In spring 2011, all seniors in the UCLA College of Letters and Science were asked to complete a survey on their academic experience at the university. The survey explored the views of students about their lives on campus, their studies, and their plans after graduating.

The result was more than 4,800 seniors responding – approximately 68 percent of the graduating class. The responses document views about the overall UCLA experience, student and campus life, academic majors and minors, the quality of faculty and courses, and research opportunities for undergraduates.
In addition to answering specific questions about the UCLA experience, seniors also had the opportunity to write their own thoughts about a variety of subjects regarding the university.

Students were eager to share their thoughts on their experiences at UCLA. One of the questions that received the most responses was the question: **What was your most meaningful learning experience at UCLA?** Categories were created, and selected responses are presented for each theme.

**Curriculum (1140 comments, 26% of all comments)**

I am EXTREMELY satisfied with the curriculum and professors affiliated with Environmental Science and in the Environmental Engineering minor. . . . This program was the best thing that happened to me.

I loved being an English major. It allowed me to connect with people from all different backgrounds that had the same interests as me. My writing greatly improved because of the fast paced and demanding work environment within the major.

Organic Chemistry (14C and D). It was absolutely awful while I was in it. But I worked really hard in that class and it ultimately paid off. I was used to being able to skate by in high school and at times at UCLA, but this class pushed me to actually learn how to study and to put in the time when it got hard.

My most meaningful learning experience was taking a class on mental illness and learning about the social construction of it. It changed my perspective about mental illness and made me look at things in a different light. I now try to apply this new thinking to my life.

I took two health care classes in a row right as the health care bill was passed by Congress. Part of it was lucky timing, but I really felt that my professors (especially Timmermans, who is PHENOMENAL) did an incredible job at making class feel incredibly important and pertinent to current events.

My most meaningful learning experience was my GE Cluster: Sex and Gender... It taught me, my first quarter, how different fields in science can come together and reach collaborative conclusions, how to interact and participate in discussions and office hours, and the value of forming study groups. I also learned how to tackle large amounts of reading and condense it to its main points.
Gillespie’s Forest Ecosystems class—he took us outside every week, even though he had a giant class, and walked around campus applying what we were learning to things in our environment. It was awesome.

I value what I learned in ancient philosophy. The ideas I learned contributed greatly to my perspective on life, made me want to further improve my moral character, and motivated me to make a difference.

My most meaningful experience at UCLA involved a UN negotiation simulation in my diplomacy class, which helped me understand that all sides have valid points; empathy is needed to give education its highest realization.

Management 1B/120A/120B with Professor Ravetch forced me to do my own work, think outside the box and was incredibly challenging. It also laid the groundwork for my critical reasoning and quantitative process.

I took WAC [World Arts and Cultures] 100A with Peter Sellars and learned more about my surroundings and myself than I ever had before. I learned a lot about how incarceration in California works and how I was not informed on the matter before. I learned that Westwood has so much to offer in terms of art that speaks to a purpose. This class was the greatest learning experience I’ve had.

My upper division math courses. They challenged me and really expanded my thirst to learn. Math really became fun and interesting for me and I often find myself now pursuing new topics to learn.

Parasitology! It was a very hard class that required students to work together to do well. We went through a lot of pains but we came out with good results.

The diversity of the course material provided an enriching and interesting learning experience. Grade school tends to teach you the basics, and after so many years of "math," "history," and "English," it gets kind of dull. UCLA makes you appreciate the notion of "education" significantly more.

It was interesting to me that I grew to enjoy studying physics. Thanks to my professor and TA, I developed a real understanding in physics even though it is not my major.

The general education classes as a whole have provided a meaningful learning experience which helped me to better understand the complex issues of diversity, tolerance, and social justice. . . . I feel that I have a better grasp on the issues that affect our modern world and will be able to supplement this knowledge with more information in the future to become a well-informed citizen.

All of the classes that I’ve taken at UCLA as a whole have taught me discipline and have significantly contributed to my being a more well-rounded individual.

I can’t really look back at a single moment, but overall I have to say that UCLA has taught me how to think critically and analyze things presented to me. Every single one of my classes has added to my qualifications and has prepared me well to face challenges in the future.

I think my most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was taking honors seminars for my psychology courses. . . . With the smaller honors seminars, I was able to interact with intelligent and established faculty on a closer basis, and it was enjoyable for them to know who I was as a student.

