

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE *Current*

August 1, 2017

[Sonia Fernandez](#)

Exceptionally Fine-Tuned

With smart homes, self-driving cars and other technology making the world an ever more automated place, state-of-the-art automation and control has become essential. And UC Santa Barbara is among those leading the way.

In its Academic Ranking of World Universities' (ARWU) 2017 global ranking by academic subjects, the [ShanghaiRanking](#) places UCSB at No. 3 in the world in the field of automation and control, just behind University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"This is a wonderful recognition of the important, first-rate work our distinguished colleagues are doing, and such recognition brings prestige and distinction to the entire college and our campus," said UCSB Chancellor Henry T. Yang.

The beauty of automation and control lies in its invisibility: If things are working well, people usually don't notice. Automation and control makes trains run on time, directs stoplights to change from green to yellow to red, lets our cars know when to switch gears and is responsible for making sprinklers come on to douse the flames when a fire breaks out in a room. Automation and control makes our world run smoothly and safely, encompassing a variety of fields, including aviation, transportation, biomedical applications and virtually every situation in which a machine must sense and respond to variable input with minimal human intervention.

At UCSB, experimental and theoretical work in automation and control is pursued on several fronts. Among them are the dynamics and control of airplane and space

structures; control of building structures due to earthquakes and winds; control of switched and discontinuous systems and automatic drive-train control.

More than 4,000 universities were ranked across 52 subjects for the 2017 ARWU list. Indicators include measures of research productivity, research quality, extent of international collaboration and research with top quality and the highest academic recognitions.

“This is great news confirming the outstanding quality of our program in control and automation, an area of increasing importance to improving quality of life in our technologically complex world,” said UCSB College of Engineering Dean Rod Alferness. “The fact that the ShanghaiRanking group has chosen to highlight this field and rank our program number three in the world validates our vision of investing in such cutting-edge, high-impact areas of endeavor.”

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.