Student Quotes

In Spring 2017, all seniors in the UCLA College of Letters and Science were asked to complete a survey on their experiences at the university. The survey explored students’ views regarding their studies, lives on campus, and future plans.

The result was more than 5,800 seniors responding – approximately 78 percent of the graduating class. Survey responses document students’ views on the overall UCLA experience, student and campus life, academic majors and minors, faculty and courses, and research opportunities for undergraduates.

More than 3,000 seniors – 52 percent of survey participants – responded to the following survey question: What was your most meaningful learning experience at UCLA? The majority of responses to this question fell into one or more of 12 themes, presented below and accompanied by select responses.

Curriculum
Personal Growth
Faculty
Diversity
Intellectual Gains
Extracurricular Involvement
Friendships
Research Experience
Challenges
Travel Study
Civic Engagement
Interactions with Classmates
Curriculum (22%, 1014 responses)

Taking CS31 and CS32 changed my life completely. They showed me the beauty of the world of Computer Science and determined my future career path.

Society and Genetics upper division courses were extremely applicable to my interests and incredibly valuable to my interdisciplinary studies and public health knowledge.

My most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was probably with my ASL courses because they helped me understand deaf culture and all that it stands for. They made me very interested in learning ASL and educating others about deaf culture.

The most meaningful learning experience was about my own identity as an undocumented student. The Chicano/a Studies courses taught me a lot about immigration, education and labor and how they are all connected. They also taught me how to be a better advocate for my own community, which I'm planning on using on my way to medical school.

Physics is a challenging degree and helped me learn a different perspective on the world and in problem solving. The most meaningful learning experiences I had as a physics major were the Physics 199 course . . . using MATLAB and Perturbation Theory to model ions in a magnetic field perturbed by light, as well as Physics 117, an electronics lab, which inspired me to pursue electronics after graduation.

I loved taking my GE's in general, and I have to say taking the Environmental Sustainability cluster my freshman year was the best learning experience ever. I honestly only chose that cluster to get rid of all the science GE requirements since I hated science in high school, but the cluster made the topics so relevant and impactful that I almost wanted to minor in Environmental Science.

I enjoyed all of my Education Studies courses. I felt that they asked me to reflect on my own personal experiences and connect them to the coursework more than my other courses that were based solely on theories in that field of study. This helped me realize that my passion is to become an educator that not only prepares students for their future, but also takes the opportunity to continue learning through the interactions with my future students.

My most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was taking an English food studies course. This course provided me with knowledge that will continue to benefit me in my everyday life, as I am now more cautious of my food choices and question where my food comes from, how it is prepared, and why certain communities have access to healthy food while others do not.

The teaching seminars that I did during my last year at UCLA have been the most valuable. Since I decided to be a teacher relatively late in my college career, I appreciated that I had abundant opportunities to get classroom experience before applying for Masters/Credentialing programs.

My most memorable experience was in an anthropology class of all places. In anthropology 9 . . . in the final lecture and throughout the course, [the professor] stressed the importance of acceptance, not just tolerance, and understanding of all cultures around the world. Nothing else in my UCLA career has struck me more.

I feel like all of my history classes have provided me with useful and appreciated knowledge. They’re so different (region, time, etc.)! I feel like I can make better connections and evaluations about the past, and that matters to me personally and to what I can bring to the workplace.

The most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was becoming a sociology major. This major truly helps you understand how our society functions and helps you view society in such a different perspective.
In my African American Studies course "Seeing After Freedom," the professor basically guided us through different philosophies and different responses to social problems/issues, and in the end it turned out that none of the discourses led to a solution. The professor at the end of the course, not verbatim, said that only through love can we figure out how to treat each other right.

The most meaningful experience was in my senior seminar. It was a lot of time with the same students so we truly got to know one another. We embraced the friendships made and also learned crucial ideas regarding our subject. We talked a lot about controversial topics (i.e. race, gender, political party, etc.) and while we all didn't have the same views, we were able to talk about these things in a positive way and learn from each other.

**Personal Growth (21%, 953 responses)**

Adult-ing and living away from home on my own was the most difficult thing I have done. I used to imagine college as being reckless and carefree, but it gave me the exact opposite experience. It made me more mindful and careful, and responsible in making decisions. The fear of messing up and the effects of messing up made me mature.

Most of the learning that I have done in my limited time at UCLA has not been academic, but personal. I have used this time to try to work on my mental and physical health, and while it sometimes feels like a very slow process, it is worth it to continue. I have learned a lot about myself and my needs, and that has been way more valuable than anything that can be taught in a classroom.

