

The California Pre-Doctoral and Chancellor's Doctoral Incentive Programs- AY 2026-27

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PreDoctoral Program Coordinator

Pre-Doctoral Program

History:

- In its 37th year!
- Founded in 1989, by the CSU and UC
- Fun fact: It's funded by the CSU from the California Lottery Fund
- The Pre-Doc Program provides financial assistance for students interested in exploring and preparing for a doctoral program.

Awards are based on:

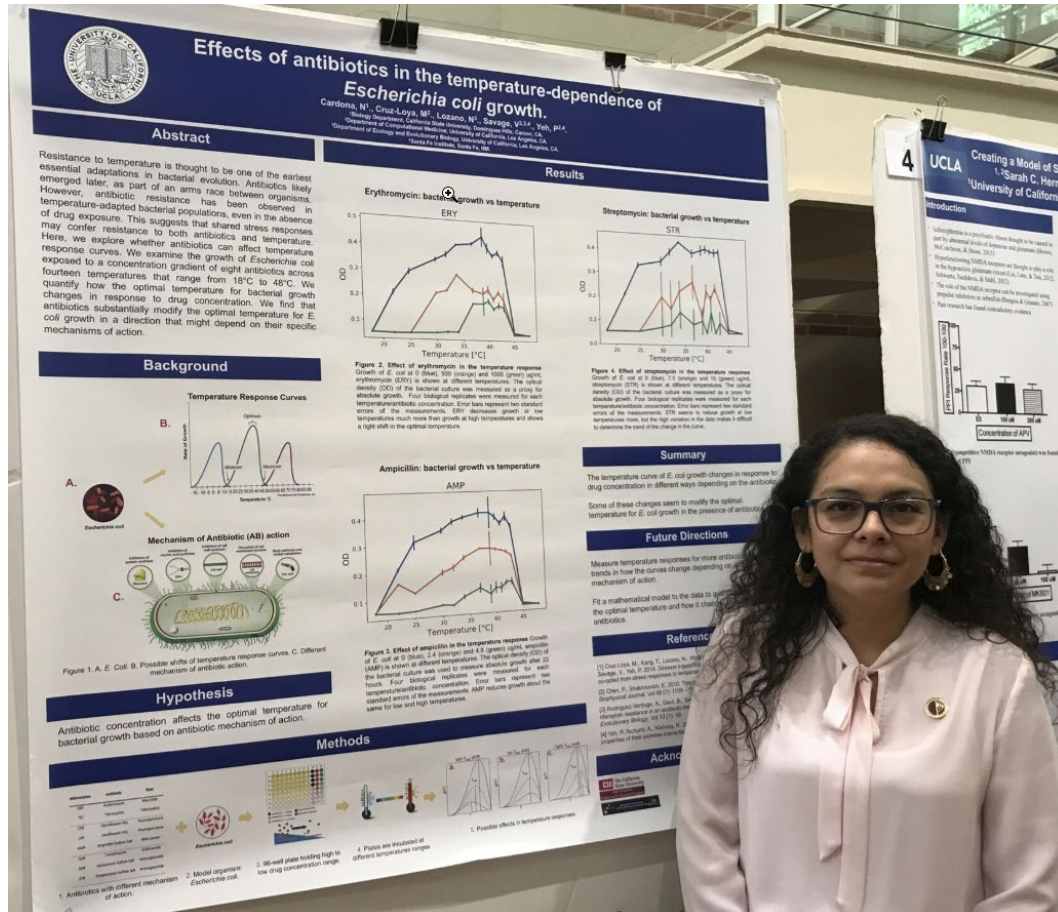
- Competitive review of applications
- Demonstration of academic excellence while experiencing economic or educational disadvantage.
- Pre-Doc Scholars may use funds for
 - meeting faculty and students at U.S. doctoral-granting institutions, membership in professional organizations, subscriptions to academic journals, GRE preparation, to cover the cost of graduate school application and test fees.
 - provides an opportunity to apply for participation in a funded summer internship opportunity.

**I AM A CSU
SALLY
CASANOVA
PRE-DOCTORAL
SCHOLAR**



The California Pre-Doctoral Program is designed to increase diversity within the pool of university faculty by supporting the doctoral aspirations of students in the CSU.

