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Doctorate Program Will Study Substance Abuse and Its Consequences

Collaboration between UC San Diego and SDSU among first in nation

A new Joint Doctoral Program (JDP) in Interdisciplinary Research on Substance Use has been launched by the Division of Global Public Health in the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine and San Diego State University's School of Social Work. The program will emphasize research devoted to studying the use and misuse of alcohol and drugs – and related social and health consequences.

“This program is the first of its kind,” said JDP co-director Steffanie Strathdee, PhD, professor and head of the UC San Diego Global Health Initiative. “Given that substance use has a growing health and societal impact in the U.S. and globally, this program could not come at a better time.”

The JDP will focus on research designed to identify and assess substance use risk and create intervention programs for preventing or ameliorating high-risk behaviors related to substance use. It will include training to craft and evaluate disease prevention and health promotion recommendations and help guide public health policies.

María Luisa Zúñiga, PhD, JDP co-director and associate professor in SDSU's School of Social Work, said “SDSU and UC San Diego have a long history of jointly offering cutting edge, high-demand programs. This new doctoral program is designed to train the next generation of researchers to lead interdisciplinary research efforts that will meaningfully address substance use issues of national and global impact. Our graduates will be highly sought after in fields including medicine, social work and public health, as well as research firms and governmental health departments.”

The new JDP is the 14th such program offered by UC San Diego and SDSU. Others include highly acclaimed programs in public health and clinical psychology.

Funding from SDSU Division of Academic Affairs and College of Health and Human Services will cover tuition fees and a teaching associate stipend for four students per year for up to four years. Students will spend the first year of study at SDSU, the second at UC San Diego and subsequent years working with faculty from both campuses.

For more information on the joint doctoral program in Interdisciplinary Substance Use Studies, visit socialwork.sdsu.edu/degrees-programs/graduate-programs/phd-substance-use-studies/phd-overview/

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