

# VIBES AND STUFF

## SOE GRADUATE NEWSLETTER

Happy New Year and welcome back!

As we begin the Winter 2025 term, we want to share that Associate Dean Eddie Comeaux is on sabbatical until the end of the academic year, so Dr. Marsha Ing will serve in the interim. To get in touch with **Interim Associate Dean Marsha Ing**, you can reach out via email at [marsha.ing@ucr.edu](mailto:marsha.ing@ucr.edu).



In an effort to better support SOE teaching assistants, Dr. Ing will be **hosting weekly office hours on Fridays** from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm via Zoom to answer questions about TA roles and responsibilities, as well as offer a thoughtful professional development topic related to being a TA. Weekly reminders will be shared via Canvas with the Zoom link.

## Did you know....

Did you know UCR has a living museum on campus that spans 40 acres and showcases over 3,500 plant species? UCR's Botanical Gardens feature diverse specimens from around the world, with a special emphasis on Mediterranean and desert plants. This thoughtful selection of plant species makes the gardens not only a beautiful and serene retreat at the foothills of the Box Springs Mountains, but also a valuable hub for education and research. Visitors and students can explore the botanical gardens' rich biodiversity, learn about sustainable landscaping, and enjoy hiking through its scenic trails.



The botanical gardens also hosts regular events for students throughout the year. These events include stargazing, twilight tours, nature and bird walks, and sustainability workshops. Find more information about the botanical garden, its hours, and a calendar of upcoming events [here](#).

# SOE Scholar Network

**Back to School Social:** On October 10th we held our Back to School social at the Getaway Cafe. Folks from different programs came together after a long day of school to de-stress, catch up and enjoy great food in community.



**Homecoming:** On November 2nd Scholar Network representatives joined UCR for their annual alumni homecoming event, Brunch and Bubbly. Alumni stopped by and learned how to remain connected with the SOE community. Pic: Viviana Padilla, SN Officer



**PhD Milestones Virtual Workshop:** On November 6th the board held a virtual workshop to discuss PhD milestones amongst PhD students. Board member, Eric Davidson, led the workshop and provided insights based on his experience with each milestone. Other students in attendance shared their insights and experiences and collaboratively discussed PhD milestones across programs.

**To watch the recording use [this link](#) & passcode: j5^Hj%8P**

[SN Website](#)  
[SN Instagram](#)



# Upcoming SOE Events

**Research Talk 'Shop Sessions:** Graduate students will present their research and participate in scholarly discussions. :

- **Dr. Fernanda Castellón** (UC President's Postdoctoral Fellow) – *In-person* on Tuesday, January 14th at 1-2:30 in Sproul 1215
- **Emily Dech** (PhD, ESC) – *Hybrid* on Tuesday, January 21st 1-2:30pm on Zoom and in-person in Sproul 1224
- **Sonia Garcia Avelar** (PhD, Higher Ed) – *Hybrid* on Tuesday, February 25th 1-2:30pm on Zoom and in-person in Sproul 1224

Come support your peers and **RSVP** for 1-3 of the sessions [here](#).

**Winter Social with Scholar Network: February 6th 6-9pm.** Arts Walk 6-7:15pm; Food at Taco Station 7:30-9pm. [RSVP here.](#)

**Doing Equity During Times of Dystopia with Dr. Tyrone Howard:** February 12th at 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM in-person in at UCR Student Success Center 235 or via Zoom. [RSVP here](#)

**Summer Opportunities Session:** Learn about various summer opportunities/employment and available resources. This Scholar Network workshop will be held on **Zoom** on **February 20th at 7 PM.** [RSVP here.](#)

**Walk with her: Protest Art and Educational Justice:** February 26th 5-6:30pm UCR Alumni and Visitors Center. [RSVP here.](#)

**SOMOS SOE with Dr. Arlene Cano Matute:** March 6th from 12 PM - 1 PM (location TBD; RSVP forthcoming). Food included.

\*Never miss out on an event - add the new [GSA calendar to your Google Calendar](#). For instructions on how to add Google calendars to your personal calendar and manage multiple calendars, [click here](#).\*



## Off Campus Activities

The **Mission Inn Hotel & Spa** has a variety affordable experiences, and you don't need to be a hotel guest to explore its rich history or participate in annual events!

