CAL STATE LA

DEPARTMENT OF History

Fall 2025 | NEWSLETTER

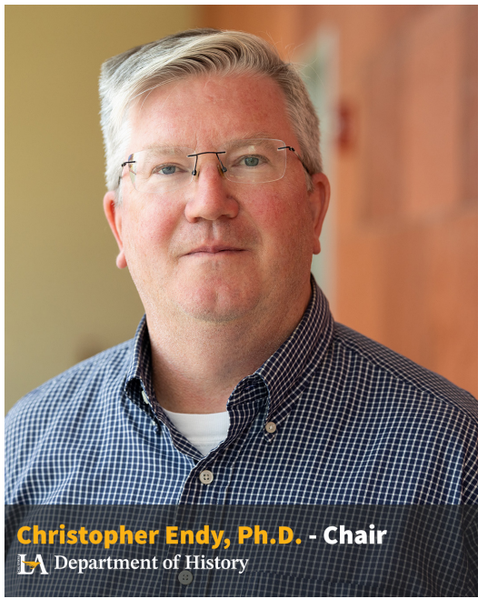


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WELCOME BACK

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



When I moved into the chair's office in August, I found a file cabinet packed with the history of the History Department. Many of the primary sources came in the form of professors' proposals to create new classes.

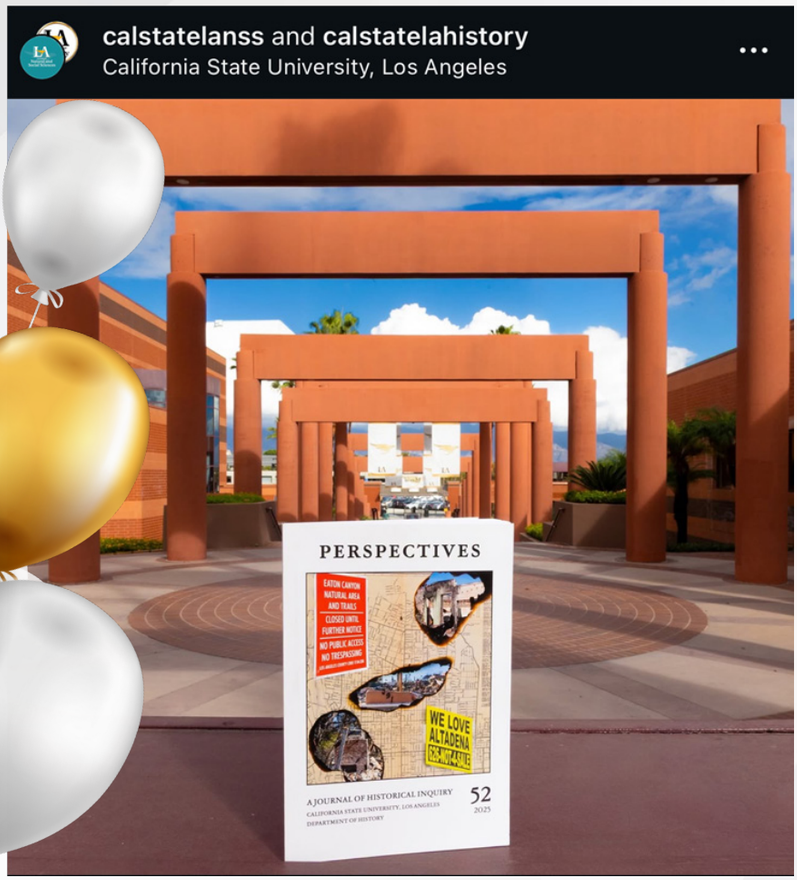
With these files, I could explore the evolution of our curriculum. When, for instance, did the department replace its bedrock "History of Western Civilization" course with a broader World History survey? The transition started around 1980, the same time a handful of young revolutionaries in Southwest Asia dominated U.S. politics by taking hostages in Iran. When did courses on women's history emerge? That came in 1985, when newly hired professor Carole Srole led the way. More recently, our department files show how we've introduced courses in Digital and Public History, Big History, Mapping Latin America, Piracy in World History, and more.

Speaking of evolution, every three years or so, a new History professor takes a turn as chair. My term started in August, and if all goes well, I'll have five more semesters... and five more newsletters to share.

Looking ahead, what projects or ideas should the History Department pursue? This newsletter, put together with the marvelous work of Jocelyne Martinez in our department office, offers a snapshot of where we are now. Over the next few years, please reach out and let me know where you think we should go. What primary sources will we leave for the next generation of historians?