My most meaningful learning experience was my 60’s GE cluster. It was the class that helped me adjust to college-level learning while having fun in a subject that was interesting.
Personal Growth (822 comments, 19% of all comments)

UCLA made me realize that if I want something I should go for it, that I must be assertive and hard-working to succeed, and that I am very capable of succeeding.

The most meaningful learning experience at UCLA for me personally was learning that a bigger world is out there waiting for me. UCLA is a stepping stone to where I want to go, and it has opened my mind and allowed me to construct future goals and aspirations.

UCLA taught me not to be afraid to do things that scare me. All of my best experiences here have been with classes or people or groups that really intimidated me at first, but ended up being completely amazing.

My most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was the avenue UCLA provided me to learn about myself and the world in general. I will have forgotten a lot of the facts I learned but I won't forget how to think about the world and myself.

I think UCLA definitely helped me in [the] important child-to-adult transition. I feel like the school made it easy for me with its great campus, accessible "residential life" programs, dining halls, etc. However, the academic rigor and challenges I faced also prepared me for "the real world" in unexpected ways.

I think that learning to have confidence in my own abilities has been the greatest change I have seen in myself. The fact that in college, no one is there making sure you go to class, or study hard enough for that final, or help a friend after a rough night... The totally self-driven environment here has enabled me to really discover how capable and honorable I can be.

Yes, my classes did teach many things (many of which I have already forgotten!), but the most influential thing UCLA has given me is once-in-a-lifetime experience in which I have seen myself become a wiser and more mature person ready for the next stage of life.

I think the most meaningful learning experience I had here at UCLA is learning how to be independent and count on myself. I know that I can count on myself for anything that I need to do. I can still work really well with other people, but now if I have a big job to do I just smile because I'm like "I can do this on my own!"

UCLA offers so many social, academic, and extra-curricular activities. It was difficult to manage my time so that looking back I would have no regrets. UCLA has definitely taught me how to prioritize and shaped my character to become more assertive.

The fact that there were so many motivated people at UCLA really pushed me to excel, but it was the challenge of doing well for myself, as opposed to doing well to impress others, that was the most valuable lesson I learned at UCLA.

I know that because of my time at UCLA, I will not reach my limits anytime soon. I know that I will continue to strive and achieve my goals while discovering my potential, and this is what my most meaningful learning experience at UCLA has been.

I realized how strong, intellectually and emotionally I can be. My first year was pretty shaky and I actually left for a quarter to go back home. But, after I came back and began my current major, I gained so much confidence and strength in many aspects of life that I wouldn't trade it for anything.

In my opinion, textbook learning is the least beneficial aspect of a university education since we often forget specifics we learn in books. . . . Aspects such as time management, prioritizing, working in groups, and rate of overall productivity are the true test of a university
education. UCLA has provided me with the opportunity to network, perform under pressure and relate to others with an elevated level of appreciation for others.

Attending a large school, much like the work force and life in general, you must be proactive and look out for yourself. No one is holding your hand and you must go out and get the things that you want.

**Faculty (467 comments, 11% of all comments)**

When I would be doing a random research for a class and stumbled across the name of one of my professors in an article database, I felt some kind of pride, and a feeling that “wow... that was my professor!” Knowing the quality of our professors made my experience so memorable.

Conversing with professors has enlightened me, inspired me, and motivated me to continue my academic career.

Most of what my professors in the History Department taught us was invaluable. These professors are Prof. Ruiz, Prof. Corey, and Prof. Weiner. In Asian American Studies, Glenn Omatsu inspired me and fellow students to engage in community learning and social action. Omatsu instilled in me a passion to learn outside the walls of the classrooms and learn from the community.

My experiences with Dr. Bacher in organic chemistry were tough, challenging, but helpful. . . . I feel like I learned the most in his classes, in not only theory, but also how to carry out experiments and function in the greater scientific community.

I came in with the mentality that I am only one person, so I cannot make a difference. However, UCLA faculty has made me believe [that] one person can and will make a difference.

My most meaningful experience at UCLA has to be my first Sociology class with Professor Jepson. . . . His class and his passion for the subject made me want to learn more and more. Thanks to that class I was able to choose my major and since then I have no complaints about it.

I really enjoyed my education courses—the professors in the education department are incredibly passionate about their field and genuinely care about student learning.

