Student Quotes

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Curriculum (1292 comments, 23% of all comments)

This is a difficult question to answer because I didn't take a class that I didn't like at UCLA.... I found both the professors and classes I took in the History department as well as the Near East department to be engaging and intellectually stimulating. I fully intend to return to UCLA for my graduate work.

I think the most meaningful learning experiences were those in which we learned about how people are affected by policies. To hear history, with a lower case h, of the normal people as opposed to just the wealthy and powerful, is the most interesting thing I encountered.

Being an anthropology major provided me with an insightful perspective of the world around me. It taught me understanding and tolerance of others. I have loved all of my courses in the department and I think the knowledge I have obtained is invaluable.

My mathematics courses have been outstanding. I truly will miss being able to take math classes and feel intellectually challenged on a daily basis.

The small honors collegiums were a great way to explore some very interesting and unique topics, such as the neuroscience of beauty and poetry of ancient India.

Every one of my English classes. . . . I loved going in and coming out of the class with a completely new way of looking at life and people.

There are so many fascinating, incredible things about biochemistry. So as boring as this may sound, the entire upper division biochemistry curriculum was a meaningful learning experience.

In my Education 130 class with Professor Tyrone Howard, I really solidified my goals of becoming a high school teacher and working to improve education in our country.

My global health class spurred my excitement surrounding infectious disease and epidemiology, and has confirmed my desire to go to medical school.
I took an honors course that focused on sexism, racism, and heterosexism, taught by Jerome Rabow and Puline Yeghnazar. It changed my life. . . . The course opened my eyes to the level of injustice present in American society, and inspired me to alter my career path in order to pursue social justice in the legal profession.

I think my most meaningful experience at UCLA comes down to my ability to take a number of classes in different disciplines and find out what it is that I am passionate about and, quite frankly, good at.

Taking the Art History C103A class. It introduced me to Museum Studies as a vocation and area of study and caused me to re-evaluate my future plans. Saloni Mathur is an excellent and engaging professor.

I would have to say the English 10 series. . . . It covers so much material and really gives you a great introduction into both the English and the American Literature and Culture majors and what will be expected from you during your career at UCLA. Plus, it allows you to meet people in your major, acquaint yourself with TAs and professors, and really establish yourself at the school.

Taking sociology of deviant behavior and anthropology of deviance & abnormality at the same time really opened my eyes to human behavior and the reasons individuals do what they do. Both classes offered a different approach to the same subject and the professors really made the material engaging.

The whole GE Cluster experience was invaluable as a freshman just entering college. I made friends I've had throughout college and carry the knowledge and skills acquired during the Cluster to this day.

**Personal Growth (960 comments, 17% of all comments)**

I really developed my sense of independence while at such a large school. I learned how to excel academically and personally, while staying true to myself. And I loved every second of being a Bruin!

Upon the massive amount of knowledge I’ve gained from classes, I learned more about myself. UCLA has opened my eyes to my past, present, and future. I learned to embrace my history, to treasure and enjoy the present, and to prepare and be optimistic for the future.

My most meaningful learning experience at UCLA has been to discover that I would rather be less financially "successful" if it means that I can make a difference somehow by challenging racism, sexism, homophobia, ageism, etc.

The most meaningful experience at UCLA was advancing my development as an individual, one who has tried to become much more academically, culturally, socially, and politically aware.

I always planned to come to UCLA and receive a stellar education, but the personal growth, bonds and world view that I gained from the counseling and one on one time with my professors improved my life and perspective of myself and others.

Being at UCLA helped me grow up and become a person that I respect, which is an invaluable learning experience. I am happy with who I have become.

Learning to view life not as a young teenager looking through a microscope, but as an adult looking at the whole picture was the most meaningful to me as a UCLA graduate. . . . UCLA
was a life learning experience and I feel that the lessons learned at UCLA inside and outside of the classrooms cannot be replaced.

I feel that, looking back to the person I was when I first started at UCLA, and seeing the person I’ve become now is the most rewarding and powerful experience. . . . I am more confident, driven, intellectually-stimulated, mathematically-focused and aware of the world because of my experiences here.

The most meaningful learning experience was learning how to live. As a chef, I made money and really didn't have a life. Inside the walls of UCLA, I learned how to pay rent, fix a broken pipe, study, write, work, all while maintaining a very social lifestyle. I learned how to be free. To live a life not of someone else telling me what to do and how to do it. I was given the freedom to learn on my own.

