

MRU eNews

Newsletter for UC Multicampus Research Units and Programs

University of California Office of the President



UC Davis to Create "Pacific Regional Humanities Center"

The National Endowment for the Humanities in December awarded a grant to UC Davis to establish a humanities center for the U.S. Pacific region. A number of MRUs participated directly and indirectly in the planning of the center, including the Pacific Rim Research Program, whose Chair, Michelle Yeh, served as a co-PI, and the Humanities Research Institute, which has co-sponsored a number of planning events. The new Center will be dedicated to bringing humanistic knowledge to bear on how people make sense of living in the Pacific United States, with its unique historical, geographical and demographic characteristics. Although the NEH funding to establish ten regional centers nationwide was drastically reduced (from \$5 million per center to just under \$400,000, a sum that must be matched 3 to 1 through local efforts), the campus has pledged to move forward with the project. More information on the PRHC is available at the Center's website at: <http://prhc.ucdavis.edu>.

New Funding Opportunities!
Visit our website at:
www.ucop.edu/Research/

MRUs Study Post-September 11 Future

Studies conducted by UC researchers are providing important data to help cope with the changes we face post-September 11. One major consequence of the terrorist attacks has been heightened airline security. As Transportation Secretary Norm Mineta said recently, "In today's world, patience is a new form of patriotism." At the request of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), researchers from the National Center of Excellence for Aviation Operations Research (NEXTOR), a multi-university consortium affiliated with the Institute of Transportation Studies (ITS) at UC Berkeley, conducted a study of the costs and disruptions that might accompany "positive passenger bag-match" (PPBM). PPBM is not a single policy, but rather a range of strategies that ensure that a bag checked by a passenger is not loaded if that passenger does not board the flight. It also prevents the loading of rogue bags that are not identified with any passenger.

The results of the study, conducted in 1997 by a NEXTOR team that included Mark Hansen, Geoffrey Gosling of ITS and others, challenge the industry view that this added security measure must entail significant flight

delays and additional costs. The study included a two-week live test that involved 11 airlines, 8,000 flights and nearly 75,000 passengers. It found that, under usual operating conditions, PPBM would delay domestic departures by an average of one minute and would cost no more than \$0.40 per passenger per flight. This finding has been reported by the *Contra Costa Times* and the *Oakland Tribune*.



In addition to assisting with new realities of airline travel and security, MRUs are helping the nation learn from the attacks to prevent or minimize future disasters. Professor Abolhassan Astaneh-Asl, a structural engineer and ITS associate, has been studying the destruction of the World Trade Center towers. He and his colleagues have received NSF funds

to analyze the wreckage in order to help improve the structural integrity of buildings. Astaneh convinced NYC officials to delay recycling of the steel from the collapsed towers so that it could be studied. "We will learn many valuable lessons from this tragedy to improve our structural design and construction and the effects of fires on steel structures." Astaneh has designed a composite system of reinforced concrete plates bolted to steel shear walls that he believes could withstand an attack similar to that on the World Trade Center. A plane hitting an exterior composed of this composite system would accordion, keeping most of the plane and its fuel outside of the building.

Other MRU efforts include the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation's "UC Toolbox on Terrorism," a database of faculty expertise that will be made available to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services. IGCC is also co-sponsoring a March 18 conference on "International Intervention." The UC Digital Cultures Project conference on "After 9/11: Wiring Networks for Security and Liberty" will examine difficult new questions on the utility and dangers of global communication networks.

MRUs spotlighted at January Regents Meeting

MRUs central role in advancing UC's research mission was the focus of a presentation at the January 17 UC Regents Meeting, held at UCLA. Vice Provost for Research Larry Coleman, along with the directors of three MRUs, spoke to the unique research capacities created by MRUs. By enabling both individual and large scale collaborative research and by leveraging millions in funding (up to 15 to 1 at one MRU) from extramural sources, MRUs add value to campus research efforts

and harness the strengths of the entire UC system.

Director of the UC Energy Institute Severin Borenstein noted that not only does the UCEI foster pure research, it serves as a focal point for responding to statewide energy initiatives and opportunities. The new California Institute for Energy Efficiency, for instance, will help the state address future energy shortfalls. Director David Theo Goldberg highlighted the Humanities Research Institute's efforts in "engaging humanities" through

promoting interdisciplinary research on issues of interest to contemporary society. UC MEXUS's Juan-Vicente Palerm outlined his unit's newly enhanced role as the state's premier research institute on California-Mexico relations, one that Governor Davis has increasingly come to rely upon for expertise. MRUs are particularly well positioned, Coleman concluded, to serve this dual function of serving the state while further strengthening UC's research preeminence.