My self-worth was something that was always a bit of a grey area for me. But being here has given me a new perspective and level of confidence that I didn't know was possible. Being here has taught me that I'm capable of exceeding in several fields. It's not easy being a student here and I have to remind myself that if I can graduate from UCLA I can do anything.

Learning to be confident and independent. Though the classroom taught me ways to be confident in the sense of stress management, I learned most through my experience of being away from home and working. I work since I am not financially dependent on my family, and I volunteer to give hope to others who come from the same background as me.

UCLA has given me many tools to approach and try to solve problems rather than run away from them like I used to.

I came to UCLA dealing with immense loss in my family. I struggled communicating with many people around me. On my first day on campus, an older friend told me, "You'll learn how to talk to people here." This could not be more accurate. I learned to socialize much better and have a boosted confidence.

I think I learned more about myself and what my strengths and limitations were, and how not to let society or others affect who I am, but to pursue what I wanted, on my own terms.

I've grown so much as a person in the past three and a half years, yet still managed to maintain my sense of self. I feel as though UCLA has helped me to move toward becoming the best version of myself, and has taught me to never give up, always strive for more because there is no limit, NOT EVEN THE SKY!

My experience at UCLA was very humbling in that I realized that I am not perfect or better than any individual. I learned that I must find the drive to go after what inspires and excites me if I'm to live not only a financially successful life but a happy one as well.

My most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was not necessarily in a classroom setting or on campus. It mainly stemmed from my reflection on myself and the capabilities and goals I
had in mind. UCLA has definitely helped me look deeper inside myself as a person and helped me discover my interests and motivations that should guide me through post-grad life.

I think my most meaningful learning experience came from discovering who I am as a person and growing up as an adult. Lots of learning came from outside the classroom in how I dealt with people and discovered my own strengths and weaknesses.

I have learned a lot through my classes not just from an academic perspective, but also from a life perspective. I’ve learned to embrace others and not shy away from adversity. At first, different challenges may seem incredibly hard and daunting. You just have to remind yourself that you are able to compete with anyone and that you have the capability to excel in whatever you pursue. I’ve learned to not let surface level perceptions deter me.

**Faculty (7%, 333 responses)**

My most meaningful experience was learning from the various talented professors here at UCLA who went above and beyond what was required to help me understand their life experiences as well as prepare me for the real world and the challenges it will bring either in the workplace or in further education.

I always made an effort to get to know my professors outside of class. They are a brilliant resource available to UCLA students with a wealth of knowledge that should be taken advantage of. In addition to learning so much more than I would have in the confines of the classroom, one-on-one time with my professors has earned me wonderful mentors and friends who I will stay close to long after graduation.

The one thing I will take away from the school is the genuine interest of faculty for their students to succeed. Never at any moment did I encounter a professor that did not care about the student's learning. Here education and learning of the student was always first.

I think the most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was being able to learn with passionate professors who knew what they were talking about. It was refreshing learning from professors who wanted their students to succeed.

UCLA has some professors who enjoy their subject of teaching very much and I always enjoy being instructed by these professors due to their drive to teach students and their love for the material and field. These individuals personify what I feel it means to be 'scholarly' and I enjoyed seeing it put on display in many classes.

Having conversations with several professors in office hours was a very rewarding experience for me in terms of learning how they got to where they were and embracing the tips and advice they would give to us as students for their courses and future goals.

Talking to all the professors in my field is incredibly helpful. From them I know what kind of work I want to do, and what kind of person I want to be in the future. Although the classes were not easy, I managed to find my way to succeed in EEB [Ecology and Evolutionary Biology] classes.

The most meaningful was meeting my professors. Learning from them, being challenged by them, and asking for advice from them. I think as an undergrad, it’s hard to know what’s next. It’s nice to know that you have people who can and want to help. I love the professors of Philosophy.

I really enjoyed all of my upper division biology courses. The professors were world renowned, but also regular people. They truly showed that they cared for the subject matter and encouraged us to work towards moving the field forward. I learned so much from all of my professors, both for life and for class.
My most meaningful learning experience was approaching a professor after class hours and having that professor truly reach out and help me by making sure that I truly understood the material. Despite my personal issues and dilemmas, my professor ensured that we could figure out a way to make the course as enriching to me as it is to those not reaching out.

