

**GRADUATE HANDBOOK**

LATIN AMERICAN AND IBERIAN STUDIES

LATIN AMERICAN & IBERIAN  
AMERICAN & STUDIES

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## 1. LAIS Website

<<http://www.lais.ucsb.edu>>

The Latin American and Iberian Studies Program has a website that has a great deal of information about the program including the program's structure; faculty affiliates' names, fields of interest, and contact information; graduate students enrolled in the program; M.A. thesis titles; and graduate alumni.

## 2. General Contact Information on LAIS:

*Program Director*  
Cecilia Méndez

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*Graduate Program Coordinator*  
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## 3. Graduate Committee

The Latin American and Iberian Studies Graduate Committee is composed of faculty members who set policy on graduate matters in consultation with the Advisory Board and the affiliates. It makes decisions about admission to the program and funding for new and continuing students. It is composed of the Director of Graduate Studies in Latin American and Iberian Studies and the Program Director. Other committee members may be drawn from the faculty Advisory Board and affiliated faculty as needed.

## 4. Faculty

LAIS has over 60 faculty affiliates who do research on areas related to Latin America or Iberia and teach relevant courses. A list by faculty research interests can be found on the LAIS website, <[www.lais.ucsb.edu](http://www.lais.ucsb.edu)>

## 5. General Information on Graduate Studies at UCSB

### *The Graduate Division*

Located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Cheadle Hall, Room 3117, the Graduate Division is the University's office for graduate affairs. It monitors admissions, fellowships, degree checks, and graduate student employment. The Graduate Division is responsible for

the *Graduate Handbook*, a major source of information for graduate students, in addition to departmental graduate handbooks such as this one. The *Graduate Handbook* is available in the Graduate Division offices or online at <http://www.graddiv.ucsb.edu/>. We highly recommend that graduate students read it carefully.

### ***Faculty mentors and advisors***

Upon admission to the program all LAIS graduate students will be assigned a faculty mentor, responsible for guiding them through their studies at the beginning of their time at UCSB.

Later on, a thesis advisor is appointed, who may or may not be the same person as the mentor, as detailed below. At this point, the advisor becomes responsible for guiding the student's studies until their graduation. Students must settle on an advisor no later than the end of their second quarter, and ideally by the end of their first quarter.

Students should meet each quarter to discuss the next quarter's course of studies with their advisors, or mentors before one is appointed, and should meet with the Director of Graduate Studies as appropriate.

### ***Additional Sources of Information***

Graduate students are responsible for meeting all University and Graduate Division requirements. In addition to the present departmental Graduate Student Handbook, students are strongly advised to read the information pertaining to the Program in Latin American and Iberian Studies in the **UC Santa Barbara General Catalogue**, and to consult the **Graduate Division's Graduate Handbook**, available at the Graduate Division. Additional information on forms, financial aid, housing, healthcare, and other matters of interest to graduate students can be located via the website of the Graduate Division, [www.graddiv.ucsb.edu](http://www.graddiv.ucsb.edu)

### ***The Quarter System***

UCSB is on a quarter system; each quarter is approximately 10 weeks long.

- Fall quarter runs from approximately the 4<sup>th</sup> week of September through the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of December. Christmas break is three weeks long.
- Winter quarter runs from approximately the 1<sup>st</sup> week of January through the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of March. Spring break lasts one week.
- Spring quarter runs from approximately the last week of March through the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of June.

Dates usually vary. Details of the academic calendar and course listings are available every quarter in the *UCSB Schedule of Classes*, online at <http://www.registrar.ucsb.edu/> or for sale in the bookstore.

*Teaching Assistants must grade finals and turn in grades within the deadlines established by the official academic calendar*

### ***Establishing California Residency***

Students who are US citizens or permanent residents but not California residents, need to take steps **immediately upon arrival** at UCSB **to establish California residency** so that they do not have to pay nonresident tuition fees in their second year of enrollment. More information may be found on the Registrar's website.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Registering for Classes and Enrollment***

*Prior to registration:*

Consult the Schedule of Classes, available online at <http://www.registrar.ucsb.edu/>.

