

UC Graduate Student Virtual Conference
February 13, 2026

Hosted on February 13, 2026, the conference will gather University of California graduate students in the humanities or humanistic social sciences or arts to explore the theme of sustenance through a myriad of lenses, including the care and tending of bodies and communities, myth-making and narratives, political and agricultural economies, and ecological activism.

Panels will be hosted on Zoom

Register: <https://bit.ly/Sustenance2026>

9:00-10:30am: SUSTENANCE + NARRATIVES

Moderated by Jeanette Kohl (UCR, History of Art)

- Isoke Atiba (UC Riverside, Comparative Literature) “The Ravenous Feminine: Cannibalism in Japanese Contemporary Literature”
- Adia Ayanna (UC Riverside, English) “Rebuilding After the End: Black Feminist Survival Across Historical and Speculative Futures”
- Erica Cecilia Castillo (UC Riverside, Art History) “Myth Making, Animacy, and Visual Memory of Latinidad”
- Mingrui Wen (UC Davis, Comparative Literature) “Aesthetics, Compassion, and Visual Ethics in Contemporary Hong Kong Cinema”

11:00am-12:30pm: SUSTENANCE + WELL-BEING

Moderated by Jade Sasser (UCR, Gender and Sexuality Studies)

- Ania Mah Gricuk (UC Santa Cruz, History) “Sustenance as Medicine: the Case of the First Chinese Hospital in Hong Kong”
- Lorna Katz (UC Riverside, Digital Composition) “Not Alone - A Musical Based on a Survivors of Suicide Loss”
- Elieza Lewis (UC Davis, Design) “The Womb As Architecture”

11:00am-12:30pm: SUSTENANCE + POWER

Moderated by Dylan Rodriguez (UCR, Media & Cultural Studies)

- Sarah Hoenicke Flores (UC Irvine, Comparative Literature) “The Weather Station: Critical fiction and the factory farm”

- Jenni Martinez (UC Riverside, Ethnic Studies) “Kitchen Epistemologies of Sustenance in Transnational Family Life”
- Mark Reynolds (UC Riverside, History) "The Pitiful Fields of Cuba": The American Red Cross and the Empire of Famine Relief”

1:00 - 2:30PM: KEYNOTE PLENARY PANEL: "Collective Sustenance: Nourishment in a Depleted World"

Whenever we eat, we enter into complex circuits of nourishment. Some beings are sacrificed so that others may be sustained. Sustenance engages lands, people, plants, animals, and insects in producing, reproducing, depleting and reconstituting. In this era of the Plantationocene, petrochemical inputs and intensive extraction create sacrifice zones in agricultural areas, as they produce industrially processed goods for a global market. What are the possibilities for finding collective sustenance and building nourishing relations in this disturbed landscape?

Moderated by Dana Simmons (UCR, Society, Environment, and Health Equity)

Panelists:

Catherine Sameh (UC Irvine, Gender and Sexuality Studies)

Vetri Nathan (UC Los Angeles, European Languages & Transcultural Studies)

Paolina Lu (UC Davis, American Studies)

3:00-4:30pm: SUSTENANCE + COMMUNITIES

Moderated by Cathy Gudis (UCR, History)

- Christine Frazier (UC Riverside, History) “Payómkawichum Land Negotiations in Riverside County: Preserving Health and Sustenance”
- Bri Matusovsky (UC San Francisco, Medical Anthropology) “Food Insecurity as Eco-Horror: The Monkey Problem of St. Kitts”
- Russell Nylen (UC Santa Barbara, Anthropology) “Agroecology as Resistance in Minas Gerais, Brazil”
- Catherine Wells (UC Riverside, Political Science) “Everyday Mutual Aid and Democratic Theory: Resisting Alienation of Basic Survival”

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