School Overview

Investigate. Innovate. Impact. At UC Irvine’s School of Social Sciences, what we do makes a difference. As a social sciences student, you will have the opportunity to investigate issues that matter to society. These issues span the social sciences, ranging from an exploration of how changes in the brain’s neurons can lead to Alzheimer’s to an analysis of how broad government policies and decisions impact our day to day quality of life. Our interdisciplinary focus helps spark innovative solutions to real-world problems, from an anthropological discovery of a link between poverty and diabetes to sociological research on how aging and migrating populations affect our economy. Our research, teaching and outreach programs impact the world around us. From research on violent conflict prevention, programs that address early childhood development issues and value-added experiences that shape the next generation of leaders, what we do makes a difference.

Quick facts about Social Sciences:

- Largest academic unit at UC Irvine, with nearly 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students.
- Confers more degrees than any other unit on campus, close to 2,300 in June 2012.
- Faculty membership totals 138, with 10 recognized as fellows of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and 6 as members of the National Academy of Sciences.
- Alumni include notable business persons such as Wahoo Fish Tacos founder Mingo Lee (’90) and Hot Topic CEO Betsy McLaughlin (’82); internationally recognized athletes including a number of former and current Olympians and several members of the Quest Dance Crew, season 3 winners of MTV’s “America’s Best Dance Crew”; and noted public figures including current California State Assemblyman Van Tran (’90).
- Of all students who graduate each year from UCI, one-third are Social Sciences students.

Academic Offerings

Anthropology

When most people hear the word “anthropology,” they think Indiana Jones, or “primitive” people in face paint. Anthropology is more than just bones and stones. It is as broad as the world around us, and as diverse as the communities and cultures occupying the globe. Anthropologists today can be found studying every corner of the globe, every culture, and every time period, from ancient kingdoms to contemporary small-scale societies to the shopping malls of Orange County.

The anthropology faculty emphasize contemporary theory, field research, and a variety of methods for analyzing anthropological data. The department has a strong interdisciplinary bent, with research and teaching interests in economic anthropology, ecological anthropology, political economy, social history and social change, medical anthropology, identity and ethnicity, gender and feminist studies, cognitive anthropology, social networks, modernity and development, religion, science studies, and the arts and expressive culture. It also has a strong emphasis on the study of contemporary issues and modern problems, such as international flows of goods, people, images, and ideas; the relationship between global processes and local practices; immigration, citizenship, and refugees; population politics; violence and political conflict; ethnicity and nationalism; gender and family; medicine; law; development and economic transformation; urban studies; and environmental issues. While the program gives students a breadth of knowledge in traditional anthropology, the faculty also bring anthropological analysis to bear on pressing contemporary social issues.

Geographic regions of expertise include Latin America, North and East Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, Iran, China, Indonesia, and South Asia, as well as extending diasporic and transnational communities in the United States and abroad.
Chicanos, Central Americans, South Americans, and Caribbean peoples in the United States form the nation’s largest minority, and comprise over a third of the population in California. The Department of Chicano/Latino Studies provides a scholarly approach to studying their important history, culture, politics, social structures, and policy needs. The department’s curriculum is organized around the themes of “migration, memory, and access.” Migration seeks to understand the causes and consequences of migration to the United States, not just for immigrants, but also for the children and grandchildren of immigrants, and for the communities where they reside. The experiences and cultural representation of these communities build cultural memory. Finally, the program seeks to understand access of these communities to civic and private institutions, and their opportunities in U.S. society in such areas as education, the economy, civic life, and health care.

The department offers both a major and a minor in Chicano/Latino studies as well as an honors program, and sponsors the Casa César Chávez theme house in Arroyo Vista. The department also sponsors an annual best research paper competition on a Chicano/Latino topic.

**Economics**

What factors influence market booms and busts? Does innovating the uranium enrichment process for nuclear energy put us at greater risk of proliferation? In tough economic times, which is best for communities — corporations or small, locally owned mom and pop shops? Economics is the study of how individuals, businesses, and governments choose to allocate scarce resources to satisfy alternative goals. As a social science, it also analyzes the interactions among these decision-makers through various institutions such as markets or corporations. Economists consider how the outcomes of these interactions meet people’s desires, and they ask how public policy might improve upon these outcomes.

