



Graduate  
Studies

# THE IMPORTANCE OF A GRADUATE EDUCATION

*As presented by the Office of Graduate Studies  
in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month*



**2021  
HISPANIC  
HERITAGE  
MONTH**

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# DR. MAURICIO CADAVID



**Degree:** Educational Leadership Ed.D.



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**H**ello, my name is Dr. Mauricio Cadavid (or Dr. Moe), and I am the Sr. Instructional Designer with Academic Technologies and Innovation at CSUSB.

I am originally from Medellin, Colombia, and I arrived in the US in '92. I completed my high school in Rancho Cucamonga and had to return to Colombia in '96. During my three years in Colombia, I studied Psychology and was an English teacher with the Centro Colombo-Americano. It was working there that I was able to return to the US in '99 to get a TESOL degree with UCR. I then transferred to RCC where I participated in the Model United Nations, as well as becoming the president of the International Student's Club. After completing my AA in Psychology, I transferred to CSUSB in 2002. Here at CSUSB, I have completed my BA in Psychology (2004), my MA in Education, in Reading/ Language Arts (2008), and my EdD in Educational Leadership and Curriculum (2017).

This year I completed 15 years as an Instructional Designer with Academic Technologies, and Innovation. Some of my accomplishments as a staff include receiving a Distinguished Service Award (2007) and the President's Service Award (2017), as well as being recognized as an expert in the field of online learning. During this time, I have also been able to write and present at multiple conferences locally, nationally, and internationally. Some of my interest topics include Adult Learning, Project-Based Learning, Educational Technology, Information Technology, and Reading Education, among others.

During my time here at CSUSB, I have also taught courses for Undergraduate Studies, CEGB, The College of Education, and currently for the Information and Decision Sciences department.

But not everything is work and academics, outside CSUSB I have tried to live an active and involved life. This is in great part thanks to being the proud dad of three wonderful, smart, athletic, kind, loving girls: Amelie (14) is a 9th grader, Audrey (10) is a 4th grader, and Annalisa (6) is a 1st grader. The girls also keep me active. I have coached their soccer teams, joined a mountain biking club to ride with them, have gone on numerous camping trips, and pre-COVID we used to spend every Tuesday at a skating rink. Inspired by my girls I have also become involved in church, I taught Bible school for many years, lead the Pathfinder's club, organized and participated in multiple community enrichment activities. This ultimately opened the world to me and took me to faraway places like Nepal, where I helped lead a health education clinic, and to closer ones like Cuba where I lead a week-long child education seminar. Nowadays, I am taking it a little easier, and enjoy spending time playing board games with them (I often lose), lawn bowling at the Redlands Lawn Bowling Club, catching up on reading, or Netflix binging.

In summary, as my life motto states, I am still just a simple man, living a simple life, and waiting for the extraordinary.



# TRINA GONZALES-ALESI



**Degree: Educational Administration M.A.**



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I am a third-generation United States citizen. My great grandparents came to the United States through the agriculture belt from the US/Mexico border to Montana. My grandparents spoke Spanish at home, so my father grew up understanding Spanish with limited speaking abilities. However, my grandparents used Spanish as a way to communicate with each other when they didn't want my siblings and I to know what they were talking about. So, I started studying Spanish in 6th grade, added French in 7th grade and got a Bachelor's Degree in Spanish and French with a teaching credential.

I started teaching French and Spanish in a rural Montana town with a population of 2000 people in 1993. I taught there for three years and then decided to move to California. This is my 24th year in education and the last year and a half have been the most challenging anyone could ever imagine. I am currently in my fifth year serving as the teachers' union president. With 1350 members, I am on full-time release, so I am not currently teaching any classes. However, in my 24 years of experience, I have taught grades 2-12, which includes elementary, middle, and high school levels. More on that in a minute.

I got involved in union work because of a very mean-spirited principal I had several years ago. My colleagues and I were very unhappy. I would watch them sitting around complaining, but not willing to do anything. So, I started joining committees and getting involved. I wanted to be part of the solution. Ten years later, I am the union president. As a world language

teacher, I was mostly used to teaching upper grades. Remember the mean-spirited principal I mentioned? Well, we got another one. This one was so bad that we had to have mediation from district-level administration. The district's solution was to move me to another site! (By the way, that principal was fired and escorted off campus a year later!)