Definitely the times I spent with some of my professors. They have taught me so much not only about the class material they were required to teach, but also about the world and society in general. I am still in touch with many of them, and I hope that in the years to come, I will be able to make them proud.

Learning from my English professors. They're all seriously amazing. It's the best department at UCLA, by far. World-class scholars who genuinely care about their students.

I was able to meet and learn with professors who were not only kind, helpful, and brilliant, but also at the forefront of their fields. I was very happy to have that opportunity.

Taking an education class with Dr. Barbee, because he taught me how to balance and integrate my academic and social spheres to be a successful undergraduate. Without him, I can honestly say that I would not be here filling out this survey and getting ready to graduate.

The majority of my professors were amazing, caring, knowledgeable individuals that inspired me and challenged me in my major/minor.

In Perceptual Development, Professor Scott Johnson once shared with the class that he always included his signature on any review articles even though it was not generally required, but he
did so because he took full responsibility for his comments and actions. I have kept this in mind because it's important to me in my progress of building my character.

As a TAP scholar, I felt that Angela Deaver-Campbell, was a great resource to go to when I needed guidance navigating my first year at UCLA. I felt she definitely cared about her students succeeding at UCLA. Also, most of my mathematics teachers were very helpful and showed concern if a student was struggling with the material. For example, Will Conley made sure that those who sought help received his full attention, and often stayed late during office hours.

Office hours are so meaningful to me. You get to connect with TAs and Professors, and they genuinely are understanding and want you to succeed.

Interacting with professors who actually care about the student's learning and seeing that they are passionate about it is one of the best experiences at UCLA.

**Extracurricular Involvement (325 comments, 7% of all comments)**

My most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was participating in UniCamp, because it really challenged me to think on my feet, practice patience, and most of all it gave me a chance to help under-privileged kids.

Working with BruinCorps has greatly shaped the person that I have come to be. The program has helped me pick out my career choice, taught me how to work with students, value the public school education, and have the companionship of life long friends.

Leading . . . the Biomedical Research Undergraduate Society allowed me to instill confidence in undergraduates by arranging mentorships, organizing lab tours for students to observe active experiments, tutoring on how to write research papers, and planning informal luncheons that allow students to meet UCLA's research faculty. This has taught me how to manage and coordinate with people from various undergraduate levels to professional faculty.

Participating in my club, Colleges Against Cancer, as the Cancer Education Chair and President was definitely my most meaningful learning experience. It provided me with a significant and ongoing way to interact with a variety of students on a cause that we all cared about. It also allowed me to gain real-life experience managing a group of members and really working in a group setting toward a common goal.

I think being a part of organizations was amazing learning experience. While academics are important, having the social skills to be a leader, present yourself, communicate with others, and be fully functional in the working world are even more important. Academics and smarts can only get you so far but getting involved with UCLA’s organizations was the most meaningful.

My participation in the UCLA Marching Band and the Psi Chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi, National Honorary Band Service Fraternity, have been monumental in my learning experiences at UCLA. It is impossible to sum up everything I have learned from my devotion to these groups, but I have learned to be a better leader, organizer, manager, and overall human being because of my involvement in and dedication to these groups.

When I pledged for Alpha Phi Omega, I learned what it means to be a leader, what it means to be a member of the community, and what it means to be a brother and a friend. I bonded so much with my pledge brothers, participated in many service projects to better the UCLA community, and I grew as a person—I pushed myself to my limits and now I know I can do anything that I put my mind to.
Working with UCLA Recreation taught me leadership, time management, introduced me to a new group of friends, and provided a welcome relief from the academic pressures of UCLA.

Being a part of the UCLA swim team and UCLA athletics. It taught me discipline, teamwork, competitiveness, as well as the ability to prioritize. I learned all the traits listed in John Wooden's Pyramid of Success.

Working at the Daily Bruin. The paper was where I learned the most practical and useful skills at UCLA, and journalism is the field I plan on going into once I graduate. I learned how to interact with the community, mediate conflict, manage my time, manage people, stay organized, think critically, communicate verbally. . . . I could go on for days. It was the most valuable experience I had by far and is what I will think of when I look back at my time at UCLA.

Being part of the USAC [Undergraduate Students Association Council] Community Service Commission really gave me a perspective on my life and taught me a great deal, more than I could ever learn in the classroom.

The nights I watched documentaries on campus really opened my eyes to different issues affecting the world. Also, Dance Marathon really opened my eyes about the HIV/AIDS disease.