For example: the Mission Inn offers **guided tours for just \$25**, where you can experience the hotel's remarkable architecture, artistic heritage, and unwind in the hotel's beautiful gardens. Or perhaps you want to indulge in a **massage at Kelly's Spa** to unwind and de-stress. Find more information about the Mission Inn's guided tours and amenities [here](#).



# SOE Research and Writing Support Center

With the on-boarding of the new director, Bryan Asdel, the SOE is now offering **writing support to graduate students**. The newly expanded support center is offering the following workshops to SOE graduate students in Winter 2025:

## **Wednesday, January 15 – 2:00–4:00pm (Week 2)**

### **Graduate Writing Circle**

Location: Sproul Hall 1210

*A peer-led monthly writing circle for graduate students, providing a collaborative environment for writing projects.*

## **Qualitative Research Workshop – Date: TBD (Week 3)**

Location: Sproul Hall 1212

*A workshop supporting students with qualitative research methods, coordinated by the Research and Writing Center, led by Drs. Alice Lee, Amos Lee, and Michael Moses.*

## **Tuesday, January 28 – 4:00–5:00pm (Week 4)**

### **APA Citation & Formatting Workshop 1**

Location: Sproul Hall 1212

*Covers common citation issues specific to undergraduate education majors, helping students master APA formatting.*

## **Tuesday, February 4 – 2:00–3:00 pm (Week 5)**

### **Grant Writing for Educators Workshop**

Location: Sproul Hall 1212

*Guidance on securing research funding, focusing on grant writing strategies.*

## **Wednesday, February 12 – 4:00–5:00pm (tentative) (Week 6)**

### **Introduction to Education Writing**

Location: Sproul Hall TBD

*An upper-level workshop introducing undergraduate and new graduate students to education-specific writing, transitioning from general academic writing to education topics.*

## **Wednesday, February 20 – 4:00–5:00pm (Week 7)**

### **APA Citation & Formatting Workshop 2**

Location: Sproul Hall 1215

*Covers common citation issues specific to undergraduate education majors, helping students master APA formatting.*

## **Wednesday, February 26 – 2:00–4:00pm (Week 8)**

### **Graduate Writing Circle**

Location: Sproul Hall 1210

*A monthly peer-led writing circle for graduate students, offering a collaborative space for writing and peer feedback.*

## **Monday–Thursday, March 3–6 (walk in/open hours) (Week 9)**

### **Write-a-Thon**

Location: Sproul Hall 1210

*Walk-in research and writing support available all week during select hours.*

## WHAT THE HECK Comes Next?!

A PODCAST BY:

UCR Career Center

Graduate Student  
Resource Center

# CAREER RESOURCES

GradSuccess offers a wide range of career resources specifically tailored for graduate students, as highlighted by the podcast collaboration with the Career Center. For instance, the GradSuccess [blog](#) features articles on career planning, resume building, time management, fellowship applications, and more.

Beyond the blog, GradSuccess provides career counseling, professional development workshops, online career planning tools, and resources to help students navigate both academic and non-academic job markets. Learn more about the career resources offered by the GradSuccess [here](#).



As you progress through program milestones and move closer to earning your degree, have you ever wondered, “What the heck comes next?”.

Many current and past graduate students have agonized over this very question, so UCR GradSuccess and the UCR Career Center have teamed up to create a podcast that addresses this question head-on. The “What the Heck Comes Next?” podcast provides graduate students with insights to help them approach the job search thoughtfully and intentionally, reduce stress during the job search, and land the job they want. Listen to the career-focused podcast from GradSuccess and the Career Center [here](#).

## Fellowship & Conference Opportunities

Winter is the perfect time to start applying for **summer fellowships**, as many internship and fellowship deadlines fall within this quarter. Some opportunities are outlined below:

- [Education Pioneers Summer Fellowship](#) - Deadline: 2/11/25
- [Mathematica Summer Research Fellowships](#) - Deadline: 2/28/25

You can also explore upcoming deadlines for other fellowships **supporting graduate research** opportunities.

