

Michael Kudenov, PhD, 2009



What influenced your decision to attend graduate school at OSC?

I lived in Anchorage, Alaska, and did my undergrad work in Fairbanks, so the weather in Tucson was attractive. I wanted to study optics, and didn't want to live someplace cold again.

What do you wish you would have known your first day of graduate school? Was there anything you wish you had done to prepare more for graduate school?

That having a background in something other than optics is common (e.g., engineering, physics, mathematics, etc.), and not to worry about it. The program at OSC is setup for this.

Which classes did you find most enjoyable? Which ones did you find most difficult?

Polarization with Russell Chipman was fun, as were Diffraction and Interferometry with Tom Milster and Optical Testing with Jim Wyant.

What was your research while attending OSC?

I studied infrared spectrometry and polarimetry instrumentation under Eustace Dereniak.

What was the cost of rent in Tucson while you were in school?

Approximately \$650/month.

If you owned a car during graduate school, what year and model was it?

2005 GMC Sierra 1500.

What was your favorite restaurant/student hangout near campus?

1702 was a favorite. La Olla Mexican Cafe off Silverbell Road (even if it was not close to campus) was excellent as well.

What did you do for fun during your time in graduate school?

Astrophotography and car camping.

At the time of your graduation, what were the most sought-after jobs/most popular industries/most popular companies?

Working at National Laboratories.

What was your first job after graduation?

I started as a postdoc and then as an assistant research professor at OSC, before moving to a job at NCSU in North Carolina.

Was there a campus or community event in Tucson that was especially important to you?

The Tucson Amateur Astronomy Association's events were always fun. They would allow us to spend the night at Kitt Peak visitor parking lot area two times per year. Usually that is not permitted!