Office of Research Multicampus Research Units



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Staff profile: Ann Gilbert, MRU Grants Administrator



Grants Administrator Ann M. Gilbert manages programs that provide over \$2 million in research support for faculty and graduate students systemwide. She currently administers the President's Research Fellowships in the Humanities, the Coastal Environmental Quality Initiative, and smaller programs such as the Science and Technology Award and Multicampus Research Incentive Fund. Previously, she also administered grants for the Pacific Rim Research Program. Ann came to UCOP eleven years ago and has become one of the system's most experienced and expert grant administrators. She has been honored twice in recent years with Certificates of Appreciation from Provost King.

Upcoming Events *meetings and conferences*

Particle Transport and Acceleration in Cosmic Plasmas. February 10-13, Mission Inn, Riverside and Lake Arrowhead. Sponsored by the IGPP Riverside.

For more information contact Director Gary Zank at gary.zank@ucr.edu.

Interfacing Knowledge: New Paradigms for Computing in the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. March 8-10, UC Santa Barbara. Sponsored by the UC Digital Cultures Project and the UCSB-based Microcosms Project.

UC Day in Sacramento. March 18-19, 2002. Selected undergraduate students who have received MRU research support will showcase their work to legislators in a poster session.

The Legacy of Slavery. May 2-4, 2002. Corwin Pavilion, UC Santa Barbara.

Sponsored by the Center for Black Studies. For more information contact Mahsheed Ayoub at mayoub@omni.ucsb.edu.

MRU Directors Meeting, May 8, 2002, UC Berkeley. Faculty Club, Seaborg Room.

**NOW ONLINE! THE UPDATED
GUIDE TO UC MULTICAMPUS RESEARCH UNITS AT:
[HTTP://WWW.UCOP.EDU/RESEARCH/MRU.PDF](http://www.ucop.edu/research/mru.pdf)**

Multicampus Research Unit News and Announcements

ALL-UC GROUP IN ECONOMIC HISTORY PROPELS UC TO TOP RANKING

The UC Davis-based All-UC Group in Economic History has helped to propel its home campus to a top ranking among schools offering economic history programs nationwide, as published recently in the *Journal of Economic History*. UC Berkeley was ranked third, after Harvard, and UCLA was ranked 12th. The All-UC Group, established in 1979 to enhance the research of faculty and graduate students through biannual conferences, has helped to attract top faculty and graduate students in the field of economic history to UC.

HRI ESTABLISHES PRIZES

The UC Humanities Research Institute is launching two national prizes. The first, a Humanities Prize for notable national contributions to public humanities, will bring as visitors to UC prominent public contributors to the humanities. The second, the Billy Wilder

Prize (in the name of the great film director), is for scholarships in film and performance, and their study. UC is deeply grateful to Regent Sherry L. Lansing for helping to get the latter prize off the ground.

ILE GRADUATE WORKSHOP

The Institute for Labor and Employment held its first Graduate Student Research Conference on January 18-19, 2002, at UC Santa Cruz. At the opening plenary session ILE Director Ruth Milkman emphasized the critical role that the ILE can play as a bridge between academia, the recently revitalized organized labor movement, and a California workforce that has undergone far-reaching demographic, technological, and organizational transformations. The interdisciplinary conference included fifteen additional sessions in which fifty graduate students from all over the UC system presented research papers based on their ILE-funded projects.

The ILE will issue its 2002-03 Request for Proposals later this spring, inviting applications from UC graduate students and faculty for fellowships and research grants on labor and employment topics. For more information, contact the ILE headquarters office at UCLA at (310) 206-5506 or visit the ILE website at www.ucop.edu/ile

NEW WHITE MOUNTAIN PROGRAM

White Mountain Research Station has received a \$750,000 grant to establish a 3-year program to enhance teacher professional development in science. The project is based on the rewatering of the Lower Owens River. Collaborators include the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the Inyo County Water Department, the California Department of Fish and Game, UC Cooperative Extension and the Inyo County Office of Education. The PI is Susan Szewczak, Ph.D.

UC-Mexico Workshop Examines Industry- University Collaborations

UC's success in developing research partnerships with industry was recently highlighted for a high-level delegation of Mexican university, government and industry leaders. The "Workshop on University-Industry Collaboration," held at Berkeley on December 4-5 and organized by UC MEXUS and the Office of Research, was designed to inform officials of the Mexican Science and Technology Council (CONACYT) and others of the opportunities and challenges in creating such partnerships. UC faculty and administrators, including UC President Atkinson, spoke on topics ranging from negotiating strategic alliances with industry, to technology transfer issues, faculty entrepreneurship and the training of a skilled workforce to deal with fast-growing fields, such as biotechnology, that rely on university-industry alliances. Synopses of several of the presentations can be viewed on the Office of Research website at www.ucop.edu/research/collaboration/welcome.html