2023 College of Liberal Arts Summer Undergraduate Research/Creative Activity Program (CLA-SURP) Projects

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| Art & Design1. LGBTQ+ augmented reality wayfinding and identity system for galleries and art museums Mentor: Prof. Linh Dao  Department: Art & Design  Email: [lidao@calpoly.edu](mailto:lidao@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  A queer augmented reality learning system to enrich visitor experiences in galleries and art museums. The experience consists of an identity and wayfinding system which consists of physical signage and a digital archive in the form of a mobile application or website. The experience blends seamlessly into the physical museum settings as part of the traditional project descriptions prints next to artworks on the gallery wall, suggesting related or similar works created by a queer artist and/or about the queer experience. A range of queer artist identities and queer artworks are available in the archive for wayfinding onsite and offsite exploration, reimagining the gallery and museum space which have remained relatively static and lacking especially for queer audiences or those interested in queer artwork.  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + Major in Graphic Design   + Proficiency in Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Experience Design)   + Proficiency in Google Workspace (Docs & Slides)   + Knowledge of HTML and CSS   + Completion of ART 288 & ART 388 * Preferred   + Strong portfolio work in the areas of branding, identity, and interaction design |
| Communication Studies2. Exploring Learning Quality and Challenges in Virtual vs. In-Person Classrooms Mentor: Prof. Anuraj Dhillon  Department: Communication Studies  Email: [adhill06@calpoly.edu](mailto:adhill06@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  Zoom and similar videoconferencing services have become a common addition to professional and educational processes since their rapid implementation over the first few months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although previous research has determined that students’ report greater satisfaction in virtual learning environments, the prevalence of “Zoom fatigue” and decreases in educational success among students engaging in online education offer a contradicting perspective on the effectiveness of virtual classrooms. Therefore, this project aims to examine the factors that contribute to learning satisfaction in virtual classes and how these compare with that in in-person classes, as well as discover potential factors that negatively impact student satisfaction from learning and academic success.  The SURP student will conduct a literature search and set up Qualtrics questionnaire by identifying relevant measures. Then, the student will create mock study sessions for two experimental conditions and recruit at least 50 participants per condition. Next, the student will help facilitate data collection and learn how to analyze experimental data.  Desired Student Qualifications:   * Required   + Background in mediated communication and interest in topics related to virtual instruction   + Experience conducting literature search and generating annotated bibliographies * Preferred   + Prior experience and coursework in empirical, social science, or similar research methods from a CLA department, preferably in Communication Studies.   + Willingness and interest in learning APA format |
| English3. Student Writers' Experiences of the Flow State in Academic Writing Mentor: Prof. Krista Sarraf  Department: English  Email: [ksarraf@calpoly.edu](mailto:ksarraf@calpoly.edu)  Project Description: Have you ever become deeply immersed in a project and lost track of time? That experience is called the “flow state” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). When people enter the flow state, they report generating more and better creative (new and unique) ideas. This research project explores if and how student writers engage in the flow state in the writing they compose for school. The student who joins this project will develop their research skills, especially in terms of developing a literature review (meaning gathering and writing about other people’s research studies), writing about research methods and findings, and crafting future research studies. Students will read and discuss with their mentor *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* by Michaly Csikzentmihalyi; read published research about the flow state, academic achievement, teaching, and written communication; and learn how to write a literature review and methods section to prepare an article for publication. I welcome students to share their interests so we can personalize the project.!  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + An interest in communication and/or creative thinking   + Completion of GE Areas A2 and A3 * Preferred   + Some experience with locating, reading, and annotating peer-reviewed research, especially in the social sciences and humanities (but students from all fields are encouraged to apply!)   + Some familiarity with the fields of writing and/or creativity may be helpful. One way to show this is through course work, such as through completion of one or more of these English courses: ENGL 220, ENGL 221, ENGL 311, ENGL 310, ENGL 317, ENGL 319, ENGL 321, and/or ENGL 368. Lots of courses outside of the English are also relevant. A few examples include COMS 301, COMS/BUS 458, ME 234, and STAT 365 |