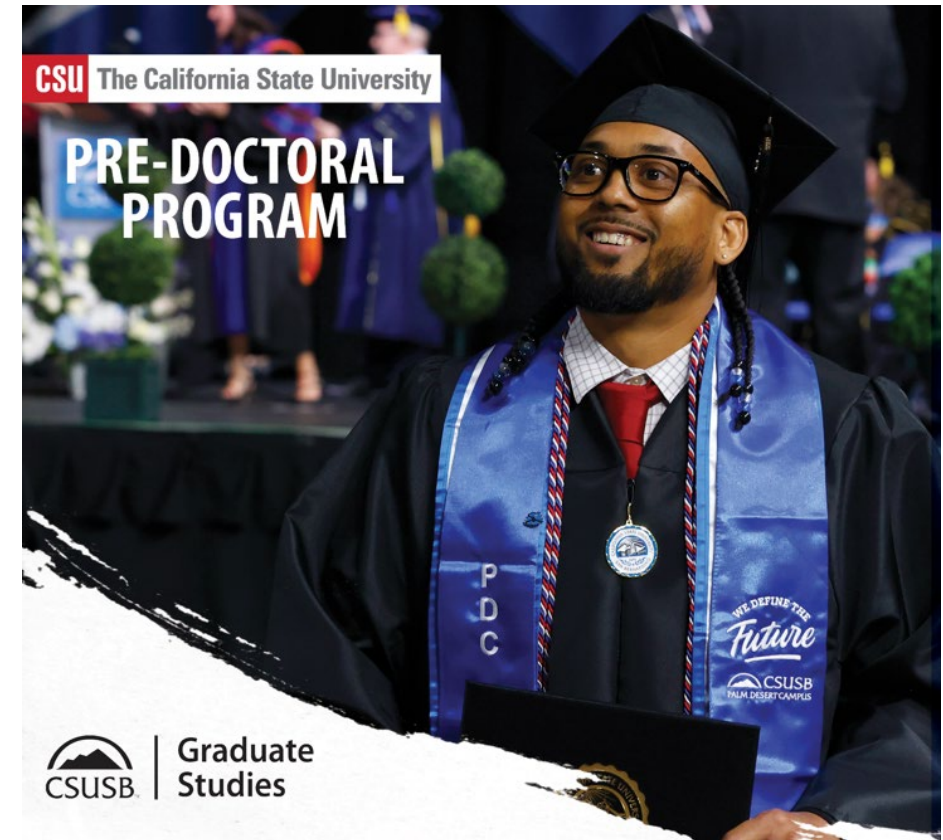
A Few Program Statistics



- Over 2600 Scholars funded
- Almost half of each cohort end up in fully funded Ph.D. programs
- Almost 25% of Sally Casanova Scholars receive funding for their Ph.D. program through the Chancellor's Doctoral Incentive Program
- An average of 13 Sally Casanova scholars are admitted each year into a Ph.D. program at a UC campus
- 90 percent of the scholars are first generation
- 82 percent are students of color
- 65 percent of the scholars are female
- 20 percent are Juniors
- 20 percent are Seniors
- 60 percent are Master's students

Two Pre-Doctoral Program Options

- The California Pre-Doctoral Program
 - Open to current CSU juniors, seniors, and graduate students across all disciplines.
- The California Pre-Doctoral Program – Health Professions Track
 - A new track within the Pre-Doctoral Program to support students aspiring to careers in health professions, including public health, health psychology, human development (with an emphasis on health), kinesiology, nursing, social work and speech/language/hearing sciences, that require professional doctorates.



Pre-Doctoral Program Details

- Supports the doctoral aspirations of CSU students who have experienced economic and educational disadvantages
- Emphasis is on increasing the number of CSU students who enter Ph.D. programs at a University of California campus
- Awardees are designated a Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholar and work closely with their CSU faculty mentor
- The Scholar and their mentor will develop an overall plan that leads to eventual enrollment in a doctoral program

Program Perks

- Travel Funds for the student to visit U.S. doctoral-granting institutions to meet with faculty and students and/or to attend professional meetings appropriate to the student's development.
- Development Funds for activities such as student membership in professional organizations, subscriptions to academic journals, graduate school applications and test fees, GRE preparation, and the cost of minor research materials.
- A Summer Research Experience opportunity at a UC campus, or other U.S. major research university, fully funded by the Pre-Doctoral Program, so that the scholar can participate in doctoral-level research prior to applying to a Ph.D. program. Separate application required.

Participant Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Currently enrolled at a California State University campus (2026-27 academic year)
- Be matriculated at a California State University campus as an upper-division undergraduate or master's student for Fall 2026.
- Plan to pursue a research doctorate (Ph.D. or equivalent).
 - Note: Professional programs such as law, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, or the MBA are not eligible.
- Have a CSU faculty mentor to support research training and scholarship
- Note: Previous Sally Casanova Scholars are not eligible to reapply.

Pre-Doc Application Details

- Components of the application include:
 - Online Application through Smartsheet
 - Educational Information
 - Curriculum vitae (CV) – New
 - Statement of AI - New
 - Three Essays* - **New prompts**
 - Faculty Mentor Letter of Recommendation
 - Student Budget Proposal
 - Unofficial Transcripts

*Essay prompts are unique to the HPT track



Selection Criteria

- The 2026-27 cohort will include enrolled juniors, seniors, and master's students in the California State University. Applicants will be selected through a holistic review process by CSU faculty members considering the following criteria:
- Potential for success in doctoral study
- Clarity and feasibility of their budget proposal and plan for educational enrichment
- Alignment with the California Pre-Doctoral Program's goals to increase access to advanced education for California's future faculty
- **If you are interested in applying, start now:**
 - Find your tenured/tenured-track faculty mentor. Network early to connect with faculty!
 - Prepare your application materials*.
 - Complete the online Pre-Doc application:
 - **The application is open and will close on Friday, February 13th at 5 p.m.**
 - **Faculty review*** - Submit application packet (draft) to me by **January 12, 2026**

