



Fall '26 School of Social Ecology- Based Placements Catalog

Types of Placements Available:

- **Research Assistantships (RA) – Site # 1000**
 - Research assistant positions with faculty within the School of Social Ecology**
- **Learning Assistantships (LA)- Site # 1001**
 - Learning assistant positions for courses within the School of Social Ecology**
 - Learn more about Learning Assistantships here:

<https://dtei.uci.edu/certified-learning-assistants-program-clap/>

Helpful Reminders

- **Within the School of Social Ecology:**
Research or Learning Assistant positions **not listed in the catalog** may still be approved as a Field Study placement. You must have approval from the faculty member overseeing the lab/class and their agreement to serve as your supervisor.
- **Outside the School of Social Ecology:**
Research or Learning Assistant positions **must first be reviewed and approved** by the Field Study Director. To request this, submit a [Research and Learning Assistant Clearance Form](#).
- **Important:**
Before applying, please review the **unit and enrollment requirements** for Research/Learning Assistantship positions [\[HERE\]](#).

If you have any questions, contact us at
sefieldstudy@uci.edu!

OPPORTUNITY: Research Assistant	Virtual/Remote/Hybrid
Placement Name	Hybrid (mix of in-person and remote)
Pocket Park and Garden Climate Solutions	Placements available = 7
Supervisor Information	
Faculty Name: Doug Houston	
Title: Professor	
Email Address: houston@uci.edu	
Placement Information	
Description of Research: This project studies how neighborhoods across Southern California are benefiting from pocket parks and gardens (PPGs). Although small in size compared to larger parks and recreational facilities, PPGs can play an outsized role in supporting sustainability, public health, and resilience against the impacts of climate change. By expanding tree cover, vegetation, and gardening opportunities, PPGs provide a variety of “ecosystem services.” These include benefits to people and the environment, such as cooling the surrounding neighborhood, supporting biodiversity, and offering communities a space to grow fresh produce. Our research team monitors PPG ecosystem services (by collecting data on soil, trees, heat, air, and usage) and supports community engagement events. Field Study Activities: Research Assistants will be engaged in the following tasks: (1) support monitoring of the usage and ecosystem services of PPG sites (2) support community engagement activities and outreach (3) help develop content for online and social media communications Field study hours will be a mix of virtual and in-person meetings, completing individual and group assignments, and working in teams to conduct PPG site visits and engagement events within Irvine, Santa Ana, and Los Angeles County.	
Requirements (subject to change)	
Ability to work in teams, good communication skills, and reliability are required. Interpersonal, organizational, and writing skills are desired. Experience with spreadsheet, GIS, or other analysis software is helpful. Interest, experience, or previous courses on policy, planning, or environmental topics are a plus.	
How to Apply	
Please email a resume and cover letter describing your motivation and related interests/experiences to Professor Houston (houston@uci.edu) and Postdoctoral Scholar Vivi Goh (vmgoh@uci.edu).	

OPPORTUNITY: Research Assistant	Virtual/Remote/Hybrid
Placement Name	Hybrid (mix of in-person and remote)
Disparate Local Implementation of California Housing Law	Placements available = 3
Supervisor Information	
Faculty Name: Alejandra Reyes	
Title: Associate Professor	
Email Address: lreyesru@uci.edu	
Placement Information	
This project studies racially concentrated areas of affluence in California, those with notably high median incomes and an over-representation of non-Hispanic white populations. Reyes' research offers an in-depth inter-scalar analysis of the evolution of housing policies and politics at a period of state-level reform, shedding light on the challenges and prospects for promoting fair housing in exclusionary geographies. Despite contention between different government levels and localities, the leverage of reactionary local politics is weakening. Jurisdictions are facing pressure to address the housing needs of diverse and mobilized constituents, rolling back initiatives restricting housing development, expanding inclusionary zoning, establishing housing funds, and strengthening tenant protections and housing provision. Students will review literature and qualitative data (e.g., news articles, government documents, public meeting recordings). If able, geospatial analysis may be requested.	
Requirements (subject to change)	
Urban studies majors preferred. Strong housing policy interest and reading and writing skills. GIS knowledge a plus.	
How to Apply	
Email resume and brief statement of interest/fit.	

OPPORTUNITY: Research Assistant	Virtual/Remote/Hybrid
Placement Name	Hybrid (mix of in-person and remote)
Political Economy of State Violence & Drug Enforcement	Placements available = 2
Supervisor Information	
Faculty Name: Julian Gerez	
Title: Assistant Professor	
Email Address: jgerez@uci.edu	
Placement Information	
This lab studies the political economy of drug enforcement, policing, and state violence, with a regional focus on Latin America, though some projects are focused on the United States. Current projects examine public attitudes toward lethal U.S. military strikes on suspected drug traffickers, the relationship between clemency board institutions and capital punishment outcomes, police firearms policy in Brazil, and the geography of drug enforcement in Colombia. Research draws on original survey experiments, administrative records, spatial data, and legal text analysis. RAs will contribute to one or more of the following tasks depending on interest and availability, such as coding U.S. government social media posts about law enforcement operations and lethal drug strikes, researching state clemency board structures across the U.S., reviewing firearms laws across Brazilian municipalities, and geolocating polling stations in Colombia. We are looking for curiosity about criminal justice, drug policy, state violence, and/or Latin American politics; attention to detail and comfort with careful, systematic tasks. Reading proficiency in Spanish is a strong plus. No prior research experience required, interest in learning R or basic quantitative data skills is welcome but not expected.	
Requirements (subject to change)	
How to Apply	
Email with resume and cover letter, with subject line 'Fall 2026 RA Position'	

