Commencement Celebration 2017

On June 7, the Graduate Division’s annual commencement celebration returned to the Nourse Theater in San Francisco’s Hayes Valley neighborhood for the second year in a row. The historic theater continues to provide a charming setting for graduates to celebrate this milestone in their lives with family, friends, faculty members, and the Graduate Division family as a whole.

This year, a record 182 graduate students participated in commencement, joined by over 1,000 family and friends. The academic procession also included over 60 faculty and distinguished guests who were present to mark the occasion. The photo series above gives a glimpse into the festivities.

Professor Carol Gross, PhD, gave this year’s Commencement Address, entitled “The Future is in Your Hands.” In reflecting on her own winding path through vast changes in science, social attitudes, and political climate, Gross sought to offer the graduates confidence in their generation’s unique potential to confront the challenges that face the world today. “By studying at UCSF, you have had the opportunity to imbibe the scientific temper. You can use this way of being not only to advance science, but also to advance the ability of people in the world to think carefully, accurately, and flexibly about our major problems and how we might solve them.”

The Associated Students of the Graduate Division and the Graduate Division Alumni Association honored Dr. Orion Weiner, PhD, with the 2017 Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award. Weiner, a professor in UCSF’s Cardiovascular Research Institute, is a Graduate Division alumnus himself, having received his doctoral degree in biochemistry and molecular biology at UCSF in 2001. In presenting the award, graduate student Zairan Liu noted, “We always have his full support in the pursuit of all career paths, enabling every trainee to attain his or her own unique potential?Orion is cherished by his students and peers for the passion and compassion he brings to scientific mentorship.”

In his own remarks, Weiner drew parallels between his dual roles as a mentor and new parent. “Kids don’t come into the world with an instruction manual and neither do grad students. They can’t tell you what they are best at, what’s the right environment or project for them. You have to figure it out with them by exposing them to a wide variety of experiences, see what sticks, encouraging them in that direction, unlocking their creativity and imagination, and being patient enough to give them room to grow.”

Many thanks to the staff and volunteers who made this special event run so smoothly, and to
the participating faculty and guests. But most of all, hearty congratulations to the Graduate Division's 2017 graduates!

Unless otherwise noted, all photos above are by Student Financial Aid staff member Derek Tong.

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