Serving as an officer on the UCLA Triathlon Team has been my most meaningful learning experience, because I have further developed my skills in leadership, problem solving, and communication. It has also been the source of my closest friendships.

My most meaningful learning experience . . . was being involved with the organization, Samahang Pilipino. It taught me to question everything, think critically, and embrace diversity. It taught me to think beyond myself and beyond the UCLA bubble—to consider how my actions, big or small, can impact the world for the better.

Being an officer of several on campus organizations has probably offered me the most valuable learning experiences during my time here at UCLA. Learning to run organizations from 50 to 5000 people has been a challenge that I [gained] a tremendous amount of 'real-world' skills in doing.

My most meaningful experience at UCLA was the camaraderie I shared with the Muslim Student Association and the activities and lectures that they provided.

**Diversity (304 comments, 7% of all comments)**

I was very one-sided in a lot of my viewpoints four years ago. Looking back, the person I am now is because of my experiences at UCLA. Despite everything I learned academically, the most valuable lesson I learned at UCLA is to be accepting of others. I hope I can prove my alma mater proud in the future.

Living in the residence halls and being able to interact with different ethnicities and people of different socio-economic standing helped me to realize the diversity within the world. It taught me information on a personal, individual level. It taught me to be open-minded and willing to listen.

The wide range of views that surround you. Taking economics and accounting classes and working in the corporate world I got the conservative political views. Yet, being involved with the Community Programs Department I was challenged with liberal views. Having such wide range of views I have developed a more balance perspective on life.

I think the best thing I have learned is how to be accepting of everyone, no matter the race, sexual orientation etc.
I was made aware of the many inequalities that exist in the world not just through the classes I’ve taken but also by talking to or observing people and understanding their points of view and how that may or may not contribute to economic disparities. Basically, because UCLA is such a big university with so many people, I was able to understand people better.

My most meaningful learning experience was to be accepting of all other beliefs. It is so important for us as a community to be diverse because we can learn from each other and are united by that fact.

My most meaningful learning experiences were in my humanities classes, such as my interracial dynamics course or linguistics. These helped me to challenge stereotypes and to appreciate people of all races, genders, and sexual orientations.

Meeting the people that have influenced my life beyond words. They are my friends, teachers. They are everything to me and truly do represent the diversity of UCLA and its broad spectrum of peoples.

The most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was the appreciation of other cultures and the realization of the vast variety of living experiences and realities. . . . My UCLA experience has allowed me to be a much more culturally aware person, conscious of the differing social and cultural customs that differentiate people of different backgrounds.

Learning about my own identity and my undocumented immigration status. I was afraid to tell others about my status at first. But I was later able to open up because the overall environment at UCLA was friendly. I learned to speak at many UCLA classes where I shared my testimony. . . . I also learned to respect other people's opinions.

Taking anthropology courses in which I learned about the beauty and value in cultural differences was very meaningful for me. It will help me as I interact with people, especially my patients as a doctor, in the future.

Growing up in a community whose ethnic composition was mostly similar to my own and suddenly being thrust into UCLA after high school, I was able to open up my world to the vastness of culture out there. My ability to see past others' race or ethnicity to a deeper understanding of others increased greatly compared to some of the people of my own community.

I have had the opportunity to meet so many great people through classes, extracurricular organizations, and on-campus events who have opened my eyes to new cultures, experiences, and traditions that I had never experienced before.

I would say that my most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was that "panel" session during Freshmen Orientation. It really opened my eyes to the diversity (not only racial, but socio-economic) that's present in UCLA.

Although I learned a great deal as a double major student here, the most valuable experiences for me were outside of the classroom, with my everyday interactions with the diverse student population at UCLA. Through the student body here I was able to learn a diverse range of perspectives and backgrounds that have given me a very well-rounded view of the world

The vast array of people I met from different backgrounds was really life changing.

Being a Peer Counselor for AAP and being able to help students with similar backgrounds to overcome the hurdles only we go through. I am a people person and it was amazing to connect with so many people.

**Friendships (234 comments, 5% of all comments)**
The people I’ve met during my time at UCLA and the experiences that we have shared, [from] the grueling study hours to the after finals celebrations, are one of the most meaningful learning experiences at UCLA.

My most meaningful learning experience was when I realized I had made true friends at UCLA and that no matter where we all end up in the future, we will always support each other and have our years at UCLA to look back on.