Chris Endy
Department Chair

Back-to-Back 1st Place!





Perspectives: A Journal of Historical Inquiry has once again earned national recognition, winning **1st Prize in the Nash History Journal Prize's Online Graduate Journals category.** As @CalstatelaNSS shared, "this achievement highlights the dedication, skill, and hard work of the Cal State LA students who make *Perspectives* possible." Published annually and developed through the work of students in HIST 4970 under the guidance of **Dr. Birte Pfleger,** the journal showcases outstanding upper-division primary source research and is edited and produced by both undergraduate and graduate students in the Department of History. This back-to-back honor reflects the exceptional quality of scholarship and collaborative effort that defines the *Perspectives* team.

Scan to explore Perspectives Vol. 52 – Articles, Reviews, & Exclusive Features!



Perspectives Vol.52 Team

Back row (left to right): Joseph White, Marjorie Hunt, Jayden Feliciano, and Kareem Ali
Front row (left to right): Sal Macias, Lachlan Streeter, and Jeanette Calderon
Not pictured: Sylvia Walker



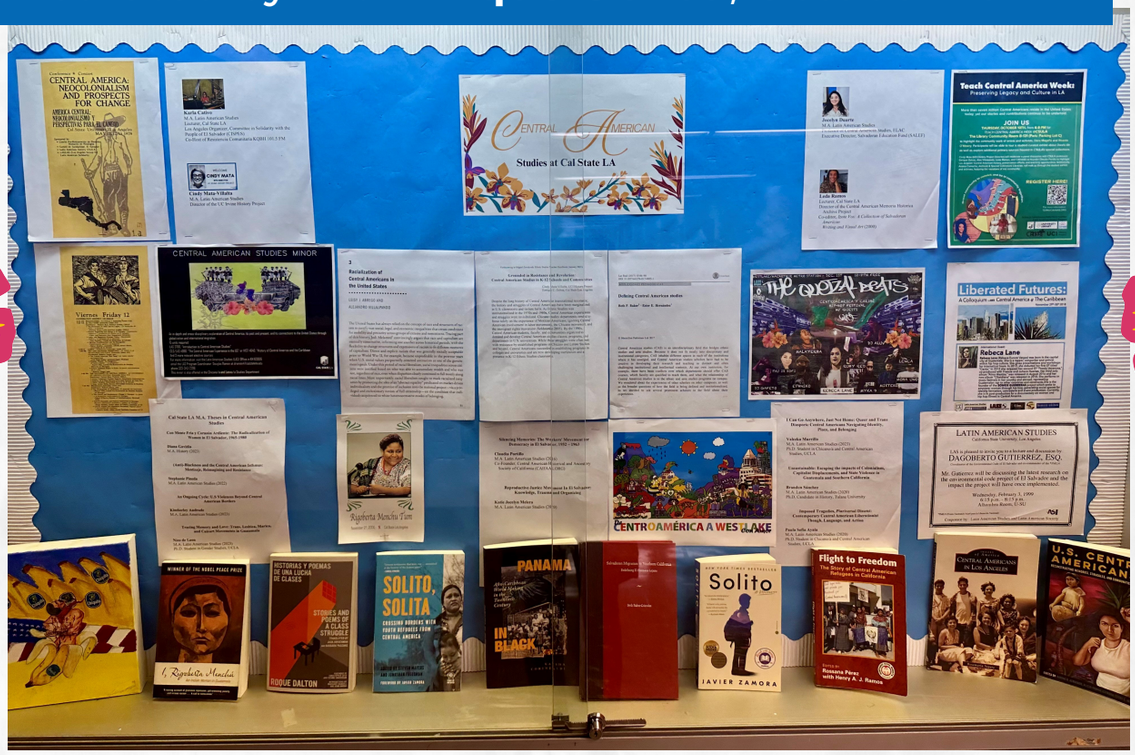
New Phi Alpha Theta Initiates

Back row (left to right): Scott Beltz, Jayden Feliciano, Joseph White, Kareem Ali, Dr. Pfleger, and Dr. Ford
Front row (left to right): Sal Macias, Jonathan Reyes, and Jeanette Calderon
Not pictured: Jacqueline Castrejon, Juana Evink, Rachel Pardo, Michael Tellez, and Sylvia Walker

Photo credit: **Lachlan Streeter** History M.A., 2025

2024 King Hall Display Case

Central American Studies
curated by **Dr. Enrique Ochoa**, October 2024



Native American Heritage Month
curated by **Dr. Sandy Gutierrez De Jesus,**
Department of Chicana(o) and Latina(o) Studies
& Latin American Studies Program, November 2024



