

Overview and updates: December 17, 2018
Katharine Burnett, Founding Director

Having completed its first three years of infrastructure building with seed funds from the offices of the Provost, Dean of the College of Letters and Sciences, and Dean of College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies, the Global Tea Initiative for the Study of Tea Culture and Science (GTI) is now transitioning to become the Global Tea *Institute* for the Study of Tea Culture and Science, the world's first and only comprehensive research institute to study tea in all its dimensions, in any discipline, and using any approach.

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Mission

GTI's mission is to promote the understanding of tea through evidence-based knowledge with a global perspective. GTI promotes research on tea from anywhere in the world, and in any discipline, using any methodology.

New research, new knowledge

By asking new questions about tea, we are finding out new knowledge about tea. We are extending the boundaries of knowledge, and sharing it with our students and the world. Moreover, through interdisciplinary and collaborative work, we are starting to ask new types of questions for new types of new knowledge. To be sure, *Camellia sinensis* is the primary focus, but as many things are consumed as "tea," we recognize that all merit study.

Goals and events

Our goals are many. They include fostering knowledge about tea through colloquia and symposia, lectures, and workshops that address the needs of the campus, tea industry and the general public.

GTI's upcoming event is the 4th Annual Colloquium on *Body, Mind, Spirit: Issues Surrounding Tea and Health*, set for January 24, 2019. (For details, see <https://globaltea.ucdavis.edu/events>.)

Teaching

Our goals also include teaching across the disciplines. We have begun to write a new Global Tea Culture and Science curriculum for undergraduates and graduate students. Our second offering of the First Year Seminar, *Global Tea Culture and Science*, is being offered Winter Quarter 2019. It is a team taught course with seven GTI faculty and librarians as instructors focusing on diverse topics, and is again fully subscribed by new students on campus.

Student involvement

When students realized that GTI existed, they established the affiliated Global Tea Club, an official UC Davis club. This club is extremely active, meeting bi-weekly, and bringing in speakers and sampling teas. It has become a model for tea clubs at other universities across the United States.

International partnerships

Working with our Office of Global Affairs, we are developing partnerships with top-tier international institutions and research universities to leverage the strengths of our various campuses through faculty and student exchange.

Dedicated building

When an Institute, we dream of a dedicated building with tearooms and gardens, meeting and teaching space, a sensory theater, exhibition space for narrating the stories of tea culture and science around the world, and more. This site will function as a public destination for relaxing over a cup of tea, and for learning about tea. In building friendships over tea, the site and GTI can promote peace on the personal and global levels.

Unique in the world

As tea industry leader, Manik Jayakumar, Chief Executive, QTrade Teas & Herbs Teas, points out, “as we stand there is no organization in the world that embraces Global Tea. With the growth of specialty tea in the US, GTI ideally suited to play that role.”

Why UC Davis?

What qualifies UCD for this kind of work? First off, in studying tea, GTI builds on campus strengths. Just as UC Davis was on the forefront of developing a world class wine program for the US, and has premier programs for the study of other beverages and foods including beer, chocolate, coffee, olive oil, honey, and more, UCD has a role in spearheading the same world class tea education program.

But also, UCD has been growing tea for over 50 years. UCD collaborated with Lipton on a project in the 1960s at the UC’s Kearney Station, near Fresno CA. Fourteen tea plants still exist. They survived as a decorative hedge, but now are part of large-scale research projects.

UC Davis is a top ranking university in the US and the world.

With over 104 different majors and 99 graduate programs to choose from, *US News and World Report* has ranked us at or among the top in various categories including “Best Global University” and “Best Liberal Arts University.” We’ve also been ranked the “Nation’s #1 Cool School for environmental sustainability practices,” and recognized as a “Top-10 national university for contributions to the public good” (*Washington Monthly*). UC Davis is ranked #1 in the nation and the world for agriculture, plant sciences, and food science and nutrition. And we have premier faculty across our the disciplines in our other departments. With this talent bank, we bring an unparalleled ability to study tea across the disciplines at a rigorous level.

Comprehensiveness

UC Davis is the most comprehensive of all 10 of the UC campuses. In addition to our breadth of offerings at the undergraduate and graduate levels, UCD also has a comprehensive health system,

a premier vet-med school, over two dozen specialized research centers, 4 colleges, and 5 professional schools. This means that we can leverage strengths in each of these areas in our study of tea.

Our faculty also work at the numerous agricultural extension stations around the state, which give us access to diverse climates and topographical conditions for our experiments. At the Kearney Agricultural Research and Extension Center near Fresno, for example, Chemistry Professor Jackie Gervay-Hague is working with Kearney Director Jeff Dahlberg to conduct experiments with the 50-year-old tea trees there.

Neutrality

As a Research I University, UC Davis provides a neutral zone for conversations and research about teas from around the world and with the industry.

Simply put, there is no other single research institute to *comprehensively* help shape the growing tea industry, and train students across the disciplines, at our rigorous level anywhere in the world.

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Partnership Opportunities

GTI is developing collaborations and partnerships with scholars and research institutes nationally and internationally. With its broad mandate for research and teaching across the disciplines and from a global perspective, GTI is working collegially and flexibly with others, and with an inclusionary attitude.

- Research Partners – partners in universities, industry, and government – commercial, farming, processing, and more – who wish to collaborate on special projects with UC Davis faculty researchers.
- Special GTI Affiliates – individual, industry, and government “special partners” that collaborate on multiple fronts – from marketing to research, to community building and beyond.
- GTI Tea Advisory Members – select group of industry and government supporters who advise and fund the GTI.
- Global Tea Education Sponsors – individual, university, industry, and government partners from around the globe.
- Global Tea Supporters – special partners who help fund outreach activities.

For more information about the GTI, please contact Founding Director Katharine Burnett, kpburnett@ucdavis.edu or GTI Research Analyst and Industry Liaison Catherine Nguyen, cqanguyen@ucdavis.edu. To inquire about supporting the program, please contact Assistant Dean Charlene A. Mattison, cmattison@ucdavis.edu.

Katharine P. Burnett, Ph.D., is Founding Director of UC Davis’s Global Tea Initiative for the Study of Tea Culture and Science at the University of California, Davis. She served as Director of UCD’s Program for East Asian Studies from 2012-2017. An art historian of the arts from China in the Department of Art and Art History, her wide-ranging interdisciplinary

research explores how cultural values are manifested in art, what it means to collect art, and now also, what we can learn about cultures and societies through studying the visual and material evidence from individual and diverse tea cultures.