I believe my most meaningful learning experience at UCLA, was from my Phonology II professor... He taught me that there is so much more to life than just pure Linguistics. Instead of just focusing on Phonology, he wanted us to become better writers, as well as have better critical thinking and critical analysis skills that we as students could apply to tackle and solve problems out in the world.

The most valuable experience would have to be the interaction with the professors. All of the music history professors are very insightful, full of knowledge and ready to help understand your subject and how it applies to the humanities field. I really feel like I have grown.

**Diversity (7%, 326 responses)**

Learning to tolerate all kinds of people. Even if you don’t agree with everyone, treating everyone with respect and as humans is what’s important, and for the most part I have seen that amongst students here.

The most meaningful learning experience I had at UCLA is learning that we need to learn to treat everyone as equals, and as a society we need to be more inclusive in order to become a better community and country. There is so much discrimination that occurs in different parts of our country and if we worked as hard as most students at UCLA, we could live in a place where [people] can express themselves without being judged for their beliefs and personality.

I think the most meaningful thing I learned at UCLA was a deeper empathy for people different from myself. Growing up in a small, fairly homogenized community contrasted greatly with the amount of diversity, whether it be racially, by SES, or varying sexualities I encountered at UCLA, and I think my exposure to these communities taught me a lot about the world and helped me learn about myself.

The cultural diversity has taught me how to be open-minded and accepting of other cultures. I love learning about different cultures and am open to educate others about my culture as well.

My most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was learning about cultures, experiences, and histories of different countries across my major. Learning about so many diverse people and their oppression has really opened my eyes to problems surrounding the most marginalized communities.

Learning about our country's history and therefore the diverse history of people with diverse backgrounds was very meaningful to me. We often don't learn or focus on black history or seriously dive into modern issues in our everyday lives so I appreciate the fact that I had the opportunity to do so at UCLA.

My meaningful learning experience was being surrounded by a diverse group of students, faculty, and staff who had different ideas and philosophies but made it work beautifully on the campus.

I learned so much more from the students and faculty outside of the classroom than inside the classroom. And, believe me, I learned a ton inside of the classroom. The biggest thing UCLA taught me was to value differences and listen to others. We all come from different walks of life, backgrounds and experiences. We all have different goals and perspectives. But we can all learn so much from each other. That is what UCLA has taught me. And that is not something that can be taught in the classroom.
I met a lot of people from different backgrounds who shared the same goal as me, to graduate from UCLA. My first year at UCLA I lived in a triple with two individuals who came from different cultural backgrounds that I had never been exposed to. My floor was also composed of individuals who came from different states/countries. The classes I took were also diverse. Thanks to UCLA I was able to interact with individuals different from me which broadened my horizons and made me more open-minded.

**Intellectual Gains (6%, 292 responses)**

I think my gradual development is what I am most thankful for—my ability to analyze and verbalize has flourished at UCLA.

This institution, above all, has given me the ability to critically think, to not take everything at face value, to doubt and question, and to value my own contributions to my fields.

My entire experience at UCLA was meaningful every day because I was challenged to think for myself and to form my own opinion. I was challenged to understand the perspective of others around me and respect them even if I didn't agree. Every day and every small interaction/experience was meaningful.

UCLA taught me to stay informed, think critically, and always question things. After attending this university I know that I never want to stop learning and that I always want to be able to help others and give back to my community.

The most meaningful learning experience was to really pursue the aspect of learning rather than getting the highest grade. There is beauty in knowledge, not just your GPA.

My most meaningful learning experience was inside the classroom when we would discuss topics that are currently affecting us today. We would analyze what the course readings were, and then we would make connections to the real world. This gave me different perspectives on what is happening outside UCLA and it allowed me to see things in different ways. It also pushed me to think critically about what my current situation is.

Being in the classroom and listening to conversation and debate really taught me a lot about how to think and how others think.

Every day at UCLA has presented me with meaningful learning experiences that have me missing UCLA already, when I still have three more months of my undergraduate education! What I appreciate the most is learning how to further develop my critical thinking and analytical skills. I felt empowered by my professors to apply what I learned in class, and in independent research, to course assignments and topics of discussion.

**Extracurricular Involvement (6%, 264 responses)**

My experience with HOOLIGAN Theatre Company has allowed me to grow in every possible way: it has given me a space to be creative/silly, it has given me amazing leadership opportunities, it has allowed me to engage with people with different backgrounds, and it has provided me with lifelong friends.

I felt honored to represent UCLA Men’s Rugby. . . . There is no greater feeling than playing under the stadium lights. It has been an incredibly meaningful learning experience.

