



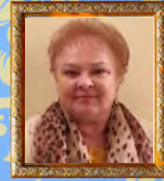
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

College of Extended Studies

never stop learningSM

Upfront

An eMagazine from the
College of Extended Studies
San Diego State University



PORTRAITS OF SUCCESS

In This Issue

- \$1,500 Stipend for San Diego County Teachers
- NEW: Wine Education Abroad
- Win a Scholarship to the SDSU Writers' Conference
- NEW: Craft Beer Education Camp



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PORTRAITS OF SUCCESS

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Upfront is an online source for engaging, informing, and cultivating conversations on workforce topics. It provides up-to-date information and insight on today's most talked about topics in professional development.

Programs described in this publication are SDSU Research Foundation programs.

Educators Can Fill a Critical Need by

\$1,500 Stipends Available to San Diego County Teachers.

Dual language programs are flourishing in elementary schools across the country. Also known as two-way immersion, they give English-language learners (ELLs) and English-proficient students instruction in English and a target language in the same classroom, starting in kindergarten for a minimum of six years. Students develop proficiency in both languages while learning from one another and supporting each other.

In San Diego, the primary target language is Spanish. Throughout the country, there are more than 20 target languages including Arabic, French, Hawaiian, Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin.

Dual language programs have become so popular and widespread that the Los Angeles Times refers to them as “the new face of bilingual education.” As such, the demand for educators to teach in these programs has skyrocketed.

SDSU is helping teachers fill this critical need by offering graduate certificate programs in both Dual Language for Academic Literacy, and English Language Development for Academic Literacy through its Department of Dual Language and English Learner Education. Each program consists of four classes, two semesters, and 12 graduate units that can be counted toward a master’s degree. And as of fall 2014, both programs are fully online to best accommodate the schedules of educators.

“This program emerged as a result of teachers and administrators requesting additional preparation for working with English learners in English-only settings as well as teachers teaching in dual-language programs in the Common Core era,” said department Chair Cristina Alfaro, Ph.D.

The Dual Language certificate program provides K-12 teachers and other education professionals with instruction in two languages, and focuses on students developing competencies in bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism/multiculturalism.

The English Language Development certificate program prepares educators for developing academic literacy assessment, curriculum, and teaching methods specifically designed to meet the needs of ELLs.

Through federally funded Project CORE, a limited number of \$1,500 stipends are still available for the spring 2016 semester to credentialed teachers who live or work in San Diego County. The deadline to apply is November 1. For details, email projectcoresandiego@gmail.com or email dle@mail.sdsu.edu.

Attaining a Dual Language /ELD Certificate

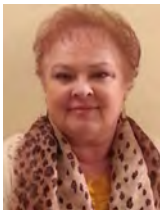
Stipend recipient **David Niss** has taught 20 years in the Lemon Grove School District, which has a dual-immersion curriculum as of the last six years. He's completing his certificate in English Language Development along with a master's program.

"This program is giving me insight into bilingual education in California and throughout the country," he said of the certificate program. "We have a high percentage of Latino students at our school. The SDSU program is motivating me to be the best for our Lemon Grove students who face language challenges and grow up in poverty."

Niss is among two males in his cohort of 27 educators, most of whom are Hispanic.

"I haven't lived through the struggles of being a bilingual child as most of my colleagues have," he said. "I come from a little bit of an outside perspective. I am coming from more of a social-justice angle of bilingual education and am learning a lot from my colleagues."

Diana Cordero Sanchez, an elementary school teacher in the South Bay Union School District, is enrolled in the Dual Language program.



Diana Cordero Sanchez

"I can tell you that I have thrived in my teaching profession because of what the Project CORE program availed me to do," she said. "It was like receiving the education of a master's in the rigor. I loved everything about this program. I recommend it to teachers in general – not necessarily to bilingual teachers – but anyone that works with ELLs."

Gisela Marable, who teaches in the National City School District (a K-6 district), also benefitted from the Dual Language for Academic Literacy program.

"It was such a fantastic, educational, and rigorous course that it gives me pleasure to say that I worked hard because that was the expectation of the professors, and my own expectation," she said.

For more information on the Dual Language and English Language Development Certificate programs, please visit neverstoplearning.net/duallanguage.



Learn more about the program in this video.

Elementary School Teacher Sees Social Justice Among Benefits of Dual Education

Now in his 20th year at Mt. Vernon Elementary School in the Lemon Grove School District, David Niss teaches the English side of a 50-50 model dual-immersion (Spanish/English) program. He's currently halfway through his combination Master of Arts and English Language Development Certificate through SDSU's Department of Dual Language and English Learner Education.

Q: Give us a brief history of your education.

A: I got my BA in Journalism from SDSU in 1985, and my CLAD Multiple Subjects Teaching Credential from National University in 1995.

Q: What was your objective in taking SDSU's English Language Development program?

A: My teaching partner, Irisbelle Rodriguez-Mosler is a program graduate and an awesome, inspirational teacher and advocate for kids. I want to contribute as much as possible to the success of our program, and the \$7,000 in combined stipends were an incentive as well.

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Q: How did the program meet your expectations?

A: I'm learning strategies and approaches to improve my teaching effectiveness along with the history, politics, and philosophical underpinnings of teaching bicultural and impoverished students, who are the majority of my clientele.

Q: What insights did you gain into bilingual education?

A: I wasn't involved in the struggle to legitimize bilingual instruction, so the program has filled in gaps in my knowledge of the pitched battles that have been fought over the issue, particularly the impact of Proposition 227 here in California and how it ironically led to the expansion of dual-language programs across the state. [Passed in 1998, Proposition 227 required California public schools to teach LEP students nearly entirely in English. In most cases, it had the effect of eliminating bilingual classes.]

Q: How do educators who haven't gone through the program deal with students for whom English is a second language?

A: That's a tough one to answer, since teaching is an art and teachers' approaches vary widely. I know that my relatively privileged background has at times blinded me to some of the issues my students and their families deal with beyond learning English. Some teachers have trouble understanding why some students seem to lack motivation or why some families seem to de-emphasize academics. I think a lot of it depends on how open a teacher is to questioning his or her own assumptions about other people.

Q: What are some of the things the program availed you to do that you couldn't do before?

A: I think generally just being able to relate better to the struggles our students face, both academically and socially. Kids grow up fast where I teach, yet they still hunger for discovery, guidance, and stability.

Q: How crucial was the program's online aspect in fitting it into your schedule?

A: Most of my program consists of traditional class instruction augmented by partnership and group projects. Professors post resources online,

communicate with us via email or text, and most assignments are submitted online as well, but I'd hardly call it an online program. I probably spend a minimum of 8 hours weekly online for these courses, whether it's reading, researching or collaborating with others in my cohort. The twice weekly afternoon or evening class meetings have allowed me to participate while continuing to teach full-time.

Q: What do you think are the program's biggest strengths?

A: Emphasis on social justice. I grew up in a state of relative privilege (which I was largely unaware of until I reached adulthood). I naively assumed most of my pals and classmates would attend SDSU, which was the neighborhood college for me, since I grew up just a couple miles away in Allied Gardens. But only a few did, and I never ran into any of the kids who were bused into my high school once I started attending State. Statistically, most of my students don't get the opportunity to attend four-year universities. Yet they are every bit as bright, talented, and motivated as anyone (including adults). It's not right that their opportunities are more limited than mine, and I want

to work to change that. Teaching as a career choice was part of that, and my participation in Project CORE is its natural progression.

Q: What do you love best about teaching?

A: Having the honor and opportunity to work with children to bring about positive change in the world. I want to add that we've started the process of obtaining International Baccalaureate certification at my school. [Certified schools are known as IB World Schools and are authorized to teach special international programs that encourage personal and academic achievement.]

Q: Anything else you'd like to add?

A: Just that it's invigorating for a relative geezer like me to be back on campus and engaging with fellow professionals who share their passion for teaching and learning.



David Niss

Wine Lovers' Dream: Exclusive Wine & Cuisine Immersion in Spain through SDSU's New Wine Education Abroad Program

Wine professionals and enthusiasts can take their knowledge – and their sense of *carpe diem* – to the next level, with the debut of SDSU's Wine Education Abroad program. The first-ever cohort will experience nine days and nights of privately guided wine and cuisine immersion in the Catalonia, Rioja, and Basque regions of Spain, April 17-25, 2016.

Students will contrast the traditions of centuries-old wineries with those of modern ones, sample wines straight from the barrel, walk through vineyards by the sea, learn the harvest process, prune grapevines, and even crush grapes underfoot. Along the way, they will dine everywhere from an ancient wine cave to a medieval village to modernist pintxos bars.

"If you ever wanted to explore the wine and food of Spain, have someone take you to places you cannot get to on your own, and experience the essence and heart of three Spanish areas, this trip is for you," says Deborah Lazear, CSW, a certified Spanish wine educator who will provide instruction throughout the excursion.

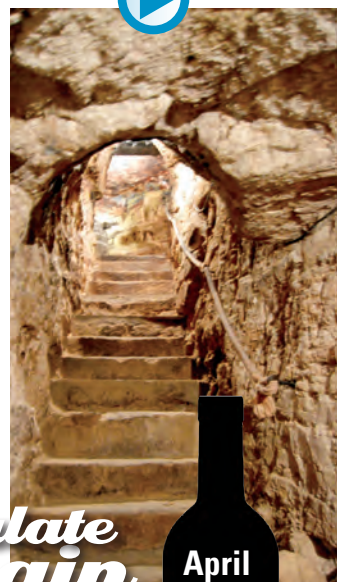
The tour is led by Spanish guide Ana Gabriela Serra, who specializes in providing tailored itineraries in this region of the world.

"Our tour guide has created relations with wineries that are not open to the public but will be open to us," says Lazear. "The trip truly is exclusive."

Students will travel by private transportation, enjoy private sommelier-level tours, experience private tours of vineyards and museums, and have private daily wine classes. Their instruction time will count toward one elective or intensive course in the SDSU Business of Wine program — of which Wine Education Abroad is a new division.

"Spain is not New World; it's Old World," says Lazear. "Students will get a first-hand experience of how history has molded wine in Spain and influenced the world."

Wine Education Abroad is a new division of the College of Extended Studies' professional certificate program in the Business of Wine. The registration deadline for the Spain trip is Nov. 27, 2015. This experience is limited to 20 participants and open to wine enthusiasts worldwide.



*Educate
Your Palate
in Spain*

April
17-25,
2016

For more information on the Wine Education Abroad program, please visit neverstoplearning.net/winetravel or email wine@mail.sdsu.edu.



Business of Wine Student Shares Insights —

“I walk out of class feeling like I was just in France.”