American Indian & Indigenous Studies 3600 – Comparative Analysis of Indigenous Women's Experiences in the Americas
Chicana(o) & Latina(o) Studies 3220 – Race, Gender, and Hybridity in the Americas

Photo credit: **Jocelyne Martinez**

2025 King Hall Display Case

Celebrating 65 Years of Latin American Studies at Cal State LA curated by the **LAS Program**, **Renée Tabizón** (LAS M.A., 2025) and **Noemí Méndez-Colón** (LASS), November 2025

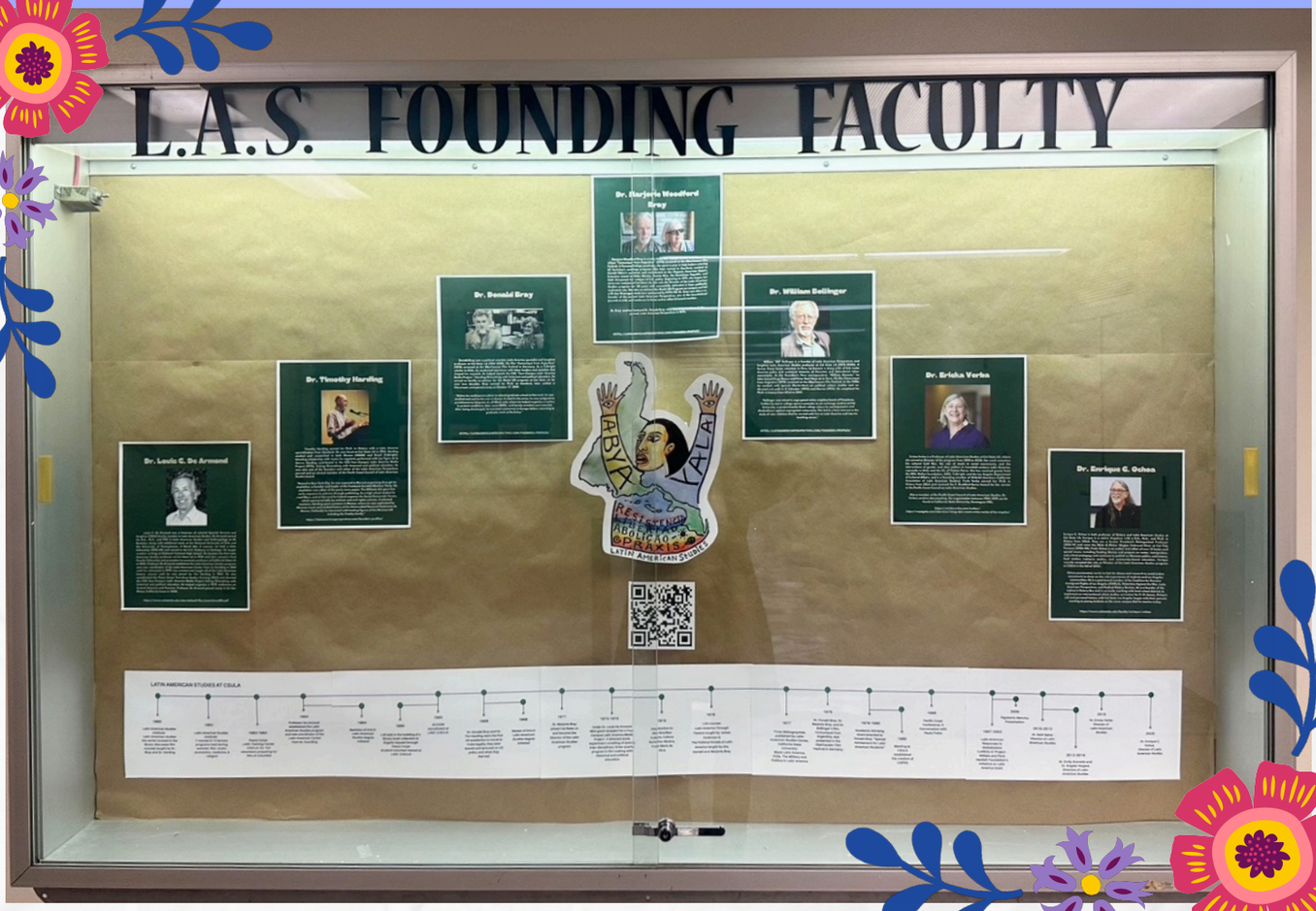


Photo credit: **Jocelyne Martinez**

2024 Events



- **Dr. Dawn Dennis** co-authored an article, "Innovative Pedagogy Through Big Data and ArcGIS: Perspectives on the Collaboration Among First-Generation Students, Nonprofits, and Open Data in Los Angeles," in the *Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship*, 16:2 (2024).