**Graduate students should meet with the Director of Graduate Studies concerning their program of studies before registering for classes.** New students can register during Orientation Week, which starts approximately 10 days before classes begin.

*When to register*

Students begin registering for classes during the 5<sup>th</sup> week of the previous quarter. New and continuing students will be assessed a \$50.00 fine if they are not registered by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes each quarter. Deadlines and fees for adding or dropping a class after the initial registration period can be located in the Schedule of Classes or online at <http://www.registrar.ucsb.edu/> (under "calendar and deadlines").

It is often useful to contact a faculty member offering a course prior to registering for it in order to get information about its content. You may also attend the first session of a class to see whether it will meet your needs. However, if you choose this route, you must be careful to add/drop the class by stated deadlines in order to avoid penalties.

*Number of units to register for*

Graduate Division takes a census of full-time registered students the third week of the quarter. Students with 12 units (usually three 4-unit courses) are considered full time students. **If you are a TA in any department, or receiving any fellowship funding, you must register for at least 8 units in order to receive fee remission.**

*Late registration*

<sup>1</sup> <http://registrar.sa.ucsb.edu/fees-residency/residency/residency-for-tuition-purposes>

If you miss the deadline for registration, you may add a class by petition signed by the instructor and the Director of Graduate Studies. **Students are responsible for submitting the signed petitions and filing whatever fees apply.**

#### *Sequence courses and in-progress grades*

Some graduate courses are two- or three-quarters in sequence with the final grades and units are awarded in the last quarter of the sequence. Interim quarter grades are IP (in progress). Upon completion of the course, the interim quarter IP grades are changed to the final letter grade for the course. If you for some reason find that you are unable to complete the second quarter of the course, unless further steps are taken you will receive no credit for either quarter. **Contact the Director of Graduate Studies immediately in this circumstance.**

#### *Dropping a class*

You can drop a class online up until the last day of instruction for the quarter. However, it is polite to inform the instructor that you are doing so, especially if it is a small graduate seminar.

#### *Incomplete Grades*

If you are unable to complete coursework in time for the instructor's deadline, you should contact the instructor in order to file the form for an Incomplete (I) grade. This form must be filed prior to the end of the quarter. Work must be completed by the end of the following quarter. If work is not completed, the "I" (incomplete) automatically becomes an F. Instructors, at their discretion, may accept work after the end of quarter deadline and change the grade.

#### *Late withdrawal*

In highly unusual circumstances, usually involving a severe personal crisis that impacts a student's performance, students may petition for a retroactive withdrawal from a course. It is important to note that approval of such petitions, although they require a signature from the professor, are not at the discretion of the individual instructor but rather depend on approval by the Graduate Division.

#### *Transfer of Credit*

Students must complete one graduate quarter at UCSB before they may petition to transfer credits earned at other institutions. Upper division and graduate courses may be transferred to UCSB if the student was in a graduate program when the courses were completed. Units counted for a degree awarded by another institution are not transferable.

With approval from the major department and the Graduate Division, up to 8 quarter units of credits for courses completed with a B or better may be transferred

from the graduate program of an accredited college or university outside the UC system. Up to 12 quarter units may be transferred from another UC campus.

Transferred units are treated as Pass/No Pass upper division units and are not computed into UCSB grade point average.

Courses taken in UCSB Summer Session ordinarily will not apply toward a graduate degree unless the student has been admitted to a degree program effective summer quarter or a previous quarter.

## **6. M.A. Program**

### ***Coursework for the M.A.***

#### *LAIS 200-level courses*

All students must take one four-unit LAIS 200-level course. Three are offered: LAIS 200, 201, and 202. LAIS 200, *Introduction to Latin American and Iberian Studies*, provides a survey of research approaches in Latin American and Iberian Studies. LAIS 201 focuses on social sciences and history, and LAIS 202 on culture, languages, and literatures.

Most students take LAIS 200, as it provides a broader survey than the other two courses and is offered more often than the others. It is structured around faculty presentations of their own research, with attention to the methods used in different disciplines in the graduate discussion portion of the course. The presentations by UCSB faculty also assist graduate students in promptly finding areas of interest for their continued studies in the program and help them select a thesis advisor. LAIS 200 is usually taught during the fall quarter, and graduate students are strongly encouraged to enroll in LAIS 200 in their first quarter of study.