Brittany Barton could rescue you in the event of a scuba emergency, defibrillate you, fly you to the destination of your choice, transact your next home purchase, detangle a hospitality snafu, and suggest the perfect wine with dinner. As a certified rescue scuba diver, emergency first responder, pilot, real estate agent, hospitality law certificate-holder, and sommelier, Barton’s interests are numerous and varied. This avid sailor will soon have her captain’s license as well.

“I find something I like and I learn it,” said Barton, who’s been working as a bartender in first-class San Diego resorts for the last seven years. “I’m currently working at the La Jolla Shores Hotel, an amazing beachfront resort owned by the La Jolla Beach & Tennis Club. My office has a 180-degree view of the Pacific Ocean. I tell all my friends back home that I have the window office.”

The journey toward her most recent achievement – certified sommelier – began in the Business of Wine Professional Certificate program at SDSU’s College of Extended Studies.

What was your objective in taking SDSU’s Business of Wine program?

When I started the program, I wasn’t sure what I wanted to get out of it. I only knew that I loved wine and wanted to know more. This program has opened my mind to an entire world I knew nothing about. The intensive classes are my way of vicariously traveling the world. I can’t get enough. Not only have the courses given me a huge edge as a bartender, but they’ve given me lots of great ideas on further advancing my career in wine and hospitality.

Which courses did you take?

So far I completed intensives in Australian, California, Spanish, and French wines. *Exploring Wine* was an amazing introductory course, and I’ve also taken Wine List Creation and The Character of Wine. The courses helped me pass the introductory-level sommelier exam and I plan on continuing to take classes long after I complete the Business of Wine certificate. I still have three classes to finish the program, but there are always new classes available.



Brittany Barton

How did the program meet your expectations?

The program has far exceeded my expectations. It would have been impossible to get these results out of a book on my own. I wouldn't have known where to start. These classes are so much more than just memorizing information to pass a test. Each class takes you beyond the surface and really helps develop an understanding of cultures, geography, and history of the region of study. The instructors bring so much passion and personal experience into their teachings that I walk out of class feeling like I was just in France.

How did you find out about the program?

My employer recommended the program and even paid for my first class. They know the value of knowledgeable staff and want to provide our guests with the best experience possible. The class is not mandatory but at least seven of my coworkers have taken the step and started their wine education as well.

What do you think are the program's biggest strengths?

By far the depth of knowledge and experience of the instructors. They're amazing. We're talking about some of the industry's most influential, long-standing, top players. They come from different backgrounds from all corners of the world and they're masters in their field. It's not often we get a chance to sit down in a room with these legends and get a real look into their world of wine.

Can you share some pearls of wisdom you learned about wine or the wine-making process?

When pairing wine with dessert, make sure the wine is sweeter than the dessert. If the dessert is sweeter, it will cancel out the sweetness of the wine and turn it into a bitter acid-bomb (sort of like toothpaste and orange juice). Also, it's OK to drink a glass of wine with lunch! It's normal practice throughout Europe (my personal favorite).

How do you plan on applying the knowledge from this certificate to your career?

I want to host the coolest wine parties in town. Whether it's a party for my

friends and family or just another night bartending, it's taken my hosting abilities to a whole new level. Most recently I've been enjoying having friends out on my sailboat for sunset wine tasting and dinner cruises. As a bartender, I'm really able to understand what my guests are looking for and help them get the most out of their dining experience. This class has opened many doors for advancement in the wine industry.

Did you make any networking connections?

Yes! In one of my classes the instructor brought in a local winemaker to talk about some of the newest practices and trends. Very interesting presentation. A couple months later while I was at the sommelier exam, I was a bit of a loner. Most of my peers had come with friends or work-sponsored groups and I was there on my own. Toward the end of the first day, I found a familiar face. It was the winemaker from school! I walked over and introduced myself and told him how great his presentation had been. For the rest of the exam process he was sort of my buddy, a friend to run questions by and create a little bit of a team feel. I have made many, many networking connections through the course but this one really stood out for me.

How convenient was it to fit the courses into your schedule?

I really liked that the classes were just a few weeks or less. Enough time to absorb the information without creating any conflict with day-to-day life. The majority of people taking this course are working professionals. Everyone would get to class at 6 pm feeling like they needed a nap and by the

end of class everyone is giggling, asking questions, and seriously excited about the information they've just learned. Whether it's at a party or in a classroom, wine is fun!

Would you recommend the SDSU's Business of Wine program to others?

I already have! I recommend this program to anyone who has any interest in wine — from the novice wine drinker to the veteran bartender to the couple starting up their own vineyard. The world of wine is vast and there is something for everyone.



Business of Wine Student Brings Napa Experience to Cruise-Goers

Jeffrey Maltzman is the founder of Blend Craft Wines, a Florida-based company that brings the Napa Valley winery experience to cruise ships. Under the direction of a professional California winemaker, cruise-goers create their ideal blend of wine; bottle, cork and label it using authentic vintner equipment; then take home the perfect souvenir of Blend Craft's "Winemaker Experience."

The concept is so unique and fun that it won the *Miami Herald's* annual Business Challenge in 2012.

In his continuing efforts to excel at what he does, Maltzman searched online for wine education classes and found the Business of Wine program at SDSU's College of Extended Studies.

"I initially started the program to gain credibility in the wine industry, but kept taking classes because they were fun and interesting," said Maltzman, whose "other" job is as a maritime lawyer, representing cruise lines. He and his wife Ana also own Napa Winery in Napa, and Gold Creek Winery in Amador City, Calif. "The program has given me an outstanding background of knowledge about the wine industry, wine making, and wine regions of the world.

The courses are educational, entertaining and interactive and the professors are, without exception, top leaders in the Southern California wine industry."

What was your "aha" moment in coming up with the idea for Blend Craft Wines?

As the recession hit, I realized cruise lines were looking for ways to attract more guests and to increase their revenue from onboard activities. I tried to brainstorm a concept that no one had ever tried before and combined my love of wine with my love of the cruise industry.

How far into the Business of Wine program are you?

I'm one class away from completing the professional certificate. I had signed up but missed the

class as I had an opportunity to fly to Geneva and pitch our wines to MSC Cruises for their onboard wine list. I'm planning to take Food and Wine Pairing when it's next offered again. I definitely want the certificate as I believe it's valuable and gives recipients instant credibility in an industry where there are lots of self-proclaimed experts without any real expertise or training in the field.

Can you share some pearls of wisdom you learned about wine or the wine making process?

Wine advertisements emphasize the romance and artistry of creating wine. The program does a great job of teaching that making great wine is 80 percent science and chemistry, 10 percent passion and storytelling, and perhaps 10 percent blind luck.

What do you think are the program's biggest strengths?

The program does a great job of combining serious education with fun and entertainment. The instructors are fantastic. Gus from Wilson Creek Winery is so passionate about what he does – it's infectious.

Did you make any networking connections?

Yes. One of my classmates is starting a wine distribution company and we're planning to give him one of our labels as his first commercial client.

Would you recommend SDSU's Business of Wine program to others?

I recommend the SDSU Business of Wine program to anyone who is serious about working in

the wine industry. Regardless whether you plan to work at a winery, work in a restaurant, or start your own wine wholesale company, the program offers an excellent background in the wide world of wine.

Anything you'd like to add?

I look forward to recruiting graduates of the program in the years to come, as I know they will have the background and education needed to succeed as wine professionals.

"The courses are educational, entertaining, and interactive, and the instructors are, without exception, top leaders in the Southern California wine industry."



Jeffrey Maltzman

Enhance Your Career by Honing Your Writing Skills



If you've ever received an email, letter, or sales piece that was confusing, wordy, or typo-ridden, you know that poor writing impacts the writer's credibility. By mastering a few techniques, you can ensure that your every communication is clear and concise. In today's multi-media world, that's a formula for success both on the job and in life.

To that end, the College of Extended Studies offers the Professional Certificate in Business Writing program, a series of three half-day workshops that will forever change your approach to writing.

Meet Instructor Anne Bromley



Students of Anne Bromley would not be surprised to know that she published two collections of poetry, a translated book of poems by Spanish poet Rosalia de Castro, and a children's picture book.

What might surprise them about this writing expert is that she's participated in five

marathons, practices yoga and meditation in the morning and evening, and does not watch television.

To get a better insight into this fascinating instructor, check out what she has to say:

How did you become an instructor at SDSU's College of Extended Studies?

In 2000, the program director of Professional Development asked my husband (at the time, he was teaching seminars on Interpersonal Skills) if he knew anyone who could teach business writing. "As a matter of fact, I'm married to someone who can do that." I sent in a proposal, had a successful interview, and I've been teaching business writing seminars with CES for 15 years.

Which course do you teach?

I teach *Business Writing for Success*, a three-part series which includes: 1) *The Five Essential Steps of Effective Business Writing*; 2) *Perfecting Your Document: Editing and Proofreading*; and 3) *Polishing Your Grammar*.

How often does your class meet?

The series is offered from 8:30 am-12 pm over three consecutive Wednesdays in the fall and spring. Organizations can also request an onsite program.

Does the course require homework outside the classroom?

There is only one homework requirement: students draft a document during the first

class and then are asked to bring in a revision to be edited in a workshop during the second class.

Do you use your own experiences in teaching the class?

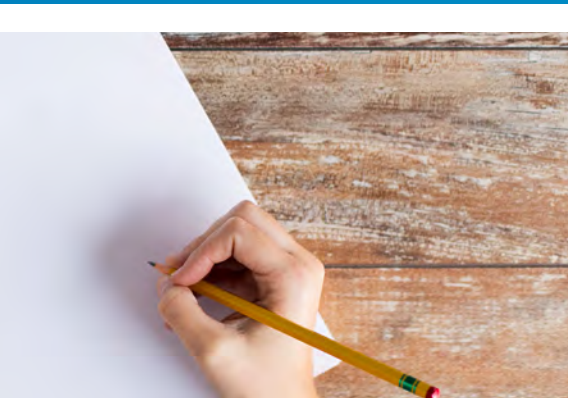
Oh, yes! I have lots of examples from daily email; formal correspondence; government documents; and choosing the appropriate communication tool (email; phone calls; face-to-face meetings) for our clients and the other professionals who serve them.

What have you learned about your students?

They come from a variety of industries, non-profits, and government agencies throughout San Diego County, as well as the U.S. Marine Corp (Camp Pendleton). Many are transitioning into new careers. Others are looking to enhance their current careers. I am touched by their enthusiasm and their humility: they realize that poor writing can impact their upward mobility as well as their credibility, and they take time out of their crazy busy lives to improve their skills.

Any fun or interesting anecdotes to share from class?

One of the exercises that I use in the first class of the series (*The Five Essential Steps*) involves reducing a 53-word passage to 20 words or fewer without losing the essential theme. Here is the original wordy passage:



In the past there were a large number of firms located on the West Coast offering us competition. At the present point in time, the majority of those firms have been forced to go out of business by the hardships and difficulties of the present recessionary period of business contraction and stagnation.