- **Dr. J. Travis Shutz** lectured on "'Japanese Pirates' in East Asia" for our Faculty Lecture Series on 4/8/24.

- **Dr. Ángela Vergara** presented "Chinchillas: From Wilderness to Breeding Farms, from the Andes to Southern California" at UCLA on 4/14/24.

- **Dr. Ángela Vergara** participated in the American Communities Faculty Fellows Symposium on 4/21/24.



- **Dr. Enrique Ochoa** celebrated the release of his book, *México Between Feast and Famine: Food, Corporate Power, and Inequality* (University of Arizona Press, 2025) on 4/30/24.

- **Dr. Enrique Ochoa** participated in an online presentation "Grounded in Resistance & Revolution: A Framework for Central American Studies in K-12," on 10/8/24.

- **Dr. Enrique Ochoa** also participated in a panel discussion, "Teach Central America Week: Preserving Legacy and Culture in LA," on 10/10/24. The event featured a panel discussion with faculty members from Latin American Studies: Alex Villalpando, Leda Ramos, and Claudia Portillo, moderated by Cindy Mata.

2025 Events

- **Dr. Scott Wells**, former History chair, was named the new Secretary of the Medieval Association of the Pacific in August 2025.

- **Dr. Eileen Ford** organized two M.A. Info Sessions via Zoom on 9/24/25 and 9/25/25. This gave prospective students the opportunity to ask questions about our M.A. program application process.

- **Dr. Enrique Ochoa**, was a guest speaker for the Chicanx/Latinx Student Resource Center in the Cross Cultural Centers on 11/12/25. The topic is Platicas Con Profes – Theme: Engaging in Cultural Healing Through Food

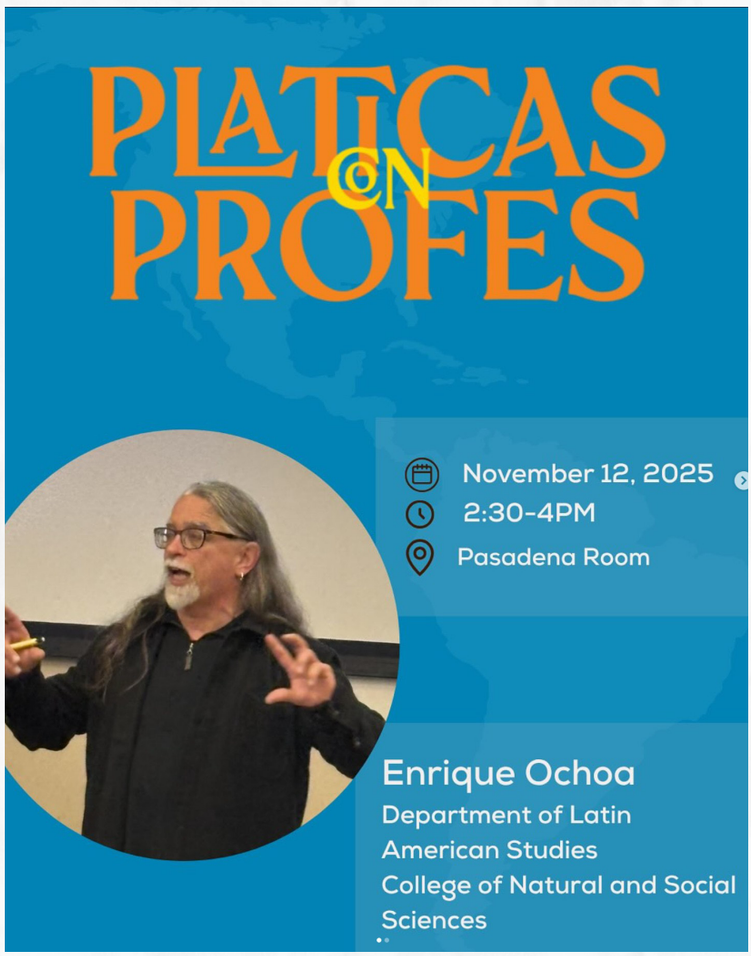
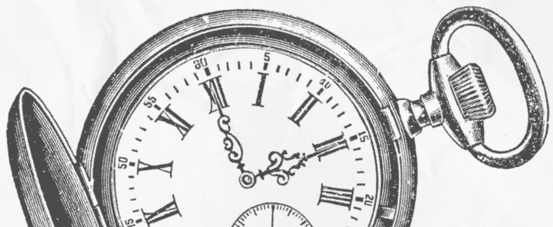


Photo credit: **@clsrc.ccc**



- **Dr Chris Endy** hosted a first ever "History YouTube Music Party" on 11/10/25.

