



# DR. MARIO GUERRERO

## 2017 - 2018 FACULTY FELLOW

The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) has named Dr. Mario Guerrero as a Faculty Fellow for 2017-2018. During his six years as a faculty member for the Department of Political Science, Dr. Guerrero has been involved in undergraduate student research from being chair of the Undergraduate Research Faculty Advising Committee (URFAC) to advising McNair scholars and senior thesis students in undergraduate research.

Dr. Guerrero's passion for research was developed while he was an undergraduate student at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He vividly remembers sitting in his research methods class his freshman year at UCLA, riveted by the enterprise of research. Nothing excited him more than the ability to find his own answers to questions about how the world works. His chosen path in research has been filled with great mentors and endeavors that have been both rewarding and frustrating. Dr. Guerrero became a university professor because he felt sharing his interest and helping students do research made his career path meaningful.

With his emphasis on political science and American politics, Dr. Guerrero studies political behavior in a number of different contexts, but his main focus is on political and civic engagement. Most of his published work is in media and examining the effects of how the Internet and social media encourages citizens to participate in politics. Dr. Guerrero's research has revealed that the average user consumes information on the Internet in a haphazard fashion and that there needs to be more awareness by users regarding filtering political news feeds.

When asked what brought him to Cal Poly Pomona, and what inspired him to get involved with mentoring students in undergraduate research, Dr. Guerrero stated:

"As a campus with faculty who are so clearly dedicated to undergraduates but with an incredibly diverse student body, I would be at no place other than Cal Poly Pomona. Particularly as a Hispanic-Serving Institution, I feel a personal responsibility to students who perhaps can identify with my own experience growing up in Southern California. I never had a mentor that looked like me or who I could even identify with on a more personal level. I hope mentoring students in undergraduate research inspires Cal Poly Pomona students to aspire and reach to incredible heights in their own research endeavors."

Dr. Guerrero believes that seeing students transform by undertaking their own research has been incredibly rewarding and instructive to his own work. It brings him joy to see students transform after they complete their undergraduate education. One of the hardest challenges for Dr. Guerrero is the fact that there aren't more hours in the day to mentor more students.

The best advice Dr. Guerrero has ever received was that "persistence is key." Dr. Guerrero recognizes from his own experience that the criticism lobbied against aspiring researchers can be debilitating to the point where people choose to leave academia or stop their research; however, he has accepted that every experience is worthwhile because everyone can learn from their mistakes. Mistakes can always be seen as a new opportunity for learning and a way of teaching yourself what not to do. Dr. Guerrero does not believe that good researchers have the innate skill or inherit ability, but rather the persistence to push forward and learn from past mistakes.

As an OUR Faculty Fellow, Dr. Guerrero hopes to expand the visibility of the OUR while also highlighting the research being done by students on campus. Dr. Guerrero knows that "we do great work at Cal Poly Pomona, but we also need to be more strategic about celebrating that work and sharing it with the greater community".