| Ethnic Studies4. Counter-Mapping as Decolonization: Creating an Indigenous Walking Tour of the Cal Poly Campus Mentors: Profs. Lydia Heberling & Becca Lucas  Department: Ethnic Studies  Email: [lheberli@calpoly.edu](mailto:lheberli@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  The goal of this project is to produce an Indigenous Walking Tour of the Cal Poly campus that can be used by a diverse range of campus and community groups. Producing an Indigenous tour of the Cal Poly campus expands on the practice of the land acknowledgment by employing the tools of counter-mapping and Indigenous research methods to center Indigenous presence in our everyday lives. An Indigenous Walking Tour would map the Cal Poly campus by places, artworks, plants, names, and histories central to the yak titʸu titʸu yak tiłhini Northern Chumash Tribe. By creating this walking tour, we will make visible, amplify, and celebrate living Indigenous traditions and knowledges. Counter-mapping is a process of cartography that challenges the dominant views of the world. It can allow for marginalized voices to communicate their stories and reveal histories of their land. Counter-mapping creates multiple ways of knowing places and lands through diverse cartographic practices.  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + Interest in both research-based writing and narrative forms of writing (storytelling) for public-facing (popular) audiences. This project will require students to learn how to weave together archival information with oral histories to tell a story about several locations around the Cal Poly campus.   + A demonstrated understanding of or relationship with Indigenous communities. This can look like: having taken (or enrolled in) at least one course within American Indian and Indigenous studies, volunteer experience with tribal organizations, participation in a student club, being a tribal member, etc. * Preferred   + It would be ideal, but not required, if the students have taken or are currently enrolled in ES 253 (Intro to American Indian Studies), ES/NR 360, (Ethnicity and the Land), or both. Enrollment in a summer term of ES 253 would be acceptable.   + It is preferred that the students have an interest in decolonial geographies and spatial mapping and an understanding of California’s settler colonial history   + Students with some entry-level digital mapping experience (such as ArcGIS or other related programming) |
| Graphic Communication5. Promoting Inclusivity in User Experience: Updating Paso Robles Children’s Museum’s Photographic Contents with Ethnically Diverse Photographic Assets Mentor: Prof. Hocheol Yang  Department: Graphic Communication  Email: [hyang25@calpoly.edu](mailto:hyang25@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  The primary objective of this proposal is to undertake an empirical investigation into the psychological impact of incorporating ethnically diverse photographic assets to foster more inclusive and culturally diverse experiences for the local community. Specifically, this study endeavors to establish the effects of inclusive UX design practices on social presence and self-esteem. By conducting this research, it is anticipated that the findings will inform individuals designing interactive communication systems that cater to diverse cultural backgrounds, while also providing support for the Paso Robles, CA community.  The SURP student will be collaborating with Paso Robles Children's Museum to update its website with ethnically diverse photographic assets for UX design. Student researchers will develop two prototypes for a UX testing - one with an ethnically homogeneous condition and the other with an ethnically diverse condition. Student researcher will conduct a UX experiment recruiting 30 volunteers. During each session, eye trackers will record participants' fixation and gaze data to analyze their responses to the two prototypes.  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + Completion of any photography course offered at Cal Poly or equivalent experiences   + Experience with UX design and testing for online services   + Self-directed learning style with good practices of communication * Preferred   + Fluency in photographic content management   + Fluency in website builder, especially for Square Space   + Fluency in academic writing in APA style   + Experience with Qualtrics or survey design   + Experience with Eye-tracker |
| Philosophy6. Thought Experiments, Introspection, and Modal Intuitions Mentor: Prof. Eleanor Helms  Department: Philosophy  Email: [ehelmszo@calpoly.edu](mailto:ehelmszo@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  What is the ground or basis for taking something to be possible or necessary? We will review existing proposes in the philosophical literature on intuitions for how we gain “modal knowledge.” (Usually learning it is actual, the third kind of modality, is accomplished by observing it to be the case.) We will determine to what extent introspection (that is, knowledge of one’s own mental states) or some kind of first-personal placement within a situation matters for modal knowledge. To what extent does knowledge of modalities depend on experiences stored in memory? Can imagination provide knowledge beyond retrieving existing knowledge?  The project will involve reading and studying peer-reviewed philosophy articles and books, constructing and annotating a bibliography and shared research bank, sharing and discussing research findings in meetings, and writing an original research essay. Work will be submitted to an appropriate philosophy journal with potential to present it at a local conference if the student researcher chooses to participate.  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + Completion of an original philosophy paper in any PHIL course * Preferred   + Completion of PHIL 449 (Thought Experiments)   + Knowledge or interest in phenomenology or Kant’s philosophy   + Familiarity with logic and modal reasoning |
