

A large, spherical water tower with a metal lattice structure, set against a dark blue background. The tower has the text 'UC DAVIS' written on its upper section.

UC DAVIS

WELCOME TO

Holistic Graduate Admissions: The UC AMIGA Mellon Project

Alliance for Multi-campus, Inclusive Graduate Admissions (AMIGA)

Faculty

- Santiago Barreda , Assistant Professor of Linguistics
- Zoe Drayson, Assistant Professor of Philosophy
- Ellen Hartigan -O'Connor, Assoc. Dean of Graduate Studies and Associate Professor of History
- Desirée Martín, Associate Professor of English
- John Slater, Chair of Spanish & Portuguese, Associate Professor of Spanish

AMIGA Project

- EVCP Ralph Hexter, PI
- Josephine Moreno, PhD, Graduate Diversity Officer, Graduate Studies, Co-PI
- J.P. Delplanque, VP&D, Graduate Studies, Professor of Mechanical Engineering
- Kellie Butler, PhD, Assistant Dean, Graduate Studies
- Brian Gallagher, Director of Admissions and Academic Services
- John King, PhD, Director of Analysis and Policy

TGA Seed Grant

Transforming Graduate Admissions (TGA), seed grant

- Explored admission methods that pointed to holistic graduate admissions at UC Berkeley, UC Davis, UCLA & UC Riverside
 1. Flexible and robust graduate admissions platform, SLATE
 2. Equitable and inclusive information for prospective applicants
 3. Holistic review requires faculty development and engagement

AMIGA Project

Alliance for Multi-campus Inclusive Graduate Admissions, AMIGA

- UC Davis (PI campus), UCLA and USC
- Faculty committees from four humanities or humanistic social sciences graduate programs
 - Faculty advisors and trainers from participating and outside grad programs
 - ~3 meetings/quarter
 - Leadership on holistic graduate admissions in depts. and campus
- Add four additional grad programs in 2020

AMIGA - Changing Culture Through Knowledge and Leadership in Holistic Graduate Admissions

- Scholarly learning, dialoguing and professional development
- Assessment to identify graduate admissions prior to AMIGA
- Faculty advisors and development leads
- Regular faculty meetings of four graduate programs, Graduate Studies deans and key staff
- Representatives engage with departmental admissions faculty
- Grad programs explore and adopt holistic review processes tailored for each program; not prescriptive

What is Holistic Review ?

Holistic Review or “whole file” review is a process that considers a broad range of characteristics, including both quantitative and behavioral attributes, when reviewing applications for admission.*

What is Holistic Review ?

Admission traits or criteria may include a combination of:

- Behavioral attributes, e.g. persistence, resilience, creativity, passion, curiosity
- Discipline specific skills, e.g. writing sample, language or math skills
- Contribution to diversity
- Equitable evaluation of recommendation letters from unfamiliar faculty or institutions
- Fair and consistent evaluation through the use of a rubric or template
- GPA considered in context
- GRE considered in context or set aside completely
- In person or electronic interviews
- Research experience and access to
- Socioeconomic level, e.g. first generation college, “distance traveled” depth of challenging circumstances applicant overcame to be on the brink of graduate studies

Potential Holistic Review Activities

1. Convene admissions committee
2. Review admission data from previous years to decide on TY goals
3. Identify which applicant attributes demonstrate success
4. Decide which applicant attributes will be basis for admission (e.g. research experience, persistence, coursework)
5. Discuss and determine how diversity will be valued
6. Confer and decide how GPA will be valued in context
7. Deliberate and decide how recommendation letters will be valued
8. Develop scoring rubric based on attributes/characteristics
9. If interviews will be included, develop questions and decide how interviews will be scored
10. Review admission protocols for first and subsequent rounds. Best practices suggest a minimum of two reviews per applicant.

Goals and Effects of AMIGA project

- **Systematically explore and implement HR in graduate admissions that ultimately increases inclusiveness, equity and diversity**
- **In-depth faculty experience participating in both TGA and AMIGA projects**
- **Knowledgeable and informed dialogues with faculty colleagues**
- **Potential of AMIGA project to inform holistic review for graduate admission processes across campus and within UC**



Santiago Barreda , Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Linguistics
sbarreda@ucdavis.edu

Josephine Moreno, Ph.D.
Graduate Diversity Officer, Graduate Studies
mjmoreno@ucdavis.edu