I believe my most meaningful learning experience at UCLA happened outside the classroom. My workplace and the student run organizations I have been involved in have been amazing experiences and have taught me a lot of lessons about being open minded and being willing to
experience new things. Overall, I became a better person and a better leader because of everything I chose to be involved in at UCLA.

Coming to UCLA, I felt very intimidated by how large the school was and how I needed to make friends all over again. I had been known as all kinds of things throughout high school, but what I associated myself with the most was as a runner. Bruinrunners offered me the community I needed to meet that identity I wanted to retain and to make the friends that I would continue to stay close with past graduation.

Joining Bruin Consulting, I met a group of the most hard-working, diverse, driven, interesting, passionate people and got a learning experience that would prepare me for the working world far better than any econ class.

Being part of the Armenian Students' Association has been my most meaningful experience at UCLA. I have learned so much about my own community through being part of this organization. I never had an Armenian community before, and UCLA offered me the means to have one.

I think my most meaningful learning experience came from working for UCLA Radio. Through the whole process from being an intern to a manager, I gained a lot of applicable knowledge about how to work in a larger organization and how to manage people. In addition, it introduced me to people from completely different backgrounds and completely different majors.

Fraternity leadership. I learned way more from getting deeply involved in a social organization than I did from my classes. I learned how to motivate people, how to satisfy customers, how to be a role model, how to budget, how to run meetings, how to work in a group, how to express my opinions in a productive way . . . all while growing emotionally closer to my fraternity brothers and gaining/maintaining a family.

**Friendships (5%, 219 responses)**

There is a huge community of UCLA Bruins in the world that are supportive and intelligent and hardworking and creative. It encourages me to believe in myself and push forward and think differently and be empathetic.

My most meaningful experience at UCLA would have to be making amazing friends that helped support me through some of my hardest times.

I am grateful that UCLA provided me with a vibrant social life that I did not expect I would or could have upon transferring in.

My most meaningful experience was meeting my friends. Without their support, their laughs, and their positive energy, I don't know if I would be able to [get] through college.

I would say that the most meaningful learning experience for me came in the form of the people that I met while here. The fellow Bruins that crossed my path were all so insightful and each one taught me something new along the way. I have made lifelong friendships, and to me, that is the most meaningful part of the college experience.

I will forever cherish being able to meet some of my closest friends, as well as people I respect and look up to, during my time here at my dream school. Both my social and academic experiences at UCLA have helped me gain confidence in my life goals and sense of identity.

I believe the most meaningful experience I had at UCLA was finding a family away from my family. The friends I have made I know will support me through anything and will last forever.
My most meaningful experience at UCLA revolves around the relationships I have made here. UCLA has given me life-long friends and the experiences branch off of that.

Definitely just the people that I met along the way. Each person taught me something different, and I never could have imagined that I would be leaving with so many friends.

**Research Experience (4%, 180 responses)**

My upper division research immersion lab. This lab showed me how real research was done and the final poster presentation was so rewarding. I was even selected to present this research at a wider conference, which really showed me that hard work and dedication pays off in the end.

The most meaningful learning experience was participating in an honors research program where I designed and executed my own research project under the guidance of professors. This was a really important and enlightening experience for me, and I felt like it matured me as a person and student and gave me a lot of great opportunities. Getting to know professors through my research also inspired me to go to graduate school.

Being in a research lab, in general, taught me a lot about leadership, socializing in a professional setting, time-management, and creativity with respect to designing experiments and troubleshooting. This has been one of the most enriching and overall rigorous experiences of my time at UCLA.

The UCLA Grand Challenges Undergraduate Research Scholars Program (GC-URSP) has been the most challenging, yet the most rewarding, experience of my academic career. . . . Working on an interdisciplinary team comprised of people from all over campus, we are investigating the impact of climate change on the biodiversity of species within tropical rainforests in biodiversity hotspots such as the Hawaiian Islands. Researching at the university level has allowed me to apply the lessons from a classroom setting into real-life situations.

The MIMG 103AL/BL lab courses greatly improved my critical thinking skills and equipped me with both the skills and knowledge needed to design effective experiments. Additionally, these courses also prepared me for data analysis via bioinformatic tools, which is extremely valuable for future research in genomics and metabolic engineering.

Doing research is the most valuable experience I have had at UCLA. While doing research, I learned how to ask a question and pursue my curiosity. I learned how to approach a problem independently. I am motivated to learn constantly and always challenge myself.

