

International
Scholars
March 2025
**Monthly
Newsletter**



Happy almost March!

Thank you so much for Professor Walter Clark for speaking about their journey at the Meet & Greet on January 29th!

And thank you so much for all who attended.

Before our next Meet & Greet on February 26th, learn about our next speaker, Professor Ertem Tuncel, on page 2!



Upcoming ISS Events

Scholar Coffee Hours

What: Meet to chat with other scholars – bring your own beverage and make some friends!

When: Fridays 11:00AM - Noon

Where: Outside of The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf

March Meet & Greet

Where: HUB 265

When: March 26, Noon – 1pm

Please come meet our new scholars! As always, we will provide lunch 😊



Check this out!

Please fill out the feedback form on the ISS activities:

<https://forms.gle/H2ciS3T4sqbHqrTK6>

**This Month's Spotlight**

Professor Ertem Tuncel

Professor of Electrical and
Computer Engineering



We asked some questions to Professor Ertem Tuncel, who will be speaking at the International Scholars Meet & Greet on February 26th! Follow his story below.

1. Please tell us a little bit about your background (before coming to UCR).

I was born and raised in Türkiye, and lived there until I was 23 years old. I got my BS degree in Electrical and Electronics Engineering at Middle East Technical University in 1995. I also received a Masters degree in the same discipline at Bilkent University in 1997. These are both among the best universities in Türkiye. I then came to the United States to have a doctoral degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering. I went to UC Santa Barbara and received my PhD there in 2002.

2. Please briefly describe your role at UCR.

At UCR, I am first and foremost a professor doing research in information theory (a research field in electrical engineering), and teaching electrical engineering courses. But in the last 8 years I also had the chance to serve the university as an administrator in several roles. Between 2017 and 2022, I was the Associate Dean of the Graduate Division, and after that I started serving as the Chair of my department, Electrical and Computer Engineering.

3. How did you get into engineering?

From my earliest days of education, I knew I was good at math. I got good grades and I was placed in great schools thanks to this. In Türkiye, if you show some talent in mathematics, your teachers, your parents, and your peers all nudge you towards getting a degree in a STEM field. On top of this, I had the guidance of my older brother who is also an electrical engineer, and has a BS degree from the same university as I went. I was intrigued by the mathematical depth of what he was learning as he went through college, and I wanted to have the same experience.

4. What are some of your favorite memories at UCR?

One of my favorite memories is when I was promoted to become a full professor. When I found the letter from the Chancellor congratulating me in my mailbox, I took it and ran to my wife's office (she also works for UCR). She was not there, but I put the letter on top of her keyboard and started walking back to my office. A couple of minutes later she caught up and there were tears of joy on her eyes. This was her achievement as much as it was mine, because I would not be here if it were not for her sacrifices and her infinite support.

5. Do you have any advice for incoming international scholars?

My advice to international scholars is that you should make the best of your stay here. Learn the culture, enjoy the food, and get yourself some local friends. If you see yourself staying here permanently, then also adapt and integrate to the life here as much as possible.

Next month's speaker is Dr. Marine A Megemont at the Molecular Cell & Systems Biology department!





Cultural Conversation Class!

If you or your spouse is interested in participating in the Cultural Conversation Class to help improve your English and to meet new friends. Thank you to those who came to our last class and helped us make it successful!

Where: HUB 367

When: Every Tuesday, 9-10 AM

Our instructor is Candace Jorgensen, who has experience living in other cultures, which adds depth to her teaching the Cultural Conversation Class for international scholars and their families. She also holds a master's degree in education with emphasis on teaching English to speakers of other languages.



What to do This Month in Riverside

UCR Women's Basketball vs Hawaii

When: February 27, 2025 6- 8pm

Where: SRC Arena

UCR entertains a visit from Hawai'i for some Thursday night hoops in the Inland Empire! Don't miss it!

<https://highlandertickets.com/tickets/events/womens-basketball-vs-hawaii-1740708000000-39944>



UCR Seminar: "Shifts in U.S. Foreign Policy: Myth or Reality?"

When: March 7, 2025 1:30pm

Where: The Stable (At The Barn), UCR

Join former U.S. Ambassador Ronald E. Neumann, Class of '66, for a seminar on the evolving landscape of U.S. foreign policy under President Donald Trump. Drawing from his extensive diplomatic experience in Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq, Afghanistan, and various Middle Eastern and Washington postings, Ambassador Neumann will share insightful stories and examine the key shifts and misconceptions that have shaped U.S. foreign policy over the decades.

<https://events.ucr.edu/event/shifts-in-us-foreign-policy-myth-or-reality>



UCR Taiko Ensemble Recital

When: March 11, 2025 at 12pm

Where: The Barn at UCR, Outdoor Stage

Beginning and intermediate-level members of the UCR Taiko Ensemble will be presenting a demonstration of Japanese taiko drumming.

<https://events.ucr.edu/event/taiko-recital-march-2025>



UCR Staff Pantry

When: March 21st, 2025 12:30-2:30pm

Where: Pentland Hills/RSO Roundabout at UCR (Turn left on Linden Street and right onto Pentland Way, near Lot 21)

FREE non-perishable food items available to the first 200 UCR Staff to arrive.

<https://events.ucr.edu/event/staff-pantry-2024-2025>



Frequently Asked Questions

I need to leave the U.S. and ISS has not signed my DS-2019 document! Is that OK?

Please know that you do not need a travel signature on your DS-2019 document to either remain in or to depart the U.S. You do need a valid travel signature to return to the U.S. in J-1 status. A valid travel signature must be no more than twelve months old on the date that you return to the U.S.

If you are departing the U.S. soon and know that your travel signature will expire by the time you expect to return to the U.S., please contact our international scholar advisor at makbule.koksal@ucr.edu. If your DS-2019 is going to expire soon, please consult with your department to extend your stay and then contact our scholar advisor.

What will happen if I end my UCR appointment early and/or depart the United States and do not intend to return to the U.S. for my J program?

If you are a scholar and you depart the U.S. early (more than 15 days before your DS-2019 end date) and you do not intend to return to the U.S. for the remainder of your J program, please discuss this with your faculty sponsor. Please also email our advisor so that she can advise you on the steps and the visa implications of ending your program early.