Group projects and seminars forced me to interact with people I may not have initially chosen to befriend, but they turned out to be incredibly meaningful and wonderful people to me!

I learned that I could create a family out of the friends I made here.

The people I have met have been intelligent, funny, well-rounded, driven, and passionate. The best thing about UCLA was the people.

My most meaningful experiences did not come from any of the classes that I took, but from the students and friends that I had the opportunity to learn and grow with. I'm a more confident individual now than I was when I first entered UCLA. I believe that is because of those around me who have helped me grow.

Definitely PEERS and first getting involved with research in the sciences. I loved my classes, but my time outside of classes was the most meaningful. I enjoyed interacting with all the amazing individuals here and have truly grown from it all and all the extracurricular activities I participated in.

Meeting new people. Socializing. Moving out of the house for the first time and being very happy to eat together with new people and forming close lasting bonds. The UCLA students.

The friends I made here at UCLA will be among some of my closest friends. This is what UCLA has provided me, a vast and diverse network of friends.

I would say the majority of my meaningful learning experiences at UCLA have been through interactions with my friends and classmates. Whether it was in class group projects or late night discussions in dorm rooms, I think I learned most from talking to people with various kinds of perspectives.

I learned that in UCLA, there will always be people out there who want to spend time with you and include you in their activities; you just have to make time out of your busy schedule for a little fun.

Research Experience (207 comments, 5% of all comments)

Joining a research lab was a decision that has provided me with priceless benefits. . . . I know more about chemistry and science than I ever did, and have been able to learn it with my hands, by growing cells and manipulating their genetic profiles. I have seen science in action with my own eyes, and have been able to see what works and what doesn't work. There is no better way to learn this stuff than to actually do it, and being able to join this lab has been a gift that I could never repay.

LS10H [Life Sciences 10H – Research Training in Genes, Genetics, and Genomics] was an amazing experience, which allowed me to get involved and interested in hands-on research. I learned so much from this class, in terms of myself and the scientific process. It helped me figure out what I wanted to do with my life. Definitely the most life-changing class I had at UCLA.
The most meaningful learning experience I have had at UCLA was in Dr. Sandhofer’s Psych 131 [Research in Developmental Psychology] course. I learned how to conduct research projects and more importantly that I am passionate about it. This experience inspired me to join her developmental lab and to go to grad school in fall 2012.

My most meaningful experience was during my medical sociology class when I had a chance to delve into a field that I was passionate about and do research in it.

Being a volunteer as a research assistant in a lab. It taught me how to follow directions carefully, work with other people of all levels (undergraduate, graduate students, technicians). I also learned a great deal of neuroscience while working on projects.

The largest source of learning during my time at UCLA was not in the classroom, but in the Sun Lab. I started the spring quarter of my first-year and eventually made my way through the ranks to finish an honors thesis my fourth year. Each day that I spent in lab taught me something new, and the knowledge that I gained first-hand allowed me to succeed in my upper-division classes.

Being able to present my research in front of an entire research lab and have them genuinely engaged with my work was very meaningful, as I felt I was making important contributions and it was the synthesis of all the things I’d learned up to that point.

I had a great time doing research. The best thing about college for me was the MARC [Mindful Awareness Research Center] program and being able to really get ahead in my field as a result of that.

I’ve had way too many meaningful learning experiences at UCLA to choose from! One of my favorite was physically getting to work with cadavers in Phy Sci 107 [Systems Anatomy]. It was AWESOME and very few students get this type of experience in their undergraduate education!

My most meaningful learning experience was the research that I did during my undergraduate years. I was able to take what I was learning in my classes and apply it in real life to my experiments. I was able to plan, carry out and troubleshoot my personal research project. I was able to analyze my data and make meaningful conclusions about it. I was able to go to several conferences and present my work many times.

My research experiences were the most valuable and meaningful experiences I have had at UCLA since they lead me to love science and choose my future career path.

The independent study course that I completed was related to a topic that I am very invested in. The research being done was on a new way of detecting cancerous cells in females. It was challenging intellectually in that I had to learn new skills in order to complete the course, but it was also very rewarding because I felt that I was in some way helping the cause that I hold dear.

