



Interdisciplinary Ph.D. Concentration Political Economy/Public Choice

This flyer is a brief introduction to faculty and other resources at UC Irvine for advanced study of Political Economy/Public Choice in the Department of Economics, leading to a Ph.D. in Economics. A parallel program exists in the UCI Department of Political Science for political science Ph.D. candidates with an interest in the economics of governance, public finance, public choice, and social theory. Both programs are jointly administered by a group of faculty from the two departments, and they have a year-long core course sequence in common.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

UCI faculty who are involved in the study of political economy and Public Choice represent a variety of perspectives, but they share a commitment to empirically grounded analysis and theory building, and to the view that theirs is an interdisciplinary field at the intersection of political science and economics, which draws on quantitative and mathematical tools to model the functioning of political institutions and processes. Faculty and student interests range from applied areas of political decision-making such as voter and party choice, electoral systems and constitutional design, regulation, lobbying and rent-seeking activities, and issues of banking, securities regulation, and taxation and income distribution; to more purely theoretical and mathematical topics in social choice and social welfare theory and the theory of public goods. Students normally choose to specialize in either more empirical or more formal areas of research.

PARTICIPATING FACULTY

The Ph.D concentration in Political Economy/Public Choice is administered by an interdisciplinary committee of faculty, primarily from the Departments of Economics and Political Science. This group includes some of the nation's leading scholars in the area, whose work has been published in the *American Economic Review*, the *American Political Science Review*, and other top journals. Members include

- ✻ **Linda Cohen**, co-author of *The Technology Pork Barrel*, past chair of the Department of Economics, and current Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies;
 - ✻ **Michelle Garfinkel**, co-editor of *The Political Economy of Conflict and Appropriation*, and past chair of the Department of Economics;
 - ✻ **Amihai Glazer**, co-author of *Why Government Succeeds and Why It Fails*, past chair of the Department of Economics, and co-editor of the journal, the *Economics of Governance*;
 - ✻ **Bernard Grofman**, member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, past-president of the Public Choice Society and co-author of *A Unified Theory of Voting* and a *Unified Theory of Party Competition*;
 - ✻ **Marek Kaminski**, author of *Games Prisoners Play*;
 - ✻ **Anthony McGann**, junior author with Herbert Kitschelt of *The Radical Right in Western Europe*;
 - ✻ **Michael McBride**, a specialist in game theory,
 - ✻ **Martin McGuire**, author of "Group Segregation and Optimal Jurisdictions," *Journal of Political Economy*, co-author (with Mancur Olson) of "The Economics of Autocracy and Majority Rule," *Journal of Economic Literature*;
 - ✻ **Donald Saari**, member of the National Academy of Sciences, author of the *Geometry of Voting, Decisions and Elections*, and *A Mathematician Looks at Voting*;
 - ✻ **Stergios Skaperdas**, co-editor of *The Political Economy of Conflict and Appropriation*, author of "Cooperation, Conflict and Power in the Absence of Property Rights," *American Economic Review*;
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- ∗∗ **Brian Skyrms**, member of the National Academy of Sciences, and author of *Evolution of the Social Contract*; and
- ∗∗ **Carole Uhlaner**, author of “Rational Turnout - The Neglected Role of Groups,” *American Journal of Political Science*, and “The Acquisition of Partisanship by Latinos and Asian Americans,” *American Journal of Political Science*.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Students who elect to earn a Ph.D. degree in Economics with a concentration in Political Economy/Public Choice are admitted under the normal procedures for the program in Economics and must fulfill all the requirements for the Economics degree, with the following modification[†]:

Students must complete the (year-long) three-quarter course core sequence in Political Economy/Public Choice (Econ 270A-C) to fulfill one of their two required fields of competence.[‡] Faculty members from the Department of Economics and from the Department of Political Science teach this core sequence. Graduate students from both economics and political science take this core sequence. [A background in economics equivalent to one year of microeconomics is required for the last two courses in the sequence.]

Students are also strongly encouraged to complete three additional graduate courses out of a set designated by the interdisciplinary committee. The courses chosen will be tailored to the individual interests and academic background of the student. Because of the close links between the Political Economy/Public Choice Concentration and the Center for the Study of Democracy, on the one hand, and the Institute for Mathematical Behavioral Sciences, on the other, it is likely that the additional courses will be courses taught by faculty associated with one or both of these research units.

Of course, students are expected to write their dissertation on a topic related to Political Economy/Public Choice. Usually the dissertation advisor will be an Economics member of the interdisciplinary committee, and usually there will be a member of the other department on the dissertation committee.

Students in the concentration may be eligible for special summer research fellowships through the Institute for Mathematical Behavioral Science or the Center for the Study of Democracy.

[†] Students must obtain (if they do already have) a background knowledge in political science, equivalent to that provided by a one-year undergraduate survey course.

[‡] The requirement for competence in a second field may be satisfied with a one-quarter course (instead of two) if it provides sufficient fluency in the field

The UCI Campus

UCI is one of the nine campuses of the University of California system and ranks among the major research universities in the nation. Students have access to the campus' computing facility and the 23-million-volume University of California library system.

UCI is located on 1,489 acres in the rolling foothills of coastal Orange County, roughly equidistant from UC Los Angeles and UC San Diego. Presently there are 22,000 students attending UCI, and the campus is projected to grow to over 25,000 students by the end of the decade.

Financial Support

UCI offers financial support comparable to that offered at other major universities. The majority of graduate students in the School of Social Sciences receive some financial support, primarily in the form of teaching assistantships. Regents' and Social Science Merit fellowships (includes a combination of fee/tuition, fellowship support and employment for 4-5 years) are awarded to students who show superior promise. The Diversity Program offers financial support to students who have overcome economic and social disadvantage in pursuing their academic objectives as well as those who bring perspectives, research topics or career interests that advance the University's goals of excellence and diversity. In addition, Public Choice students are eligible for special summer research assistantships and for other sources of extramural research funding.

Admission

Prospective students should apply for admission to either the Ph.D. Program in Political Science or, for economics graduate students, the Ph.D. Program in Economics and indicate their interest in Public Choice. Applications received prior to January 15 will receive full consideration for financial assistance. Additional information and applications are available from:

University of California
3151 Social Science Plaza
John Sommerhauser, Graduate Counselor
Irvine, California 92697-5100

You are encouraged to apply online at: <http://www.rgs.uci.edu/grad/>

Department of Economics

The Department has two formal concentrations: Political Economy/Public Choice and Transportation Economics. Other areas of faculty interest include, econometrics (Bayesian and classic), empirical microeconomics, and public policy areas such as energy, industrial organization, labor, and urban development, and macroeconomics. Faculty are involved with four campus-wide research units, the Institute of Mathematical Behavioral Sciences; the Center for the Study of Democracy; The Institute for Transportation; and the Irvine Center for Global Peace and Conflict Studies. Presently there are 26 full-time faculty, with considerable continued growth planned.

Department of Political Science

Based on citations to faculty publications, the Department is one of the top 30 in the U.S. The Department has two formal concentrations: Political Economy/Public Choice and Political Psychology. Other areas of faculty research include: comparative politics, with a focus on democratic systems and the politics of democratization; international studies; and race and ethnicity. Faculty are involved in four campus-wide research units: the Center for the Study of Democracy, the Irvine Center for Global Peace and Conflict Studies, the Institute of Mathematical Behavioral Sciences, and the Center for Research on Information, Technology and Organizations. Presently there are 27 full-time faculty members, with considerable continued growth planned.