As a child of refugees from Laos, many people do not understand the conditions from which my family immigrated . . . because Laos is clearly not mentioned in the news, textbooks, or any kind of mainstream curricula. Being at a University like UCLA with the strongest Asian American Studies department in the nation has allowed me to finally be educated about very simply myself and my identity.

I had a very unusual experience at UCLA, 19 years from my first quarter to graduation (13 year break). . . . UCLA has been part of more than half my life and I have such fond memories and experiences. The most meaningful learning experience at UCLA for me was my personal growth in both character and knowledge via the tools and opportunities given to me by UCLA. Go BRUINS!!

My most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was learning to build character and confidence. I came into UCLA as a shy and timid 18 year old. It took me a while to become a leader and not a follower, but all the people at UCLA supported me throughout my college career and I believe I have learned the skills necessary to have a bright and successful future.

**Faculty (570 comments, 10% of all comments)**

At UCLA I learned to view history through many different lenses. The best part, however, is that professors remained largely impartial when presenting these different perspectives, which is important because at no time did I feel as though I were being indoctrinated.

Being able to learn from the world’s best faculty gave me the opportunity to look beyond my capabilities and achieve as much as possible. Every class, every discussion and every interaction with students and faculty was an opportunity of intellectual enrichment.

Physics was my most challenging subject in high school and so I feared for my life for UCLA courses in physics. But to my surprise, physics may be my favorite subject here at UCLA. I feel that the department, professors/instructors and teaching assistants were absolutely amazing and everyone really cared about student learning.

My neuroscience class with Arnold B. Scheibel. He is the most inspiring professor because he truly loves the subject and the students. He is also just incredibly intelligent and knowledgeable. I learned so much about neuroanatomy and thoroughly enjoyed the class even though it was one of the most rigorous classes I have taken at UCLA.

Taking Professor McDevitt has truly taught me real world economic concepts which have allowed me to understand the economic crisis our country faces today. Taking his courses [has] allowed me to grow intellectually and broadened my own level of thinking.

The most meaningful experience at UCLA was having the privilege to take courses from Dr. Tom Gillespie and Dr. Hartmut Walter. Their courses instilled within me a passion for conserving our wildlife. For this I am eternally grateful.
The most meaningful learning experience was getting to know professors and become good friends with them. They made me more excited about learning and helped me gain confidence in my abilities as a student and as an individual.

I took several courses from a professor in the Public Policy Department. I later became her research assistant and completed a thesis under her supervision. Being able to have close interactions with such an outstanding professor on academic material that highly interests me was a fantastic experience.

My most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was through the Physiological Science Department faculty members. My dream has been to go into pediatrics physical therapy and my major in Physiological Science at UCLA has only confirmed and stirred up my passion to pursue this career.

Learning from the world renowned professors. Almost every single one of them had that something special which inspires.

My most meaningful experience at UCLA was my first class. It was Jewish Fiction, a class I would not have picked in a thousand years. When the class started the professor was amazing. She was smart, she engaged students and she prompted amazing discussions. I have never been so excited to attend a class.

**Diversity (530 comments, 9% of all comments)**

I learned that there are so many different types of people out there with different backgrounds and cultures; I learned to respect and be understanding of those differences.

Learning about other people—my best experiences came outside of the classroom by meeting the extremely diverse student body.

Being able to interact with people from various walks of life in a setting where similar goals are shared and different ideas are encouraged rather than shunned.

The most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was the eye opening diversity in the UCLA community. The university is filled with individuals of varying backgrounds and pasts that create distinctive characters which are then united under the UCLA family. The stories behind all the Bruins are definitely the best memories I will hold from UCLA.

It's not a single experience that I found most meaningful at UCLA, it was being part of such a large community but still feeling so much a part of it. With such a large campus, it would be easy to get lost, but I felt that UCLA helped me thrive in this situation. I met so many great people from all different types of communities and ethnic backgrounds.

Being at a mega university allowed me to meet so many amazing and different people from various backgrounds. UCLA is one of the more affordable universities, which allowed people of different socioeconomic backgrounds to attend and provided a more leveled field in terms of communication and student group involvement.

Meeting different kinds of people . . . all intelligent, accepting, understanding and inspiring. It has been phenomenal. The administration, faculty, everyone has been amazing and supportive.

Based on the courses I have taken, I have learned to me more accepting of people who are not like me. I have developed the ability to be more open minded. Before entering UCLA I had very stern beliefs but after attending UCLA for four years I am more open minded.
Learning that there is an entire world outside of California, and UCLA for that matter, with people of different views, backgrounds and circumstances that I must be able to work and interact with in order to solve the most pertinent problems our future holds. UCLA, I feel, has prepared me well to handle this task.

