

UC SANTA BARBARA

# THE *Current*

January 5, 2015

[Andrea Estrada](#)

## Department of Sociology Ranked Number One

The [Department of Sociology at UC Santa Barbara](#), which celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, has been ranked number one in the country, according to College Factual, an online resource of data-driven information designed to assist prospective students as they navigate the college and university selection process.

College Factual cites the program as one of the largest in the country, noting coursework offerings in gender studies, sexuality, race, globalization and other social movements that help students understand human social interaction.

According to the rankings report, which appeared in USA Today, sociological theories and methodologies at UC Santa Barbara are supplemented with liberal arts courses to provide students with a well-rounded education. Furthermore, sociology graduates typically enter the work force earning an average starting salary of \$44,000 and increasing to \$73,000 at the mid-career level.

To highlight salary details, College Factual partnered with PayScale.com, a provider of compensation data analytics. PayScale surveys millions of people each year to identify specifics about how well they are paid, their experience level in their profession, what job they have, where they went to school and what they studied. This material is then aggregated and analyzed to determine the salary information College Factual uses in its rankings.

“This recognition is the result of a conscious effort over the past 50 years to develop a distinctive sociology department that engages students to not only understand the world but to also change it,” said Melvin Oliver, executive dean of UCSB’s College of Letters and Science and the campus’s Sara Miller McCune Dean of Social Sciences.

“As we have assumed leadership in cutting edge areas like sex and gender, the department continues to meet the intellectual curiosity of our students as well as their career aspirations,” Oliver continued. “Moreover, during the past 10 years the department has internalized UCSB’s mantle of interdisciplinarity, which is also reflected in this ranking. This is an exemplary accomplishment that once again affirms UCSB’s dual commitment to research and teaching at the highest level.”

UC Santa Barbara came in ahead of UC Berkeley, which ranked No. 2, and UCLA, which took the No. 4 spot. Other universities in the top 10 include Harvard, Princeton, Brandeis, Columbia, the University of Chicago, Stanford and the University of Pennsylvania.

“The department is extremely proud of this recognition,” said [Maria Charles, professor and chair of sociology](#). “We have a long tradition of world-class research *and* world-class teaching. Our success in both domains reflects the intellectual diversity of our faculty and graduate students and our shared commitment to scholarship and teaching that is publicly relevant and oriented toward major social problems of the day.”

Several factors are used to calculate the ranking by major. Among them are the graduate earnings, major focus, related major concentration, accreditation and overall university quality.

---

## **About UC Santa Barbara**

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.