My new assignment was teaching grades 2-5 at an International Baccalaureate school. I was not crazy about teaching elementary and I was in denial that it would actually happen right up to the first day of school! I dove in and did the best I could, but I knew I was not the right fit for these kiddos. I tried to be as patient as possible when they would shout out random thoughts from across the room.

I did it for three years and gave it my all. In the end, I was able to confirm that I was not cut out to be an elementary teacher. However, I am so grateful for the experience because now I am representing 1350 members who teach elementary, middle, and high school. And I can relate to all of them. In 2012, I earned my Master's Degree in Educational Administration.

Although I aspired to be an administrator, I am using all of the skills I learned in my Master's courses as the president of the teachers' union.



# DR. MARY MCALLISTER-PARSONS



**Degree:** Educational Leadership Ed.D.



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**D**r. Mary McAllister-Parsons is an elementary school principal in Riverside, California who is passionate about and committed to education for students, parents, families and staff. This is her 25th year in the field of education and 14th year as a school site administrator.

Dr. McAllister-Parsons earned her Doctorate degree in Educational Leadership at California State University, San Bernardino, where she also earned her Master of Arts degree in Educational Administration and Administrative Services credential, Bachelor of Arts degree and multiple subject teaching credential. Dr. McAllister-Parsons received commendations when she successfully defended her dissertation titled, "Creating a College-going Partnership with Latina/o Parents of Elementary School-aged Children," because of her engagement with participatory action research with Spanish-speaking Latina mothers of elementary school students.

She has been the recipient of grants to support her work and research with students, parents/families and faculty. Dr. McAllister-Parsons is committed to giving back to others as she has benefited from the generous support of family, friends, colleagues and fellow educators. She serves as a coach for educational administrators who are earning their Clear Administrative Services credential and has served as a support provider for first- and second-year teachers. She continues to mentor those who aspire to complete their college degree and/or enter the field of education.

Dr. McAllister-Parsons is involved with Growing Inland Achievement (GIA) and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP). Both organizations are aligned with Dr. McAllister-Parsons' passion, advocacy and collaborative work for education. Dr. McAllister-Parsons has had the honor of presenting at national and local conferences including American Educational Research Association (AERA), American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education (AAHHE), Meeting of the Minds-Student Research Symposium at California State University San Bernardino, and the No Excuses University (NEU) Network of Schools. Additionally, she has welcomed incoming doctoral program cohorts at orientation and has presented to pre-service teachers in their teacher prep program.

Dr. McAllister-Parsons' passion for education extends to women in leadership. She is currently co-facilitating her second national book study with fellow CSUSB graduate, Dr. Mina J. Blazy. By participating in NAESP's Center for Women in Leadership Book Study Group, Dr. McAllister-Parsons aims to connect, support, learn and grow with other women in leadership.

Dr. McAllister-Parsons was born and raised in the Inland Empire and currently resides in Riverside, California with Russell, her husband of 34 years. They are the proud parents of two daughters. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading and spending long weekends at the beach or mountains.





# AGUSTIN RAMIREZ



**Degree:** Experimental Psychology M.A.



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**M**r. Agustín Ramírez (he/his) is the Director of the Veterans Success Center at CSUSB. Agustín has a long history of service to CSUSB. Through his multiple roles on campus, Agustín brings thorough knowledge of University procedure and protocol, knowledge of academic advising and graduation requirements, and a history of program development and team building practices. As an Academic Advisor, Agustín was the coordinator of two key programs, the 4-Year Pledge and Basic Skills Compliance, for the Office of Advising and Academic Services.

He previously served as a Transfer and Graduation Counselor in the Office of the Registrar. Agustín served four years in the U.S. Navy as an Aviation Electronics Technician, Petty Officer Third Class (AT3). His squadron, VF-14 the “Tophatters”, was an F-14 Tomcat fighter squadron stationed out of Naval Air Station Oceana, Virginia. He served onboard the USS John F. Kennedy and USS Theodore Roosevelt. As a Navy veteran, Agustín demonstrated his commitment to student veterans through his work as the Staff Advisor for the Student Veterans Organization and in the topic of his master’s thesis, a “Veteran Students’ Needs Assessment”. He has also served as the University Honors Program Advisor, and as Chair of the Student Health Advisory Committee.