- **Dr. Chris Endy**, along with M.A. student Stephen Legaspi, hosted a Student Faculty Alumni Potluck Picnic on 11/15/25 in collaboration with Monterey Park Historical Society. Shout out to Stephen and the rest of the MPHS for making this a successful event!





THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO CAME OUT TO OUR FIRST EVER

Potluck Picnic

in collaboration with MPHS!









Photo credit: **Robert Tellez,** Marketing Coordinator, Historical Society of Monterey Park



Dr. Tim Doran

Professor

Dr. Doran has an article, "Spartan Eugenics as Ideology and Practice," forthcoming in the Fall 2025 issue of the *Historical Review of Sparta*. He continues to work on a history of Sparta textbook for Routledge and a monograph on Spartan eugenic ideology for Palgrave-MacMillan.



Dr. Enrique Ochoa

Professor

Dr. Ochoa, a History professor for 30 years at Cal State LA, became the new director of the Latin American Studies Program. They still teach History and LAS courses.



Dr. Ángela Vergara

Professor

Dr. Vergara participated in the American Communities Program Faculty Fellows Symposia in September 2024, and April 2025. Her presentation, "El Cobre 1965: Disaster and Reconstruction in a Forgotten Mining Community," advanced the ACP theme of Re/Constructions.



Dr. Dawn Dennis

Lecturer

Dr. Dennis announced that her book review of Green and Slap (eds), *The Civil War and the Summer of 2020* (Fordham University Press, 2024) was accepted for publication in the *Journal of the Civil War Era (December 2025)*

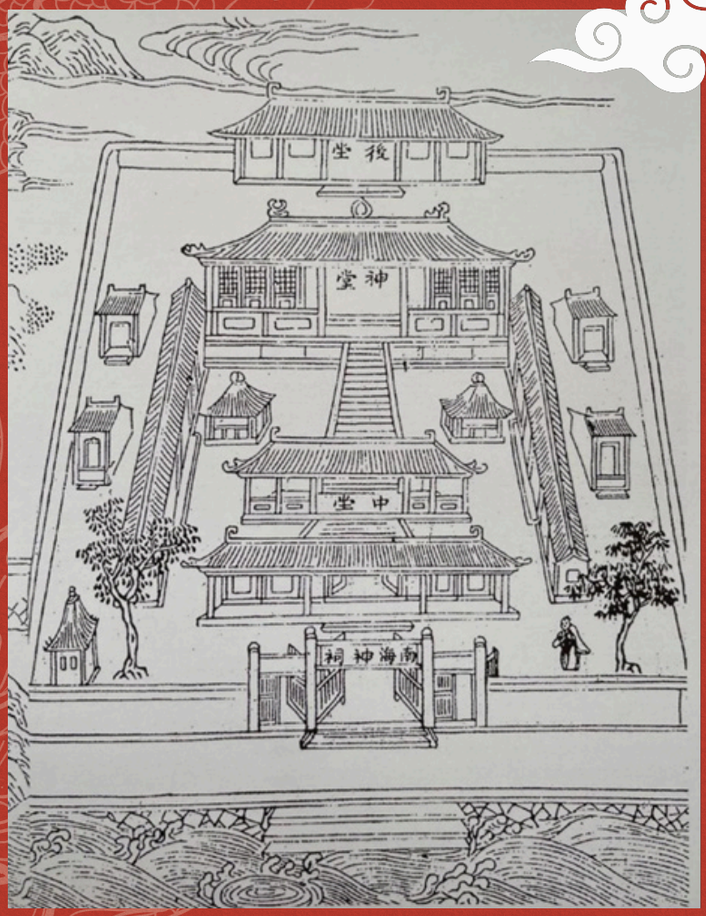
Searching for Dragon's Veins
by Dr. J. Travis Shutz

This summer, I completed a research trip to Taipei and Guangzhou (Canton), capital cities that are home to numerous records and scholars. While acquiring historical texts and recent studies about China's maritime past, the most exciting part was a series of on-site inspections (kaocha 考察) at historically important locations. In June, I visited the Southern Seas Spirit Temple in Guangzhou for the first time since 2014, when I was a recent MA graduate living in the city.

