California State University SAN MARCOS | OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

2025-2026
Graduate Dean's Award

The Graduate Dean's Award honors the central role of graduate education at California State University San Marcos by recognizing the exceptional achievements of a distinguished master's or doctoral recipient. Graduate study combines intellectual independence with rigorous collaboration with faculty mentors, enabling students to build specialized knowledge and make meaningful contributions to their disciplines. The recipient of this award will exemplify outstanding academic distinction, demonstrated through a record of scholarly or creative excellence, independent inquiry, and meaningful contributions to research or professional practice.

The name of the student selected by the Dean of Graduate Studies as the recipient of the Graduate Dean's Award will be forwarded to the Office of the President. The awardee will be honored at a special recognition event hosted by the President on Friday, May 1, 2026, at the McMahan House. Honorable mentions will be acknowledged on the OGSR website.

Award Criteria

- Be on track to complete the master's or doctoral degree requirements in Summer 2025, Fall 2025, Spring 2026, or Summer 2026.
- Minimum graduate cumulative GPA of 3.7
- Departmental and/or college recommendation (only one nomination per graduate program will be accepted)
- Evidence of outstanding scholarship in graduate coursework
- Evidence of outstanding achievement on the master's or doctoral culminating experience (thesis, project, comprehensive examination, or dissertation)
- Achievement in academic, professional, and service activities

Nomination Process

Nomination packets are due to the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research via email (gradstudies@csusm.edu) by Friday, March 13, 2026. Completed packets must include:

- Student's Personal Statement (maximum 3 pages) describing:
  - Significant educational accomplishments and career goals.
  - Challenges overcome in pursuing the graduate degree at CSUSM.
  - A pivotal graduate school experience and its influence on the student's academic journey.
- Letter of Recommendation from the student's faculty advisor commenting on the special achievement of the student's culminating experience (thesis, project, comprehensive examination, or dissertation)
- Student's Curriculum Vitae/Resume that includes academic, professional, employment, and service history

Questions may be directed to Nam Nguyen via email at gradstudies@csusm.edu