

**2017-2018 Mentoring at Critical Transitions
Wakeham Fellowship Award Recipient Proposal Abstracts**

Gail Bornhorst

Assistant Professor, Biological and Agricultural Engineering

Students: Yamile Mennah-Govela ([Biological Systems Engineering](#)), Clay Swackhamer ([Biological Systems Engineering](#)) and Alex Olenskyj ([Food Science and Technology](#))

Active mentorship has been shown to positively impact the performance and overall success of mentees. However, a significant challenge facing graduate students is how to effectively navigate mentor-mentee relationships, because they are required to accept mentoring as well as become mentors to others.

Obtaining skills to effectively receive and provide mentoring is of crucial importance for graduate students, as they are in the critical transition from mentee to mentor. Through utilization of established tools in mentor training, graduate students will learn key aspects of mentoring, including setting expectations, communication, and assessing understanding in diverse environments. These skills will be applied to enhance their relationship with their faculty mentor. Subsequently, under guidance from their faculty mentor, graduate students will become mentors of undergraduate research interns. Based on their experiences as both mentee and mentor, graduate students will develop a mentoring toolbox and conduct a workshop to share their findings with fellow graduate students. Participation will allow graduate students to learn the fundamentals of mentorship, practice them in a supportive environment, and contextualize their role as both mentors and mentees in the workplace.

Sheila David

Professor, Chemistry

Students: Elizabeth Lotsof ([Chemistry](#)), Chandrima Majumdar ([Chemistry](#)) and Kori Lay ([Chemistry](#))

This MCT fellowship proposal will focus on mentoring three graduate students to effectively communicate their research and its impact, and also promote themselves to advance their careers. The premise of this proposal is that as scientists we are extremely good at doing research but not as good at communicating and maximizing the impact of our hard work. Indeed, we do not invest effort in effectively communicating and promoting our research. In this project, three students will work on several different types of research communication. One aspect will involve enhancing the webpage of the laboratory and creating individual pages for each graduate student. The graduate students will also work developing practices to advertise research publications using social media, writing research summaries and reviews, and attending scientific conferences. We also plan to work to establish effective means to communicate our research to the general public. In the end, we hope the efforts of these graduate students will serve as a model for the research team as a whole to provide effective strategies for communicating of the impact of our research. This will have a positive impact not only on these three students but the entire "David" laboratory, past, present and future.

Ted Grosholz

Professor and Specialist in Cooperative Extension, Environmental Science and Policy

Students: Ben Rubinoff ([Ecology](#))

The focus of this proposal is to provide mentoring and professional experience to members of my lab and graduate group in the process of graduate student recruitment. Many of the students in my lab and graduate group will need to recruit their own graduate students once they become academics themselves. However, students receive little or no training to help them identify candidates likely to succeed in a doctoral program, and in particular, to identify successful candidates from non-traditional backgrounds. This project will focus on potential graduate student candidates from regional California State Universities that serve underrepresented populations, many of whom have backgrounds and experiences that may place them at a disadvantage as applicants. Students in my lab group will participate in several recruitment events with senior undergrads and master's degree students from these institutions to learn more about the process of recruiting graduate students and to recognize their own expectations and biases for graduate student candidates.

John Slater

Associate Professor, Spanish

Vice Chair of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese

Students: Evan Brown ([Spanish](#)), Génesis Bui ([Spanish](#)), Víctor Cervantes ([Spanish](#)), Alicia Gallego Zarzosa ([Spanish](#)) and Rebeca Rubio ([Spanish](#))

This mentoring/collaboration project will address an important issue facing graduate students who are preparing for careers in Spanish: demonstrating excellence in teaching through publication related to pedagogy. Increasingly, early and mid-career faculty in Spanish departments need to publish about their teaching, but no one is teaching graduate students how to do it. Even ten years ago, faculty going up for tenure at elite institutions could present student and peer evaluations along with a teaching portfolio and have a chance at being judged "excellent" or "far exceeds expectations" in their teaching. That is often no longer the case. In order to demonstrate "multiple measures of teaching excellence" candidates for tenure in Spanish need to publish about their pedagogy. This mentoring/collaboration project will teach graduate mentees how to publish about their pedagogy in three stages:

1. Form a working group that meets weekly, composed of 5 graduate students in Early Modern Hispanic Studies and mentored by me, that will focus on developing research and publication projects related to pedagogy.
2. Invite to campus three scholars who have differentiated themselves by publishing pedagogical editions of seventeenth-century plays.
3. Prepare publication-ready pedagogical editions of seventeenth-century literary texts.

The goals of this project are increased collaboration among mentees and the strengthening of our unit's identity, as well as the development of new mentoring relationships based on genres of academic publication that we have not worked on together in the past.

Michael Ziser

Associate Professor, English

These funds would help systematically address new employment opportunities for UCD graduate students working at the intersection of traditional humanities disciplines and environmental studies. Taking advantage of the large number of core faculty and graduate students in the English department's internationally recognized subfield of ecocriticism, but also including faculty and students from other humanities disciplines, we will discuss and document the rise of the "environmental humanities" as a hiring category, brainstorm strategies for appealing to hiring committees in this interdisciplinary field, map out all of the relevant graduate and undergraduate institutions engaged in such hiring, and network with relevant faculty and administrators outside of UC Davis. The project will involve three stages: a reading group on the rise of environmental humanities (spring 2018), a faculty and graduate retreat (summer 2018), and a small set of invited speakers (fall 2018). Unlike most past MCT projects, this proposal will target a large number of current and future graduate students for expanded job market positioning. All materials created will be archived for the benefit of future UCD students and faculty.