**Academic Gains (161 comments, 4% of all comments)**

Whether it was in a cognitive psychology course or a PIC10A [Program in Computing 10A] problem, it was always encouraged by the professors to look at ALL the perspectives there are out there trying to explain the same problem. So in essence it really expanded my way of thinking and viewing problems.

I can’t really look back at a single moment, but overall I have to say that UCLA has taught me how to think critically and analyze things when presented to me. Every single one of my classes has added to my qualifications and has prepared me well to face challenges in the future.
I think the interdisciplinary courses that I’ve taken have been the most beneficial because [they] really encouraged me to integrate multiple types of knowledge and appreciate the subject matter from many more points of view.

What I learned in my major honestly changed my life and the way I think about the world.

My first meaningful learning experience at UCLA was learning to read and write in Armenian, which is my nationality. I learned late in life, primarily because my parents did not have the means financially to send me to Armenian school as a child. It was very rewarding to read my first book in Armenian.

All four years that I have spent at UCLA have been a learning experience. I have learned academically about culture, gender, sexuality, genetics, molecular development, and so much more. However, my experience here has not only been academic. I have learned about team work, adapting to people, punctuality, determination, and hard work.

My most meaningful memory educationally was the positive impact good professors and good classes had on my learning. I was able to grow as a more effective critical thinker and writer and communicator.

Civic Engagement (119 comments, 3% of all comments)

My involvement with the LGBT center and Special Olympics at UCLA has taught me so much in terms of responsibility, service, and dedication. These experiences furthered my passions of serving underprivileged and/or oppressed communities in the future.

I joined a non-profit at UCLA called Rural India Social and Health Improvement. . . . Interaction with other older students helped me learn a lot about the medical and public health fields. It opened my eyes to health obstacles in third world countries.

The most meaningful learning experience at UCLA had to have been the opportunity to volunteer in Honduras through Global Medical Brigades here at UCLA. I not only received a more hands on approach to the medical field, but I was able to contribute to a society that was more than grateful to be receiving medical aid.

Dance Marathon. I learned so much about Pediatric AIDS and how many kids it is affecting all over the world. It felt so incredible to be able to make a difference in their lives by raising money and having a fantastic weekend dancing for 26 hours.

My favorite learning experience came from serving medically underserved Latino populations at the Venice Family Clinic for my Spanish 175 class. It helped me to apply my Spanish and clinical skills in a community setting. I learned a lot about the people, the culture, their needs, and what I could do to help.

I had a fantastic experience volunteering at a Homeless Women’s Shelter—which I did through an internship class. The experience directed me to my major. I have since also obtained a license as a vocational nurse and continue to work with this population.

Working with the homeless on Skid Row was an opportunity presented to me by UCLA that I will never forget.

My most meaningful learning experience at UCLA was participating in UniCamp, because it really challenged me to think on my feet, practice patience, and most of it all gave me a chance to help under-privileged kids.
My most meaningful experience was my internship experience where I worked at the downtown resource center in Downtown Los Angeles helping people who cannot afford attorneys in their civil cases. It allowed me to connect with the Los Angeles community outside of the UCLA community, and I learned a lot from the experience.

**Study Abroad (96 comments, 2% of all comments)**

My summer fieldwork in Peru was the most meaningful experience I had at UCLA. I learned so much about anthropology, my fellow students, and even myself.

My most meaningful experience was traveling and studying abroad in Paris with Professor Teo Ruiz. Everything about that program was perfect and I have no complaints. It opened my eyes to a whole new culture and understanding. Nothing beats first-hand experience.

I've heard so much about UCLA's study abroad program by so many people that I decided to give it a try. I had the best experience of my life.

Education abroad in Thailand. It gave me personal confidence to navigate through a totally new and foreign country by myself. It allowed me to reflect on my society's views and ones that were completely different from those of previous cultures I have interacted with.

The best learning experience I had was the History Travel Study program to Spain with Professor Morony and 16 other fascinating students. It was the experience of my life.

Summer Travel Study was my most meaningful experience. The travel, the interacting with students, professors and professionals in the field I wish to pursue was an amazing experience.

Studying abroad in Moscow. It changed my life and put me on a new path. That is when I decided I wanted to go to grad school and study children's literature.

Studying abroad has opened my mind and allowed me to be more knowledgeable about the world and more open minded to a variety of different people. I have gained new perspectives on learning and my courses. I am more than grateful to have had the opportunity to study abroad through EAP [Education Abroad Program].