Learning about different cultures and ethnic backgrounds, learning the importance of activism in the community and learning that there are other people who are going through similar life experiences and problems as me.

**Extracurricular Involvement (454 comments, 8% of all comments)**

While I learned a lot in the classroom, I learned more about life and about myself through my participation in extracurricular activities and internships. . . . I have grown so much because of the opportunities afforded to me by UCLA and my hope for future students is that they find themselves as they participate in activities and programs on this campus.

I was involved with the UCLA Community Service Commission. I strongly feel that the work that UCLA students do is remarkable. It was not until I was involved with USAC [Undergraduate Student Association Council] that I realized this and really fell in love with UCLA. I think UCLA student government is unmatched, and it produces not just politicians but leaders in all facets of life.

Dance Marathon. I have been involved in the organization as a committee member since my first year and it has defined my college experience. I was involved in HIV/AIDS organizations prior to college, but never anticipated that further involvement would make me want to pursue non-profit work as a career post-graduation. . . . I have learned so much professionally, socially, and leadership-wise through Dance Marathon that when I look back at my time at UCLA I'll remember those daily life lessons before those presented in my classes.

My most meaningful experience was being involved in the student organization Nikkei Student Union. Through this I was really able to learn about the importance of belonging to a community, and the need to be actively involved. I learned that the knowledge I gain in the classroom is useless unless I can put it into use to serve others and fight for equality among all communities.

My most meaningful experience at UCLA was serving as a director for an organization in the Community Service Commission. The Watts Tutorial Program has affected my life as a student and an individual in so many significant ways. . . . My career goals have everything to do with this program and I am so thankful that UCLA offers so many great opportunities to discover one's passion.

Samahang Pilipino at UCLA provided me with a network of friends and colleagues that made the campus smaller. . . . I have learned skills that I can apply to my future career in the non-profit sector; I have excellent communication skills from the various leadership positions I have held, including board and project positions; I have an amazing network of Pilipino alumni who can aid me in my future aspirations in the arts and graduate studies. . . .

It was being in leadership positions. It was in planning, organizing, managing and executing functions. It was going to meetings. It was volunteering. It was studying abroad and traveling. It was dinner in the dormitories with friends. It was late night conversations with friends about life and the future. It was learning a sport. It was going to UCLA Live events. It was seeing and feeling and knowing Los Angeles. It was everything that wasn't a midterm or final exam. UCLA has prepared me for life; I have developed myself, my character, and personality, not just my intellectual prowess. For this, I am ever thankful and cognizant.

My friends and I decided to create a "non fraternity" fraternity, in which we would try and diverge from the negative stigma of the Greek System by putting high values on academics,
community service, leadership, and brotherhood. . . . Since then, we have maintained the highest GPA in the entire Greek System, along with growing from a ten person house, to over ninety people. . . . I feel like my friends and I have succeeded in creating something positive that will last at UCLA.

**Friendships (296 comments, 5% of all comments)**

UCLA has allowed me to meet my best friends: people who are interested in educating themselves yet enjoying life at the same time.

My most meaningful learning experience would have to be the friendships and relationships that I have built. I met my boyfriend, future husband here. He is Taiwanese and that has opened up my mind to cultures everywhere. My best friend is Gay and that made me want to take a class on LGBT studies to get a better look and a better understanding on the struggles and way of life that many of the LGBT community experience. My other best friend is Black and she has allowed me to enter her world and embraced my culture as well.

My most meaningful experience was my own personal development and meeting the people that I was fortunate enough to cross paths with. I feel that I have made life-long friends at this school, who have taught me valuable lessons in life.

Making friendships that I know will last a lifetime. Being able to work with others to help each other excel and succeed.

I met so many extraordinary people here that will be lifelong friends. I thank UCLA for that.

Connecting with people that became the foundation of my social, academic and professional network. I made lifelong friends through the experiences that we endured and the social opportunities we captured.

My most meaningful memories at UCLA are on the grass lawn having lunch with my friends. I feel that UCLA is truly a beautiful school and I appreciate its nature. It was so nice to be able to relax for a few hours in between class and have a picnic lunch.

My most meaningful learning experience has been through relationships with fellow students and friends and just being constantly in an environment where I had to learn how to work effectively with others.

My most meaningful learning experience was learning how to create lasting bonds with new friends.