Currently he is the Primary Staff Advisor for the Catholic Newman Club at CSUSB. He earned his B.A. in biological psychology and minor in biology, with honors, and M.A. in experimental psychology at CSUSB. Agustín is a second generation

American and first-generation college student. His father, also named Agustín, was born and raised in Jalisco, Mexico. His mother, María, was born and raised in California. Agustín grew up in Colton, with three older siblings. He lives in San Bernardino with his wife and two daughters.



# FRANCISCO RODRIGUEZ



**Degree:** Communication Studies M.A.



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**F**rancisco is a 3rd year communication professor and CSUSB alumni, having graduated with his Master of Arts in Communication Studies in 2020. His areas of research interests include Latinx culture, decolonial theory, gender & LGBTQ+ studies, media arts and technology, and intercultural relations.

Besides teaching, Francisco has corporate experience having worked in the human resources department for several companies in southern California. Francisco is a hands-on academic who is continuously working on projects, especially community-based like TEDxCSUSB, to reinvent himself while building relationships and fostering community. In his spare time, he enjoys watching scary documentaries or going hiking with friends. Native to California, he is now working in the heart of Orlando, FL teaching speech and faculty development courses.



# DR. OLIVIA ROSAS



**Degree:** Educational Leadership Ed.D



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Olivia Rosas, a graduate of Indio High School in the Coachella Valley, obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, Spanish and Chicano Studies from UC Riverside, a Master of Arts from CSUSB in Education with a Concentration in Counseling and Guidance and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) from California State University, San Bernardino. Ms. Rosas has served in multiple roles with a focus on student access and success.

Prior to her interim appointment as Vice President of Student Services at San Bernardino Valley College, Ms. Rosas served as the Associate Vice President of Student Success and Educational Equity at California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB). In this role, she had direct oversight of state and federally funded programs including Educational Talent Search (ETS), First-STAR Academy, GEAR-UP, The Undocumented Student Success Center and Upward Bound. Olivia also served as the Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management at CSUSB where she oversaw the operation of the following departments: Admissions, Student Recruitment and Visitor Services, Financial Aid and Scholarships, University Registrar, DREAMers Resource and Success Center and the Office of Pre-College Programs.

Ms. Rosas held other positions throughout her career in higher education including Director of Admissions and Student Recruitment, Assistant to the Associate Vice President, Enrollment Management, and Associate Director, Admissions

and Student Recruitment to name a few.

Ms. Rosas has been in the field of higher education for over 30 years, and she has been an advocate for students since the beginning of her career. Serving students is her true passion. In addition to serving the students at San Bernardino Valley College, Dr. Rosas and her team focus on strengthening collaborations across divisions on campus and engaging with educational and community partners.





# DAVID SOSA



**Degree:** English Composition M.A.



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**T**he son of Mexican immigrants, I was instilled with a desire to succeed in school because my parents counted on and encouraged the development of our literacy, believing it would be the key to our success. I am also proud of my experience as a leader in the Marine Corps where I learned the value of commitment, work ethic, and building together for a common purpose. Finally, my experience as an English, math, and military science teacher, as well as my time serving as an interventions coordinator and assistant principal at both the middle and high school levels, have prepared and inspired me to continue working with incredible students, families, and staff to support the various school communities I serve.

I have had an unconventional path toward graduate school. After separating from the military, I enrolled in the community college system where I spent four years before I successfully completed coursework to transfer to Cal. State San Marcos in the Literature and Writing Studies Program. I was involved in the school paper as a copy editor as well as the president of the philosophy club with my mentor, Dr. Arriaga. I completed my undergraduate degree with the support of an incredible staff and network of students in the program.

I went on to obtain a single-subject credential in English from San Marcos as well. As a result, I went on to be both a middle and high school English teacher. I worked with students struggling with writing, and I was hard pressed to find anyone with a clear understanding how

to effectively teach struggling writers. That was my cue to seek out the English composition program at Cal. State San Bernardino. With a full-time job, I was finally able to earn my Master's in English Composition. When the time eventually came, I decided to become a school administrator. I had a Master's, so I needed to complete an administrator credential program. I currently work as an assistant principal at a middle school, where my degree is used on a daily basis as I interact with students, their families, and staff. The technical skills of reading and writing play a significant role in my daily duties. But the critical consciousness that comes with a graduate degree is the more salient aspect of what graduate school does for students as they become practitioners of their craft and understand the needs of others.

# CONTACT US

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