The economics major is a highly structured, rigorous program emphasizing quantitative methods. The program covers traditional topics related to market interactions, such as monopolies and antitrust, labor markets, economic growth, and the business cycle. It also covers non-market interactions, such as those involved in politics, crime, families, and cultural traditions. In learning to think in terms of incentives and tradeoffs, economics majors develop analytical skills, quantitative tools, and clarity of thought that are useful for just about any occupation. The UCI economics degree also provides excellent preparation for graduate study in law, business administration, public policy, and social sciences. Students can pursue one of three majors:

The **economics major** is designed for students seeking a broad education applicable to occupations in business, law, and government.

The **business economics** major is for students seeking a business orientation in their study of economics. Guided by the rigorous logic and integrative perspective of economics, the curriculum provides excellent training for students who intend to pursue a career in business.

The **quantitative economics** major takes the study of economics to a higher level, emphasizing quantitative methods to gain a deeper understanding of the basic ideas. This major prepares students for quantitative careers in finance, business, and law, and for graduate studies in the social sciences.

**International Studies**

Why do some countries acquire nuclear weapons while others do not? How has the use of private forces in Iraq affected democracy in the U.S.? How do illegal immigrants acquire citizenship through illegal paperwork? Why are NGOs sometimes a force for good in global politics and other times not? UCI’s international studies (IS) scholars investigate global issues to contribute to solutions that positively impact citizens around the world. Four focal areas — global issues and institutions, global conflict and negotiation, the global role of California and the U.S., and global society and culture — allow students to develop expertise in specific aspects of international life. A degree in international studies prepares students for careers in a variety of fields, including international affairs and public policy, international business and finance, international organizations, and academic research and teaching.

The international studies program co-sponsors the International Peace and Conflict Studies (IPACS) House which brings together students interested in international affairs, global politics and peace studies. Residents help plan and attend various activities such as faculty speakers, films, social gatherings, and community service. Living in the IPACS House provides a great opportunity for students to engage with a community of students, faculty, campus organizations and academics working on international issues.

**Political Science**

How are public policies determined? What factors shape international relationships? Does media influence Presidential decision making? Political science majors explore these issues and more under the direction of the department’s faculty who specialize in the politics of advanced and democratizing societies and their interactions, political economy, international relations, legal systems, political institutions, political philosophy, political ideology, political behavior, and radical and ethnic politics.

Widely recognized on campus for excellence in undergraduate teaching, the department annually offers nearly 100 courses across all major political science subfields, and annually directs more than 100 independent study and research courses with individual students on a wide variety of topics. Students are introduced to the methods for gathering and systematically analyzing information about political behavior, institutions, and processes.

Political science majors go on to receive advanced degrees in many fields — notably law, academics, and public policy — and they pursue careers in business, international relations, law, politics, consultancy, journalism, and public service.

**Psychology**

Have you ever wondered how we perceive, learn, and solve problems? What causes one individual to adapt to stress in our society and another to develop deviant, antisocial behavior? How does neurobiology relate to cognition? How do people change from infancy to adulthood based on biological, family, cultural, and social influences? Psychologists address these sorts of questions with a scientific rigor that requires a thorough knowledge of sensory, perceptual, cognitive, developmental, and social processes, as well as familiarity with the basic functioning of the nervous system. The psychology major gives students a strong foundation in general psychology, and provides a suitable background for postgraduate training and careers in all branches of psychology.

Psychology majors in the Department of Cognitive Sciences may become involved in research by enrolling in courses associated with the Child Development Center, HABLA (a broad-spectrum Latino-focused educational outreach program), or by working with faculty members in research areas such as visual and auditory perception, memory and attention, thinking and decision-making, language acquisition, and neuroscience.

**Social Policy & Public Service**

The Social Policy and Public Service program is designed for students interested in social issues, social justice, equality, and social policy. With three unique areas of focus (i.e., Education, Governance, and Health) students can explore
educational access and progress, the impact of public policies, or America’s current health and health care policies. Through a selective curriculum and research training, students are guided to create a strong academic portfolio in preparation for graduate studies or the job force. The degree will prepare students to understand public policy formulation, quantitative and qualitative analysis, organizations and public policy, non-profit management, and leadership.