| Political Science7. Social Policy and Extreme Weather: How Tightly Woven is Our Safety Net? Mentor: Prof. Leanne Giordono  Department: Political Science  Email: [lgiordon@calpoly.edu](mailto:lgiordon@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  Extreme weather events are expected to increase the frequency and severity in the upcoming decade (Allen et al., 2018). Vulnerability to the impacts of climate change is expected to be higher among populations that experience high poverty and other barriers to inclusion and prosperity (Hallegatte et al., 2020). Evidence suggests that strong social safety nets increase resilience to climate change, especially when integrated with other efforts to build resilience and adapt to the growing risks of climate change (International Panel on Climate Change, 2022). The project will use a combination of survey and interviews with state-level policy agencies to fill gaps in our knowledge about efforts to anticipate and adapt to the climate change risks faced by populations served by the traditional safety net.  The SURP student(s) will primarily assist with data collection preparation tasks, including identification of relevant state-level stakeholders, development of a respondent contact information database, survey and interview guide development, and preparation of a related IRB package. These activities will build critical social science research skills and offer an opportunity for the student(s) to assess their own interest in continued research.  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + Ability to work independently   + Attention to detail   + Comfort with sleuthing publicly available info (via internet and telephone leads) * Preferred   + Familiarity with Excel (as a simple database tool, not as an analytic tool)   + Familiarity with survey design and/or Qualtrics   + Knowledge of social policy/safety net system and/or climate change literature   + Completion or current enrollment in POLS 351 |
| Psychology & Child Development8. Can daydreaming improve learning? Mentor: Prof. James Antony  Department: Psychology & Child Development  Email: [jwantony@calpoly.edu](mailto:jwantony@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  This project aims to understand the factors leading to long-term memory endurance. Everyday learning events contain various contextual factors, which contribute to memories for the who-what-when-where-why of specific events. Each factor can trigger recall of events when cued later; however, this cue-dependence also means memory accessibility (i.e., whether memories can be retrieved) may be limited to instances when those factors are present or can be mentally reinstated. For learning to be useful across the lifetime, memories must generalize beyond the learned context or become “decontextualized.” In this project, we will ask whether contextual variability in an individual’s mental context – as manipulated via daydreaming about vacations – improves memory. Ultimately, these findings could help educational policy, such that, rather than teachers recommending that students keep the context constant between learning and tests, they could instead suggest that students mentally mix it up.  The SURP student(s) will perform a variety of tasks, including reading papers and collecting, scoring, organizing, and analyzing data. Data collection will occur in-person, recruiting students from PSY/CD summer classes as participants. The SURP student(s) will also join joint lab meetings with Dr. Bennion’s SURP student(s) to discuss professional development topics and other memory-related research.  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + Basic computer skills (e.g., Microsoft Word, Excel, Zoom, Email)   + Strong attention to detail, organization, and time management   + Willingness to work both independently and as part of a team   + Residence in (or near) SLO and flexible schedule for data collection * Preferred   + Interest in continuing in research following this experience (particularly via PSY/CD 448/449 Research Internship if a PSY or CD major) |
| 9. Attitudes about teamwork across cultures Mentor: Prof. Lucy Bencharit  Department: Psychology & Child Development  Email: [ybenchar@calpoly.edu](mailto:ybenchar@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  Is there an "I" in team? This research study examines cultural group differences in how people work on teams. We use a mixed-methods approach to uncover the values (e.g., independence or interdependence) and social identities (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender) that impact teamwork behaviors and attitudes.  SURP students will be involved in all parts of the research process, including activities such as: held collect data by recruiting participants for the virtual study; analyze and clean data; code data and utilize qualitative methods; statistical analysis; and manuscript writing and preparation. SURP students will have the opportunity to participate in a deep and meaningful way in a research study around culture and diversity.  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Preferred   + Prior experience with research methods   + Prior experience with statistical analysis   + Students interested in graduate study or data science will especially benefit from this experience |