**Intellectual Gains (235 comments, 4% of all comments)**

My most meaningful experience at UCLA was being able to learn so many new things about life, nature, and our existence. Through my coursework, I have learned the complexity of life and it has opened my eyes to the power of science and knowledge. I have never wanted to be educated more and learn more in my entire life.

The professors here have taught me that there is no bound to learning, and that thirst for learning is an invaluable tool.

I was challenged is so many aspects of my life—ethically, mentally, socially, intellectually, and spiritually. But in the end, I am happy and proud of the person I’ve been after my experience at UCLA. I feel like a much more well-rounded individual. UCLA has definitely taught me how to better approach learning through a variety of different thinking methods.
I help teach a second grade class and I constantly catch myself acting based off of a psychological principle that I learned at UCLA. I feel like I can understand kids from a different perspective, one that is not only tolerant but more constructive, than teachers who did not have psychology as their major.

UCLA faculty challenged me to think critically about ideas and stressed how we should question everything we take for granted.

Learning to recognize that all teaching and knowledge has a perspective, opinion, or even bias. These can translate and correlate to constructive learning, but must be recognized before accepting all professors, texts, and experiences at face value.

Being forced to think critically about issues made me more able to analyze situations on my own and come to my own conclusions. Of course, I still listen to others’ views, but I think the ability to think on my own was invaluable.

Attending UCLA helped me to understand the true definition of higher learning. I can remember my educational career prior to attending UCLA and how after attending I think and understand ideas more critically.

Research Experience (218 comments, 4% of all comments)

Getting the opportunity to research my own interests under the faculty supervision of various professors was an invaluable experience to me, and has made a huge impact on my academic self-confidence and my goals for the future.

My overall experience with scientific research was really rewarding. I had the opportunity not only to work in a lab but also to take classes taught by successful professors. It is so amazing to be surrounded by such accomplished researchers and to hear them speak of their groundbreaking work.

Being able to do research with psychology grad students under the supervision of very well known faculty, working with different faculty members with their research, and being taught by some of the best professors in the nation definitely made my learning experience worthwhile.

Getting involved in research. As an incoming freshman, I had no idea UCLA was such a huge research university. I learned critical thinking skills, time management, work etiquette, and the scientific process through my undergraduate research.

Presenting my undergraduate research at conferences was an extremely awarding experience.

Presenting my research group’s work before California State Senator Gil Cedillo as part of my final for Prof. Raul Hinojosa's class.

Entering the Directed Research position. It was the best choice that I could have made, it taught me a lot about my abilities and made me realize that as a UCLA student you are introduced to many important aspects of education; it is just a matter of how you take advantage of it.

Study Abroad (158 comments, 3% of all comments)

I had such a great experience with UCLA's travel study program in Spain. I can see the deep planning involved and the passion of all of the faculty members involved. They are very concerned with our overall experience but mostly, our learning. I am very impressed with the
wide selection of travel programs UCLA offers and I hope to see that this will continue in the future.

Studying abroad was the most meaningful learning experience at UCLA. I had a chance to discover and love a new world. UCLA courses helped me gain a better understanding of East Asian languages and cultures but studying abroad reinforced my understanding to a new level.

Studying abroad in Australia. I met new people, experienced a different culture, felt independent, evaluated myself, and learned so much about fieldwork, ecology, and group dynamics.

Traveling abroad with the Spanish Program through EAP [Education Abroad Program] to Merida, Mexico. It made me realize the type of life I want, gave me an extremely better global perspective, and truly fueled passions that I never tapped into before.

Traveling to Tanzania, Africa I have become all the more inspired by their lifestyle and how living on limited means is not punishment but can be a blessing. I have embraced other cultures and have felt a greater sense of community with humanity rather than my own ethnicity or my family.

My best experience while at UCLA was when I did a research project in Paris with fellow Global Studies students. It was a great opportunity for students with similar academic interests to help each other learn in a different environment than the norm.

My study abroad experience in South Africa. I saw things and did things I never thought I would be able to do. Because of UCLA I was able to volunteer with an AIDS organization, help the world on a global level and serve as a representative for UCLA.

Civic Engagement (141 comments, 2% of all comments)

Being a director for two years of Asian Pacific Health Corps at UCLA has allowed me to utilize the linguistic, research, leadership, communication, and administrative skills that I have developed over time for the good of the greater Los Angeles community as well as the UCLA students.