Early accounts place a government station and small shrine on the Fuxu bend of the Pearl River as early as the Sui Dynasty (581-618 CE). Given ambiguities in the records, debate persists about the station's purpose. Was it for border management or tax collection? In other words, did it ensure downriver control over people and goods traveling to and from the upriver capital city? Nevertheless, scholars generally think the shrine's existence reveals Fuxu was a place where seagoers presented offerings for safe voyages.



"The Sea is calm and peaceful" (hai bu bo yi 海不泊溢) stone archway at Southern Seas Spirit Temple, Guangzhou, China



Temple layout in the Southern Seas Spirit Temple Gazetteer (1596)

Photo credit: **Dr. J. Travis Shutz**

In my research of Chaozhou (a secondary port city several hundred miles to the east), I grapple with similar cloudiness in historical records. Although China was never cut off from the sea, far more details entered records regarding terrestrial activities. Exploring the temple proved a valuable reintroduction to local Guangzhou history. It also helped me recognize patterns of upstream, downstream, and nearshore connections that have been obscured in Chaozhou records.



Wharf ruins from the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912)

In Guangzhou, a dragon's vein, an important channel of Qi, is believed to run underground from Dragon's Head Mountain southwards beneath Southern Seas Spirit Temple and across the Pearl River. Connections thought to be created by the vein mirror linkages that historians strive to reveal in our research. Like fengshui geomancers recognizing Qi flowing underground made Fuxu a prime location for a shrine, and officials realizing a temple where seagoers stopped was an advantageous position for a government station, we look for unseen and visible forces influencing patterns in the past. So what dragon's veins have you been looking for?



Dragon's Vein Mural (20th c.)

Photo credit: **Dr. J. Travis Shutz**

Graduate Student Highlights

Kieran R. Black



Published an article in the *Journal of Big History* Vol. VIII, Issue 2, 2025, titled "Climate and the Periodization of Ancient Greece: A Big History." Here's a message from Kieran:

"I would like to thank my three advisors, Professors Pugach, Wells, and Doran for continuing to help me refine my abilities as a writer, researcher, and thinker as well as my father and grandfather for supporting my studying of History. "

Anthony Sales-Hernandez

Began Ph.D. study in the History Department at UC Santa Barbara.

Marjorie Hunt



Won the 2024-25 NSS Outstanding Graduate Student Award in Social Sciences!

LET'S HEAR FROM OUR CURRENT STUDENTS!

What is it like being a history student at Cal State LA?

Nathaniel Jaco-Razon, B.A. student

Being a history student at CSULA is incredibly rewarding, as we produce work that feels meaningful and actually contributes to our understanding of history.

Michael Machado, M.A. student

It is a heck of a lot of reading and writing, but mostly a lot of reading. My leisure hours after work are now spent reading and taking notes on what I read.

Ezra Alvarez, B.A. student

At first, I had difficulty staying with one major and decided that history should be the most interesting for me at the time. I do like history and learning about some of the events I did not know happened which has shaped our world. However, I do think people overestimate it since there is a lot of reading, but it is an important role, and many more people should consider the lessons behind it.

Juana Evink, M.A. student

Being a student at Cal State LA, is great, all the professors are extremely helpful, knowledgeable and qualify.

LET'S HEAR FROM OUR CURRENT STUDENTS!

What has been your favorite history course so far and why?

Nathaniel Jaco-Razon, B.A. student

My favorite history courses have been HIST 4890 History of Los Angeles and 3450 Rise of Urban America, both for the same reason. These courses really developed my understanding of living in a major city, and the history of both success and oppression made Los Angeles.

Michael Machado, M.A. student

History 5750 with Dr. Chris Endy has been my favorite course so far for, I liked the selection of books that we read touching upon US transnational history. Also, I liked how Endy ran the class because it forced me to do things that seemed insane like reading a book a week. The bookends method has really helped with tackling that.

Ezra Alvarez, B.A. student

My favorite courses have been ancient history so far because they were simple classes that were relatively easy to understand.

Juana Evink, M.A. student

My favorite history course so far was Professor Doran's Ancient Greek seminar. Despite being a challenging class, the topic and the group assignments made it so much more interesting and manageable.

LET'S HEAR FROM OUR CURRENT STUDENTS!

What kind of change would you like to see at Cal State LA?