| 10. Memory strategies: Mixing the old with the new to prevent interference Mentor: Prof. Kelly Bennion  Department: Psychology & Child Development  Email: [kbennion@calpoly.edu](mailto:kbennion@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  Nearly a century of educational research has shown that one of the best ways to introduce new material is to first tap into the prior knowledge of the student. “Start with what they know” is a phrase used again and again in teaching certificate programs and educational theory. That memory is better for new material that is related versus unrelated to prior knowledge is a classic and robust finding in cognitive psychology and in artificial intelligence (AI) models of learning, which researchers often reciprocally use to make predictions about how humans learn. However, both in humans and AI, there can be unintended consequences of learning, whereby new learning causes one to instead forget prior knowledge. One solution to this problem from AI models is to weave in old information that is likely to otherwise be forgotten during new learning – and here we will test whether this solution also alleviates forgetting in humans.  The SURP student will perform a variety of tasks, including reading papers and collecting and analyzing data. Data collection will occur in-person, recruiting students from PSY/CD summer classes as participants. The SURP student(s) will also join joint lab meetings with Dr. Antony’s SURP student(s) to discuss professional development topics and other memory-related research.  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + Basic computer skills (e.g., Microsoft Word, Excel, Zoom, Email)   + Strong attention to detail, organization, and time management   + Willingness to work both independently and as part of a team   + Residence in (or near) SLO and flexible schedule for data collection * Preferred   + Interest in continuing in research following this experience (particularly via PSY/CD 448/449 Research Internship if a PSY or CD major) |
| Social Sciences11. Circulation of Climate Change Knowledge and Obstructions to Meaningful Adaptation in Bangladesh: An Examination of the Role of Prominent Media Houses Mentor: Prof. Nikhil Deb.  Department: Social Sciences  Email: [ndeb@calpoly.edu](mailto:ndeb@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  The southwestern coastal region of Bangladesh, known as ground zero for climate change, has become a testing ground for climate actions and strategies due to rising sea levels and extreme weather events. Dominant actors of prevailing institutional adaptation believe that a “traditional” agrarian livelihood, such as rice farming, is undesirable, yet they arrive at such a belief without properly consulting the local communities. Export-oriented shrimp aquaculture, promoted as a lucrative alternative for the country’s economic growth in the face of climate change, is responsible for diminishing local livelihoods and weakening homegrown strategies for navigating climatic shocks. Media houses are one of the significant influential actors in circulating the discourse regarding institutional adaptation practices. However, their role thus far has received little academic attention. Drawing on content analysis of major newspapers in Bangladesh, this study fills the gap by investigating how the media undermine local livelihoods and disregard the adverse consequences of shrimp aquaculture in the region. This inquiry holds crucial implications for coastal Bangladesh and the larger global South in addressing the discrepancies between the needs of localized adaptation and the pursuits of large-scale, institutionalized adaptation.  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + Strong reading and writing skills, as the student researcher(s) will be tasked with reading and reviewing relevant literature   + Interest in sociological research on climate change   + Interest in reading, collecting, organizing, and analyzing newspaper data * Preferred   + Basic skills for conducting content analysis, but the faculty mentor will provide training required for this |
| 12. Mapping Social Justice in Space and Time: Developing tools to green California schools for a warming climate Mentor: Prof. Andrew Fricker  Department: Social Sciences  Email: [africker@calpoly.edu](mailto:africker@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  As climate warms, children in paved urban school yards will be particularly vulnerable to heat. Trees provide shade and evaporative cooling, and California is prioritizing planting new trees in schools which are socially vulnerable and projected to warm most in the coming decades. Our project seeks undergraduate student researchers to help an interdisciplinary team, map social vulnerability, and use climate change models to determine which California public schools need to plant trees now to mitigate the worst effects of climate change. Additionally, we are performing experimental research to improve estimates of canopy cover across CA using aerial imagery and machine learning. SURP research scholars will be responsible for using Geographic Information Systems to help digitizing tree canopies in different climate zones, urban areas, and species to create an image ‘training library’ to help train an artificial intelligence powered classifier which a give better estimates of tree canopy cover across the state. SURP scholars will learn GIS techniques and will also be responsible for a literature review and investigations into the scholarly work on these topics.  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + Basic data literacy and ability to use Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Power Point). No special skills required; all training will be provided as part of the SURP program. * Preferred   + Basic competence in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and knowledge of remote sensing, forestry, botany, computer science, python programming, and/or public policy are a plus! |