The students work in pairs to get this passage down to its essence. Usually, they can get it down to about 13-15 words. However, “the world’s record” has been set by a Marine at Camp Pendleton, who stood up to proudly announce that he had cut this thing to the bone: WE’RE STILL HERE!

So far, it’s still “the world’s record.”

Who should take this class?

This class is for anyone who cares about good writing skills. Writing is an important skill on the job and in life. As William Zinsser, writer, editor, and teacher, points out in his book, *Writing to Learn*, “Far too many Americans are prevented from doing useful work because they have never learned to express themselves. Contrary to general belief, writing is not something only ‘writers’ do; writing is a basic skill for getting through life.” The ability to write well – clearly and concisely with an awareness of one’s reader – is not an ancillary skill; it is an essential skill.

Student Success Stories

“It’s the perfect crash course for the inexperienced, or refresher for the skilled veteran. You will not be disappointed! Anne Bromley’s teaching style makes the minutiae of English and grammar seem to jump off the page. This course was one of the best investments of my educational career. Definitely worth repeating.”

— **Allen Sulzen**, Office Administrator, Southcoast Heating and Air Conditioning



“The Business Writing program instructor and materials motivated me to start incorporating techniques from the course well before the class concluded. From composing daily emails to drafting complex reports, the writing methods outlined in the sessions are easy to employ and deliver solid results. I’ve gained greater confidence in my writing approach and my overall writing process has become faster, more fulfilling, and less frustrating.”

— **Andrea Priske Cowan**, Senior Marketing Communications Manager, ELSEVIER



“The SDSU Extended Studies Business Writing course was excellent; it exceeded my expectations. I am an administrator in higher education and communication is critical. Writing clear, concise, and succinct memos, emails and reports is a daily occurrence. Federal laws change, contracts are negotiated, training materials are created, all of which require clear communication. The Business Writing course refined and improved my written skills. It brought bad writing habits to the forefront, and tips were provided to not only break bad habits, but provide good proofreading skills and general best practices. The advice was practical and applied to situations that occur in the workplace. The course was so good that I have asked my staff to attend the next session.”

— **Traci Merrill**, CRA, Director, Office of Sponsored Programs, University of San Diego



“The SDSU Business Writing course is an excellent refresher for grammar rules and helpful tips to avoid common mistakes, but my biggest takeaway comes from strategies for brainstorming, proofreading, and collaborating with colleagues to ensure the best writing output possible. I highly recommend this experience to anyone who does not feel 100 percent confident at all times about writing.”

— **Jill Linder**, KPBS



First Cohort of SDSU's MA in Education with a Concentration in Educational Leadership and a Specialization in PreK-12 — Blazing the Innovation Trail

According to **campustechnology.com** — an online publication covering education technology on college and university campuses — the burden is now on universities to advance the culture of innovation, to foster environments that accelerate learning and creativity, and to create the conditions for innovation to happen at all levels.

A group of 25 students are doing just that by taking the first cohort of SDSU's Master of Arts in Education with a Concentration in Educational Leadership and a Specialization in PreK-12 program. The program is fully online and offered in cooperation with SDSU's Department of Educational Leadership and the San Diego County Office of Education.

The WASC-accredited program is designed for school administrators and teachers who aspire to a leadership role in educational technology within their school or district.

Michelle Snyder, a mother of three, said the program is a perfect fit for her. Not only is she able to take her classes online from home, she can also apply what she learns to her current position as an English teacher at an accredited Vista Unified School District high school that offers online and blended learning.

"I'm learning the same way my students learn," she said. "It really has changed the way I teach. The class is a good balance of technology, pedagogy, and leadership."

Before taking the MA program, which focuses on technology, Snyder checked with SDSU College

"There's a big shift in how students are learning. They don't just open books, they're navigating online. There's a big need for administrators who have their ear to the ground and are taking a look at strategies."

of Education administrators to make sure it was a match for her.

"For a long time, I wanted to get a master's degree with a program that appealed to me," she said. "This one came along and it was right up my alley. I could tell it was very cutting-edge in education."

Alex Gonzalez, technology coordinator at a San Diego charter school, already had two degrees from a local computer training college and a master's degree in educational technology from Michigan State University.

He said SDSU's 15-month program, which runs through December, gives him insight into how administrators facilitate education. (The second cohort began in May.)

"It's a good experience to pull back the curtain and see why things are the way they are," he said. "A lot of people want to change education;

you have to look at the changing landscape of education first.

"There's a big shift in how students are learning. They don't just open books, they're navigating online. There's a big need for administrators who have their ear to the ground and are taking a look at strategies."



Michelle Snyder



Alex Gonzalez



Ulises Cisneros

Those strategies involve both educators and their students.

"You can't just drop devices on teachers and students and expect them to learn it," Gonzalez said. "When these students graduate from high school, they're going to be on their own. The global workforce is looking for people who can think on their feet."

Ulises Cisneros, second-grade Spanish-immersion teacher at a Lakeside Elementary School, noted how fellow students in the inaugural program refer to themselves as "trailblazers."

"It's been an amazing experience getting to start from the beginning," he said. "We see how things work and don't work. We get to collaborate with our instructors on how to make the program better."

As Cisneros noted, students are learning aspects from their professors that you cannot "Google" to find out. The SDSU course includes discussion groups and management systems designed for master's students to think deeper, and ultimately challenge the students they teach at the K-12 level to do the same.

"This program really makes us think big-picture," Cisneros said. "We think far into the future, not just the near future. It helps us become better leaders in education."



For more information on SDSU's MA Education Leadership program, visit neverstoplearning.net/edleadership.

High-Demand Careers in Grant Proposal Writing

By Jay Katz, President, Grants West; and Instructor, SDSU Professional Certificate in Grant Writing

In my time running Grants West, a company that raises money through grants for nonprofits and tax-exempt institutions, one theme has remained consistent:

These organizations are always looking for skilled grant proposal writers. Staff positions open and reopen; contractual grant writers come and go. Those who can make a difference and obtain results will be in demand. If you are already in the nonprofit field and want to enhance your skill set, having a credential in grant proposal development can be your ladder to career advancement and higher pay.

In turn, this career pathway offers an opportunity to truly help local communities. You can help prevent homelessness. You can enrich your community's arts and cultural programming. You can help youth succeed in school and prepare to go to college. You can help seniors stay in their own homes rather

than go into nursing care. You can help people prevent or manage chronic diseases or disabilities like diabetes, heart disease, multiple sclerosis, cancer and HIV/AIDS. You can do so many great things while advancing along your career path.

What does it take to succeed?

Writing skills: Some keys to successful proposal writing include using active voice, keeping your language concise, and understanding what is most compelling. If you've never written a grant proposal, you'll quickly discover that the writing format is a bit different than what you've done before. We'll help you focus your writing to meet and exceed expectations.

Business knowledge: It's not enough to write for a great cause; we have to be aware of successful nonprofit business models and how our organization stacks up. A poor management structure, negative balances on financial statements, or lack of experience can doom a grant application before it has been submitted. As a grant proposal writer,

you can advise and help your organizations understand what they need to do to position themselves for success. During the SDSU Grant Writing certificate program, we discuss these elements, and the role of the proposal writer in guiding their organizations to make improvements.

Matchmaking: Communication and research skills. The key to writing any grant proposal is submitting it to the right places. As part of the SDSU Grant Writing certificate program, we discuss how to find potential grantors and how to focus our prospect research appropriately. We also discuss how to communicate with a potential funder in a way that will increase the chances that a grant application is funded.

Join me for an accelerated course sequence that will build your skills and give you confidence as you pursue your next steps to building a career and helping your community.

What Students Say



“This was an outstanding course. I liked the way the presentation was laid out each week, and our instructor [Jay Katz] gave prompt and constructive feedback. He had additional thoughts on my submitted homework and really personalized my experience.”

— **Linda Sullivan** | [Read more in the blog story >>](#)

“The instructor had a vast knowledge of grant writing as well as other forms of raising money for projects. This knowledge helped to distinguish between funding options/projects.”

— **Kimberly M. Paris** (*Intro to Grant Writing*)

“He (Jay Katz) explains everything very thoroughly and makes it all so easy to understand.”

— **Jessica Van Der Woude**

“This online experience was my first rodeo and it was a very enjoyable way to learn.”

— **Tim Konzen**

“Jay was so accessible. He outlined everything so clearly and was available for questions. He was just super.”

— **Carol Hasson**



“I have taken many online courses, and this course was organized extremely well. The video/audio PowerPoint presentations made it feel as if I was in a classroom. The weekly exercises were relevant, and they built on each other making the process more understandable and applicable to real life scenarios. Great class! I thought the instructor was the best part of the class. He was engaged each and every week, he responded quickly to questions, had a positive attitude, and made me feel important as a student. Because of the instructor, I participated more and challenged myself to work outside of my comfort zone, knowing I would be met with his support. Thank you!”

— **Patricia Hiebert**

“The course was divided into manageable parts and felt challenging but not to the point of being overwhelming. I appreciated the instructor’s personalized feedback and encouragement, his availability and quick response time. This is the first online course I’ve ever taken, and my first class through SDSU. I would take another course with this instructor.”

— **Lauren Schade**

HR is Ever-Evolving. Learn to Stay Essential.

A career in human resource management involves strategic planning, addressing ever-changing legal and ethical issues, managing complex budgets, and guiding organizational behavior and change.

Whether you're new to HR or an accomplished practitioner, SDSU's Human Resource Management Professional Certificate helps you advance your career by acquiring the necessary skills, and providing practical experience.

Meet Instructor Dari DeSousa



Dari DeSousa

By day, Dari DeSousa is the senior work environment manager for Marriott International. By night, she teaches the *Talent Acquisition* course in the Professional Certificate in Human Resource Management program through SDSU's College of Extended

Studies. In between, she's cultivated interests that one wouldn't necessarily equate with an HR professional.

"I think it surprises students when they find out that I'm kind of a geek and love zombies and Comic-Con," said DeSousa, who will also be team teaching the *Compensation* course in HR along with fellow Marriott employee Dawn Myers during the fall semester.

What are some highlights of the *Talent Acquisition* course?

My favorite night is when we review, create, and practice interview questions. It's a great

brainstorming session. We do activities to think outside the box and come up with interesting questions that will gain insights into candidates. Students get to "interview" each other, putting their questions into practice. The most interesting question from another company we saw: "Tell me all the uses for a brick in one minute." This would show quick thinking, creative thinking; a bit of a stress test.

Here are two questions from our interview bank: If you were a Disney character, who would you be and why? Who would win a bowling match between Oprah and Abraham Lincoln, and why?

