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Winter 2026 Internal Newsletter

Meet the School of Humanities Staff Appreciation Committee!



Pictured (L-R): Kimmy Bao, Katie Desmond, Veronica Portal, Haleema Sood and Jasmine Diaz.

Kimmy Bao
Graduate Coordinator, Art History

Fun Fact: Kimmy plays piano and guitar and she loves the rare gloomy, cloudy days in southern California!

Katie Desmond
SFIAH Coordinator, Art History

Fun Fact: Katie studied abroad in South Africa in college. She is a fan of lindy hop (a type of swing dancing) and has started learning piano this past year. She is obsessed with board games and would happily challenge you to a game of Azul, Splendor, or Here to Slay!

Jasmine Diaz
Finance Analyst, SoH Dean's Office

Fun Fact: Jasmine started her employment at UCI as an undergrad in March of 2015. She enjoys live music and recently attended a Coldplay concert last summer!

Veronica Portal:
Undergraduate Coordinator/Finance Assistant

Fun Fact: Veronica is a twin and is left-handed. She enjoys traveling and hiking and has been to 18 countries, including Panama, Switzerland, France, Spain, Ireland, Chile, Peru, Argentina, Guatemala as well as 15 states: Indiana, Arizona, Hawaii, Alaska, New York, Nevada, South Dakota, to name a few. In Argentina, she visited the Las cataratas del Iguazú and in Peru she visited Machu Picchu!

Haleema Sood
Staff Personnel Analyst, SoH Dean's Office

Fun Fact: Haleema hosts a weekly public affairs radio show, "Peace Time" focusing on self-care and meditation, Fridays on KUCI, 88.9FM. She has studied yoga and meditation for 25 years, enjoys cooking for her family and friends, traveling abroad and experimenting with new vegan, gluten-free cookie recipes!

Communications

Branding
We've been excited to work with various departments, centers, and programs to develop specific branding that is aligned with the new SOH branding. If your unit would like to discuss potential branding updates, reach out to Kelly and Erica in order to schedule a time to talk. We're excited to share with you a few of the most recent designs:





Website accessibility trainings
Thanks to those of you who were able to join us for the first website accessibility training held on November 5th and follow-up training on February 26th. We hope each session served as productive training for you, and we are here to support your needs as you work on any website accessibility issues. A reminder that we have resources to share with anyone interested in getting additional support.

As we approach the federal deadline for digital accessibility compliance, the Dean's Office Communications team is hosting a second training. This training session will expand on the accessibility principles we introduced in November and will focus on applying them to our websites, social media, and PDF files. Trevor, the SOH Webmaster, will walk staff through how to check their sites for issues and will demonstrate live how to correct content. This training session will review:

- How to write proper alternative text for images
- How to write descriptive hyperlink text
- How to apply heading levels correctly
- How to make social media content accessible

Be on the lookout for an email invite from SOH webmaster.

Graduation season
As we head into early graduation season, we're always looking for graduating students (undergrad and grad) to highlight! If you know of excellent students to feature, please reach out to Kelly and Nikki.

Branded Bags
We are about to place another order for the Power of Imagination Campaign bags that you may have seen across the School. If your unit or department would like to order some, let us know–it helps cut down on costs when we order in bulk.

Kelly Anne Brown
Director | Media Relations and Communications

Facilities

RECENT PROJECTS

- **HG Network Cable Replacement**

- **HG 1030 Carpet Replacement**
  With the correction of some deficiencies with how the new carpeting was laid in HG 1030, the project to renovate the HG first floor conference rooms in response to the flood last year is complete.
- **HIB Fire Alarm System Replacement**
  The fire alarm system has been replaced; additional work discovered during replacement will be scheduled soon.