My abroad experience to Korea. I was able to use so much of the knowledge I had learned in classes on urban development and Korean history in a real life setting, and it gave new meaning to by major and a whole lot of validation in realizing that perhaps I really have learned something here.

My time abroad in France taught me how to be independent. I gained so much knowledge from traveling and living alone in a foreign country and learned more from hands-on life experiences than hypothetical situations and texts studied in class.

**Interactions with Classmates (90 comments, 2% of all comments)**

My first study group at UCLA hugely impacted my impression of students at the school. Everyone came prepared, everyone participated, everyone tried to help each other learn. The class was very difficult and there was no complaint about that, just hard work to achieve the goal of succeeding in the course. I am still in touch with several of these students.

Late night study groups were very memorable, not only because of the stress but also because of the bonding between me and other students. . . . It made studying more enjoyable because there was always the feeling that we were all in it together.
I think the most meaningful learning experience is just realizing how many smart people are here. My fellow classmates in my major have challenged me always to give 100% because anything else would not be sufficient.

The speeches my classmates and I made in a Community Health Sciences course brought us close together. We truly learned a lot about each other and bonded over the things we shared with one another.

I suppose I am most fond of the memories I have of my fellow classmates in my two honor seminars during Winter 2010. They were all incredibly intelligent and I learned a great deal from each and every one.

I am honored to have interacted with other students who are some of the brightest of my generation and to learn about their passions for so many different subjects.

I think the interaction with my peers and the knowledge I gained from them is one of the most meaningful things I will take from my UCLA experience.

My math 105 class built a strong connection between my classmates and myself as we struggled to learn new materials and studied outside of class.

**Challenges (86 comments, 2% of all comments)**

The quarter system is challenging, and I care very much about my education and making the most out of it. I surrounded myself with a group of friends that had the same ideology and we fully . . . took advantage of this time in our life. As much as the quarter system killed me physically and drained me emotionally, it stimulated me mentally in ways I never knew possible! Thank you so much!

The campus seems to have a single political voice with not much room for disagreement. . . . Those of us with different political views were looked upon with contempt. The push for tolerance seemed hypocritical because of this. There is no such thing as an open dialogue here. Other views are demeaned and bemoaned. I learned to be respectful of other views, even when I do not get that respect myself.

I’ve taken some really fantastic courses with great professors, but it was hampered a lot by huge class sizes, difficulty to enroll in classes, and studying a major (Asian Humanities) where students rarely volunteered information.

Learning that education is not in the hands of the teacher but in your own hands as a student. I learned this after feeling very stressed and minimized by the rigorous testing culture that attempts to place value on people's ability, a system that inaccurately measures intelligence.

My learning experiences were more "real world" than UCLA related. I learned that making friends is not easy, especially as a transfer student. The only way I made any friends was through a sorority that I joined.

You, as in individual, are responsible to what degree you succeed. There is no handholding. You need to seek counseling, professors, and research which major and classes work for you. Also, since the student body is so large, customer service is awful in all departments, so I had to learn persistence and how to stick up for myself to get things done.

Not being afraid to take a different path. I started out as a Chemistry major, hoping to switch into Chemical Engineering, but struggled with the physical chemistry and physics classes. It was something that I just could not wrap my mind around, and something that I was increasingly losing interest in. My only motivation was the respect of a prestigious science degree and the likelihood of a steady job in science to make my "Asian parents" proud.
However, through exploring my other major options and speaking with UCLA academic counselors, I found a path that was more suited [to] my true interests and talents.

**Residential Life (55 comments, 1% of all comments)**

When I lived in the dorms, I learned to cope, understand, and help others around me in order to succeed at UCLA. Although UCLA is a very competitive and respectable school, I came to find that it wasn't about stepping over people to be the best, but to work with fellow students.

My most meaningful experience was living in the dorms. I got to know a great amount of people and live in an extremely social environment.

Through sharing dorm rooms with other UCLA students, I learned how to communicate in more effective ways and I learned helpful lessons regarding how to interact and live with other people.

Living in the dorms proved to be extremely helpful in my understanding of others.

My first year in the dorms. We're still all friends to this day and I live with 2 of the girls that I lived with my freshman year. I had an amazing year and we all got so close. Really had that quintessential college experience of late night hang-outs, gorging at the dining halls, amazing and supportive RAs, and the development of 4-year-long friendships that will hopefully continue past our time here at UCLA.