My second favorite night is our "Human Capital Review" session. Human Capital Planning is a passion of mine, so I'm naturally drawn to the fun dialog of the session. This is a topic that isn't entirely familiar to people, but the tools we learn are things that they can take with them. HCR is growing your bench into leadership roles, forecasting future open positions, and ensuring a succession management plan to backfill talent.

Tell us more about growing your bench and backfilling talent.

Bench is like a football analogy. What are you doing to grow your second-string if the first string gets injured/traded etc.? So when you're looking at leaders, you need to actively review who may be looking to transfer, get promoted, retire, etc. Then you review and determine who's next, or on the bench, and then have development plans in place to ensure that over time, this next group are ready to fill the positions as they open. That's what "backfill" means. This bench, ideally, is being developed to take the role of departing leaders.

The reason all of this can be so important is time and money. Sourcing talent, from scratch, from outside of your organization takes time, and the productivity loss can also then result in a higher cost to the organization. Additionally, having a strong bench, with strong development plans in place really engages the workforce and helps with loyalty and a sense of career, versus "just having a job."

What will students learn in your class that they didn't know before?

Even if they have experience hiring, they will leave the class with new tools in their belt for recruiting; they will have an opportunity to work on their own resume; and they will have a great outline to begin their own Human Capital Review process.

Does the course require homework outside the classroom?

Yes. There is reading, one presentation, and a small paper. Additionally, there are small, time-easy homework tasks.

What have you learned about your students?

This was my first class at CES. I really enjoyed this group not only as students, but as HR and future HR professionals. I thought everyone was engaged, and their participation really made for some interesting and dynamic conversations! One particularly interesting conversation started with a discussion on Gravity Payments CEO Dan Price when he cut his salary. That went to a dialog on Amazon and Zappos, who both have a "pay to quit" program. [EDITOR'S NOTE: The goal of this novel concept is to filter out disengaged employees.] It wasn't a part of the planned lecture, but it was such a good conversation, we ran with it!

What's the most interesting aspect of HR?

The people. I love teaching and developing people to help them in their careers and to be amazing leaders. I also love the "tough stuff." I find it always an interesting challenge sorting through challenging or legal situations.

Where do you think the HR profession is headed?

I feel that compliance is going to have to be a focus point. Every year, especially in California, there are more and more laws that we have to ensure are correctly followed to keep our companies litigation- and fine-free. I also think that Human Capital will be essential. Many companies have flattened their leadership structures, leaving the bench a bit lean. Developing talent will be key for succession planning and keeping your leadership levels consistently strong.

What advice do you have for those seeking to enter the HR profession?

Make sure you LOVE it. Not like it; L-O-V-E. This field is a passion; go all-in or find a better-suited field. This doesn't mean you will love every aspect or every day. But overall, you need to have passion to maintain the energy to navigate the HR waters.

Meet Instructor Dawn Myers

Borrowing from a popular ad campaign, Dawn Myers believes that whatever happens in her class, stays in her class. To find out what that is, you'd have to take Myers' *Introduction to Human Resource Management* course at SDSU's College of Extended Studies.

Former student Gladys De Santiago did, and can't say enough good things about Myers. Having worked in the HR world for many years, De Santiago didn't expect to learn anything

groundbreaking from the course. Little did she know that she was about to meet and be taught by "one of the most amazing and accomplished people in the HR world."

"This class has motivated me to continue on with my goals and dreams," De Santiago said. "I've learned so much from Dawn and her generosity of time. I appreciate her realistic approach to the materials given."

Myers, director of human resources at the San Diego Marriott Gaslamp Quarter, will also be



Dawn Myers

teaching the *Compensation* course in the fall with fellow Marriott employee Dari DeSousa.

Myers has worked the past 13 years for the hotel, which has been voted among San Diego's "Top Places to Work" for each of the past 10 years.

What does your job at the San Diego Marriott involve?

I'm directly responsible for the overall administration, coordination, and evaluation of the human resource function of our hotel. Simply put, if it involves an associate, it involves me.

How did you become an instructor at SDSU's College of Extended Studies?

I was serving on the board for the Extended Studies' program and the director, Diane Clark, put out a request for instructors. Because I love to see people grow, I answered the call.

How often does your class meet and is there homework?

Once a week, from 6 to 9:30 pm. Yes there is homework, but I understand that many students have full-time jobs so the work outside of the classroom is not extensive.

Do you use your own experiences in teaching the class?

Absolutely, that is what the students want to hear and that is when they learn the most . . . from my failures and successes.

What have you learned about your students?

That we all have something to learn from one another. I may be the instructor, but I learn about different industries, cultures, and viewpoints every week. It's priceless and I feel honored to be a part of such a collaboration.

Any fun or interesting anecdotes to share from class?

"HR Circle of Trust" — what happens in class stays in class. I guess you'll have to take my class to find out.

Who should take this class?

I would recommend the *Introduction to Human Resource Management* course for anyone who is remotely interested in HR. I tell my students in the very beginning "by the end of this class you should hold your head high with confidence and say 'yes, I want to be in HR' or you will run away from here screaming." If you do either one of those things, I've done my job well.

What advice do you have for those seeking to enter the HR profession?

It's all about relationships. You can't be in human resources and be in a silo. You have to network and reach out to people for help and insight. SDSU's HR Certificate program is one way to do that."

Learn Arabic, Chinese, Persian, Portuguese, or Russian in Five Weeks at SDSU's Language Acquisition Resource Center

The Language Acquisition Resource Center at San Diego State University is one of 15 such centers in the United States. Established by Congress in 1989, their mission is to develop and support the teaching and learning of foreign languages in the U.S. Particular attention is paid to less commonly taught languages, cross-cultural issues, language skills assessment, and teacher training.

LARC collaborates with SDSU's College of Extended Studies on various programs, including the Summer Intensive Language program, offering courses in Arabic, Chinese, Persian (Farsi), Portuguese, and Russian. Summer Intensive courses are each 2 1/2 weeks long and meet for 4-6 hours per day, five days per week – covering an entire year of foreign language studies.

Meet Instructor Ghassan Zakaria

Instructor Ghassan Zakaria teaches Arabic 101 and 102, and gets a solid A from students on RateMyProfessors.com, who also voted him Faculty of the Year in 2013 at the College of Arts and Letters.

Give us a brief history of how you came to be a LARC instructor at SDSU.

I grew up in a household that emphasized education, so my parents were a tremendous

motivation for my future career in academia. My father had a passion for reading and my mother taught elementary school in Jordan for 25 years. Falling in love with Arabic literature in grade school, I knew I wanted to teach.

I started out as a Sunday school teacher at my church and, when I moved to New York in 2001, I began working for the United Nations Arabic Translation Department. In 2004, I moved to San Diego and served as an Arabic instructor at Cuyamaca College. A semester later, I started teaching Arabic at SDSU as a lecturer for the Department of Linguistics and Asian/Middle Eastern languages and also served as an instructor and material creator at the SDSU Language Acquisition Resource Center, where I remain today.

Do you speak many of the different Arabic dialects, or any other foreign language?

Raised in Amman, the capital of a central Middle Eastern country, I was exposed to numerous dialects of spoken Arabic at a young age due to my day-to-day interactions and exposure to the media. I am familiar with the Egyptian, Gulf, Iraqi, and Levantine dialects. Having attended a Catholic private school, I learned formal Arabic, French, and English growing up.



Ghassan Zakaria

Assuming they've taken both courses in the sequence – Arabic I and II, which total five weeks of instruction – how fluent can students expect to be at the end of a Summer Intensive?

After five weeks in two intensive language courses, students will be able to communicate with native Arabic speakers in a wide range of familiar topics (e.g. self, family, daily and weekly activities, home, location, food, personal characteristics, weather, etc.). They would be able to order food from local Middle Eastern restaurants in Arabic and will have the ability to read and write formal Arabic.

On RateMyProfessors.com, in addition to thinking you're "amazing," "awesome," and "this guy needs to be CLONED," most students also commented that despite Arabic being a tough language, you make it fairly easy by the way you explain things. Can you give an example?

Instead of simply asking students to memorize Arabic vocabulary, I employ a variety of activities to keep students interested. For instance, in my lesson on house structure



(room names, furniture, appliances), I split my students into two groups. One of the groups is asked to wait outside the classroom while the other group remains inside. I describe a house in Arabic to the students inside the class and ask the students to write down keywords. I repeat the description a second time and then invite the second group of students back into the classroom. The students are split into pairs with one student from each of the groups. The students that were inside the classroom are asked to describe the house in Arabic to their partners (who were not present for my description) while reviewing their notes. The students who were outside are asked to draw the house based on their partners' descriptions. I then take some of the drawing samples and display them on the document camera while reading the original description out loud once again. The class compares the drawings with the description. The groups are then switched and the activity is repeated with a new house description. This activity facilitates the learning of the vocabulary while also allowing the students to get directly involved (and get a laugh out of it).

Students also commented on the “great videos and group projects.” Can you tell us about them and how they facilitate language acquisition?

My goal in employing a variety of videos and projects in my courses is to provide my students with authentic and captivating first-person experiences into the culture and everyday life of the Arab world. These activities provide insight and expose the students to Arabic music, art, literature, architecture, and religion. This helps to erode common Western stereotypes of the Arab world.

What does the cultural awareness portion of the course entail?

The cultural awareness aspects of the course involve the aforementioned videos and projects. I also invite guest speakers that my students can relate to. I make an effort to ask American students who studied in the Arab world to come in for a class, describe their experiences abroad, present their thoughts on the rich culture, and also respond to student questions. My intention is to provide my students with a general and authentic look into Arab culture.

In addition to students completing foreign language requirements, who else takes your classes?

My students usually consist of those who are interested in world cultures and international politics.

What’s your favorite aspect of teaching at the LARC?

LARC is unique in that the environment fosters collaboration, openness, and friendships between the students, staff, and faculty members.

Anything you’d like to add?

In my classes, I use the communicative approach which is one of the most effective teaching methods. It requires students to engage in interaction in order to fulfill a task, and involves learners and teachers in some joint selection. It is based on bringing tasks and selected scenarios into the classroom, so the goal of this approach is to develop overall proficiency in the Arabic language through a functional approach. The focus, therefore, is on performing language functions, using the language forms learned, rather than on analyzing them.

LARC Student Perspectives

"I studied Russian at SDSU through ROTC's Project Global Officer* program in 2013. It greatly prepared me to study abroad, and my contacts at LARC even helped to set me up with the University of Pittsburgh's study abroad program in Estonia, also with Project GO. Both instructors, Masha and Dasha, were extremely committed to our successes. The 2013 group I was a part of reached OPIc [Oral Proficiency Interview by Computer — an Internet-delivered proficiency test] ratings of Intermediate Low by the end of our 12-week seminar. Five of us continued on to complete the 2014 Estonia program, where we further increased our OPIc ratings to Intermediate Moderate.