- [Josephine de Karman Fellowship Trust](#) - Deadline: 1/30/25
- [Hayne's Foundation Dissertation Fellowships](#) - Deadline: 3/10/25

New Conference Opportunity: two new programs from **Centering Black Children in Education** focused on graduate students:

- [Sankofa Graduate Research Conference](#): The **call for proposals** is now open. The deadline to submit a proposal is **February 1, 2025**. The conference itself will be held on February 21, 2025.
- [Sankofa Research Intensive](#): This **intensive program** will be held on campus at Wayne State University in Detroit, June 15-22, 2025. Applications are currently open and also due on February 1, 2025.

For a full list of available fellowships, internship, and conference opportunities, check out the modules in Canvas.





## Upcoming Deadlines

**Written Exam Sign-Up:** January 6, 2025

**Apply to graduate:** January 27, 2025

**Format review dissertation/thesis:**  
March 7, 2025

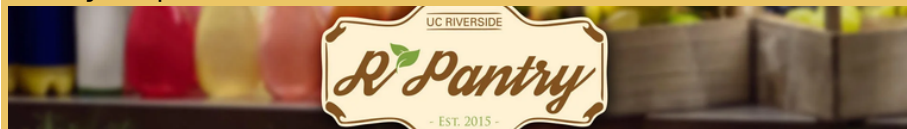
**MED Capstone:** March 19, 2025

**Final submission dissertation/thesis:**  
March 21, 2025 by noon

## Resources Highlight

As part of UC Riverside's Basic Needs initiative, **R'Pantry** provides **essential food and hygiene resources** to support students facing food insecurity. Located in Highlander Union Building 346, R'Pantry offers free access to **fresh produce, canned goods, feminine hygiene products, hair care, soap, and other basic necessities**. To ensure accessibility, R'Pantry fosters a safe, judgment-free environment. R'Pantry is open to all undergraduate and graduate students four days a week. Learn more about accessing R'Pantry for support with everyday challenges [here](#).

Additionally, the **R'Kids program**, offered through UCR's Women's Resource Center, is designed to support student parents and their families with tailored resources to help them thrive academically, emotionally, and personally. Through family-friendly events, workshops, and a strong network of other student parents, R'Kids provides **access to essential services and childcare resources** that support UCR families. Learn more about services offered through R'Kids [here](#). With resources like R'Pantry and R'Kids, UCR is committed to helping students balance their academic goals with personal and family responsibilities.



## Program Milestones

**Check Degree Audit:** Regularly check pending courses and requirements. Have a course substitution? Send faculty advisor approval email to Heather.

**Written Exam Dates:** February 28–March 3, 2025

**Oral Exam & Dissertation Committee Nominations:** Two weeks prior to the scheduled exam. The nominations must be completed through R'Grad via R'Web.

**Oral Exam & Final Defense:** can be scheduled any date/time between January 6–March 21, 2025

*Tip:* Since the oral exam/final defense dates must be scheduled with committee members, use a [doodle poll](#) to make the process quick and efficient.

# Student Spotlight

## Sonia Garcia Avelar

Sonia Garcia Avelar is a third-year PhD student in the Higher Education Administration and Policy program. Sonia's research focuses on undocumented students and their experiences at 4-year campuses, particularly the ways in which non-DACA undocumented students navigate their post-graduation journeys and how institutions equip them for the post-graduate transition. Below, you can find insights directly from Sonia about their research pursuits:

### **Q: What inspired you to pursue this particular area of education research?**

*A: As someone who identifies with the undocumented community, this area of research is deeply personal to me. I have over 7 years of experience in Student Affairs and am currently the Director of Undocumented Student Programs (USP) at UCR. I navigate UCR as an undocumented Scholar-Practitioner who is dedicated to the continuous support and advocacy for undocumented and marginalized students within UCR and beyond.*

