

# CONNECTIONS

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Newsletter #12

Fall 2017

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## Lunch: Alzheimer's Disease and ALS

The *Fall* luncheon is scheduled for **Thursday, November 9** at the Smittcamp Alumni House on Matoian Drive of the Fresno State campus – west of the SaveMart Center. The “meet and greet” period starts at 11:00 a.m.; and we sit down for lunch at 11:30 a.m. The meal is free to ERA members; prospective joiners are welcome as non-paying guests. If you are planning to attend, please RSVP to David Quadro <[davidq@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:davidq@mail.fresnostate.edu)>

ERA President David Quadro will welcome attendees with brief remarks regarding organizational matters. Following the presentation and Q&A session, the President and/or officers of the Executive Committee will update members on vital issues being tracked by the statewide ERFA and our local affiliate ERA. The luncheon ends by 2:00 p.m. The **guest speaker** is Dr. Joy Goto, Professor of Chemistry and Department Chair at Fresno State. The **general topic** is: “**Alzheimer's Disease and ALS: Clues from the Environment and Answers from Biomedical Research.**” Neurodegenerative diseases are influenced by age, genetics and the environment. Dr. Goto's research uses fruit flies and neuronal cultures as models to understand the molecular and chemical mechanisms of how these diseases are initiated and propagated in humans. She will explain how biomedical research advances our insights into these complex diseases and how her Fresno State laboratory and students are paving the way to finding answers. **Joy J. Goto** earned a B.S. in Chemistry from UC Davis and Ph.D. in Chemistry from UCLA. She was the recipient of the UCLA Alumni Association distinguished dissertation award. She was a visiting Assistant Professor of chemistry in the Joint Science Department of Scripps, Claremont McKenna and Pitzer Colleges prior to joining Fresno State in 2007.

### **Election Results, 2017-19 Officers, Executive Committee\*\***

#### **Officers**

David Quadro, President and State Council Representative, Communication

Judith Chibante Neal, Vice President, Literacy and Early Education

Joanne Schroll, Secretary/Treasurer, Kinesiology

Stephen Rodemeyer, Newsletter Editor/Historian, Chemistry

#### **At-Large Members**

Ronald Johnson, Theatre Arts; Judith Kuipers, Child, Family and Consumer Sciences;

Jerry McMenamin, Linguistics; Elizabeth Nelson, Sociology; John Tinker, Sociology

\*\*After an extensive investigation into possible Russian collusion in the election, no such collusion was found and the results certified by the Nominations/Elections Subcommittee.

# Emeriti Groups

As Emeriti, we have several groups vying for our attention and attendance:

**Emeritus and Retired Faculty Association (CSU-ERFA).** This is our parent group, costing \$120 annually (maximum fee). This group publishes the "Reporter," the statewide newsletter, <http://csuerfa.org/reporter.html> quarterly.

Note; The CSU-ERFA Foundation encourages CSU-ERFA members involved in research and creative projects to apply to the Small Grant Program. The small grant program is competitive, with past awards ranging from \$100 to \$2,000, depending upon the number of proposals and the amount of money available for grants from the CSU-ERFA Foundation. Preference is given to first time grant applicants when grant proposals are of equal merit. The applications can be obtained by downloading them from [http://www.csuerfa.org/services.html#Grant Awards Program](http://www.csuerfa.org/services.html#Grant_Awards_Program). Deadline: October 31.

The **Emeriti and Retirees Association** (California State University, Fresno) is our local group, part of the statewide **CSU-ERFA** group. Some of our statewide dues return to us, which allows the free luncheons for members and prospective members. Be sure to invite any prospective members to a lunch. We publish our "Connections" newsletter twice a year.

The Fresno State Development Office hosts "Emeriti Coffees and Breakfasts" several times each semester, recently in various locations on campus to give us an update on current programs. Liz Garvin, [egarvin@csufresno.edu](mailto:egarvin@csufresno.edu), leads this group. They also sponsor a yearly reception on the coast, usually in early August, for those who live on the coast or those of us who like an excuse to visit the coast.

The Provost's Office sponsors a "new-Emeriti" lunch each fall semester, to which we are usually invited.