CURRENT PROJECTS

- **Safety On Site (SOS)/ Workplace Violence Prevention Program (WVPP)**
  We are currently going department to department to identify hazards and unsecured furnishings in our workspaces and correct them. Separately but related, we are evaluating building safety issues—such as evening lighting, accessibility, and access to emergency resources—on an ongoing basis as part of the WVVP.
- **EH&S Building Inspections**
  EH&S will resume conducting our annual building safety inspections when they once again have enough personnel to conduct them
- **Teams Phone Transition**
  As departments transition to MS Teams for phone communications, they should contact Colin or Jeremy to arrange for old office phones to be picked up as eWaste. For more information on the phone retirement project, visit OIT's page here: OIT Phone Retirement Project
- **HG Chilled Water System**
  Initial planning has begun for the replacement of "V" band clamps on the chilled water supply and return lines—the type that failed and caused the HG leak last year.
- **HIB 135 Renovation and Reservations**
  Lighting in HG 135 has been upgraded, with the removal of the old pendant lights and installation of new recessed overhead light fixtures. Upgrades to the podium and other technology, which are intended to make the room match the tech currently found in HG 1010 and HG 1030, should be scheduled soon. Other information of note includes:
  - HIB 135 is now reserved through the Dean's Office.
  - Official capacity: 68
  - Reservations can be made via the SOH Conference Room Reservation Form
- **2025-26 Small Capital Improvement Project Proposal**
  Our proposal to upgrade many of our departmental conference rooms to Zoom Rooms and/or other upgrades has been approved and some work has already been started. Fortunately, funding has been approved for all of the rooms, which had been pending before. Those rooms include:
  - HH 342, HH 344
  - KH 374, KH 400D
  - HIB 208, HIB 220, HIB 246
- **HH and KH Fire Alarm Systems Replacement**
  Initial planning to upgrade Fire Alarm systems in HH and KH is underway in coordination with Facilities Management and Design & Construction Services.

more bike racks in the areas around Humanities Hall and Anteater Learning Pavilion.

EVENTS

- **Conference Room Updates**
  A new video resource is now available in the Facilities section of the SOH portal, providing an overview of conference rooms, capacities, layout options, and recommended uses.
- **Conference Room Guidelines**
  As a reminder, when submitting a reservation, try to be as detailed as possible:
  - If submitting a request for a weekend event, include a KFS account in the description so we can order HVAC and restroom unlocks. Restroom unlocks must be scheduled at least one week in advance through UCIPD/CSA.
  - If you are reserving for someone else, include a contact name and verify they are familiar with the guidelines.
  - For anything that might be ambiguous, we will reach out but including these details in the description helps us plan more efficiently.
- **Event Safety**
  For events involving sensitive topics or potential security concerns, notify our office and UCIPD promptly so appropriate safety measures can be arranged. Consider factors like venue capacity, publicity, and pre-registration when planning. The guidelines also include UCI's Disruption Guidance for managing potential event disruptions.
- **Supplies**
  SOH Facilities has a limited supply of cleaning products and hand sanitizer available. Reach out if you need assistance.

Colin Andrews
Director, Facilities and Space Planning

Humanities Center

We are pleased to announce new leadership appointments across some of our centers and research clusters, as well as the launch of a new cluster in the School of Humanities:

Center for Liberation, Anti-Racism and Belonging
New Faculty Director: *Laura Enriquez, Associate Professor of Chicano/Latino Studies*

Environmental Humanities Research Center
New Faculty Director: *Jon L. Pitt, Assistant Professor of East Asian Studies*
Jon will also serve as the new **Faculty Director for the Japanese Studies Research Cluster**

Global South Critique Research Cluster
New Graduate Directors: *Benjamin Charles Connor and Maryam Salehi, Comparative Literature*

New Research Cluster: Early Modern Iberian Worlds

Judy Tzu-Chun Wu
Associate Dean for Research and Director of the Humanities Center

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SOH Trivia Break: Congratulations to Saori Mack, winner of the Fall Newsletter Trivia Break!

In the new curricular cycle from 2025–2028 under the program direction of Professor Rebecca Davis, Humanities Core will focus on the theme of:
Answer: Environment | Encounter | Entanglement

Winter Newsletter Trivia Break Questions (must answer both correctly)
1) Spencer C. Olin was a founding faculty member in the School of Humanities. He served as the chair of the Department of History, chair of the Academic Senate, dean of Humanities, and what major central campus role:
2) True or false, Dean Miller has never owned or even tried on a pair of Crocs?

