

UCLA's top teachers recognized at ceremony at Chancellor's residence

Recipients of the Distinguished Teaching Awards were honored by the Academic Senate

Sidney Kantono | October 31, 2018



The recipients of UCLA's highest honor for teaching, the [Distinguished Teaching Awards](#), were honored by the UCLA Academic Senate at the Andrea L. Rich Night to Honor Teaching awards ceremony at the Chancellor's residence on Oct. 25. The winners were selected in three categories: senate faculty members, non-senate faculty members and teaching assistants.

Recipients of the award are chosen from nominations by colleagues and leaders across campus, recommendations by students and their involvement in community outreach, along with many other criteria.

The senate faculty awardees were professors Vilma Ortiz, Christopher Kelty, Lorrie Frasure-Yokley, David MacFadyen, Sarah Abrevaya Stein and Casey Reas.

[Vilma Ortiz](#) is a professor of sociology. She studies the socioeconomic experiences of Latinos in the United States, focusing both on specific Latino groups as well as comparative studies with other racial and ethnic groups. Her most recent book, "Generations of Exclusion: Mexican Americans, Assimilation and Race," measures Mexican American integration across education, socioeconomic status, intermarriage, residential segregation, ethnic identity and political participation.

[Christopher Kelty](#) is a professor of anthropology and information studies. He is also a part of the UCLA Institute for Society and Genetics. Kelty's research centers on social theory and technology, the cultural significance of information technology and the relationship between participation, technology and the public sphere. He is the author of the book "Two Bits: The Cultural Significance of Free Software."

[Lorrie Frasure-Yokley](#) is an associate professor of political science. Her research interests include racial and ethnic political behavior, immigrant political incorporation and African American politics. She is the principal investigator of the collaborative [multiracial post-election survey](#), which is the first post-election study of political preferences and behavior among multi-ethnic voters in the United States.

[David MacFadyen](#) is a professor of musicology and is currently the chair of the comparative literature department. His interests include eastern European and central Asian literature and culture. Through studying the development of Russian poetry and music, MacFadyen now oversees an archive of more than 4.5 million compositions from Slavic, Baltic and central Asian lands.

[Sarah Abrevaya Stein](#) is a professor of history. Her work focuses on the economic, political and cultural aspects of modern Jewish culture. She is the recipient of the 2016 National Jewish Book Award, and is currently working on "Family Papers: A Sephardi Odyssey Through the Twentieth Century," which will explore the ruptures that transformed southeastern Europe and the Judeo-Spanish diaspora.

[Casey Reas](#) is a professor of design media arts. Reas writes software to explore emergent systems and his work brings together conceptualism, systems theory and experimental film and animation. In 2001, he cofounded Processing, an open source programming language and environment for the visual arts, and published "Processing: A Programming Handbook

for Visual Designers and Artists,” a comprehensive introduction to programming within the context of visual media.

The non-senate faculty awardees were lecturers Zhao Li, Dana Cairns Watson and Karen Cunningham:

[Zhao Li](#) is a lecturer in the chemistry and biochemistry department. Her current research is on early cancer detection and targeted therapy by magnetic resonance molecular imaging. She received the Women in Molecular Imaging Network Scholar Award from the World Molecular Imaging Society in 2018.

[Dana Cairns Watson](#) is a lecturer in UCLA’s writing programs. Her topics of interest include public science writing, interdisciplinary approaches to food, science and society and health care. She is the author of “Gertrude Stein and the Essence of What Happens,” and “Building a Better Reader: The Gertrude Stein First Reader and Three Plays.”

[Karen Cunningham](#) is a lecturer in UCLA’s English department. Her work explores the intersections of law and early modern drama, as well as women in English Renaissance law and culture. Cunningham co-edited “Shakespeare and the Law” and “Imaginary Betrayals: Subjectivity and the Discourses of Treason in Early Modern England.”

The teaching assistant awardees were:

[Dani Smith](#) – psychology

[William Kowalsky](#) – philosophy

[Devon Widmer](#) – chemistry and biochemistry

[Kevin Coffey](#) – Earth, planetary and space sciences

[Scott Abramson](#) – near eastern languages and cultures