharing of information and removing of barriers to accessing resources.

The Office of Graduate Studies is incredibly proud of Alejandro and thrilled about his many accomplishments. We know that he will continue to thrive in his Ph.D. program at the University of Mississippi and are so glad that he has left his pawprint here at CSUSB.

# Coyotes Shine at Campus and State-wide Student Research Competitions

Student research is a big part of academic life at CSUSB, as demonstrated by the popularity of this year's research competitions.

The CSUSB Student Research Competition, held February 10th, attracted 33 participants and spanned all five colleges. Both graduate and undergraduate students presented their research and creative works before a panel of judges; 12 were selected to represent CSUSB at the CSU statewide Student Research Competition on April 28-29 at San Diego State University.

The highly competitive statewide competition showcases some of the best student research at each CSU campus. The top presenter in each category is awarded \$500; second place receives \$250. Student presenters from all disciplines are judged by experts in their fields for their oral presentations and written abstracts. It is an honor to be chosen to compete in the state-wide competition and

our Coyotes were up to the task. Two CSUSB students earned first and second place for their outstanding work.

Undergraduate Geography Major and Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow Johnathan Solomon took home First Place in the Undergraduate Behavioral, Social Sciences and Public Administration category for his presentation "The River's Retribution: Policy Impact Analysis of the QSA on a Dying Sea."

Doctoral Student Rangel Zarate was awarded Second Place for his presentation "From the Lens of (In)Visibility: A Photovoice Inquiry Into How Community Colleges Can Advance Filipino/a/x American Student Resilience" in the Graduate Education category.



# Congratulations to all who Competed in the CSUSB and CSU Student Research Competitions!

The 12 winners of the 37th annual CSUSB Student Research Competition are:

## College of Arts & Letters

**Serenity Chavez, Philosophy**

Faculty Mentor: Kaitlyn Creasy

*That Which Calls Out to You*

**Dia Poole, Communication Studies**

Faculty Mentor: Thomas Corrigan

*Connecting Students with Community-Based Organizations for Informal, Short-Term Experiential Learning Opportunities: A Portal Proposal For CSUSB*

**James R. Watson & Judy Rodriguez**

**Watson College of Education**

**Rangel Zarate, Educational Leadership**

Faculty Mentor: Karen Escalante

*From the Lens of (In)visibility: A Photovoice Inquiry into How Community Colleges can Advance Filipino/a/x American Student Resilience*

## College of Natural Sciences

**Delilah Gbur, Biology**

Faculty Mentor: Nicole Bournias-Vardiabasis

*Effect of Heat Shock Treatment on the Lifespan and Healthspan of Transgenic A $\beta$ 42 *Drosophila melanogaster**

**Auguste Torres, Kinesiology**

Faculty mentor: Zhaojing Chen

*Bone Turnover Markers Responses to Acute Resistance Exercise in Postmenopausal Women*

## College of Social & Behavioral Sciences

**Viviana Alvarez Rodriguez, History**

Faculty Mentor: Pedro Santoni

*Back to Photo Albums: Afro-descendant Student Activist's Employment of Local and Familial Histories as Alternate Afro-descendant Historical Narration*

**David Lopez-Sanchez and Jordan Taylor, Psychology**

Faculty Mentor: Cynthia Crawford

*Single-trial fentanyl sensitization and conditioned activity in juvenile rats*

**Angelique Melendrez, Psychology**

Faculty Mentor: Donna Garcia

*Virtue Signaling: Do You Really Care?*

**Joshua Mondragon and Ana Bautista, Anthropology**

Faculty Mentor: Arianna Huhn

*Afrolatine California*

**Jonathan Solomon, Global Studies and Environmental Sciences**

Faculty Mentor: Michael Karp

*Policy Impact Analysis of Water Legislation in the Salton Sea*

# Career Readiness Series Prepares Students for Life after College

The Office of Graduate Studies was happy to host our annual Career Readiness Series! Held the week of March 20th, the Career Readiness Series offered students a week of workshops and panels specifically designed to provide professional development opportunities for graduate students.

These events included:

- Utilizing LinkedIn for marketing and job opportunities
- Building resumes for best practices and industry standards
- Sharing the origin stories of university alumni and campus partners through a thought-provoking panel.

We also offered our annual Spring Graduate Program Information Session, giving undergraduate students the opportunity to explore graduate education and connect with our graduate program coordinators.

The Career Readiness Series was a hit among both graduate and undergraduate students; 70 graduate students participated in at least one of our sessions throughout the week, and 75 undergraduate students took part in the program information session. Post-workshop surveys showed that 83% of those who responded felt that the sessions were helpful for their educational and professional development.

We look forward to continuing curating timely and effective programming for our graduate students, and hope to see you join us next year!

## Awards and Accolades – Spring 2023

### History Journal Wins Second Place in Graduate Print Division

Congratulations are in order yet again to the staff of the student-run journal, History in the Making. The 15th edition of the journal was awarded second prize in the 2022 Gerald D. Nash History Journal Competition – Graduate Print Division. The latest honor marks the fifth consecutive year that the journal was recognized by Phi Alpha Theta National History Honor Society.

### CSUSB Awarded \$2.25 Million for Social Work Programs

The social work program will be expanding, thanks to a generous grant from the state of California's Department of Health Care Access and Information. The funds will be used to expand the current social

work programs at the San Bernardino campus and create a master's in social work (MSW) program at the Palm Desert Campus, which will start in fall 2024. Congratulations to our Social Work programs!

### CSUSB Ranked Among Best Graduate Schools

In its 2023-24 graduate school rankings, U.S. News & World Report has listed Cal State San Bernardino programs among the best universities in the nation. The top-ranked programs include: Rehabilitation Counseling, Social Work, Public Health, and MBA.

CSUSB was also listed in the unranked categories of Best Business Schools, Best Education Schools and Best Nursing Schools: Master's. The university is proud to offer high-quality programs to our community.

# Calendar

## June

**19 Juneteenth Holiday – Campus Closed**

## July

**4 Independence Day – Campus Closed**

**13 Thesis Consultation Deadline**

**17 Thesis Submission Deadline**

## August

**11 Thesis Publication Deadline**

**12 Graduate Student Orientation**

**24 Fall Semester Begins**

## Graduate Studies Summer Office Hours

**7:00 am – 5:30 pm,  
Monday – Thursday  
(Closed Fridays during summer)**

## Interested in attending graduate school?

Attend one of our Taco Tuesday or Teatime Thursday Q&A sessions and learn about CSUSB graduate programs. CSU Apply application workshops are also available to help you navigate the online application. See the Graduate Studies website at [www.csusb.edu/graduate-studies](http://www.csusb.edu/graduate-studies) for more dates and times.

Visit our website for workshop registration and Zoom Links: [csusb.edu/graduate-studies](http://csusb.edu/graduate-studies)

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