There is also the **Retired Public Employees Association of California** (dues, \$5 per month), which includes all retirees, not just academic. <https://www.rpea.com>  
And the **California State Retirees** [www.californiastateretirees.org](http://www.californiastateretirees.org)

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"Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power."  
Abraham Lincoln

"It is not true that people stop pursuing dreams because they grow old. They grow old because they stop pursuing dreams."  
Gabriel Garcia Marquez



## May 2017 Luncheon Speaker, Andrew Fiala

In addition to our usual excellent lunch, Andrew Fiala gave us insight into "The Arts and Humanities at Risk." He argued that we need more and better humanities and arts education to provide insight.

He outlined three challenges: the Trump Government, Academia Itself and General Ignorance. Since these challenges reinforced my own prejudices, I paid attention and relay some of his thoughts here.

In May, the Trump budget called for the elimination of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Institute for Museums and Library Services and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. The House budget contained funds for all these entities. Let the Art of the Deal begin. Since the Department of Philosophy has two NEH grants, they are watching carefully.

The Free Speech Wars, Liberal Bias and Professionalization of Academia are providing internal challenges to the arts and humanities. As General Education is re-examined (yes, again), arts and humanities may get squeezed out due to the 120 unit cap on units for graduation and the exemptions for professional programs. A recent CSU Executive Order reduces the upper division GE units from 12 to 9.

Andrew bemoaned the lack of ability to talk coherently about value conflicts, the ignorance of science and religion and their history (see comment below), the ignorance of the constitution and law. He sees education in Civics, Literature and (of course) Philosophy as opening up the students' minds to the complexity of the human condition.

As you might expect, there was a lively discussion after the presentation.

Andrew also leads the Ethics Center and the Civility Project.

**Ethics Center** <http://www.fresnostate.edu/artshum/ethicscenter/>

### **Civility Project**

<http://fresnostate.edu/artshum/ethicscenter/documents/Civility%20Project%20Flier%20Trifold.Sept.pdf>

*The United States is one of the most religious places on earth, but is a nation of shocking religious illiteracy. Only 10 percent of American teenagers can name all five major world religions and 15 percent cannot name any. Nearly two-thirds of Americans believe that the Bible holds the answers to all or most of life's basic questions, yet only half of American adults can name even one of the four gospels and most Americans cannot name the first book of the Bible. Stephen Prothero, "Religious Literacy"*

## **CSU EXECUTIVE ORDER ALLOWS FOR BEER SALES AT BULLDOG STADIUM**

Fresno State fans will once again be able to purchase beer at football games at Bulldog Stadium starting this fall. The change results from Executive Order 1109, a new California State University system-wide policy that allows each of the 23 CSU campuses to decide whether to reinstate the sale and service of alcohol at university intercollegiate athletic events.

Alcohol was last sold at Fresno State football games during the 2005 season, before a previous CSU executive order initiated a ban on sales in 2006.

FresnoStateNews.com

## **CSU to end placement exams [Entry Level Math (ELM) and English Placement Test (EPT)]**

Many community colleges are moving away from placement exams as a means of determining the skills of incoming students.

Now the California State University System is planning to do the same in an effort to increase graduation rates, despite lingering concerns from some officials and faculty members that removing the tests may hurt students in the long run.

“We’re trying to increase the number of students who can go right into college course work to get college credit instead of track students into remediation for various reasons,” said April Grommo, director of enrollment management services for the system, adding that the system would discontinue the use of early placement tests as soon as 2018 and instead rely on high school grades and course work, SAT or ACT scores as measures to determine college readiness.

The move is part of the system’s long-term goal known as Graduation Initiative 2025, which is a series of steps Cal State is taking to increase the four-year graduation rate from about 20 percent today to 40 percent in the next eight years. The goal also includes increasing the six-year graduation rate from 57 percent in 2015 to 70 percent in 2025.

The Cal State system currently uses its own English and math exams designed by Educational Testing Service to determine placement.

If students score below certain benchmarks and were considered conditionally ready, the system would introduce the review of high school course work and grades to determine placement and if based on all factors the student is found not to be college ready, they would be required to attend the system's early-start course in the summer. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/06/13/california-state-university-looks-end-placement-exams>

**Editor’s Note:** Many thanks to John Shields for serving as our Editor for six years. He has made it an attractive, informative, and interesting Newsletter. He has established a high bar!! Many thanks, John.

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