Be the first to send the correct answers to Haleema Sood (hsood@uci.edu), with the Subject line: SOH Winter Newsletter Trivia, by March 9 for a chance to win a gift card.

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Human Resources

SoH Co-Worker Appreciation Celebration
The SoH Staff Appreciation Committee will host a **Co-Worker Appreciation Day celebration, Thursday, March 4, 12:00-1:30pm. (HG 1010 and Patio Area)**. We look forward to celebrating with our SoH co-workers/friends!

Co-worker Appreciation Week, March 2-6, 2026 ***Special Employee Discounts**

The following offers are valid Monday, March 2 through Friday, March 6 for all UC Irvine employees. CWAW-Discounts.pdf.
*To redeem, please show your UCI employee ID card for verification. If you do not have an ID card, please show the Co-Worker Appreciation Week Zotmail sent to your UCI email.

Staff Appreciation Breakfast (for all UCI staff)
Wednesday, March 25
6:30-9:00am

Please join the Staff Assembly at The Anteatery, located near Mesa Court Housing, for our annual Staff Appreciation Breakfast! No registration is required.

discounts are being provided as informational only and do not constitute an endorsement of any products and services.) For a list of discounts, please visit the UCI HR Wellness website.

The Life Resources Program

The Life Resources Program, provided by ComPsych Guidance Resources, offers monthly live webinars to support your overall wellbeing and resources to help promote mental health awareness. Join an upcoming live webinar, view a past webinar, or schedule a custom session for your team.

Upcoming Webinars:

- March 12: Digital Mindfulness: Taking Control of Your Device and Screen Time
- April 9: Managing Your Emotions in the Workplace

W-2/UCPath

W-2 season is approaching quickly and your help is necessary to ensure that employees receive accurate W-2 forms on time. Please review and update your personal email address, home address and phone number. Sign up for paperless W-2 and 1095-C at UCPath online. https://ucpath.uci.edu/.

Possible Federal Immigration Enforcement Activity at UCI - resources available

While we do not currently know of any incidents pertaining to ICE on campus, many of us are concerned about what might occur in the future. Students in particular may not be aware of their rights and the available campus resources. Here are some resources as we navigate the new year and a new federal administration.

- Faculty can always express care and concern for students. For the classroom, DTEI offers a number of resources on facilitating challenging conversations and responding to social and traumatic events.
- Instructors of record have flexibility in making academic accommodations for students as needed.
- Please do not offer advice about a student's particular situation -- there have been times in the past where good-meaning people gave incorrect information that harms more than it helps. Student Affairs reaches out directly to students who are potentially impacted by various events.
- Faculty can direct individual students to centers on campus, some of which already have moment-relevant info on their websites. These include the UCI Dream Center, International Center, and LGBTQ+Resource Center.
- UC has a FAQ for University Employees about Possible Federal Immigration Enforcement Actions on University Property.
- The UC has an ongoing commitment to the values of diversity and inclusivity and a Regents Policy on Diversity that continue to guide us.

UCOP has a series of 12 Frequently Asked Questionsthat respond to many of the questions they've been handling at the systemwide level. Questions range from whether UCPD will work

UCOP has also produced a **"Know Your Rights"** info-sheet (cards to be printed and sent to campuses this month; we are working to obtain as many as possible to share) that outlines individuals' rights should immigration come to their home (apartment/dorm room). These may be incredibly useful for your students, as they cover a range of topics and scenarios. Please feel free to share the attached PDF with your students while we work to obtain physical cards for school wide distribution.

If faculty find themselves in an enforcement situation and need legal advice, they are strongly encouraged to call the Office of Campus Counsel at **949-824-9904**. Their phone is set to ring and/or will be diverted so that hopefully a live person will answer and can direct the call to one of our attorneys. In the absence of reaching an attorney in the Office of Campus Counsel, individuals should contact UCIPD.