"The SDSU team was dedicated to ensuring we were well prepared to study abroad, and even offered us year-round sustainment courses at no extra charge. When we landed in Estonia, we were able to effectively communicate with the local population and live comfortably.

"It's also worth mentioning that completing the SDSU Project GO Russian Program is looked upon highly by other Project GO Universities, which offer the advanced in-country programs. I had applied to several in-country Project GO advanced programs in 2014, and was accepted to all of them. Many of my former classmates even applied to go on a third trip for the 2015 year and were accepted again.

"All in all, seven of the nine ROTC cadets from our program continued on to study abroad. Many of us traveled together and are still close friends today."

— **Cameron O'Connell**

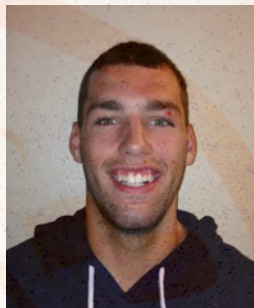


*Project GO is a Department of Defense initiative that promotes the study of critical languages for ROTC students, and focuses exclusively on the languages and countries of the Middle East, Asia, Central Asia, and Africa.

"I studied Russian last summer and had an absolute blast doing so! I took the course out of personal interest in the language and culture of Russia. The course was 8 am to 4 pm, every day, of Russian. It was really well planned out; the timetable for learning new material was adequate to

meet my needs. The instructors were also VERY helpful, they were more than willing to spend extra time to help students if the need arose. I would definitely recommend the course to someone wanting to learn Russian."

— **Matthew Keller**



"I truly enjoyed my time spent learning Farsi (Persian). The instructors were patient and kind throughout the learning process, and learning about the culture is very interesting."

— **Andrew Linsmeier**

"This class surpassed my expectations. In the past I had participated in the Intensive Arabic Program at Georgetown University and I would recommend the program at SDSU over Georgetown. I learned more and paid significantly less. My instructors were phenomenal and I highly recommend this class to anyone, whether it is your first Arabic class or you just need a refresher."

— **Dea Kollekowski**



"I took the class not only for my degree requirement but because my family is from the Middle East and I can already understand the Iraqi dialect of Arabic but I wanted to learn how to write, read and speak in the "proper" Arabic dialect. It was an amazing experience; I really learned a lot! The instructors were amazing and very, very helpful! I actually now text my parents in Arabic so that the alphabet is always fresh in my mind. Also, if I make a mistake, my parents correct me."

— **Amandine Bahro**



"I first worked with LARC through Project GO (Global Officers) while a cadet with Air Force ROTC. I studied Arabic with the program, and the professors and assistants were all very eager to teach us their language. I'm so glad I was involved in the program; today, I'm using the language skills I gained there as a student archaeologist working at a site outside of Aqaba, Jordan."

— **Conor M. Fagan**



"I took Persian because of personal interest; I already knew German conversationally and wanted to try a more difficult language. The program met my expectations amazingly. I learned a significant amount about the culture and how to use the language in different settings. The instructors were very personable and occasionally tough — but only because it brought the best out of their students. I'd absolutely recommend anyone who has the summer available to take these courses, you learn so much more than just a language."

— **Grant J. Varnau**

"I joined the Russian language program out of interest. I have never had so much success with any other language course. The other students were as motivated as I was and the professors were fabulous! They offered all the help any of us needed."

— **Alyssa Selberg**

The Unicorn of Marketing Social Media



Take the complexity out of interacting with your customers By Erika DiProfio

It seems everyone and their great grandmothers are using some form of social media. Brands must be social or they become irrelevant. But is social media as complicated as it's made out to be? No.

Social media isn't a mystical creature. Simply talk WITH your customers, not AT them. Use conversations with your customers to turn them into an army of advocates who tell others about your product or service. Engage in a

conversation with your customers and really hear what they have to say.

Treat social media as a fundamental of marketing and you will be successful. If you can hold a conversation with someone about your company/product/service, you can be social. And if you're involved on any level in customer service for your company/product/service, you can be social.

Sure. Social media can be leveraged in great ways. Creative tactics such as contests, boosted

posts, user-generated content, and engaging videos are always cited as best practices. These initiatives will help start the conversation. But it's up to the company to nurture the relationship and keep the dialogue going.

Measurement is also important for several reasons. It's always nice to present success stories

and metrics to the C-suite so they feel comfortable with the time and effort the marketing team puts into communicating with customers. And tracking what's working and what isn't is

**“Focus on how to BE social,
not on how to DO social.”**

— Jay Baer

important so you can adjust your strategy in real time.

While some of these things may at some point require an “expert” or partner to bring creativity and analysis to the table, it doesn’t mean being social requires much more than an authentic conversation.

Social media “gurus” are a dime a dozen. They pitch companies on their arduous process of DOING social media and explain with a bunch of jargon how it should be left up to the “experts.” Leaders of small and large companies buy into this approach and hand over their most important relationship — the relationship with their customers.

Don’t over-complicate social media. It’s sometimes as easy as asking a question, taking your customers behind the scenes using photos, or encouraging followers to share their thoughts and ideas about your product. Take the complexity out of talking with your customers.



Erika DiProffio is the instructor of Social Media Strategies for Business in the Marketing Certificate Program at SDSU’s College of Extended Studies. She has more than 15 years of in-house and agency public relations and marketing experience, and is the director of marketing for Omni La Costa Resort & Spa. DiProffio has a degree in Communications and Public Relations from SDSU.

WHAT STUDENTS SAY

“Erika DiProffio’s course [Social Media Strategies for Business] was extremely valuable as it further built upon my understanding of marketing, and the importance of a social media strategy. I went into the program expecting to learn best practices from a real-world instructor, and I did. I learned how to draft a social media strategy for use at my current job, and how to quantify its ROI. Erika taught the importance of ‘humanizing’ a brand, and how social media is integral in doing that. Also, honesty and transparency are key in social media strategy.”

— **Aaron Krueger**

“I enjoyed the convenience of the classes [Creating the Marketing Plan, Defining and Positioning a Brand]. They were practical, timely, and relevant, with experienced instructors who worked in local companies, doing what they were teaching. The biggest takeaways were what factors to consider when developing a brand, and how rating statistics and ad pricing are used to predict and measure the effectiveness of an ad campaign.”

— **Ian Cook**

Analyst, Cubic Corporation

“I did sincerely enjoy the professor; he was engaging and it was refreshing to be presented information from someone who is currently in the industry and has built his own agency. I also found the class [Defining and Positioning a Brand] to be a great networking opportunity; not only was the information educational, but getting to know the other professionals in my class was almost just as beneficial. I now recognize many at industry and networking events that I attend and it’s nice to see a friendly face.”

— **Lauren Holt**, Marketing &

Communications Coordinator, BBB

“I signed up for the Social Media Strategies for Business course in hopes of gaining knowledge that I could apply to my position as office supervisor at SDSU’s Mission Bay Aquatic Center. I took on the responsibility of overseeing our social media platforms and wanted to learn creative ways to promote our programs while connecting with customers. This class taught me applicable strategies for managing our social media posts and the importance of having a social media presence online. With the experience and knowledge that I gained from this course, shortly after completion I was promoted to office & marketing supervisor, and I am now responsible for all of our online and social media marketing.”

— **Amanda Burgess**, Office Supervisor,

SDSU’s Mission Bay Aquatic Center

12 Standout Social Media Success Stories

Social media experts culled their favorite campaigns from 2014 and early 2015.

10 Social Media Fails

Learn from the grand-scale mistakes of others.

San Diego's Booming Hospitality Industry Needs Event Planners

**City Ranks #4
Among Top Meeting
Destinations in the U.S.**

Year-round sunshine, near-perfect weather, and more than 70 miles of gorgeous coastline are just some of the reasons San Diego recently ascended to the #4 spot in a national ranking of top meeting destinations in the United States. As such, our city hosts a year-round roster of conventions, trade shows, and conferences; in addition to the ongoing events being staged by local businesses, restaurants and hotels.

As a result, the demand for event planners is high. So high, in fact, that employees are often tasked with planning events in their company, whether or not it's part of their skill set.

Whether you're a planner by choice or by chance, whether you're new to the industry or a seasoned pro, SDSU's Meeting and Event Planning Certificate offers you the opportunity to expand your expertise in this flourishing industry.

For more information on the Meeting and Event Planning Professional Certificate program, please visit neverstoplearning.net/meeting.

Source: Cvent, August 2015, a technology firm that tracks more than 5000 cities across the country to produce its annual list of top 50 convention destinations.





Students can now take classes on their phone or tablet, and instructors and industry experts can interact with students from anywhere...



Meeting and Event Planning Program Graduate Finds Fulfilling New Career

Molly Fry was the assistant director of admissions for a San Francisco bay area MBA program for a few years prior to moving to San Diego. Once here, she embarked on a career with Vistage International — an executive coaching organization — planning and executing monthly training programs in the Learning & Development department. But her real interest was in meeting and event planning.

“I searched online for part-time event planning programs at night and came across the SDSU program,” said Fry. “It worked great for my schedule at the time, and was at a reasonable cost. I knew this program would provide me with the right foundation and skill-set to get started.”

Indeed it did. Fry is now on the Events Team at Vistage where she plans one-day corporate conferences for members all over the country, ranging from 120-800 attendees. “I plan 12-14 events per year, and then support an additional 10-12. I’m on the road a few times a month. I’m celebrating my two-year anniversary with the Events Team this July.”

[Read more in the blog story >>](#)



Molly Fry

Career Path Veers from Dreary to Dream for Graduate of Meeting and Event Planning Program

In 2013, Leah Sheffield was in business-to-business sales, selling textiles, and first aid and safety products to manufacturing companies.

“It was not a very glamorous job and not a very rewarding career path overall,” said Sheffield.

Fast forward to less than 10 months later and she was on her way to the job of her dreams as a program manager at a national-brand destination management company. How did it happen? She went through the Meeting and Event Planning Professional Certificate Program at SDSU’s College of Extended Studies.

[Read more in the blog story >>](#)



Leah Sheffield



Melissa Halas-Liang

Nutrition for Optimal Health and Wellness Program Boasts Nationally-Recognized Educator

Are you a personal trainer, group fitness instructor, or other health and wellness professional wanting to gain expertise in advising your clients on nutrition? Or perhaps you're seeking nutrition information for personal wellness. The College of Extended Studies' Professional Certificate in Nutrition for Optimal Health and Wellness is designed especially for you.

This online certificate program provides an in-depth examination of advanced nutrition, vitamin/protein supplementation, functional food implementation, antioxidants, and meal-plan analysis for optimal performance. Guiding your educational journey is instructor Melissa Halas-Liang.