The outcome of all three courses should be a preliminary thesis prospectus, which is ordinarily the final assignment of each course.

If one of these courses is not offered in the first year of study, students may take a course from another department that fulfills these requirements with prior approval from their advisor, or their mentor if an advisor has not yet been appointed, and the Director of Graduate Studies.

#### *Thesis*

Students are required to write a master's thesis, as detailed below.

#### *Unit requirements*

Students take at least 32 units of upper-division and graduate coursework in Latin American and Iberian Studies and 6 units of thesis preparation courses.

The 32 units must include no fewer than 20 units (ordinarily five 4-unit courses) of graduate courses numbered 200-299 or 596, with a maximum of 8 units of 596 (“directed reading” or “independent study” courses) being eligible to count toward the master’s degree. The required LAIS 200-level course (200, 201, or 202) counts towards the 32 units of required courses.

Twelve of these units can be at the upper division undergraduate level from the list of approved LAIS courses, ordinarily in the form of three 4-unit classes. Students enrolled in undergraduate classes must have the approval of the instructor, who may assign additional work.

In addition, students take six units of thesis preparation, which take the form of one or more LAIS 598 courses.

#### *Distribution requirements*

The 32 coursework units should be distributed among four areas of concentration as follows: 16 units in a primary area of concentration, 8 units in a second area of concentration, 4 in a third area of concentration, and 4 on the final area of concentration.

The required LAIS 200-level course (200, 201, or 202) will count towards one of the areas of concentration.

#### *Areas of concentration*

An area of concentration is defined either as a department or a subject field. In the first case, courses offered by the same department, such as 16 units of courses offered by the Political Science Department. In the second, as courses in the same subject but offered in different departments, such as 16 units of courses in topics in colonial Latin American history offered across the History, Art History, and Spanish and Portuguese departments. In any case, these choices must be approved by the advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

#### *Grades*

A grade of B or better is required for each course to count toward the master’s degree.

#### ***Language Requirement***

In order to graduate from the program, students must be proficient in either Spanish or Portuguese. For this reason, all students are required to take a written translation exam. Students will translate two (2) 250-word passages; one from English into the foreign-language of choice, and the other from the foreign-language of choice into English. Both passages must be translated in full within the 1 ½ hour exam time. The use of a dictionary is allowed.

Each student is responsible for arranging with the Director of Graduate Studies to take the exam.



Students are strongly encouraged to fulfill the language requirement as soon as possible, but no later than by the end of the first year. Students who do not feel prepared to take the exam, or who fail it, must take the relevant placement exam offered by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and enroll in the appropriate language courses.

### ***Thesis Requirements***

The thesis is an original research project that makes a contribution to the scholarly literature on Latin American and Iberian Studies. The completed thesis becomes part of the University of California library system, with a copy held at UCSB.

Students begin plans for their thesis while they are taking coursework. Completion of the thesis is the culmination of the graduate program and ordinarily students do not register for LAIS 598, *Thesis preparation*, until their other required courses are completed.

#### *Finding your thesis topic*

Many thesis projects are extensions of research begun in a graduate seminar or independent study. Some students arrive with a very clear thesis topic in mind; others have a general notion of the areas they are interested in but not a particular topic.

#### *Finding your thesis advisor and committee members*

All students are admitted to the program with a mentor. This mentor usually becomes the advisor, who is the chair of the thesis committee. However, some students, on settling on a thesis topic, may want their advisor to be a different faculty member. In those cases, students must inform their mentor and obtain the agreement of the potential advisor. The change must then be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Students must settle on an advisor no later than the end of their second quarter, and ideally by the end of their first quarter.

In addition to the advisor, students must also secure the participation of two other LAIS faculty affiliates. These are usually faculty members with whom students have taken courses, although the primary advisor may also offer suggestions.