The major prepares students who have an array of interests given the interdisciplinary focus. For example, SPPS majors are interested in pursuing the fields such as: governance, social policy, education, health (including medicine), social work, non-profit organizations, teaching, law, community leadership, and public and health administration. All students enrolled in this major have an interdisciplinary interest in research and public service. The majors address current issues related to governance, community, public policy, public health, education, and leadership. SPPS majors have an invested interest in social change, social justice, fair political representation, quality education, and health equality. Majors seek to attain training in effective means for practical and research centered solutions.

Sociology
What will an increasingly older population mean for our economy and way of life? What roles does racial preference play in online dating? How many undocumented immigrants live in the U.S. and what does that mean for policy-makers? Sociology is the study of the products of human interaction — groups, institutions, and societies. Whether the topic is Chinese society or American families, youth gangs or multinational businesses, sociology majors learn to look beyond conventional explanations to understand how conflict, cooperation, inequality, and diversity shape our social world. Students decode messages hidden in advertisements, observe the activities at a Buddhist temple, interview workers about their jobs, analyze surveys on sexual attitudes, and count grave markers to learn about mortality trends.

An innovator in undergraduate education, the department encourages hands-on research. Working closely with faculty, students carry out their own studies and build analytic, research, and communication skills. The department offers its majors special opportunities to bridge their educational experience to careers with internships in their chosen field and with departmental certificates in specific areas.

Minors and Certificates

Minors in Social Sciences
The School of Social Sciences offers academic minors for students interested in pursuing study in the following subject areas: anthropology, archaeology, Chicano/Latino studies, conflict resolution, global peace and conflict studies, linguistics, medical anthropology, political science, psychology, and sociology.

Certificate Programs and Specializations
The School of Social Sciences offers the following certificate programs, some of which are open to all majors (indicated by "sponsored by") while others are designated for specific majors:
- Business, Economy & Organizations (available only to sociology majors)
- Chicano/Latino Community in a Global Context (sponsored by Chicano/Latino studies)
- Diversity & Inequality (available only to sociology majors)
- Economy and Culture (sponsored by anthropology)
- Ethnomusicology (sponsored by anthropology)
- Gender Studies (sponsored by anthropology)
- Global & International Sociology (available only to sociology majors)
- Global Studies (sponsored by anthropology)
- History and Culture (sponsored by Chicano/Latino studies)
- Law and Policy (sponsored by anthropology)
- Mediator Certification (sponsored by international studies)
- Medical Anthropology (sponsored by anthropology)
- Middle East Studies (sponsored by international studies)
- Social Policy & Issues (sponsored by Chicano/Latino studies)
- Social Problems & Public Policy (available only to sociology majors)

Special Programs and Opportunities

Students in the School of Social Sciences can choose from a wide range of special activities offered by each of the school’s major programs. Opportunities for involvement range from working with faculty, to interning off-campus, to pursuing specialized study. A complete college education includes the life skills one learns outside of the classroom, and students are encouraged to get involved with at least one of these special programs each year at UCI.

Honors Programs
Are you interested in pursuing research with a faculty mentor? Upper-division students who have demonstrated academic excellence can take part in one- to two-year honors programs that provide the opportunity to delve more deeply into specific issues of interest. Each major within the school offers an honors program, which often includes smaller classes and the chance to work more closely with faculty members.

Awards and Honors
The school’s top students can receive recognition through acceptance to national honors societies. These organizations include Alpha Kappa Delta (sociology), Lambda Alpha (anthropology), Omicron Delta Epsilon (economics), Pi Gamma Mu (social science), Pi Sigma Alpha (political science), Psi Chi (psychology), Sigma Iota Rho (international studies), and Phi Beta Kappa. For those with excellent writing and analytical skills, awards are given each year for outstanding undergraduate papers — the Alice B. Macy Award for the Outstanding School of Social Sciences Undergraduate Paper, the Robin Williams Award in Sociology, the Jeff Garcielazo Prize in Chicano/Latino Studies, and the Harry Eckstein Award in Political Science. The Order of Merit is awarded each year to outstanding seniors who demonstrate excellence in academics and community services, and graduation with departmental honors is possible for students who successfully complete the honors program in their major.

Internship Programs
Would you like to apply your academic skills outside the university community? The Social Sciences Academic Resource Center has internship information on more than 200 Orange and Los Angeles County placements, all open to majors within the School of Social Sciences. Majors in social science can enroll in a year-long field studies course as part of their public and community service specialization.