### **Q: How does your research fit into the SOE's broader equity-focused position?**

*A: My research aligns closely with the School of Education's broader equity-focused mission by addressing the unique challenges faced by undocumented students, particularly in a post-DACA era. As the majority of undocumented students in 2025 will not be eligible for DACA, it is crucial to explore new avenues of support and advocacy that ensure these students still have equitable access to higher education. My work highlights the need for systemic change and policies that promote inclusion, resources, and opportunities for undocumented students who are navigating a more uncertain landscape. By centering undocumented students' experiences, my research helps to create a more diverse and inclusive academic environment, which fosters equity and social justice.*

### **Q: What are your professional goals?**

*A: In addition to my current role as Director of USP, my long-term goal is to serve as the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs at a four-year institution in California. In this capacity, I aim to advance advocacy efforts for policies that promote social justice and equity to ensure that all students, regardless of their backgrounds, have the support and opportunities they need to succeed in higher education.*

### **Q: What are the broader implications of your work for education and beyond?**

*A: The broader implications of my work extend far beyond education, as my work also has implications for policies and practices that affect marginalized communities at large. By advocating for the needs of undocumented students and addressing the challenges they face in an increasingly uncertain post-DACA era, my research contributes to the ongoing conversation about immigration, access, and equity. It emphasizes the importance of creating inclusive and supportive environments, not just in educational institutions, but also in broader societal systems that shape students' experiences. This work has the potential to inform policy decisions, foster social justice, and drive systemic change in areas such as immigration law, workforce development, and community-based support systems. Ultimately, this benefits not only students but also our society as a whole.*

### **Q: What impact on education do you hope to make throughout your career?**

*A: Throughout my career, I hope to make a lasting impact on education by advocating for policies and practices that promote equity and inclusion for all students, particularly those from marginalized communities. Specifically, I aim to ensure that undocumented students have the support, resources, and opportunities they need to succeed, especially as we navigate a post-DACA era. By challenging inequities and fostering environments where all students are valued and empowered, I hope to contribute to a more just and accessible educational system. Ultimately, my goal is to help shape an education landscape that not only reflects the diversity of our society but also actively works to dismantle barriers that prevent students from reaching their full potential.*

Sonia's research offers important insights into the experiences of undocumented students in higher education, with a particular focus on their preparation for post-graduation life. Sonia is currently collaborating with Dr. Eddie Comeaux on a project focusing on undocumented college athletes, and they will present their findings at the 2025 AERA meeting in Denver, Colorado. Sonia would like to thank Dr. Eddie Comeaux for supporting her research and collaborating with her on this project which brings UndocuAthletes to the forefront. Additionally, she would like to thank Dr. Del Real Viramontes for his support and mentorship throughout her PhD and professional journey on campus.

# Faculty Spotlight

## Dr. Rican Vue

Dr. Rican Vue is an Assistant Professor in the School of Education at the University of California, Riverside. Her research focuses on racism, displacement, and subjugated ways of knowing in education, with an emphasis on advancing equity and justice. Dr. Vue uses qualitative methods including case studies, narrative analysis, and critical race discourse analysis. These methodological approaches are particularly suited to examining the questions she asks about power dynamics and the interplay between individual experiences and structural systems. In her research, Dr. Vue draws on and bridges theory and literature across education and ethnic studies to gain a greater understanding of how to disrupt racial inequities and injustice. She currently serves as Co-Chair of UCR's AANAPISI committee and is a Co-PI on a recently awarded HSI grant. Below, find Dr. Vue's personal narrative about her research and academic journey:

### **Q: What inspired you to pursue this particular area of education research?**

*A: My research is inspired by my own experiences as a first generation student and child of refugees, along with witnessing the struggles, resilience and aspirations of those around me navigating inequitable conditions. In particular, I wanted to gain a greater understanding of the social conditions that shape students' educational learning and opportunities, to increase access for marginalized students, and to create more opportunities for historically underrepresented students. Additionally, as an undergraduate student I was heavily involved in culturally sustaining, student-initiated organizing, which inspired my approach to research that centers BIPOC students' experiences, efforts, and creativity.*

### **Q: What are the key findings of your work and what are some areas of uncertainty or unanswered questions that your research has raised?**