| Theatre & Dance13. Costume Design, Construction, and Implementation for Festival Mozaic productions: *Appalachian Spring* and *The Soldier’s Tale* Mentors: Prof. Brian Healy and Laina Annette Babb  Department: Theatre & Dance  Email: [bphealy@calpoly.edu](mailto:bphealy@calpoly.edu) & [babb@calpoly.edu](mailto:babb@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  The creation of theatrical costumes is a journey from research to design, prototypes to complete garments, fittings to stage. We must take into consideration the original piece; the Director’s themes and interpretation and the performers needs all well staying true to our artistic vision.  This project focuses on two upcoming shows. Appalachian Spring is a Ballet by Aaron Copland that in its original ideation focuses on a Preacher and the wedding of a young couple in early America. Recognizing the problematic theme of settler colonization, our production chooses to focus more on the land itself. We will create a living landscape inspired by the golden hills and crashing waves of our Central Coast, coalescing in a celebration of the land and its role in sustaining our daily lives. This will be created by studying the history of local natural dyes then implanting them with modern artistic dye techniques, while reimagining silhouettes of late 1800’s Americana dress. *A Soldier’s Tale* by Igor Stravinsky is a one act performance that combines chamber music, acting and dance. For this production we will study early 1900s Russian clothing as well as techniques for distressing and aging stage costumes.  SURP scholars will do research into each production and techniques that we will then implement to create over 40 different pieces between the two shows. The productions will be performed at the end of July as part of the 52nd season of [Festival Mozaic](https://www.festivalmozaic.org/).  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + Works well in team collaborations   + Basic Sewing Skills or Strong Interest to Learn   + Available Tuesday-Thursday to work on campus starting 6/20/2023 through the month of July, as well as some weekends and evenings in late July * Preferred   + Background in Performing or Visual Arts |
| 14. *L’Histoire du Soldat (A Soldier's Tale)* with Festival Mozaic Mentor: Prof. Karin Hendricks-Bolen  Department: Theatre & Dance  Email: [khendr04@calpoly.edu](mailto:khendr04@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  Restaging a theatrical piece that was topical 100 years ago requires dramaturgical research and artistry to effectively represent the original story and find its relevance for a contemporary audience. Using innovation, theatre-makers are called to take these historical masterpieces and infuse them with current story-telling techniques and a modern lens.    Igor Stravinsky’s, *L’Histoire du Soldat (A Soldier's Tale),* was first presented in Lausanne in 1918. The piece combines chamber music, acting, and dance to tell the parable of a Russian Soldier who is tricked into selling his fiddle to the devil. This summer, the production will serve as the final work in Festival Mozaic’s Chamber Concert Series.    This project will require dramaturgical research to collect and examine multiple translations from the French interpretations of *L’Histoire du Soldat.* We will look to develop a thematic concept for Festival Moazaic’s interpretation of the production through the reimagining of casting, staging, lighting, scenic design, and choreography that will resonate with current audiences.  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + Strong writing and reading skills as the student researcher(s) will be tasked with reading relevant literature   + Experience working as either an Assistant Director or Stage Manager   + Availability for in-person meetings and rehearsals in June and July * Preferred   + Experience in dramaturgy   + Musical literacy |
| 15. Staging Change: Initiating Environmental Literacy & Prosocial Action through the Performing Arts Mentors: Profs. Philip Valle & Phyllis Wong  Department: Theatre & Dance  Email: [pvalle@calpoly.edu](mailto:pvalle@calpoly.edu) & [pwong28@calpoly.edu](mailto:pwong28@calpoly.edu)  **Project Description:**  In 2019, educational leaders from the UC and CSU systems partnered to publish an ambitious report titled: [*Achieving Climate Stability and Environmental Sustainability*.](https://sites.google.com/tenstrands.org/ecclps/report) The coalition’s goal was to “expand the opportunities of every child to learn about climate change and to have the tools to affect positive social change.”  The questions and challenges in shaping environmental pedagogy were posed as follows:   * What are the best methods of increasing environmental literacy (EL)? * How will increased competency then translate into clear prosocial and environmental action?   Social and behavioral psychologists have increasingly interrogated what *affective models* (those that alter beliefs/feelings/behavior)best initiate pro-environmental action across populations (Ardoin et al. [2023](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13280-022-01764-6#citeas)). And while the use of performing arts in building EL is not unusual, the ability to track the *affective results* of such pedagogical experiments is rare.  Our project seeks to address this gap. This project is an interdisciplinary, community-based collaboration. It offers research, education (K-6) and performance-based components. The faculty/student scholars will collaborate on researching recent studies in Climate Change pedagogy with a particular focus on *affective methods* that promote prosocial action. SURP students will assist in survey design, data collection, and data analysis. Students will also co-design a website for teachers with climate action resources. Finally, scholars will collaborate in writing a 30-minute play addressing local climate action topics.  **Desired Student Qualifications:**   * Required   + Strong interest and curiosity about climate science   + Self-motivated and self-directed learner with good communication skills   + Works well independently and collaboratively   + Strong reading and writing skills as students will be reading and reviewing literature on climate science * Preferred   + Engagement and interest in STEM, as demonstrated by STEM education, Science, Technology & Society minor, and/or similar   + Interest in theatre   + Interest in working with K-6 elementary aged children   + Interest/experience in quantitative and/or qualitative research design and data analysis   + Good analytical skills   + Interest/experience in web design |