Student Organizations and Outreach Programs
Participation in student organizations and programs is an excellent way to take full advantage of campus life. There are a variety of organizations available; some are academic in focus, while others have a cultural emphasis. School-sponsored organizations include the Anthropology Club, Chicano/Latino Academic Association in the Social Sciences, International and Global Studies Club, Irvine Linguistics Student Association, Latino Business Student Association (LBSA), Latino Student Psychological Association (LPSA), Law Forum, Middle East Studies Student Initiative (MESSI), Mock Trial, Model United Nations,
Career Opportunities

A degree in a social science discipline will equip students with the knowledge and ability to assist both the private and public sectors in many decisions. Graduates are well-positioned for research and analysis careers at all levels of government and in private firms, or for further training in graduate and professional programs.

Business and industry often look to social sciences graduates to fill positions in:

- Administration
- Finance
- Management
- Marketing and Advertising
- Personnel
- Policy Analysis

In the public sector, a wide variety of opportunities are available in city, county, state, and federal governments. Teaching at all levels, from elementary school to college, is a frequently chosen career. In addition, many graduates enter professional practice to become lawyers, psychologists, researchers, and consultants in various fields.

Additional Information

Academic Resource Center
The Social Sciences Academic Resource Center provides the most extensive resources of its kind on campus. Staffed with knowledgeable resource advisors, the center offers information on graduate and professional programs, research opportunities on-campus and nationwide, internship opportunities in the Los Angeles and Orange County areas, and advising on career opportunities in the social sciences.

Undergraduate Student Affairs Office
The Social Sciences Undergraduate Student Affairs Office provides numerous services and special programs for current students, including course planning, change-of-major requests, financial-aid appeals, course substitutions, and information concerning honors, graduate and professional schools, and careers and internships.

Additional Opportunities

There are many more opportunities to explore in UCI’s School of Social Sciences:

- Numerous research projects are open to student participation, including work in infant cognition, congressional redistricting, virtual reality, and health issues among Chicanos.
- Programs such as the Summer Academic Enrichment Program and the Education Abroad Program provide students an opportunity to expand research skills both in the classroom and at sites around the world.
- The Mexico-U.S. Comparative Perspectives Program in Mexico City offers Chicano/Latino Studies students the opportunity to study and to experience the roots of the migration experience.
- Open-access computer laboratories with 120 terminals provide students with access to the Internet, and state-of-the-art software can be used for student projects in statistics, mapping, word processing, and other necessary twenty-first century skills.

Theme Houses
If living on campus in a small community of students who share your interests sounds exciting, an academic theme house may be in your future. Small communities of 16-32 students design their own extracurricular programs based on academic disciplines and shared intellectual interests. Current social sciences theme houses include psychology and global peace and conflict studies. Other houses of interest to students in social sciences are the Rosa Parks House (sponsored by the African American Studies Program), the Asian American Studies House, Casa Cesar Chavez (sponsored by the Chicano/Latino Studies Program), and the Campuswide Honors Program Theme House.

Additional Information

School of Social Sciences
Undergraduate Student Affairs
University of California
Irvine, CA 92697-5100
Telephone: (949) 824-6803
www.socsci.uci.edu

Admissions and Relations with Schools
260 Aldrich Hall
University of California
Irvine, CA 92697-1075
Telephone: (949) 824-6703
www.admissions.uci.edu

General Campus Information
Telephone: (949) 824-5011
www.uci.edu

UCI General Catalogue
UCI Bookstore
Telephone: (949) 824-2665
www.book.uci.edu
www.editor.uci.edu/catalogue (PDF Version)

Accommodations: Upon request, this publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities. Contact the UCI Disability Services Center; telephone (949) 824-7694, TDD 824-6772. The campus and all buildings are accessible by wheelchair.

Campus Safety: Pursuant to the Federal Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, UCI annually makes available to the public statistics on reported occurrences of criminal activity on and off campus and at UCI Medical Center at www.police.uci.edu/awareness/jca.html.

Nondiscrimination Policy: The University of California, in accordance with applicable Federal and State law and University policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer related or genetic characteristics), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or service in the uniformed services. The University also prohibits sexual harassment. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities. For more information, call (949) 824-5594.