*A: One of my key findings in a recent article on HMong American students' educational experiences that is forthcoming is that they experience not only invisibility, but hyper-invisibility. The previous literature on HMong students' experiences have largely discussed this group as an invisible group, and my work has shown the ways this framing itself can contribute to their hyper-invisibility and so we have to be very intentional in how we discuss these groups by appropriately contextualizing their experiences and also amplifying*

*their agency and knowledge. I believe that these findings have relevance for other subgroups of Asian Americans and Pacifica students, though I'm uncertain whether sufficient research currently exists in this area. I think there's a need to explore the hyper-invisibility these students experience.*

### **Q: How does your research contribute to addressing broader scientific questions or societal challenges within education?**

*A: I think that one of the ways that my work addresses broader societal challenges within education is through theory building around the processes that reproduce and sustain racial inequities and theory building that honors the generativity of minoritized individuals as they endure and battle socially unjust and violent conditions. For example, my work on HMong Americans underscores both how political, cultural and structural forces reproduce HMong people's racialization and how HMoog people's everyday practices emplace memory, imaginings, and alternative futures. By highlighting these complex processes, it's my hope that they will point us toward actionable policy and practices for educational equity.*

### **Q: What advice would you give to graduate students aspiring to pursue a career in academia as research or teaching faculty?**

*A: I think it's important for graduate students to reflect on why they want to pursue this path and what they hope to accomplish with it. I also think it's important to know what an academic career in education research entails, so talking to people who are in those roles and also getting involved when there are opportunities is important. You also have to hone your craft, whether that be research and/or teaching, which demands ongoing engagement and reflection. Lastly, try to also find fulfillment in other areas of your life and always remember to practice self care, no matter what career path you choose.*

While Dr. Vue currently does not have funding for graduate students, she encourages graduate students to connect with faculty to share their interests and ask questions, as opportunities often arise through these connections. If you would like to learn more about Dr. Vue's research, you can reach her at [ricanv@ucr.edu](mailto:ricanv@ucr.edu).



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Let's celebrate YOU for all your accomplishments

Congratulations to **Ambrosia Solis** for **completing her first year** in the Educational Policy Analysis and Leadership (EDPAL) Ph.D. program while expecting her first child. Ambrosia overcame numerous physical and emotional challenges with resilience and determination to balance the demands of her Ph.D. program while pregnant. We also congratulate Ambrosia on **welcoming a baby boy in August 2024!**

Congratulations to **Alexis Fenger** and **Shaina Wright** for **passing their oral qualifying exams** and rising to candidacy! Their hard work and dedication brought them to this exciting milestone, and we can't wait to see the incredible research you'll contribute as PhD candidates.

Congratulations to **Luke Rabelhofer** for having their **research project accepted for a paper presentation at the 2025 AERA Annual conference**. This marks Luke's first conference presentation outside of the SOE, which is an exciting step forward in sharing his work with a broader audience.

Shout out to **Yeon Hee "Jenny" Kang** for an incredible year of accomplishments! Jenny served as **editor** for the most recent issue of the **Canadian Journal of School Psychology, published 6 manuscripts (2 in French), and 1 book chapter**. She accomplished all this while balancing full-time work, school, and research. Jenny's hard work and dedication are truly inspiring—congratulations on this well-deserved success!

Congratulations to **Eric Davidson** for **publishing his article** *"Insider Knowledge, Outsider Practice: The Disruptive Liberatory Potential of Skateboarding in US Higher Education"* in Current Issues in Education! Eric's article draws on his personal connection to the skateboarding community to offer a fresh perspective on higher education spaces. This innovative and impactful article showcases Eric's trans-disciplinary expertise across urban studies and cultural anthropology. You can check out his **open-access article [here](#)**.

Congratulations to everyone who participated in the **2nd Annual SOE Graduate Student Research Conference!** You can view the full list of this year's graduate, faculty, and alumni presenters **[here](#)**.



If you would like to share an accomplishment to be featured in the next SOE newsletter, **fill out this form**.



# WELCOME BLACK TO THE SOE



## FALL 2024

### SOMOS SOE Welcome Event

October 10, 2024



## Past Events

### Welcome Black to the SOE Event

October 3, 2024



### SOE Student Open House Event

September 25, 2024

