



*Research is formalized
curiosity. It is poking and
prying with a purpose.
-Zora Neale Hurston*



Editorial Staff

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University of California, Merced



Brianna Barajas – Tabling Manager



My name is Brianna Barajas and I grew up in South Sacramento. I am currently a second year undergraduate at UC Merced. I'm an English major working on improving my skills as a writer and elevating my thoughts as a critical thinker. I dream of publishing one day but my ideal career goal is to practice law as an immigration lawyer. Would you call me crazy if I told you I feel like I've tasted my life purpose at nineteen? This semester I'll be working with the Undergraduate Research Journal as the Tabling Director meaning I'll be working with many people. People with some dreams as big as mine. To me, my place in society feels like splashes of positive, moving energy serving as influence for the general human race. These splashes encouraging us to be our best version of ourselves. With that being said, I'm excited to meet new people and do great things.



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Cydney Caradonna – Class Presentation Manager



My name is Cydney Caradonna, and I am serving the Undergraduate Research Journal as manager of class presentations. I am a third year in pursuit of my bachelor's degree in Spanish, with a minor in both writing and philosophy. My career goals include teaching, becoming a professor, an author, and using all of that as experience in the world of academia.

Aside from facilitating the undergraduate research journal, I am a member of the UC Merced Women's basketball team, as well as a DARTS fellow where I am a peer mentor and advocate for the transfer population on campus. Through DARTS I am also a peer instructor for the undergraduate studies course offered here on campus. I have also served on the UC Merced Leadership Conference board, in charge of speaker hospitality and helping with all efforts that go into making the conference happen.

My research interests include Latinx Studies, Golden Age Spanish Literature, and Spanish Linguistics. I hope to bring the experience I have acquired as a means of helping the outreach efforts of the Undergraduate Research Journal. Furthermore, I look forward to being a well heard voice of the Undergraduate Research Journal board.



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Vivian Chu – Senior Editor



My name is Vivian Chu, and I am a fourth-year undergraduate with a major in Psychology and a minor in Cognitive Sciences. I am graduating with my Bachelor's of Arts degree in May 2018, and intend on pursuing a doctoral degree in Clinical Neuropsychology, and ultimately becoming a clinical neuropsychologist. My primary research interests include understanding the neural networks of psychopathology and clinically-oriented neuroimaging research.

Since Spring 2015, I have been a Writing and Psychology tutor at Peer Assisted Learning Support where I host review sessions for Psychology courses and assist with papers across all genres. In addition, I have been a research assistant at the Psychoneuroendocrinology laboratory under Dr. Jitske Tiemensma and Holly Rus to help investigate the physiological effects of Facebook on responding to and recovering from stress. I have also been a research assistant for the Etkin laboratory under post-doctorate Christina Chick to examine functional neural networks of emotion perception.

My experiences thus far have nurtured my time management, interpersonal, and communicative skills, all of which I hope to contribute to the UCMURJ. I am currently serving as the co-senior editor for the UCMURJ, and I look forward to being a part of this semester's editorial board!



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William S. George – Assistant Editor



My name is William Serg George and I am a senior and history major at UC Merced. When people think of History they think it is just numbers and dates, but it involves applying critical thinking to answer questions that may not have been considered. My intended career path is to go into teaching. Some of my extracurricular involvements have included serving as the President of the Geology and Natural Science Club at Merced College and as President of the Merced College History Club. All of these experiences have taught me the importance of group collaborative work, maintaining effective communication, and the need to maintain organization to achieve set goals.

My experience with evaluating academic works includes serving two semesters on the UC Merced Undergraduate Research Journal. I currently serve as assistant editor, while past duties have included web publicity. What this means is that I have filled in when it came to content development on Twitter and Facebook, handling procurement and purchase orders, communications with authors and professional staff, managerial decisions with senior editors, and both content and layout editing. I have also served as an editor in the Undergraduate Historical Journal at UC Merced. What I valued the most out of the experiences on these two journals is how I was able to help my fellow students become better writers and to have published works that they would be proud of.



