



Tips for Writing Strong Grant Proposal Narratives

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CSU

The California State University

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

Agenda



Getting started



Writing about the CSU



Writing about student engagement in RSCA



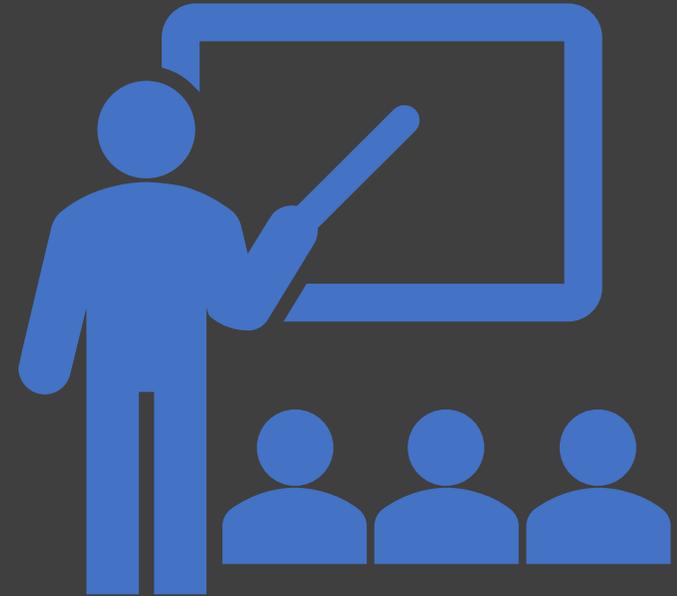
Articulating project rigor, merit, & impact



Writing quality



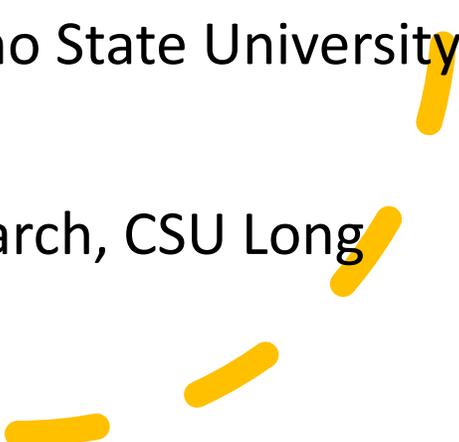
Questions & Discussion





Expert Panel for Questions & Discussion

11:30 – 12:00

- **Leslie Ponciano**, Director of Research Opportunities, Chancellor's Office
 - **Julia Gaudinski**, Director of Research Development, San Jose State University
 - **Chandra Khan**, Faculty Director for Research Development, CSU Dominguez Hills
 - **Ulrike Muller**, Professor of Biology, Fresno State University
 - **Barbara Taylor**, Associate Dean for Research, CSU Long Beach
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Getting Started





Think like a reviewer

- Volunteer to be a reviewer
- Read successful proposals
- Read declined proposals and review comments

Do your homework

- Review funder's priorities
- Review eligibility criteria, proposal guidelines, and evaluation criteria
- Schedule meeting with a program officer
- Talk to your campus research office

Grant proposals are different than journal articles

- Marketing document
- Convey confidence and competence
- Create a template



Tips: Writing about the CSU System

The CSU

- is the **nation's largest four-year public university**, with 23 campuses and eight off-campus centers
- educates the **most ethnically, economically, and academically diverse student body in the nation**
- is renowned for the **quality of its teaching** and preparing job-ready graduates
- educates approximately **482,000 students**
- employs more than **53,000 faculty and staff**
- stretches **800 miles** from Humboldt in the north to San Diego in the south
- has conferred degrees on more than **3.8 million alumni**
- turned **60 years old in 2020**, celebrating six decades of readying graduates to fuel CA's economy

Tip #1 Strengths-Based Perspective



Tip #2 Describe the Context

The California State University promotes student success through opportunity and a high-quality education that prepares students to become leaders in the changing workforce, making the CSU a vital economic engine for California.

NATION'S LARGEST
four-year public
university

23 CAMPUSES
and eight
off-campus
centers

482,000
STUDENTS

23 CAMPUSES. ONE UNIVERSITY.

Tip #3 Use your Resources

The CSU currently has ten multi-campus collaborations, also known as affinity groups, that conduct research and share knowledge on a breadth of topics, from agriculture and biotechnology to desert and ocean life.

They are associated with field stations, provide classes for students and the community, and offer ways for faculty to connect and collaborate.