****Faculty Review Committee optional but is strongly recommended***

Tips for Applicants

- Applicants are strongly recommended to contact their campus' California Pre-Doctoral Program [campus coordinator](#) for guidance on preparing a strong application and selecting a faculty mentor.
- Start early! Draft essays well before the deadline.
 - Take advantage of the [Graduate Writing Center](#)
- Meet regularly with your mentor to design a focused, realistic budget proposal.
- Keep your budget proposal aligned with your doctoral preparation goals.
- Ask for feedback on your essays and CV from your coordinator, mentor, and/or writing center.
- [Log into your existing Smartsheet account](#), often bound to your institution email address, or [create a new account](#)

The Chancellor's Doctoral Incentive Program

Developing Future Faculty



Mission and Goals of the CDIP

- Provide an opportunity for exceptional applicants interested in working as scholars and teachers in the CSU to receive comprehensive support during their doctoral studies.
- Create a qualified and diverse faculty to meet the needs of the most ethnically and economically diverse student body in the nation.
- Increase the number of CSU faculty who have the desire and commitment to teach the diverse student body of the CSU.
- Available to [CSU](#) and [non-CSU](#) students

Program Overview

- CDIP helps doctoral students turn their faculty aspirations into reality through CSU Faculty mentorship, professional development, and financial assistance.
- Each of the selected will be designated as a CDIP Fellow and will work closely with their CSU faculty mentor to develop an overall plan that leads to a faculty career focused on student-centered teaching and research. This plan should be tailored to the specific goals and career objectives of the doctoral student.
- Additionally, the program provides access to internal funding (which is competitive):
 - Professional Development for fellows to prepare for an academic career as faculty in the CSU.
 - Development Funds for academic and professional development (student membership in professional organizations, subscriptions to academic journals, and the cost of minor research materials).
 - Access to an Optional Loan that is forgivable if the CDIP Fellow has an instructional faculty position in the CSU system.

Eligibility

- Interested applicants are strongly recommended to contact a CDIP campus coordinator for guidance.
- Individuals applying to or currently enrolled in accredited doctoral programs in the United States with a goal of becoming student-centered faculty are eligible.
- Individuals must identify a CSU Faculty Mentor who is on the tenure track or tenured at the time of application. You can contact a CSU Campus coordinator to help you identify a faculty member.



The Application Components

- Find your faculty mentor – Start now!
- Work with your mentor and complete the application components
 1. Bio/Demo Information
 2. Curriculum Vitae (CV)
 3. Essays (3)
 4. Collaborative Plan of Support: Teaching, Research & Scholarly Activities, Service & Leadership
 5. Two Letters of Recommendation - Refer to CDIP Guidelines
- The [application is now open](#)
- Application closes: February 16, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. (PST)

****It is not required but strongly encouraged that you submit a draft application for review by our CSUSB review committee before you submit the application. (Due 1/12/2026)***



Additional Information

- The CDIP Team is encouraging applicants to contact their campus CDIP Coordinator and attend a Zoom Info Session with the CO. [Find session dates by clicking here](#)
- If you are already in a Ph.D. program, you need to have at least one year remaining in your program to be eligible.
- CDIP Eligibility - Special Degree Considerations
 - Faculty Careers
 - CSU EdDs: New this year! You can apply but you must address how the program will prepare you for a faculty career.*
 - EdDs outside of the CSU*
 - U.S. citizenship is not required, and we encourage International students to apply.

****Doctoral program's mission explicitly includes preparation and training of future university faculty members. Plan to provide strong evidence for how your program will prepare you to be qualified and competitive for CSU faculty positions.***

Additional Information

- The role of your mentor is to support you in your doctoral training and development as a researcher and a teacher.
- How to find a Mentor
 - Speak with your undergraduate advisor, graduate program coordinator, or a faculty member who conducts research in an area that you want to pursue.
 - Speak with the chair of your department or a tenure-track faculty member in your area of discipline.
 - Watch the previously recorded [Finding a Faculty Mentor Workshop](#)
 - Reach out to the CDIP Coordinator if you need assistance in identifying a mentor.

Ready to get started?

California Pre-Doctoral Program Information:

<https://www.csusb.edu/graduate-studies/financial-support/california-pre-doctoral-program>



Chancellor's Doctoral Incentive Program Information:

<https://www.csusb.edu/graduate-studies/financial-support/chancellors-doctoral-incentive-program>



GOOD LUCK WITH THE PROCESS!

- **Reach out to me with any questions you may have about applying.**
- **I'm available to meet in-person, via Zoom, or by the phone**

April Lane

Pre-Doctoral & Chancellor's Doctoral Program Coordinator

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