

Ganesh Raman, Ph.D.

**Assistant Vice Chancellor
Research**


CSU Office of the Chancellor
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www.calstate.edu

December 4, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: CSU Student Research Competition Campus Coordinators

FROM: Ganesh Raman, Ph.D. 
Assistant Vice Chancellor
Research

SUBJECT: 40th Annual CSU Student Research Competition

The 40th Annual California State University (CSU) Student Research Competition will be held April 23-25, 2026, in person at San José State University (SJSU). SJSU's Division of Research and Innovation will host the three-day, systemwide competition, which will showcase the excellent research, scholarship and creative work accomplished by undergraduate and graduate students across the CSU system.

Student participants will make oral presentations that will be judged by experts from foundations, corporations, public agencies and universities throughout California. The procedures and guidelines for this year's competition are similar to those held in prior years, and are included as an attachment.

Each campus may deliver a maximum of 10 presentations. Only submissions that have been endorsed by their campus coordinator are eligible for the systemwide competition. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top presentations in each category.

Campus coordinators are encouraged to promote the competition, to establish a campus-specific selection process for entrants and to screen final submissions in the manner deemed most appropriate by the campus. While multi-campus planning committees have endorsed the general procedures and guidelines for the 2026 CSU Student Research Competition, creativity is encouraged in designing a local competition that best meets the unique needs of each university.

CSU Campuses

Bakersfield
Channel Islands
Chico
Dominguez Hills
East Bay

Fresno
Fullerton
Humboldt
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Maritime Academy

Monterey Bay
Northridge
Pomona
Sacramento
San Bernardino
San Diego

San Francisco
San José
San Luis Obispo
San Marcos
Sonoma
Stanislaus

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To that end, prior to formally announcing the competition and promoting it to students, campus coordinators should personalize the information in the attached procedures and guidelines document to include campus-specific details such as local deadlines and competition dates, as well as contact information for campus resources.

A contact list of the campus coordinators for each university is also attached. If there is an error in the name or contact information for your campus coordinator(s), or if subsequent updates are required before the 2026 CSU Student Research Competition takes place in April, please contact Elizabeth Soto, director of Research Operations at the Chancellor's Office, via email at esoto@calstate.edu.

Once a university has selected its delegation, **each campus coordinator must submit their participants' names, email addresses and presentation categories by end-of-day on Monday, March 16, 2026**, via an email to csustudentresearchcomp2026@sjsu.edu.

Additionally, **all participants**—including campus coordinators, selected students, jurors, event volunteers and other supporters—**must register online by end-of-day on Monday, March 16, 2026**, using the online registration form available on SJSU's [2026 CSU Student Research Competition website](#).

GR/ac

Attachments

- c: Mildred García, Chancellor
- Junius J. Gonzales, Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs, and Chief Academic Officer
- Elizabeth A. Boyd, Chair, Academic Senate of the California State University
- Tara Al-Rehani, President, Cal State Student Association
- CSU Presidents
- CSU Provosts and Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs
- CSU Vice Presidents for Student Affairs
- CSU Associate Vice Presidents and Deans of Graduate Studies
- CSU Associate Vice Presidents and Deans of Undergraduate Studies
- CSU Chief Research Officers
- Chairs, Campus Academic Senates
- Presidents, Associated Students Inc.

2026 CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT RESEARCH COMPETITION

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

This in-person competition is held to promote excellence in undergraduate and graduate scholarly research and creative activity by recognizing outstanding student accomplishments throughout the California State University (CSU).

WHO MAY PARTICIPATE

Undergraduate or graduate students currently enrolled at any CSU campus, as well as alumni/alumnae who received (or will receive) their degrees in winter, spring, summer or fall 2025 or winter 2026, are eligible to enter the competition. The research/creative activity presented should be appropriate to the student's discipline and career goals. Proprietary research is excluded.

CATEGORIES

Presentations from all disciplines are welcome. There will be separate undergraduate and graduate divisions for each category (unless a division has four or fewer entrants, in which case the divisions may be combined). The San José State University (SJSU) steering committee reserves the right to combine or subdivide these categories, or to move an entrant from one category to another, as necessitated by submission numbers.

The 10 disciplinary categories are:

- Behavioral & Social Sciences & Public Administration
- Biological & Agricultural Sciences
- Business, Economics & Hospitality Management
- Creative Arts & Design (Creative projects are welcome. See the Competition Guidelines section for details.)
- Education
- Engineering & Computer Science
- Health, Nutrition & Clinical Sciences
- Humanities & Letters
- Interdisciplinary
- Physical & Mathematical Sciences

A campus delegation may include up to 10 entries. An entry is defined as either an individual presentation or as a small group making a single presentation.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Each university appoints a campus coordinator and develops its own procedures for selecting student delegates to the systemwide competition. Interested students should contact their

campus coordinator for more information. Only those students endorsed by their campus coordinator may enter the systemwide competition.