Give us a brief history of your education and career, and how you came to be an instructor for SDSU's online Nutrition for Optimal Health and Wellness Certificate program.

I started out in clinical, and eventually became a critical care dietitian with a certified nutrition support specialist credential and later

became a clinical nutrition manager. I loved teaching dietitians, nurses, pharmacists, and physicians about insulin and electrolyte management in nutrition support. To keep my skills diverse, I worked side jobs teaching diabetes, wellness, and weight management classes, which lead me to my Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) credential. I also volunteered in the community and counseled patients occasionally.

Then over 13 years ago I started teaching at SDSU's College of Extended Studies. Later, after having a child, I had a creative idea and felt like I was on a mission to solve it! I saw the need to influence moms to feed their kids healthier, show them the light, so to speak, and the tremendous physical and mental benefits a child and family can achieve through living nutritionally fit. The goal was to "save the world, one healthy food at a time." So I started SuperKidsNutrition.com and then later MelissasHealthyLiving.com. I continued to teach because I love staying up-to-date, informed, and providing evidence-based resources to help offset all the nutrition fads and myths that circulate on the Internet.

Who are your students?

I have many different types of students. Many are personal trainers, but I also have wellness directors, MBAs, and nurses, looking to better develop their institution's program. Some

attend for CEUs and I do get the occasional person who decides to take the course to improve their life or is exploring a new degree and wants to gain some exposure to nutrition material before further investing.

What's the duration of each course and how many hours per week can students expect to invest?

I always say you get what you give. The more students put into their class discussion questions and reading my feedback with additional education links, the more they get out of it. But the goal is to finish within eight weeks and work at a pace that works with your lifestyle and schedule.

Are there common "aha" moments that students typically have?

Yes! I think the biggest aha moment is when they realize how so many popular diet books are really recycled fads with no science behind them. This is usually after their written project and I love when they come to the realization that it's so easy to twist the science and make a claim sound true.

Do you ever hear back from students on how the program helped them achieve their goals?

Yes, I have had many students over the years send me emails that it's changed their lives, and the way they eat and practice their



lifestyle. That's why I'm still teaching. It's a huge time investment – developing and updating the courses. I teach because I love it.

Your website says you combine an evidence-based and holistic approach to help clients reach their health goals. Can you give an example?

There is a spiritual component to good health. We need to feel connected to a greater good and be with nature. Sometimes a simple cure for a bad mood can be going for a hike, getting some fresh air and being surrounded by trees! In our busy tech-savvy world, we forget that sometimes. The best thing about learning online is you can do it from anywhere with the Internet — even the beach or local park!

Your website also says your philosophy is that regardless of one's food habits, small changes can build momentum for lasting changes. What are three small changes everyone could make?

1) After your alarm clock sounds and before life gets a hold of you, take a minute to reflect on

what you want to accomplish with your day. You could set a simple food-related goal, such as eating an extra fruit or vegetable with each meal, or an emotional well-being goal, such as gratitude for your family or work. Find a way to remind yourself of this goal so that when the craziness of the day is in full swing, you still can take yourself back to that peaceful morning moment. Try writing your positive intention on a Post-it note and stick it to your mirror, your fridge, or your phone.

2) Try carrying a water bottle with you to track how much water you drink throughout the day. Proper hydration benefits our bodies in a multitude of ways. Water can help us achieve satiety so that we're less likely to over-eat, it helps maintain the flow of the digestive system, and it plumps up skin cells which aids in our appearance. Additionally, becoming excessively dehydrated can actually impact our cognitive performance, so grab a bottle and drink to that!

3) If your tummy starts talking to you before you're ready for lunch or dinner, keep your energy up with some feel-good foods. Healthy snacks

that are easy to keep on hand include fresh fruit, nuts and seeds, and dried edamame. Try some almond butter on apple slices, low-fat cheese on whole grain crackers, or hummus with bell peppers. These snacks provide helpful fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals that will sustain good health verses the typical highly refined snacks with either added sugar or salt that most Americans snack on.

Where does your passion for eating healthfully come from? Were your parents an influence?

Yes, my parents were and I'm so grateful for this and still thank them for this today. My dad liked to shoot hoops, play catch with me, or take me to the batting cage. My mom made walks, weights, and now yoga a part of her daily life.

What do you think are the biggest benefits of online learning?

The convenience of it all!

One-Unit Weekend Courses —

Students Earn Credit, Expand Horizons in Just 15 Hours

One-Unit Weekend courses allow SDSU undergraduate students to earn extra units for graduation while also learning about the latest trends in a variety of topics. Each course meets only twice: typically a Friday/Saturday combination for a total of 15 classroom hours. The course topics are so intriguing that community members regularly take advantage of the fact that they're open to the public.

Topics have included emergency management, youth gangs, popular culture and criminal justice, substance abuse policies and practices, and restorative justice.

Meet Instructor Luca Dal Pubel

Course: The Evolution of International Diplomacy

Give us a brief history of your career, and how you came to be an instructor at SDSU.

I am originally from Italy and I moved to the U.S. in 2003. I went to law school at University of Bologna, Italy (the oldest university in the world). I first came to San Diego in 2001 to perform an internship with a law firm. I was trained as a mediator in Italy and became active in developing mediation and conflict resolution



Luca Dal Pubel

programs throughout Italy and Europe. When I moved to San Diego, I became involved with the National Conflict Resolution Center (NCRC), first as an intern, and then as a full-time employee. I have worked as a program manager, mediator, and trainer with the NCRC since 2003.

In 2012, I completed my MA in Negotiation, Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding at CSU Dominguez Hills. I am currently working on my Ph.D. at the Open University of Catalunya in Barcelona, Spain. At NCRC I developed two study-abroad programs (Rimini, Italy and Barcelona, Spain) in partnership with San Diego State University's College of Extended Studies. I teach Leadership and Communication, and Conflict Resolution at the Lorenzo de' Medici Institute in Florence, Italy. I spend several months every year in Italy and Barcelona. Also, I am a consultant to businesses both in San Diego and Italy.

I came to be an instructor at SDSU in 2014 when I started teaching Alternative Dispute Resolu-

tion with the International Security and Conflict Resolution department.

What percentage of your students take the course because they need one unit to graduate, versus personal interest?

I would say that 70 percent of the students took my course because they needed one more unit to graduate, and 30 percent were interested in the topic.

What aspect of international diplomacy are students most fascinated by, or surprised to learn?

I think they are fascinated by the complexity of international diplomacy and surprised to learn that even students can be active diplomats when they travel abroad or are involved in exchange programs with other countries.

What are the top three skills people need for successful conflict resolution?

- 1) Being assertive (being able to express your perspective in a non-confrontational way).
- 2) Being a good and active listener so you can fully understand the position of those involved in the conflict.
- 3) Being able to show empathy and put yourself in the other people's shoes.

How do you deal with people who don't want to resolve conflict?

If you are involved in a conflict and the other side is not open to resolve it, then you will need to decide for yourself how you want to handle or end the situation. That is why it is very important to know your alternatives. For example, you may need to end a relationship or

look for a third-party intervention to resolve the conflict (judge, arbitrator, mediator).

Are some conflicts simply not solvable?

Yes, some conflicts are simply not solvable especially the one-sided conflicts where one side is not interested in resolving the conflict.

Do animals have better conflict resolution styles than humans?

I like to think that they don't. As human beings, we can count on our emotional intelligence and intellectual abilities to resolve and manage conflicts.

How can parents help their children grow up to be peaceful?

By providing a positive example when dealing with conflict. Parents must be role models for their children and promote tolerance, compassion, and collaboration in their words and behaviors.

What is "citizens' diplomacy" and can you give an example of it in action?

Citizens' diplomacy takes place when citizens act as representatives of their country by simply travelling abroad and interacting with citizens of other countries, or by being involved in official programs like sports events, scientific research, or business meetings. All of us can be citizen diplomats and have the responsibility to help improve our country's international relations.

Are we any further along toward world peace than we were 100 years ago?

Definitely. The world is becoming less violent and there is more international cooperation. Just 100 years ago the world was involved in the beginning of the Great War, and the 2nd World War ended only 70 years ago. We are living the most peaceful times of human history and I think this is the biggest accomplishment our species has achieved.

What peacemaker – living or dead – do you look up to?

Leo Tolstoy, Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Aung San Suu Kyi, Emma Bonino, Dalai Lama.

For more information on One-Unit Weekend Courses, please visit neverstoplearning.net/oneunit.



What Students Say About One-Unit Weekend Courses

"I took the Restorative Justice: Alternatives to Punishment course to help me decide what to go to graduate school for. I was feeling kind of lost and overwhelmed with the choices, and this course made me decide to pursue a social justice MA. This course taught me there are other, more beneficial (in some instances) consequences aside from juvenile hall. I would recommend this course to others."

— Devin Grindrod

"The class (Addressing Youth Gangs in the U.S.: Prevention, Intervention, and Suppression Strategies) was really enlightening on gang issues, especially locally. We were able to talk to reformed gang members as well as a police officer. Both perspectives were important aspects to the authenticity of the subject. I would definitely recommend it to people who just need the credit as well as people who are interested in working with youth."

— Elleisha Elzien

"I was very interested in the fact that the course (Introduction to Emergency Management) demonstrated real-world applications. It was very informative and helpful."

— Maya Fakhrriddine

"Great way to make up one unit!"

— Tiffany Taft

"I became more informed on the topic of immigration, as a result of the Fixing What's Broken with Immigration course."

— Sandra Cosio



Writing Group that Began in Memoir Writing Class at OLLI at SDSU Still Going Strong

In the spring of 2013, some 25 students assembled for the first day of class in Kathi Diamant's Memoir Writing course at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at San Diego State University (OLLI at SDSU). By the last day of class, several had decided they didn't want the fun, or their writing growth, to end. They started their own group. In homage to advice Diamant had given students – to limit the use of "ing" and "ly" in their writing – they named themselves the INgly Writers Group.

"Many of us had discussed it to try and make it happen, and Kathi encouraged us," said member John Castell, "We invited everyone in our class at the time, then we set a date for our first meeting and invited Kathi to help us get organized and offer her expertise. Some were invited later who were a positive fit for the group's dynamic."

"I loved Kathi's classes and bonded with many of the class members immediately, even though most of them were closer to the age of my daughter than they were to me," said **Margie Prestwood**, who was one of the first

to join. At age 93, she's also the group's most seasoned member.

At any given time, there are eight to 10 active members, and the entire group consists of Castell, Prestwood, Janet Gastil, Barb Huntington, Milly McCoo, Laura Bottaro-Costner, Eddie Heubach, Linda Hughes, Bill Latta, Kris Limont, Karen Malfara, Christa Rieth, Karen Simons, and Suzanne Williford. The group meets the second and fourth Thursday every month at Limont's house.