- Agricultural Research Institute (ARI)
- Council on Ocean Affairs, Science, and Technology (COAST)
- CSU Program for Education and Research in Biotechnology (CSUPERB)
- California Desert Studies Consortium (CDSC)
- CSU Shiley Institute of Palliative Care
- Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML)
- Ocean Studies Institute (OSI)
- Social Science Research & Instructional Council (SSRIC)
- Science Technology Engineering Mathematics Network (STEM NET)
- Water Resources and Policy Initiatives (WRPI)



\$676 MILLION
in external funding



10 MULTI-CAMPUS
affinity groups focusing
on research



38,000
FACULTY-AUTHORED
journal publications from
2014-19

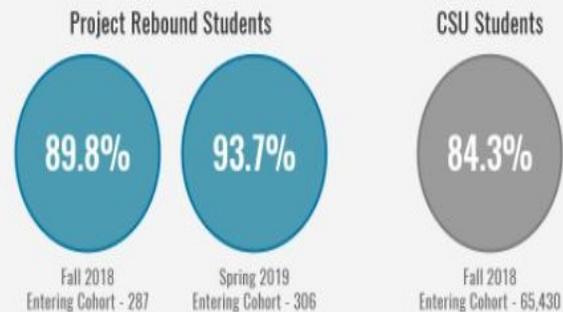
Project Rebound

Project Rebound is a program that supports the higher education and successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals wishing to enroll and succeed at the CSU. By connecting students with critical resources, Project Rebound constructs an alternative to the revolving door policy of mass incarceration and increases community strength and safety.

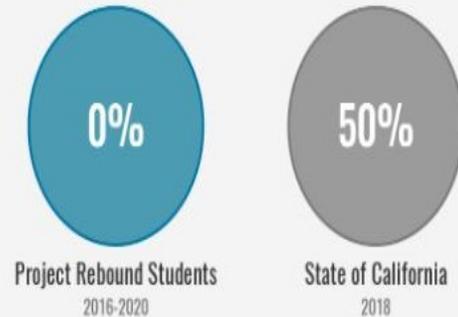
The Transformative Power of Higher Education

STUDENT RETENTION/PERSISTENCE

Status After Year 1



RECIDIVISM RATE



GRADUATION INITIATIVE 2025

Graduation Initiative 2025 aims to increase graduation rates for all CSU students while eliminating opportunity and achievement gaps. Through this initiative the CSU will ensure that all students have the opportunity to graduate in a timely manner according to their personal goals, positively impacting their future and producing the graduates needed to power California and the nation.

Student Well-Being & Basic Needs

Critical to student success at the CSU, the Basic Needs Initiative takes a holistic look at students' well-being both inside and outside the classroom, from housing and food security to mental health. We're working together to find better ways to support our students on their [path to graduation](#).



Tips: Writing about the CSU Faculty



Faculty & Staff

Tip #5 The CSU Community

The CSU system employs more than 53,000 faculty and staff.

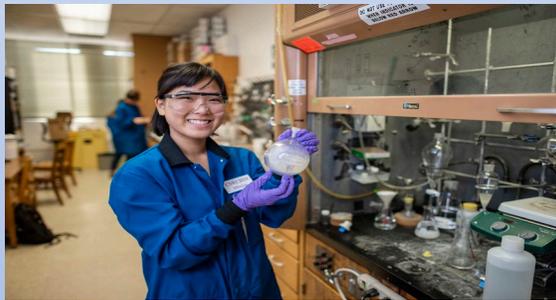
Over half of all California State University employees are faculty members.

Nearly 70 percent of CSU employees are women and minorities.

Fall 2019

FACULTY RANK	WHITE MALE	MINORITY MALE	MINORITY FEMALE	WHITE FEMALE	RACE/ ETHNICITY/ GENDER UNKNOWN*	TOTAL	PERCENT OF GRAND TOTAL
Professor	1,821	893	696	1,259	152	4,821	35.7%
Associate Professor	643	422	451	644	122	2,282	16.9%
Assistant Professor	808	634	784	922	277	3,425	25.4%
Tenure-Track Subtotal	3,272	1,949	1,931	2,825	551	10,528	78.0%
Lecturer	897	357	515	1,037	160	2,966	22.0%
TOTAL	4,169	2,306	2,446	3,862	711	13,494	100.0%

Research, scholarship, and creative activity touch every part of the CSU – enhancing learning and preparing students for the jobs of the future. The breadth and depth of this work spans 23 campuses through shared expertise, facilities, and resources.



Tip #6
Boldly state
your
contribution

Tip #7
RSCA is
Teaching



Tips: Writing about the CSU Students

STUDENTS

CSU students largely come from California and mostly remain in the state after graduation, applying the skills and knowledge they have learned to help California's economy thrive.