Each campus coordinator will submit a list of students who have been selected for the systemwide competition, via an email to csustudentresearchcomp2026@sjsu.edu, by end-of-day on Monday, March 16, 2026. Written summaries must be provided by the campus coordinator, along with the list of selected students.

The rules governing the preparation of the written summary are as follows:

- The summary must include the name(s) of the student(s) and the title of the presentation.
- The written narrative should:
 - Utilize a font size of 10 points or greater;
 - Have margins of at least 0.75 inch; and
 - Be a minimum of one page, not exceeding two pages in total.
- Appendices (e.g., bibliography, graphs, photographs, other supplementary materials) are optional; may not exceed three pages total; and will be uploaded separately from the written narrative.
- All research must comply with all applicable policies and regulations. Research that involves human or animal subjects must obtain appropriate institutional review.

Additionally, **all participants**—including campus coordinators, selected students, jurors, event volunteers and other supporters—**must register online by end-of-day on Monday, March 16, 2026**, using the online registration form available on SJSU's [2026 CSU Student Research Competition website](#).

COMPETITION GUIDELINES

Students will present their work orally before a jury and an audience. Students will compete by discipline category and, where feasible, by division (undergraduate or graduate) as described in the Who May Participate section. Juries may consist of professionals from leading foundations, corporations, public agencies and universities across California. Jurors' areas of expertise may not necessarily align with the specific disciplinary category they are evaluating.

Student presenters will have 10 minutes to make an oral presentation of their work, followed by five minutes to listen and respond to questions from the jurors and the audience. It is expected that a student will not make a presentation by simply reading directly from the written summary. In the case of a multi-author entry, it is recommended that the oral presentation be made by no more than two students, with any additional group members responding to juror and audience questions, as relevant.

All entrants may use audiovisual materials as appropriate, and presenters are encouraged to use delivery techniques that promote interaction with the audience.

Entrants in the Creative Arts & Design category may include live performances or present an audio and/or visual recording of a performance they have given or a work they have created.

Oral presentations should focus on the rationale and historical context underlying the entrant's interpretation of the creative material.

Each entry (i.e., oral presentation plus written summary) will be judged on the following criteria:

- Clarity of purpose
- Appropriateness of methodology
- Interpretation of results
- Value of the research or creative activity
- Ability of the presenter to articulate the research or creative activity
- Organization of the material presented
- Presenter's ability to address questions from the jury and the audience

AWARDS

Based on the recommendations of the jurors, monetary awards will be provided to the outstanding presenter and the runner-up in both the undergraduate and graduate divisions of each category. If the undergraduate and graduate divisions of a particular category have been combined, awards will be provided to the outstanding presenter and the runner-up without regard to class standing.

QUESTIONS

More information about the competition can be found at SJSU's [2026 CSU Student Research Competition website](#). Student questions should be directed to their local campus coordinator. Campus coordinators may contact csustudentresearchcomp2026@sjsu.edu, should they have questions.

**2026 CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT RESEARCH COMPETITION
CAMPUS COORDINATORS**

| CAMPUS | CONTACT NAME(S) & TITLE(S) | EMAIL | PHONE |
|------------------------|--|--|----------------|
| BAKERSFIELD | MANUEL BARRERA Director of Sponsored Programs Development | mbarrera@csub.edu | (661) 654-3534 |
| | ISABEL SUMAYA AVP for Grants, Research and Sponsored Programs | isumaya@csub.edu | (661) 654-3344 |
| CHANNEL ISLANDS | AHMED AWAD Director of Student Research & Professor of Chemistry | ahmed.awad@csuci.edu | (805) 437-2794 |
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| DOMINGUEZ HILLS | SHEREE M. SCHRAGER Dean of Graduate Studies and Research | sschrager@csudh.edu | (310) 243-2553 |
| | KEN SELIGSON Co-Chair, Student Research Conference & Associate Professor of Anthropology | kseligson@csudh.edu | (310) 243-3491 |
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| FRESNO | JASON A. BUSH Interim AVP for Research and Sponsored Programs | jbush@mail.fresnostate.edu | (559) 278-0845 |
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| FULLERTON | NICOLE BONUSO Director, Undergraduate Research Opportunity Center | nbonuso@fullerton.edu | (657) 278-8451 |
| | BINOD TIWARI AVP for Research and Sponsored Programs | btiwari@fullerton.edu | (657) 278-8205 |
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| | NATASHA OEHLMAN Writing and Professional Communication Associate, UROC | noehlman@csumb.edu | (831) 582-4031 |
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