Once students have the agreement of the advisor and the other two faculty members, they must complete the *Committee Nomination for Master's Thesis or Doctoral Degree* form, available on the Graduate Division website.<sup>2</sup> The nominated faculty, Program Director, and the Director of Graduate Studies all sign the form, which is then filed with the Graduate Division.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.graddiv.ucsb.edu/docs/default-source/academic-services-documents/formi-coi-10-17.pdf>

If for some reason the committee composition changes, students must file with the Graduate Division the *Changes to Master's Thesis or Doctoral Committee* form,<sup>3</sup> signed by the affected faculty, thesis advisor, and Program Director reflecting the change.

### *Thesis Prospectus*

A formal thesis prospectus is a requirement of the program, and must be approved by the advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

Students must complete a preliminary thesis prospectus in the Fall quarter of their first year, usually as part of a LAIS 200/201/202 course. They must then use this as the basis to prepare their final prospectus in consultation with their advisor.

The final prospectus must be submitted by the end of the first year for approval by their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

### *About the prospectus*

Drafting a prospectus helps you clarify your thinking and ascertain whether the thesis is doable. A prospectus should outline the basic research questions you intend to explore, provide preliminary bibliography of secondary works on the topic, and the potential primary sources. Doing this preliminary work will help you determine whether your project is feasible within a reasonable time and with the resources available to you.

If you plan to use interviews, you **MUST** complete the Human Subjects Training Module with the Office of Research and prepare a formal proposal for official approval by the Human Subjects Committee of the Office of Research. More information may be found on its website.<sup>4</sup>

### *Working with your committee members*

In general, the thesis advisor is the person with whom you work most closely during the research phase and preparation of a first draft of your thesis. However, check with other committee members to ascertain how involved they wish to be with these stages of the project.

Expect to revise your thesis draft several times. When you complete the first draft of the thesis, your thesis advisor is most often the primary person who provides feedback. You may also show your draft and receive feedback from other committee members, particularly as your thesis develops beyond a first draft.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.graddiv.ucsb.edu/docs/default-source/academic-services-documents/form-ia-10-17.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.research.ucsb.edu/compliance/human-subjects>

Please be mindful of everyone's other teaching and research commitments, and ensure that you submit drafts within a reasonable time-frame for your committee to review before the applicable filing deadlines.

You must submit a final draft of your thesis to your committee by the second quarter of your second year. This will ensure that there is enough time for all committee members to read and comment on it and for you to submit a final version with revisions no later than the end of the final quarter of the second year.

This final version must be approved by all committee members, who sign their names on the final draft, signifying that they approve the thesis.

### *Use of human subjects in research projects*

The UCSB Office of Research deals with faculty and students' use of human subjects. Any time you plan to use human subjects in your research, such as surveys, interviewing, or other kinds of fieldwork, you must clear your project with the Office of Research and ensure you are in compliance with the regulations. You cannot get this approval *after* you have collected the research.

To obtain this approval, you must prepare a project proposal using the template available on the Office of Research human subject's website, which also contains an online training module to make you aware of the issues and requirements with regard to human subjects.<sup>5</sup> Your thesis advisor and the Program Director must sign the form approving the project, which you must then submit to the Office of Research.

Not all projects require intense oversight by the Office of Research, but the human subjects committee makes that determination, not the researcher. Contact the Office of Research for further information.

### *Length of Thesis*

Your thesis must be at least 10,500 words in length (roughly 35 pages of 12-point double-spaced text in Times New Roman), excluding footnotes and bibliography. There is no formal maximum, and some theses have been as long as 60,000 words.

### *Filing the Thesis*

Graduate Division requires that the thesis be electronically filed with ProQuest, and signature pages be filed with their office. A copy of the thesis becomes part of the collections of the Davidson Library. In addition, the Latin American and Iberian Studies Program requires a copy to be filed in the student's permanent record in the program office. Please see the Graduate Division's website for detailed thesis filing instructions: <https://www.graddiv.ucsb.edu/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.research.ucsb.edu/compliance/human-subjects>

## 7. Academic requirements and standards

### **Course Load**

Graduate students must enroll in and complete **12 units per quarter**. Students who are serving as TAs should enroll in 4 units of TA practicum. Units of TA practicum do not count toward the degree but do fulfill quarterly unit requirements. For LAIS 596, directed reading and research, *there is a maximum number of 8 units that may be counted toward the MA*. While the student is free to enroll in additional 596 units, none of the additional units will count toward fulfillment of University unit requirements for the MA degree. Students should enroll in 6 units of LAIS 598 only when they have completed the 32 units of required courses.