My most meaningful learning experience happened while taking the sociology of crime, being able to work in a group on a research project on a community of our choosing. It allowed me to research a neighborhood that I am not too familiar with, and break down the crime ratings in that community. This project also allowed me to learn how to work in groups. . . In the end it was a great experience to understand why crime occurs and how social structures play in to that role.

Designing and executing my own ethnographic field research program was an incredibly meaningful experience. The subject . . . was a combination of many academic passions, and the project itself was a chance to practice and refine the skills I had been developing in earlier undergrad courses. An abroad summer field research program on my own, real-life data analysis and interpretation, thesis writing, and speaking opportunities all provided beneficial learning experiences outside of the classroom.
Challenges (3%, 145 responses)

I thought it was extremely sad that when a UCLA faculty member was killed, no one took any time to say all this school stuff isn't that important, let’s process and think about who was lost. I had a final due in two days, and I just kept working that afternoon. My teacher was kind enough to offer us extra time. But I was already done by then. Some of the administrators made a point of offering us services if we needed them. But that was wrong. You should have made us stop for a few days, and reflect. You made it seem like a crutch to get a chance to take a break. It wasn’t. It was more important than what we were doing.

My most meaningful learning experience was from my independent laboratory research. An entire quarter passed where everything I did failed. I felt very disappointed and considered other things that I may be good at. However, I [persisted] and my experiments eventually started to work out. I learned that I need to blame myself less and be more open to solutions in order to move forward.

I learned that even if you try your best, you still fail. But I also learned how to get back up after falling. My failures have built the way I am: a passionate hardworking person.

I was very depressed and anxious my first year because I had disadvantages that prevented me from getting involved and making friends, and it really affected my grades. I learned that just because others look like they're having more meaningful experiences than me doesn’t mean I can't have my own or should feel like I'm left out. What's important is my own education and being comfortable and confident in myself.

I don't think I have lived out my best self in UCLA, and a big part of that was the lack of planning I had before attending. At times, I feel like I was just floating around aimlessly. This negative experience will reinforce the importance of planning for all my future endeavors.

I think the most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was failing. Failing to juggle all that you are expected to, then accepting the fact that you need to let somethings go, keeping in mind that you need to have your priorities straight. After that, you pick up again, and try again. Then the juggling gets a bit easier. Then one by one, you start picking up the things you had to let go in order to figure out how to juggle the most important things first. By the end, you learned how to balance things, you gained valuable life skills, critical thinking skills, and you learn how to be efficient, effective and pretty much excellent.

I had depression, PTSD, and anxiety, and my counselors strongly advised me to take a break my third year at UCLA. I was able to use that time to recuperate and manage stress differently. I had a lot of support from the people at Murphy Hall such as the dean, OSD, counselors, and especially my advocate. . . . They helped me learn how to look and reach out for resources as soon as I see a problem.

I did not have the means to be able to live around Westwood and have adequate time to dedicate to my studies, due to having to work 20+hrs/week just to be able to pay rent (and that's not touching tuition). . . . But, as I've learned from going here, the world doesn't owe you anything, which is the most meaningful learning experience I've had.

I had to take one class three times in order to pass. While I thought about giving up the major, I was resilient and managed to satisfy all the requirements. In the grander scheme, these experiences have taught me that my personal success is up to me to define; I do not have to go by the definitions of others.

Travel Study (2%, 114 responses)

The most meaningful experiences were the travel study programs I have been on, one to Jaffa, Israel and one to Paris, France. I met a few of my best friends there, learned a lot
outside my major, and was able to live in a small community with students with diverse backgrounds while actually getting to [know] everyone really well.

Studying at the University of Westminster with British students allowed me to learn from different perspectives and cultures. Traveling also helped me grow up and learn about myself and what I wanted to do career wise. I learned to take care of myself and I also improved my writing and creativity abroad. Best learning experience I could have ever asked for because it was more than an intellectual experience, it was a life learning experience.

Traveling to Europe and Peru and Haiti as part of my education helped me gain perspective. Everything seems less important, and at the same time altogether more important, when you learn about how other people live. It is different from what you know but just as valid. I also gained new insight regarding my identity. Seeing what am I not, compared to the world, illuminated what I am.

My most meaningful learning experience has been studying abroad. I was able to learn a new language, a new culture, and a new perspective about myself. I met many different people from a variety of backgrounds and hung out with people I didn't think I would before this class. . . . I am so glad that I was able to attend this trip and would recommend [it] to anyone.