Nathaniel Jaco-Razon, B.A. student

One change I would like to see at CSULA is the improved design of GET and greater accessibility to History Department courses. Another change I would recommend is the implementation of a King Taco or Tommy's Original Burger as one of the on-campus dining services. Both restaurants are iconic Los Angeles food eateries and should be represented at LA's iconic Cal State.

Michael Machado, M.A. student

How about cheaper parking. Especially if you're a grad student going twice a week. It should not be more than $100 for a semester, maybe make it valid from 5-9pm or something.

Ezra Alvarez, B.A. student

I would like to see additional events at school other than holiday celebrations throughout the months. Given that CSULA is a commuter school, the culture tends to reflect a similar notion. I also liked that the History department hosted a few Dodgers games. In general, I would want to see similar activities being presented at school.

Juana Evink, M.A. student

I would like more courses on ancient world history and medieval being offered every semester. As well as more classes in order for students to have options.

LET'S HEAR FROM OUR CURRENT STUDENTS!

What is your favorite thing about Cal State LA?

Nathaniel Jaco-Razon, B.A. student

My favorite thing about CSULA is the professors; almost all of my professors have been incredible at teaching and getting me to connect with the material to have a better understanding of it. The professors are also very easy to talk to about any difficulty you are having with learning the material and will be able to provide the additional support you need. It is very easy to tell that every professor in the history department has a genuine passion for the subject and for their students.

Michael Machado, M.A. student

My favorite thing about Cal State LA is its accessibility, for it provides easy access to higher education for thousands of LA and adjacent residents. As a high school teacher in south central LA I love that CSULA is just a 20 minute drive away and it's affordable enough where I do not need to take out loans for my graduate courses. The hours for graduate courses are also great for fitting into my schedule. Lastly, CSULA has some nice views.

Ezra Alvarez, B.A. student

I originally chose CSULA because it was really close to home and a step up from community college. I think many students like me also enrolled into CSULA because it is local and a commuter school which makes it easier on my responsibilities outside of school.

Juana Evink, M.A. student

My favorite thing about Cal State LA is the outstanding professors and seminar classes being offered at night.

LET'S HEAR FROM OUR CURRENT STUDENTS!

Share with us an accomplishment or update

Nathaniel Jaco-Razon, B.A. student

One update I have is that after this semester I will have completed my CLS minor and only need two more History courses (and three electives) to graduate and receive my B.A.

Ezra Alvarez, B.A. student

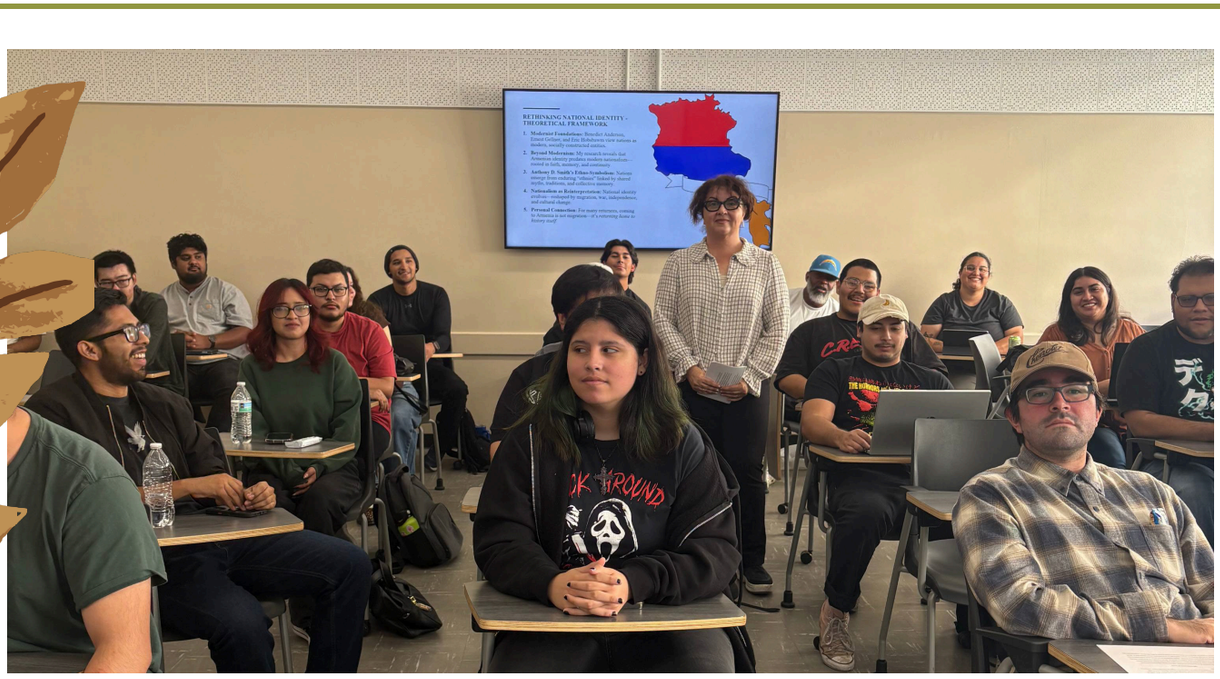
Balancing life and school can be difficult tasks. Especially when class assignments pile on which can be overwhelming. However, being consistent and completing assignments despite separate challenges provide a progress to look back on and realize how rewarding it can be.