### **Degree Time Limits and Normative Time**

The Graduate Division has set up the following degree time limits:

For MA students, all requirements for the MA degree must be completed *within four years* after admission to the Master's Program.

When students take an approved leave of absence for medical, family emergency, military service, or pregnancy/parenting reasons, Graduate Division will extend the student's normative period by one quarter at a time to a maximum of three quarters of leave. More leaves or periods of lapsed status will not stop the normative time clock; the deadline stands. Quarters of Research Leave and the Filing Fee Quarter of Leave *count* toward the expiration of a student's normative time clock.

When students must deal with emergencies that prevent them from pursuing their graduate studies for an extended period of time, their normative time is usually extended by petitioning for a leave of absence (e.g., under the circumstances discussed in the subsection "*Leaves of Absence*" below). A time-to-degree extension is also available for parenting demands. If you think you qualify for an extension of normative time, please consult the Graduate Advisor.

### **Minimum GPA**

All graduate students need to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0. Students must take courses for a letter grade to achieve the minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 required to remain in good standing academically. Students who take only courses graded Pass/No Pass or Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory will earn a cumulative GPA of 0.0, which is unacceptable.

*Students must receive a grade of B or better in a required course for it to count toward fulfillment of program degree requirements. The grade of B- (B minus) is considered unsatisfactory.*

The Graduate Division monitors the grades of all students, and will intervene if a student's GPA falls below the minimum. If it is not remedied by the deadline set by Graduate Division, the student may be subject to academic probation and subsequently to academic disqualification. For additional information see the Graduate Division's Handbook.

Students are allowed to carry No Grades (NG) and No Record (NR) for only one quarter after the course was originally undertaken before the NG or NR automatically reverts to a failing grade, which *is* calculated in the grade point average. Similarly, "incompletes" automatically revert to a failing grade unless the work is completed and a grade reported to the registrar by the end of the subsequent quarter (this rule also applies to LAIS 598).

### ***Procedures for Incompletes***

Taking "incompletes" in graduate courses and seminars is only encouraged when absolutely necessary due to an unforeseen circumstance. In an emergency, students must make an agreement with the professor, and file a petition for an incomplete prior to the last day of the quarter (i.e. prior to the day of the last final exam, not the day grades are due). Incomplete coursework must be submitted no later than the end of the subsequent quarter (see previous paragraph on the conversion of incompletes to failing grades). Petitions for incompletes are available from the Registrar's Office and website.

A student with excessive units of unfinished coursework (defined as 12 or more units of Incomplete (I), No Grade (NG), or No Record (NR)) is sent an advisory letter the first quarter this occurs. When the excessive units of unfinished coursework occur a second quarter, the LAIS Graduate Advisor may recommend that the student be placed on academic probation. When the student has excessive units of unfinished coursework for a third quarter, the Program Director and Director of Graduate Studies are consulted and asked to recommend and justify (a) continued academic probation or (b) academic disqualification.

Even below this threshold, a large number of units of incomplete coursework (or a low number of courses completed relative to the normative standard of 12 units per quarter) may block appointment to a TAship, fellowship, or other academic appointment; these positions are competitively awarded.

Students must complete or clear all unfinished course grades before a degree can be awarded.

### ***Academic Probation***

When a student is placed on academic probation, it is a serious matter. When a student fails to meet standards of academic scholarship, he or she is ordinarily

placed on academic probation for at least one regular quarter. This allows time for the student to correct deficiencies and, in conjunction with faculty, to complete a course of remedial action. If adequate remedy is made by the specified deadline, the student is returned to good academic standing. Otherwise, the student is subject to academic disqualification. Some of the problems that *may* result in academic probation are the following (for more information, consult the *Graduate Handbook* of the Graduate Division):

- Failure to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0
- Excessive units of unfinished coursework
- Failure to meet the time limit for completion of the master's degree
- Failure to meet other standards of scholarship (such as failure to pass master's exams, comprehensive exams, or language exams, cannot form a master's thesis, or fails to meet other departmental milestones)

