Coastal Dune Restoration Research
Bren Environmental Leadership Program Summer Fellowship

Project Background
Climate change is impacting coastal communities in many ways, such as sea level rise, storm erosion, and flooding. Coastal beach-dune systems can provide a buffer for flooding and offer many other ecosystem benefits, such as habitat for rare species. Dune restoration efforts are varied and have included removing impacts such as beach grooming (or raking) and driving, removing invasive plants, and moving infrastructure away from the coast. While there are many dune restoration projects throughout California, they are usually studied individually. This project seeks to improve our understanding of dune restoration regionally, to inform scalability and their potential as an adaptation strategy to improve coastal resilience.

The undergraduate student will work with a PhD student mentor and other team members to conduct field surveys at ~10 coastal dune restoration sites in southern CA, including assessments of vegetation cover, geomorphological features, and other attributes. The student will conduct data entry, analyses, and literature reviews, and will have the opportunity to participate in other events such as public outreach, webinars, and professional development meetings.

Qualifications
- Interest and enthusiasm about the project and coastal ecology or geomorphology
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Excellent organizational skills and attention to detail
- Scientific writing experience (preferred)
- Experience with data entry and analysis (e.g., Excel, R) (preferred, training will be provided)

Details
The position is 10 weeks, 35 hours per week, between mid-June to mid-September (dates TBD). This position will be hybrid, with in-person fieldwork at California dune restoration sites, remote data entry and analyses, in-person check-in meetings, and remote literature review. Payment is $18.57/hour. This position is part of the Bren Environmental Leadership Program – the student will participate in professional development training during the summer and a poster session at the Mantell Symposium on Environmental Justice and Conservation Innovation in Fall 2024.

Applicants must be full-time UCSB continuing undergraduate students (not graduating within the 2024 calendar year).

How to Apply
Please submit applications to this form by March 24 at 11:59pm. Applications should include:
- A brief cover letter (2-3 paragraphs) describing why you are interested in this project and how your experience and qualifications make you a good fit for the position. We are committed to fostering an inclusive environment and supporting diverse students in Environmental Science, including those from underrepresented, low-income, and first-generation college backgrounds, and those active in DEI, environmental justice, or social justice. Please include insights into how your experiences or perspective might shape your contribution to the BEL community.
- A resume or CV, including any relevant coursework and previous experience
- Name and email for one professional reference (included in the cover letter)

Interview and Selection Process: Approximately two weeks after the submission deadline, applicants selected for interviews will be notified by email. Though only some students will be selected for interviews, all applicants will be notified of the status of their application when the interview/selection process is complete (approximately 3-4 weeks after application deadline).