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Jorge Luna – Senior Editor



I am presently in the last semester of the Economics program at the University of California, Merced (UCM). Through the Economics program at UCM, I have developed strong theoretical and statistical practices, primarily focusing my studies on empirical research methods in economics. I am currently the Senior Editor for the Undergraduate Research Journal. My professional experience so far has consisted of working for Engineering Service Learning (ESL) where I held the positions of Procurement and Finance Officer, Assistant Project Manager, and Project Manager. The Engineering Service Learning program works with disciplinary teams to solve design challenges faced by local non-profit organizations.

In the Fall of 2014, I was awarded the *Paramount Farms* scholarship. Recently, I was accepted to the *Omicron Delta Epsilon* International Honor Society. Post-graduation, I hope to attend graduate school and work toward a degree in Business Analytics.



Jemena Nesbitt – Social Media Director



My name is Jemena Nesbitt and I am serving the Undergraduate Research Journal as social media director. I grew up in a small town called Menifee, which is a developing city that lies in between San Diego and Los Angeles. I love cooking, traveling, taking pictures, and learning new things.

I am currently a second year undergraduate student at UC Merced with a Political Science major and Spanish minor. Along with being a student at UC Merced, I am involved in a few organizations on campus. I am involved in the Charles Ogletree Pre-Law Society, Retention Director of Black Student Union, and Chief of Staff of Associated Students of UC Merced External Office. My duties consist of holding study sessions, coordinating workshops, giving presentations, creating applications, and much more.

I am currently working towards becoming an attorney at law. My main focus is criminal and family law. After a few years of being an attorney, I would like to gradually become a judge. I would like to use my spanish language to communicate with others in my career field as well as travels. Even though law is my main focus, I have always had an interest in journalism. I am excited to use my communication skills to execute information to the public.



Eva Fernanda Ordonez – Event Coordinator



My name is Eva Fernanda Ordonez. I am from the Downtown area in the city of Los Angeles. I am a political science major with an emphasis on Pre-Law and American politics. I also have a minor in writing with an emphasis in professional writing. I like running and going to gym in my free time. I wanted to be a UCMURJ editor because I wanted to strengthen my writing skills and I wanted to learn about the components that make up a good research journal. In the future I want to either be an immigration and human rights lawyer, or work for the government.



Selena Valencia – Treasurer and Social Media Director



My name is Selena Valencia and I am a senior graduating in Business Management/Economics with a minor in Writing. I have a passion for helping animals, so in my free time, I volunteer at local shelters here in Merced County learning the basics of caring for animals such as flea treatments, aggression testing, and selections.

My professional experience so far has consisted of interning at a music television network, REVOLT TV, for the past four summers where I have gained great amounts of experience in digital marketing, integrated marketing, programming, production, ad sales, and human resources. My positions in the Undergraduate Research Journal play hand in hand with the experience and knowledge I have absorbed from my work experience - treasurer and social media director. I am excited to be a contributing factor to UC Merced's Undergraduate Research Journal this semester!

Post-graduation, I plan to continue working in the entertainment industry to gain more experience within a startup business and continue to meet new people to network with however, I do not plan on staying in the entertainment industry. My career goal is starting my own rehabilitation center for homeless animals as well as opening a few of my own shelters.



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Dr. Iris Ruiz – Faculty Advisor



Dr. Iris Ruiz is a Continuing Lecturer with the Merritt Writing Program at UC Merced, California. She has been actively involved as a scholar and editor in the following memberships, committees, and journals: CCCC Co-Chair, Latinx Caucus, CCCC Resolutions committee, CCCC Task Force on Standing Group Guidelines, CCCC Advancement of Knowledge Book Award Committee, NCTE Committee Against Racism and Bias, Lead Author NCTE Position Statement on Ethnic Studies, Peer Editor *Rhetoric Review*, *WPA Journal*, *Constellations*, and, *Best of CCCC Independent Journals*, Member of Latinx Caucus (2000-current). Publications: Palgrave MacMillan, titled, *Reclaiming Composition for Chicano/as and other Ethnic Minorities: A Critical History and Pedagogy* and *Decolonizing Rhetoric and Composition Studies: New Latinx Keywords for Theory and Pedagogy* and a forthcoming article in *WPA Journal* on race and WPA.