### ***Academic Integrity***

All work produced for your MA must be your own. According to the UCSB Student Conduct Code (p. 4), "Cheating includes, but is not limited to, looking at another student's examination, referring to unauthorized notes during an exam, providing answers, having another person take an exam for you, etc. Representing the words, ideas, or concepts of another person without appropriate attribution is plagiarism. Whenever another person's written work is utilized, whether it be a single phrase or longer, quotation marks must be used and sources cited. Paraphrasing another's work, i.e., borrowing the ideas or concepts and putting them into one's 'own' words, must also be acknowledged. Although a person's state of mind and intention will be considered in determining the University response to an act of academic dishonesty, this in no way lessens the responsibility of the student." For UCSB guidelines about Academic Integrity, see the Student Code of Conduct and the Office of Judicial Affairs website on Academic Integrity.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Academic Disqualification***

Any of the problems that may result in academic probation may lead to academic disqualification if they occur repeatedly (for example, *three quarters* of failure to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0. or carrying excessive units of unfinished coursework). Only the Graduate Dean may disqualify a graduate student for academic reasons. Students who have been disqualified for academic reasons are not eligible to register for future quarters at UCSB, unless the Graduate Dean readmits them.

### ***Leaves of Absence***

All students are required to maintain continuous registration. Under special circumstances, leaves of absence may be requested from the Dean of the Graduate Division. Petitions for leaves of absence may be obtained from the Graduate

<sup>6</sup> <http://judicialaffairs.sa.ucsb.edu/AcademicIntegrity.aspx>

Division's website or the Graduate Advisor and must be signed by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Division. A fee is charged for leave petitions. See the Graduate Division's *Handbook* for categories of leave and further details.

### ***Lapse of Status***

Students who have a break in registration must petition to return to registered status. In order to be reinstated, the student must complete a *Petition for Reinstatement to Graduate Status* and secure approval of the Director of Graduate Studies and Graduate Division. Reinstatement petitions are evaluated with the same care as new applications. Students should be aware that previous enrollment in the department does not necessarily guarantee a space in the future if the student lapses. For further and updated details please consult the Graduate Division's *Handbook* and their website.

A lapse of graduate status has serious financial consequences for students filing for their degree, since the university requires students to be enrolled at the time they file.

### ***Disputes involving Graduate Students and TAs***

There are appeals procedures approved by the Graduate Council for handling and resolving complaints involving graduate student disputes with graduate committees, in particular thesis and dissertation committees, and for handling disputes involving TAs or Graduate Student Researchers. Please consult the Director of Graduate Studies or the Program Director for information about such guidelines if such an event occurs.

## **8. Financial Support**

### ***Teaching Assistantships***

Teaching Assistantships are the chief source of financial support for most graduate students. If you are a TA, you are entitled to a GSHIP Health Insurance Premium Remission, a partial Educational and Registration Fee Remission, and other applicable benefits as set forth in the agreement. Please check the agreement for the specific eligibility requirements and amounts of each remission.

TAs in LAIS are generally awarded to continuing students on the basis of merit. However, since LAIS may not have enough TAs for all of its students on a continuous basis, students are encouraged to apply for TAs in other departments. Students are responsible for applying for TAs and must act proactively to ensure they have the funding they need. However, When TAs do become available both in LAIS and other departments, we hope that students will give priority LAIS positions.

The University limits TAs to a total of 12 quarters (four years), regardless of whether the TAship was held in just one or in several departments. There is however no guarantee of renewal of appointment at any time and for any particular length of time, since renewals are based on academic performance.

Individual performance, experience, and the number of teaching positions available will be taken into consideration in making recommendations for TAs. The individual factors include the following criteria:

- a) Evidence of academic potential and progress toward the degree
- b) Number of quarters of previous teaching support
- c) Evidence of potential as a teacher

### ***Fellowships***

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships homepage is the best source of information about university and extramural fellowships.<sup>7</sup> Applications can be downloaded directly from the web. Make a habit of checking their pages once a month. Students must meet Graduate Division's guidelines for fellowships.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.finaid.ucsb.edu/>