OPPORTUNITY: Research Assistant	Virtual/Remote/Hybrid
Placement Name	Hybrid (mix of in-person and remote)
Quest for Peace in the Nuclear Age	Placements available = 8
Supervisor Information	
Faculty Name: John M. Whiteley	
Title: Professor	
Email Address: whiteley@uci.edu	
Placement Information	
In 1983 I started interviewing informed individuals on the question: 'Is Peace Possible?'. The first was Harvard Psychologist B.F. Skinner in the UCI Faculty Club. All have been Video Recorded. The interviewees are National Security specialists such as Secretaries of Defense, Religious Leaders, CIA Directors, Anthropologists, Philosophy leaders, Admirals and Generals. For Social Ecology students there are 9 interview with Psychologists and Medical Doctors.. After discussion, Social Ecology students will choose what individuals the wish to make Transcripts of the interviews--for example both B.F. Skinner and Carl Rogers.	
Requirements (subject to change)	
Any Major	
How to Apply	
Email with resume	

OPPORTUNITY: Research Assistant	Virtual/Remote/Hybrid
Placement Name	Hybrid (mix of in-person and remote)
Environmental policy research with Ulibarri Research Group	Placements available = 3
Supervisor Information	
Faculty Name: Nicola Ulibarri	
Title: Assistant Professor, Urban Planning and Public Policy	
Email Address: ulibarri@uci.edu	
Placement Information	
The Ulibarri Research Group studies ways to design regulations and decision-making processes to yield better social and environmental outcomes. We focus on water resource management, coastal resilience, and infrastructure siting, all with an eye toward building more adaptive and equitable environmental governance. Sample projects might include reviewing plans and policies to evaluate whether/how they support environmental justice, climate adaptation, or other sustainability-related goals; surveying or interviewing government agency or nonprofit employees to understand barriers they face in implementing policies; or reconstructing a decision-making process (e.g., collaboration, use of science) from meeting minutes. Our research is fundamentally mixed method, interdisciplinary, and practically oriented.	
Requirements (subject to change)	
Applicants should be organized, self-motivated, and have high attention to detail. Coursework, career interests, or related experience in environmental policy or governance is a plus.	
How to Apply	
To apply, email a resume and cover letter to ulibarri@uci.edu	
OPPORTUNITY: Research Assistant	Virtual/Remote/Hybrid

Placement Name	Hybrid (mix of in-person and remote)
Human rights and technology lab	Placements available = 4
Supervisor Information	
Faculty Name: Nicole Iturriaga	
Title: Assistant Professor at UC Irvine in the Department of Criminology, Law and Society, and Sociology	
Email Address: n.iturriaga@uci.edu	
Placement Information	
The laboratory will serve undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty who have an interest in the intersection of human rights and technology social science research. The lab's primary functions will be to support new and ongoing research and to build a thriving academic community on campus. This will be accomplished in several ways. First, after being properly trained, undergraduate students will have the opportunity to work as research assistants on projects associated with the lab. Second, the graduate students will workshop their ongoing projects, share updates, get feedback, and, if their projects need additional support, have access to the undergraduate research assistants. Having a tiered effect will ensure that the laboratory remains consistent and productive and will aid in the educational development of all the students involved. Third, due to these opportunities, the lab will help all students develop mentoring relationships with faculty. Fourth, there will be weekly lab meetings to review the progress of the research projects. And finally, the Human Rights and Technology Lab will advance further collaboration and research development by hosting workshops for visiting scholars, both from the UCI community, as well as other universities, with similar research interests.	
Requirements (subject to change)	
3.5 gpa and interest in human rights. Prefer students to have taken a class with Professor	
How to Apply	
Email with resume and cover letter	

OPPORTUNITY: Research Assistant	Virtual/Remote/Hybrid
Placement Name	Hybrid (mix of in-person and remote)
Mapping Law Enforcement	Placements available = 3
Supervisor Information	
Faculty Name: Amanda Geller	
Title: Amanda Geller	
Email Address: agellers@uci.edu	
Placement Information	
I'd like to engage a student in helping me code recent incidents of immigration raids in Southern California, based on videos from 'LA Taco', a local independent news source. Students may gain experience and skills in mapping and geocoding as well as data curation and management.	
Requirements (subject to change)	
Successful completion (A- or better) of a course on statistics or research methods. (Need not be a social ecology course, but I'd like to see the syllabus.)	
How to Apply	
Email me a resume and cover letter (agellers@uci.edu)	