"Members share updates regarding their writing projects, classes, or upcoming events in an informal meet-and-greet for about 15 minutes," explained Castell. "A member volunteers in advance to facilitate each meeting. He or she can offer a 10-minute writing prompt or informational reading about the craft of writing or how to submit work for publication. Members who are prepared with written work to read are counted, and the remaining time gets divided equally for the reading and feedback process."

The group uses BigTent.com – an optional free online tool where OLLI students and instructors can communicate outside the classroom — to post written work prior to meetings so members can provide early feedback and/or

be prepared for in-person meetings.

"Some stories are longer – 1000-plus words – so online gives us a chance to really sit down, read and provide useful feedback," said Castell.

Did meeting and writing regularly yield any breakthroughs or unexpected benefits?

Bottaro-Costner: Yes. It allowed us the benefit of a deadline which went away when the Osher class ended. Deadlines infuse an important energy into writing for most of us, and the INgly meetings provided that essential additive. All the while we honed skills and built confidence. Unless one self-publishes, the chances of getting published are slim. Knowing that group members will hear your words is a real motivator.

Castell: Yes. Regular meetings create a kind of "deadline" to meet and thus the motivation to write and finish new works. The continued practice of writing, learning the craft and the reading/critique cycle has yielded much richer, stronger and provocative writings from every member. We challenge each other's writing choices and learn to strengthen our personal language of expression. Plus, the valued friendships and bonds of trust that have

"We challenge each other's writing choices and learn to strengthen our personal language of expression. Plus, the valued friendships and bonds of trust that have been built are pillars in the ongoing strength of our group."

“I’m writing my memoir and I enjoy the memories of the past and the creativity of putting them down on paper. Kathi’s writing and critique classes, and the INgly writing group have given me a new lease on life.”

been built are pillars in the ongoing strength of our group.

Huntington: Getting me off my duff.

Latta: Taking the Osher courses on writing and working with the INgly group gave me the confidence to take on the task of co-authoring a professional book on psychotherapy. The meetings that I attended were very beneficial, because everyone was dedicated to becoming a better writer and helping each other.

Limont: Absolutely. For me having a deadline for writing helped, and we have all learned and grown a lot over the last two years. And despite developing a hatred for the word “arc,” I have finally done a complete story with the arc.

McCoo: Yes. It’s useful to hear the critiques of others who love reading and writing. They give useful ideas about how to make my writing clearer and more accessible. It’s useful to find out whether what I’m trying to communicate is being understood or misunderstood by others. Sometimes, they see more value than I do in my writing. It’s a great way to practice my skills.

Prestwood: I’m working on my memoir and have about 20,000 words down with more to

go. I find it difficult to always join the group for the bi-monthly meetings because I have a severe hearing loss. That’s the main reason I’m so grateful for BigTent. I have no words to properly express my gratitude to those who take the time to critique what I write. This is an invaluable tool for me, one that I never had before.

When did you discover OLLI and what keeps you coming back?

Bottaro-Costner: My husband and I began taking Osher classes in the spring of 2010. I return because I always find courses that let me entertain material from the perspective of a life lived vs. undergraduate wide-eyed discovery. Art history and philosophy classes come to mind. The writing classes were an unexpected avenue to new acquaintances and a sharing of life experiences.

Castell: I started taking classes in spring 2013. I return because of the strong course materials and the dynamic instructors and speakers. It was a gift to meet and learn with Kathi Diamant. She brings such a passion for writing.

Latta: I keep coming back for the variety of classes and the professor/student interactions.

McCoo: Only since early 2013 when I took the first of two memoir courses by Kathi. She also introduced us to the value of attending writers’ conferences, which are invaluable ways to meet people with similar interests and to interact with brilliant writers. I continue to take Osher classes in various areas of interest.

Prestwood: I found Osher when their catalog came to my house about four or five years ago. After that first semester, I was hooked.



The sessions were interesting, informative, and the instructors were excellent. The next year I talked my Social Security-age daughter, Linda, into being an Osher student. How many of us get to go to college with our children? I keep going back because I like how I feel when I’m there. I live close enough to SDSU to walk up there, so I feel I get my exercise and sharpen my mind at the same time.

“It has been a joy and honor to work and grow along with this highly creative and talented group of writers,” summed up Castell.

“I return because I always find courses that let me entertain material from the perspective of a life lived vs. undergraduate wide-eyed discovery.”

Many Companies Require Key Employees to be Certified Project Managers. Here's Why.

Keeping projects on track, on time, and within budget is so crucial that many companies require key employees – and those of any organization they work with – to be certified project managers. A brief look at two classic project management disasters illustrates just how crucial these skills are.

In 2005, Denver International Airport finally scrapped the sole surviving portion of its automated baggage system — which was costing \$1 million per month to maintain — in favor of a manual system. The real fiasco, however, began back in 1990 when the airport was built. What should have been the most advanced baggage-handling system in the world turned into a project whose complexity, architecture, schedule, and budget were so underestimated that the newly completed airport sat empty for 16 months while solutions were sought. Maintaining the empty airport, plus interest

Time and again, expert analysis reveals that projects fail due to varying combinations of 10 common delays and derailments.

charges on construction loans cost the city of Denver \$1 million per day throughout the delay.

In 2007, thousands of teachers and other employees of the Los Angeles Unified School District were overpaid and underpaid by tens of millions of dollars, thanks to a new \$95 million payroll system. One teacher received a check for \$11,000 while another's monthly wage amounted to 20 cents. Tempers flared, emergency checks were cut, attorneys were hired. The 20-month saga ended with millions of dollars in losses on the part of the school district and the payroll contractor.

These are just two of the fascinating case studies of projects from around the world, as chronicled in the [Catalogue of Catastrophe](#). Time and again, expert analysis reveals that projects fail due to varying combinations of 10 common delays and derailments. Knowing those issues in advance can help you keep the project on track, on time and within budget.

Stand out as a leader who can successfully manage project uncertainties, with a professional certificate in

Project Management from SDSU's College of Extended Studies. Learn more about the program at neverstoplearning.net/pm.



Malachi Walker



Mark McCoy

Project Management Courses Lead to Exciting New Career for Personal Trainer Seeking a Change

“The workforce took notice of my updated resume with the project management classes I had completed, and I was brought on board as a technical project manager with the San Diego Tourism Authority,” said Walker. “I perform software support projects, data validation, and hardware implementation and deployment projects.”

Three years later, he’s still on what he calls a “versatile, fast-paced, high-performing team” at the SDTA, and he’s still thrilled. “This opportunity has been a valuable learning and gratifying experience with an ever important and extremely fun objective — selling San Diego as the best convention, meeting, and visitor destination.” [Read More >>](#)

— **Malachi Walker**, Technical Project Manager, San Diego Tourism Authority

Enthusiastic Project Management Program Graduate Shares Insights

“Following eight years of growth and success in the training industry, I was eager to take on a new challenge. One of my loyal and trusted clients suggested I look into project management because he believed I demonstrated and learned organically many of the key strengths project managers need to thrive in the corporate structure. Concurrently, a good friend was nearing completion of the capstone class of SDSU’s Project Management Certificate program, and urged me to look into the program because it had been a very positive and enriching experience.”

“The program was awesome and I hope to get some of my colleagues to attend. The instructors were engaging and knowledgeable, and the coursework was challenging yet manageable for working folks. Even though I have had a lot of PM experience and coursework, I found a great deal of application for the program to my work. Thanks for driving such a cool program.”

[Read More >>](#)

— **Mark McCoy**, Senior Training & Development Specialist, General Dynamics NASSCO

Success Begins with Preparation – Test Preparation

“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe,” said Abraham Lincoln – clearly a proponent of preparation. To apply his strategy to academia, a test preparation course is the best tool for sharpening.

For over 20 years, students have been maximizing their test-taking potential by taking the test prep courses offered at SDSU’s College of Extended Studies. They learn important strategies, expectations, and content specifics about the CBEST, CSET, GMAT, GRE, LSAT, and SAT exams.

Each course is conducted over four Saturday classes, from 9 am to 3 pm, and comes with a free repeat policy. Students can take the course as many times as needed to pass the required test.

The classes are held in partnership with BTPS Testing, distinguished by its outstanding educators. At SDSU, those educators include the husband-and-wife duo of Jerry and Barb Swovelin. Both are also licensed pilots and accomplished skydivers.

Meet SDSU’s Test-Prep Instructors Jerry and Barb Swovelin

What’s your background and how did you become a test preparation instructor?

Jerry: I have a master’s degree in psychology,

specifically a field called community-clinical psychology; my graduate program had a major emphasis on both testing and statistics, all of which applies directly to the test preparation courses I teach. At that same time, I taught college-level psychology courses part-time through the Los Angeles Community College District. In addition, I also have several years of teaching experience when I ran a large skydiving school; that was one of the most rewarding periods of my teaching career. Finally, there is one specific reason I became a test-prep instructor, and her name is Barbara.

Barb: I was an English teacher for 34 years; a College Board consultant with both national and international experience; an ETS essay reader; a test preparation instructor since 1984; and I have a master’s degree in British Literature. I began teaching for Bobrow Test Preparation Services after being introduced through a fellow English teacher.

Which test prep courses do you teach at SDSU?

Jerry: I regularly teach courses for the GMAT, the GRE, and the LSAT exams.

Barb: I teach those as well, and occasionally SAT and CBEST courses.

Does the course require homework outside the classroom?

Jerry: There’s no assigned homework, per se, but on non-class days we encourage students to practice their test-taking skills for about two hours daily. This additional practice helps maximize the value of the course for each student.

Can you summarize one or two test-proven strategies that you teach students?

Barb: To prepare for the Reading Comprehension section, for example, I provide strategies that allow for effective reading of the prompt passage, along with specific techniques to master the most common question types, as well as tools that are used to quickly eliminate wrong answers. On the other hand, when I teach students how to tackle the oddball Analytical Reasoning questions, it’s more like analyzing and completing a variety of intricate puzzles.

What’s the general outlook of students who complete the course? Do they feel confident and ready?

Jerry and Barb: Yes. My students gain confidence by knowing what to expect on the exam, by knowing how to approach the different sections, and by getting practice on the various question types, both in-class and at home.

Do students take advantage of the course’s great feature of a free repeat if needed?

Jerry: Absolutely. We have repeat students in virtually every class. They return for a variety of reasons. Some never got around to taking the exam and now they want a refresher, some took their first try at the exam but didn’t achieve the score they wanted, so now they want to improve their skills even more. Some students plan from the beginning to take the class more than once to maximize their skills before tackling the actual exam.



Barb Swovelin



Jerry Swovelin

Who should take a test-prep course?