Juana Evink, M.A. student

My accomplishment so far is to be able to take, complete, and pass two courses a semester while being a middle school teacher, and a mother of three small children. Furthermore, that despite the challenges, I haven't given up yet.



SUZANNA TEREYAN
History
M.A., 2023



Suzanna visited Dr. Choi Chatterjee's class, Hist 4370, speaking about her experiences growing up in the Soviet Union. Suzanna is a graduate and high school teacher at Holy Redeemer in Burbank.

Photo credit: **Dr. Choi Chatterjee**

Alumni Spotlight:

Chris Gurrola

Chris Gurrola graduated with an M.A. in History in 2022. Here's a message from Chris:

I am currently the Visitor Services Lead at LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes.

I recently started a book club at LA Plaza. Be on the lookout for future sessions.

I also was chosen as a 2025 Association for Preservation Technology International (APT) Equity Scholar.



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Alumni Spotlight:

Luis Zavala

Luis Zavala graduated with an M.A. in History in Fall 2024. Here's a message from Luis:

During my time in the M.A. History program at CSULA, I worked in multiple museums as an educator in the Los Angeles area. Most recently, I held a research position at the Petersen Automotive Museum where I conducted historical research with Chief Historian Leslie Kendall. I am happy to share that I enrolled as a Ph.D. History student this fall at Claremont Graduate University..."



"Thank you to the history professors at CSULA for your guidance, mentorship, and for your belief in all of us."

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EVENTS TO CHECK OUT

The famous LA Archives Bazaar, an annual gathering of archives, museums, historical societies, and other public history organizations, came to Cal State LA for the first time on October 18th, 2025. Cal State LA History alumni were everywhere! Learn more and see the full schedule of exhibitors and workshops: **laassubject.org/archives-bazaar**

Penny Neder-Muro is a B.A. alumna and a current M.A. student who works as an archivist at CalTech.



(left to right) Nick Beyelia and Ryan Pena are History M.A. alumni and both work as archivists in the Los Angeles Public Library.





(seated left) Current MA student, Stephen Legaspi, is a volunteer curator at the Monterey Park Historical Society.

Get Involved

If you've been a History student at Cal State LA in recent years, chances are you had experts from the Autry Museum of the American West visit your class to lead workshops on exhibit design. Be sure to check out the Autry's jobs page to learn about openings, including for part-time museum educators.

Speaking of the Autry, their exhibit, Black Cowboys: An American Story, closes on January 4th, so see it soon! You can also visit their new exhibit, Creative Continuities: Family, Pride, and Community in Native Art, through June 27th. Their monthly film series, What is a Western?, pairs a classic movie on a big screen with an opening lecture by an invited speaker.

The Monterey Park Historical Society is open to the public on Sundays from 1 to 4pm. They are looking for volunteers to help process their rich collection of primary sources. Visit on a Sunday and ask!

The Arqiv is a digital mapping project showcasing the past and present of LGBTQ communities in Los Angeles. The project is based at Cal State LA and is looking for volunteers to contribute content. They also welcome folks interested in learning web design.

Do you know about other opportunities? Let us know and we can add them to our Spring newsletter!

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Fall 2025 | Newsletter

If you'd like to support the History Department, click the "Give Now" button. Your generosity helps us continue offering meaningful opportunities to our students.

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Questions?

CONTACT US

Special thanks to our:

Newsletter Editor, Graphic Designer, and Content Creator



Jocelyne Martinez

Administrative Support Assistant

and

Newsletter Contributing Editor and Content Contributor

Dr. Chris Endy

Department Chair

Thank you for reading to the end!

We appreciate your time and hope you learned something new about the work we do in the department.

If you would like to contribute a story or update for our Spring newsletter, please reach out to Dr. Endy (cendy@calstatela.edu).

We wish you a safe and peaceful end of the year.