The most meaningful learning experience I had at UCLA was my travel study program in Rome. Although it was nothing like a conventional classroom, I think that unique experience is what made it so special for me. I felt much more engaged because we were sight-seeing while also learning about Rome’s history.

Studying abroad in Australia and taking EEB 110 both satisfied my desire to learn more about marine biology, and also animal physiology. Both these will prepare me well for my time at vet school (and during internships in the future as I want to become an aquatic animal vet).

My most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was probably the time that I spent in Paris with my French UCLA professor and subsequently when I did the exchange program at Lyon II. I had been studying French for many years, but I was not fluent until I studied abroad, and for that I will always cherish my time there (despite how stressful it might have been at times).

My most valuable learning experience was studying abroad and seeing the things that I read about in books come to life. Often I found that experiencing something took away stereotypes or biases taught about in a classroom.

One of my most meaningful learning experiences at UCLA was studying abroad in Peru for a month and being able to learn about it as a developing country and the health disparities that exists.

**Civic Engagement (2%, 111 responses)**

My most meaningful experience at UCLA was being a part of the Pediatric AIDS Coalition. I discovered my own leadership and professional skills, and found a passion I will have for life. I made lifelong friends and memories I will always reflect on with happiness and pride.

My most meaningful learning experience was working with students in underprivileged or under resourced communities and creating a college-going culture within the community. I also enjoyed my study abroad experience learning about public health issues in migrant communities in Thailand.

The emphasis on community, diversity, and acceptance influenced me to do UCLA Unicamp with my peers, and I have gained renewed insight and perspective on the world, the chance to
relive childhood through the lens of an adult, and to influence some children to ameliorate the world and the community, which is more than I could have ever imagined or asked from a program.

My most meaningful learning experience occurred when I decided to participate (fully) in UCLA's Dance Marathon. It was surreal to see so many Bruins come together for a cause that did not affect many of us personally but affected people in other countries. I don't think I would have made the same friends if not for that event that brought a diverse group of people together for one life-changing cause.

My most meaningful learning experience was working with students in underprivileged or under resourced communities and creating a college going culture within the community.

Mobile Clinic at UCLA broadened my horizons and showed me a whole world and life I had previously not encountered. It gave me . . . hope as well as humbled me and gave me a passion to help others.

Volunteering under the American Red Cross at UCLA opened my eyes to many issues surrounding the local community as well as the issues faced by some populations across the globe. Volunteering has taught me how I can help alleviate the struggles that people face while providing me with leadership experience which has helped me become more eloquent, organized, and assertive.

Volunteering with outreach organizations at UCLA really taught me the privilege that I have and how it is my responsibility to give back to the community.

**Interactions with Classmates (2%, 100 responses)**

My favorite experiences were the conversations I engaged in with my peers about what I was learning and what they were. These conversations were especially eye opening for me when the person I talked with was majoring in something somewhat related or not at all related to my major or minor. I loved the opportunities I have had to learn from other students and share my experiences as well.

A group of my peers including myself banded together to get through our first upper division class, a class that was exponentially more rigorous than any that we had been in before. . . . We were not worried about the curve for tests, and did not view one another as competitors. The real opponent was the material that we were learning, and we understood this. We worked as a group, tutored one another if someone needed help, and became friends. . . . Our philosophy of helping one another remained with us, and it is a philosophy that pervades the physics department.

I think the most meaningful experience I have had at UCLA is the opportunity to meet the brilliant people who gather here. It is not common to come across so many driven, hard-working people concentrated [in one] area. I have been inspired by my professors and my peers to not only achieve great success in my own life but use that success to help others.

The sheer amount and variety of students here at UCLA bring a new perspective and a new story to get to know daily. It is the most enriching part about coming to this campus. The quality of people I’ve met here will always be something I miss after graduation.

The most meaningful experience was in my first year when I was a lost freshman and reached out for resources on campus as an undocumented Latina in STEM, and a lot of upper classmen peers were so willing to provide me with knowledge they have learned throughout their years at UCLA. I learned the power of mentorship, and that’s why I keep mentoring others as they transition to UCLA.
My most meaningful learning experiences at UCLA came during the weekly discussion sections for EEB 116, Conservation Biology. . . . I was astonished . . . by the insight and wisdom that these 20-something-year-old students have, and by the ability of some people to clearly articulate their thoughts. . . . To really be in a classroom full of people who are vocally challenging your thoughts and ideas and where every person was able to find something they were interested in, really proves to me that there is hope for the direction that this world is headed.