95 PERCENT

of all enrolled students come from CA

94 PERCENT

of new undergraduate transfers come from CA community colleges

89 PERCENT

of first-time freshmen come from CA public high schools

Tip #8 Our students are the story

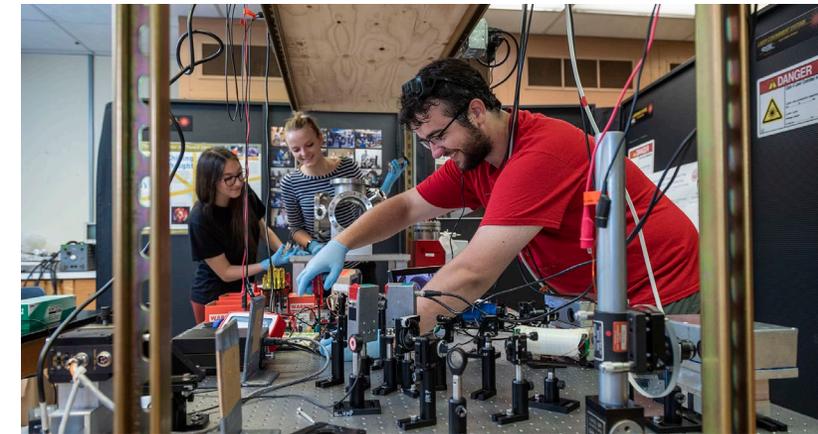


Tips: Writing about Student Engagement in RSCA

Tip #9
Paid positions provide equitable opportunities



Tip #10
Students strengthen RSCA





Tip #14 UGs rock at RSCA!



Tip #3 Use your resources

S⁴ Social Science Student Symposium
46th Annual
THURSDAY, May 6, 2021
 Online "Virtual" Conference (ZOOM)

Submission Deadline:
 March 18, 2021
 (registration opens Jan 7)

What? The S4 is a free "student only" conference that allows CSU students to present research in a supportive environment! Quantitative or Qualitative (12-15 min. presentations)

Who? Any Cal State University "Social Science" student, broadly

Registration: Submit a 250 word (max) abstract by the deadline (or: submit an abstract & full paper to be eligible for a paper award)

Four Paper Awards Available: (\$500 each)
 (1) Best Undergraduate Paper, (2) Best Graduate Paper,
 (3) Best use of Quantitative Data, (4) Best use of Qualitative Data

For details and registration, visit: <https://ssric.org/participate/src>

SCAN ME



Tips: Writing about Rigor, Merit, and Impact





Tip #15
Provide a strong rationale

Writing Approach

Tip #16
Be Bold!



Rigor – how robust are your methods?



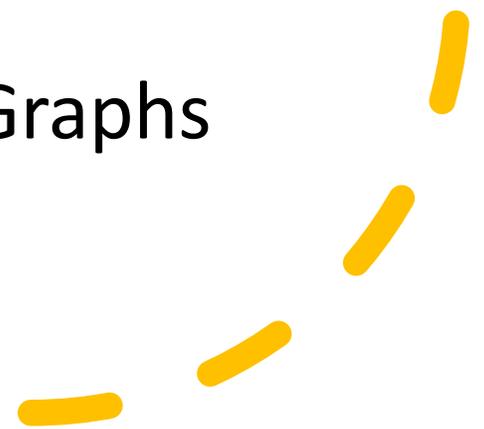
Merit/Significance – how will your project advance the discipline?



Impact – how and for whom will your project make a difference?



Writing Strategies

- Tip 17: Content organization
 - Tip 18: Word choice!
 - Tip 19: Focused and concise
 - Tip 20: Images, Tables, and Graphs
- 



Tips: Writing Quality



Avoid Common Writing Mistakes



MISSING OR
EXTRANEIOUS
DETAIL



OVERLY
TECHNICAL



ERRORS



LACKING
NOVELTY OR
INNOVATION



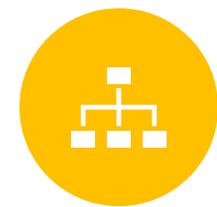
LACKING A
RATIONALE FOR
PROJECT
DECISIONS



NOT
ADDRESSING
LIMITATIONS
OR RISKS



NO
SUSTAINABILITY
PLAN



LACK OF
PROJECT
MANAGEMENT



Strategies

- Utilize font type, font size, underline, *italics*, **bold**
 - Arial
 - Utilize font type, font size, underline, *italics*, **bold**
 - Times New Roman
 - White space
 - Citations
 - Headings and subheadings
 - Plagiarizing RFP
 - Alignment across documents
- 



Upcoming Opportunity!



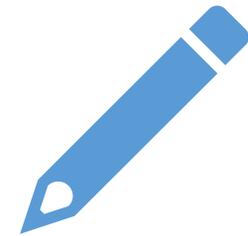
Small Systemwide
Writing Groups



Three-month commitment
(Feb – April, May – July, Aug – Oct)



Writing progress



Peer feedback



Questions & Discussion



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