The strong sense of community service has been one of the most rewarding experiences at UCLA. Almost all of the research done in Psychology and Anthropology impacted people (and usually enhanced) their lives in some form or another, and this definitely helped instill the sense of community service. In addition, many student organizations (i.e., Dance Marathon and Clothesline Project) [at] UCLA helped do the same.

For me joining a health project through the CPO [Community Programs Office] was by far the most valuable experience at UCLA. I did things for my community I never thought possible for someone without a degree. . . . It was through this experience that I finally determined that I truly did want to pursue a career in medicine.

My most meaningful learning experience was . . . through Watts Tutorial Program, the community service student organization I have been a part of for three years. The children we tutor every week at UCLA come from the most difficult lives - nothing is easy for them in their homes, with their families, or at school. . . . The greatest learning experience I could have is [learning] the importance of service and widening the prospects of children whose future is limited due to their lack of access to quality education.

Being involved in CALPIRG [California Public Interest Research Group]. My internship through them taught me skills of good citizenship, and gave me a chance to apply what I was learning in class to making real social change.
Joining Mobile Clinic allowed me to interact with and learn more about helping the homeless and those in need.

**Challenges (118 comments, 2% of all comments)**

... I think the greatest lesson of UCLA that I didn't get before coming here and I wish I was prepared for was just how alone you start. It's never worth it to go it alone here, and it's extremely valuable to join as many groups as you can handle. With angst for the initial situation of feeling completely abandoned, I wasted a lot of time learning that essential lesson of life here.

My first year, I was very intimidated since I came from a small private school. I even considered changing schools. I remembered how hard I worked to get in and decided to try one more year. I ended up loving it, and learned that change is a good thing.

Experiencing a brief period my sophomore years where my grades really dropped, and realizing I wasn't giving my best effort or using all that UCLA had to offer to me. It was a wake-up call to start turning my work ethic around to make my education count for me again.

I failed many times at this school, academically, socially, financially. I changed my major, I fell to a low GPA and got on both AP [Academic Probation] and STD [Subject to Dismissal] at different times in my academic career. Being forced to look at myself, to decide what I really wanted out of life, was probably the most important thing I learned.

I learned that UCLA demands the money you owe them promptly but doesn't care that their delay in returning refund money and financial aid may affect your ability to pay bills and rent.

The first F I ever had was at UCLA, and it motivated me to work harder. At the same time, I felt it wasn't my fault because the professor was put on probation for failing more than a third of the class, but nothing was done about it. Now he grades easier. I had a B going into the final.

**Intellectual Interactions with Classmates (117 comments, 2% of all comments)**

The caliber of intellect and drive my fellow collegians possess is simply astounding. I treasure most what I've come to understand about the world as a result of their challenging illuminations and poignant insights.

Having conversations with incredibly bright people in classes, seminars, the dorms, at events, etc! Never have I met a more amazing group of 36,000 people.

I felt that the most meaningful experiences occurred outside of class with fellow UCLA students. We are constantly intellectually advancing our minds, regardless of being in class or not, because we love discussing the topics we learn in our respective classes.

I learned the knowledge I needed to know from my classes but the most meaningful conversations were with the friends and colleagues that I met here. UCLA students are a very particular breed and I feel as though we share a common desire to learn more and be more than the status quo and this commonality forces us to push one another to never settle.

The most meaningful experiences were during discussions with other great minds. UCLA has a diverse and very talented group of students. Being surrounded by excellence like that is inspiring.

**Residential Life (78 comments, 1% of all comments)**
I learned the most from meeting new people in the dorms: my views and opinions were challenged and broadened, I took up new hobbies, engaged in different experiences, and made lifelong friends - that in itself is the most worthwhile learning experience one can have, and no classrooms were involved.

The most meaningful experience for me was developing my social skills. Living in the residence halls was definitely a key part of that. I was exposed to many different cultures and backgrounds and I learned a lot just from talking and interacting with other residents.

My social education at Hedrick Hall. I think I learned the most about others by being shoved in a triple and having to share one restroom with the entire floor. I definitely got the entire "college experience and troubles" during the one year in Hedrick. I would do it again in a heartbeat! My closest UCLA friends are from the dorm.

I loved my years at the Residence Halls. I was really involved, gained position in the Floor Gov't, held Halloween festivities for the community kids who come over, and felt like I was part of a family.

Being part of OCHC/ORL [On-Campus Housing Council/Office of Residential Life] and living on the hill. My most valuable learning experiences are those outside of the classroom; socially I have grown so much as a person and I accredit this to campus housing.