Barb: Anyone who wants help understanding how to intellectually approach the test, how to work through the questions and the reading passages. Anyone who wants to ensure that

they can write a high-scoring timed essay, and/or how to understand the logical and critical reasoning sections. Many students take the course simply to learn specific test-taking strategies.

What is the best advice you can give students about test preparation?

Jerry: Give yourself plenty of time; you'll find it takes longer than you think until you finally feel properly prepared. Learn about your own personal strengths and weaknesses by taking practice tests and identifying patterns. When reviewing your practice exams, don't forget to analyze the wrong answers to better understand how they try to fool us. When taking the actual exam, concentrate on applying the strategies you learned in class and the tricks you learned in practice.

What do you love most about your job?

Jerry and Barb: It's intellectually stimulating and very rewarding to watch students gain confidence and engage with the test strategies.

For more information on Test Preparation courses, please visit neverstoplearning.net/testprep.

What Students Say About the Test-Prep Program

CBEST

"The instructors were great. They cut right to the chase so I was able to get the information I needed. And the Bobrow book is phenomenal because it has really good practice tests and really good explanations of how to prepare properly. It was a great class. And I passed the test!" — **Matthew Saeman**

CSET

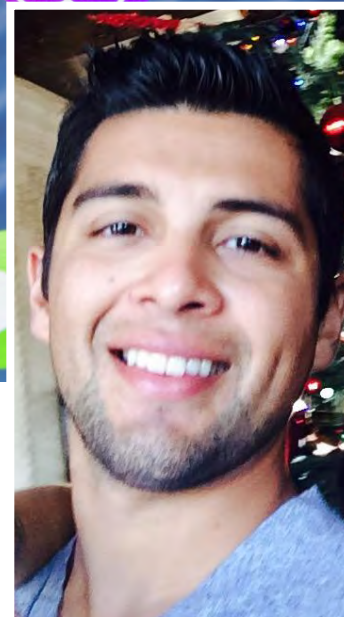
"I was really pleased with the CSET test-prep classes. They were very organized, detailed, and extremely informative with regard to the contents of all three tests. I especially liked how Professor George Crowder went out of his way to make sure we got all the extra help we needed by providing us his email as a follow-up to any further questions. I took advantage of that by writing constructive responses on my own in the weeks that followed and he corrected them within a few days' time." — **Jennifer Saiz**

GMAT

"I felt overwhelmed when starting GMAT prep. I wish I had started with the courses at SDSU College of Extended Studies as the first step. Once I started the courses, the preparation process was simplified and I was able to get on track. The courses narrowed down necessary information, providing encouragement and guidance to stay focused while preparing for the exam, making it less overwhelming."

— **Shanna Harger**





Adan Moreno

Graduate of Web and Mobile Applications Development Program Makes Significant Career Jump

With 1.6 million Android apps, 1.5 million Apple apps, and hundreds more being created daily, it's easy to forget there was ever a pre-app world. But there was. The app era didn't begin until July 2008 when Apple launched the App Store — the world's first mobile applications distribution service.

It wasn't long before San Diego State University's Department of Computer Science took action to meet the huge demand for a program in mobile applications — both from those wanting to enter the field, and from professionals already in the field who wanted to upgrade their skills. In August 2010, in partnership with the College of Extended Studies, they launched a new graduate-level program — the Advanced Certificate in Web and Mobile Applications Development.

Student success stories include Adan Moreno, who graduated from San Diego State University

in 2012 with a Bachelor of Science degree in computer science. A mere two weeks later, he began working at Northrop Grumman. Shortly after, he decided to enroll in SDSU's Web and Mobile Applications Development program as a bridge to the master's program.

"The program helped me to make a significant jump in my career," said Moreno. "I landed a great position where I currently work as the lead Android developer for the RockMyRun app that's on the Google Play Store. The knowledge I gained helped me answer the questions that eventually led me to land the position, and in

getting the job done at a successful startup company here in downtown San Diego.”

We trace his journey.

What was your objective in taking SDSU's Web and Mobile Applications Development program?

I had heard great things from one of my professors in the SDSU Computer Science department about the program and I felt as though I had so much to learn about web and mobile development since there are so many jobs out there for people with these skills.

What do you think are the strengths of the program?

The strengths are that you're able to take these courses as part of the SDSU Computer Science program and the course material is really relevant to the real world.

One of the things that sets our program apart is we teach the science behind applications development versus just the how-to. What do you see as the benefits of that?

This is a huge deal in our field because there are many frameworks out there that come and go, so knowing the science behind these things gives you the flexibility to adapt to any new framework you encounter, instead of being coupled to a specific piece of technology.

Can you speak to the caliber of the instructors?

My experience with these professors was nothing short of excellent. These are graduate-level professors who know what they're teaching very well and work very hard to keep their material relevant to the job market. They're constantly attending conferences and seminars to help keep the course up-to-date.

Did you learn any new programming languages or just enhance the ones you already know?

I was able to pick up PHP, Perl, and Objective-C languages while in the program as well as enhance my skills in JAVA.

“My experience with these professors was nothing short of excellent. These are graduate-level professors who know what they're teaching very well and work very hard to keep their material relevant to the job market.”

Classes are online or a hybrid of classroom and online. Which route did you take?

In order to accommodate my work schedule, I sometimes had to watch some of the lectures online and try and make it into the classroom as much as possible. However, having the lectures at my disposal when trying to study is such a powerful tool.

How long did it take you to complete the program?

It took me two semesters to complete the program, so one year. I probably spent about an average of six hours a week watching lectures and going to class. The homework time varied week to week as I'm guilty of procrastinating until a week before the assignment is due, but I would say there's an extra six hours per week on homework on top of the lecture time.

Students spend a great deal of time doing actual programming projects and some end up in the real world. What were some of your projects?

None of my work from the program made it to the real world, but I created two Android applications that have made it to the Google Play Store [the official app store for Android smartphones and tablets]. One is a social media app, and another is a music app for working out, that syncs music tempo to a heartbeat and steps.

Did the program offer any networking opportunities?

Yes, all of my professors became contacts that I know I can go to for career advice. Also, I was able to

make some friends who I have run into in the industry.

What do you think is the next big thing in web and mobile?

I think the next big thing is driverless cars. They're going to require major networking and mobile sensors which equates to endless amounts of jobs in the industry.

Would you recommend the SDSU's Web & Mobile program to others? If so, why?

I would absolutely recommend the program to other students if their background was computer science. This is a program that will help you catapult your career to the next level and give you the raw technical skills needed to succeed in the real world.

Source: App stats are per Statista Inc., one of the leading statistics companies on the Internet.

Your Path to Publication Begins Here

32nd Annual SDSU Writers' Conference

January 22-24, 2016 at the
San Diego Marriott Mission Valley

The excitement was palpable in every workshop, on every panel, and every networking event between writers, agents, editors, and authors at the 31st annual SDSU Writers' Conference. Friendships were forged and important contacts were made.

Each year, more than 300 attendees come from all over the United States and as far away as Japan, South America, and Switzerland, to pursue their dreams of publication. And dreams do come true. The SDSU Writers' Conference has launched the careers of numerous writers including best-selling crime novelist **Neal Griffin**; Young Adult author

Shannon Messenger, and YA science-fiction sensation **Stephanie Diaz**.

In addition to author and agent panels, workshops, and night-owl sessions that focus on the technical aspects of writing, attendees can get direct feedback on their writing from agents and editors. These 1:1 appointments are an invaluable opportunity to getting one's work in the hands of top industry professionals.

"The SDSU Writers' Conference was an eye-opener," said attendee Steven E. Browne. "I chatted with editors, writers, and agents all weekend. I learned more in those two days than in the previous two years."

If you're a writer with a dream, get one step closer to becoming a writer with an agent by attending the **32nd annual SDSU Writers' Conference**.

Conference Choice Awards

Each year, participating editors and agents have the option of selecting the fiction or nonfiction project that most intrigues them, for a Conference Choice Award. These awards do not represent the winner of a competition, but rather an encouragement to the authors selected that their work stands out among the hundreds of other submissions.



See what attendees of the 2015 conference had to say.

2015 Conference Choice Winners Share Their Thoughts on the Conference's Greatest Strengths



“ There are two that really stand out: the access given to the participants to agents and editors is unparalleled. And the one-on-one sessions with agents and editors is worth its weight in gold. It was particularly fabulous to be able to submit 10 pages for an advanced reading. ”

— **Ruth Webster**

Manuscript: *Where I Went When I Was Gone*, a memoir on her experience working as a Peace Corps volunteer in Swaziland, Africa

“ How accessible everyone is; from the speakers, to the organizers, to other attendees. Everyone is approachable. Everyone is there to support the craft of writing, and writers. ”

— **Cari Butorac Dowling (pen name: C.C. Dowling)**

Manuscript: *Conduit*, a New Adult paranormal novel



“ The breakout workshops are great and represent a wide variety of topics, but the opportunity to socialize in an informal environment with agents, editors and other authors is invaluable. Lunches and the social gathering at the end of the evening proved to be just what I needed. I asked questions, and made incredible contacts that gave me the confidence I needed to revamp my proposal and get to querying agents. ”

— **Tory Zellick**

Manuscript: *An Elephant Named Kabu*, a travel memoir

“ The professional panels – great information, good guest speakers – and a great, encouraging environment. I come back armed with good information and raring to go. ”

— **Kathy Weyer**

Manuscript: *Pages*, the third in a series of six books that take place in San Diego Heritage Park (one book for each of the six Victorian houses)





“ The SDSU Writers’ Conference is one of the better organized conferences I’ve attended, and the 2015 event had a strong agent and editor presence. The SDSU staff support for the event was exceptional. ”

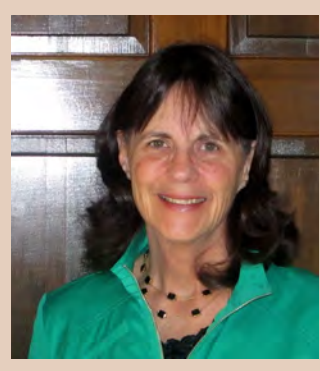
— **Kit-Bacon Gressitt**

Manuscript: *Ada’s Story*, narrative nonfiction thesis project about peeling away family and national myths to find some semblance of truth underneath

“ Supportive atmosphere and quality workshops. ”

— **Maddie Rue Burke**

Manuscript: *Dark in Nature*, a post-apocalyptic Young Adult novel



“ The beautiful location, San Diego, and the magnificent venue. The variety and relevance of the workshops. Agent Jill Marsal. She was absolutely lovely. ”

— **Maggie Pike**

Manuscript: *Just Listen for the Thud*, a nonfiction collection of stories about family members who use humor to care for their loved ones who are suffering serious illness



Enter to Win Erin Quinn's Writers' Conference Scholarship

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