If UC Irvine students or staff reach out to you for advice about personal immigration issues or enforcement, please refer them to our **Immigrant Legal Services** (ILS) attorney, Sergio Giro who can be reached by email Monday-Friday at sergio.ucimm@law.ucdavis.edu. Individuals should copy Karia Salazar (karia.ucimm@law.ucdavis.edu) on any communications. Please let the students or staff members know that emails to ILS should include the impacted individual's full name, DOB, contact information, and a brief summary of their immigration history.

Juanita P. Jackson
Director of Academic Personnel

Office of Graduate Study

Timesheet reporting for ASEs and GSRs
Graduate Student Researchers (GSRs) and Academic Student Employees (ASEs) are required to report absences/leave monthly in TRS. If no absences/leaves were taken, ASEs/GSRs are still required to log in to confirm that they have not been absent from work for that pay period.
All questions can be directed to Kimberly Pham (kimbenp1@uci.edu), the assigned DTA for graduate student employees.

TA application process
As with last year, OGS will begin the TA application process a few weeks earlier. Between March 9-13, programs can input their course descriptions in GSP. On March 30th (week 1 of spring quarter), the TA application will open for graduate students, and April 13th is the TA application deadline.

Please reach out to students who are In-Absentia, Academic LOA, or on an employment leave to remind them to submit their application for 2026-27 AY TA opportunities in the SOH.
Please check your students' commitments in GSP and notify Geneva (lopezg@uci.edu) and Kim (kimbenp1@uci.edu) with updates.

ceremony is for Ph.D. and MFA graduates only.
Students graduating with an M.A. can register to participate in the *Humanities School Ceremony*, which will be held on Sunday, June 14th at 5:00 p.m.
Please check the UCI Commencement website for current updates and information about the ceremonies.

Reminders and resources

- Email us at soh-grad@uci.edu if there are any changes in your students' status (e.g., withdrawals, Academic LOA, In-Absentia) for the upcoming academic year.
    - If a student plans to take a leave from employment, please work with them to initiate the Employment Leave form.
        - ASE and department should complete the "Employee" portion and sign off on the "Supervisor" line. OGS will complete the "Employer" section and sign off on the department line.
- Send all DocuSign forms that need the Associate Dean signature to soh-grad@uci.edu
- Submit your fellowship and GSR hiring and/or stipend award requests via this google form. Please note, GSR hiring requests that you upload a copy of the Written Notice of Appointment (WNA). Please contact Kimberly Pham (k.pham@uci.edu) regarding salary points for GSR hires and WNA template.

Check out the OGS tab in the SOH staff portal for quick links to forms and graduate student related policies and information.

Geneva Lopez-Sandoval
Director, Office of Graduate Study

Office of Undergraduate Study

Our office now has an email address for all inquiries related to undergraduate advising and Humanities academic requirements: humadvising@uci.edu
Students, staff, and faculty are all welcome to contact our academic counselors using this address.

Please note the following important dates and deadlines for winter quarter:

March 5 (Thursday of Week 9) – Submission deadline for the March HEC meeting. The March HEC meeting is the final opportunity to submit proposals and modifications for undergraduate courses, majors, and minors and receive final Senate approval in time for inclusion in the 2026-2027 Catalogue.

March 13 (Friday of Week 10)– Deadline for undergraduate students to request to change the grading option in W25 courses. Please see the Undergraduate Study website for complete details on the grading option policy.

deadlines.

Students can connect with a Humanities Academic Advisor or Peer Academic Advisors (PAAs) in-person, via email (humadvising@uci.edu), or online chat. Please see our website for full details about each of these advising options.

Whitney Young
Director, Office of Undergraduate Study

Office of Undergraduate Study - Experiential Learning

In Spring Quarter, we will be highlighting undergraduate research. We will be heavily promoting departmental programs and events, as well as hosting the first ever **School of Humanities Research Poster Session** on Friday, May 29.

Please let us know if your department or program is hosting a research event that you would like to include in our newsletter, on social media, or our website.

And please encourage the undergraduate students doing research in your area to participate in the Poster Session! We will be sending additional information to faculty, staff, and students in the coming weeks

Brittney Pinney
Director of Experiential Learning



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School of Humanities

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