

**Humanities and Social Change**  
International Center at the University of California, Santa Barbara

**Call for Applications**

Dissertation Fellowship and Postdoctoral Scholar Positions  
for Academic Year 2017-2018

*The Humanities as a Vocation:  
Fact and Value - After Truth*

**Humanities and Social Change**, a newly founded interdisciplinary research center at the University of California, Santa Barbara, engages social change both as an object of critical study and as a constructive project. Focusing on the existential grounds and implications of social change in its political, economic, cultural, and environmental dimensions, and highlighting the decisive roles played by technology and science in reshaping these domains, we aim not only to identify and elucidate the most significant challenges posed by social change in today's world; we aim also to advance creative responses to those challenges through an emphasis on their moral, ethical, psychological, and spiritual stakes.

In its program for academic year 2017-18, the Center will assemble and support an interdisciplinary research team of dissertation fellows, postdoctoral scholars, and UCSB faculty who will work both with one another and with distinguished visiting scholars, journalists, artists, activists, policy makers, and other public figures. Members of the research team will plan and participate in a yearlong seminar that will meet several times per quarter; organize lectures, colloquia, round-tables, or other public events exploring the year's guiding theme; and convene at least one major international conference. We intend to make the results of our year's work public in a range of possible formats, from academic publications, interventions in popular media, and white papers or policy proposals to art work, film, or other forms of creative expression.

**Theme for 2017-2018**

Our guiding theme for the academic year 2017-2018 will be "**The Humanities as a Vocation: Fact and Value - After Truth.**" This thematic focus is prompted both by the many urgent questions facing us today about the meaning, function, and interplay of "facts" and "values" in public life and by the centenary of sociologist Max Weber's famous treatment of the fact/value question in his "Science as a Vocation."

Weber first delivered his lecture on "Science as a Vocation" in a time of extraordinary social and political instability and uncertainty, to a group of students yearning for meaningful experience and for the kind of leaders who might guide them to it. His response to this youthful audience included a diagnosis of modernity that can seem especially relevant to our contemporary context. It emphasized the pluralization and privatization of value spheres that compete and conflict with one

another like warring gods, but within a world that is increasingly disenchanted; it stressed the incapacity of scientific rationality and technological power to establish their own ultimate value or meaning, even as they shape and drive our lives ever more thoroughly; and it indicated that related forms of change or "progress" in our world bring with them an open-ended temporality and ever-accelerating tempo that can yield the suspicion expressed by Leo Tolstoy that individual death, and hence life, in modern culture may be meaningless. While Weber famously argued, in resistance to his student audience, that university teachers, as scientists, cannot legitimately answer questions of ultimate meaning or value, he also insisted that the scientific work of teaching does serve ethical forces by helping us to cultivate clarity and responsibility concerning the facts and values that determine our lives.

Revisiting the diagnosis of modern culture in Weber and related thinkers, our year's work will thus take up the challenges still posed by "Science as a Vocation" for our own time. Along these lines, we will explore relations in contemporary life among scientific rationality, technological power, cultural and ethical pluralism, political struggle, and the questions of ultimate meaning and value in human experience. Attending to Weber's provocative claims about the nature and limits of university teaching as an ethical task, we will pursue our various lines of inquiry in light of one shared, overarching question: how might the humanities today be understood and practiced as a vocation that serves what Weber called the "ethical forces" of clarity and responsibility regarding matters of fact and value in public life?

For our dissertation and postdoctoral fellowships, we seek applicants from the humanities, arts, and humanistic social sciences whose work speaks in creative and far-reaching ways to questions of fact, value, clarity, and responsibility as these relate especially (though not exclusively) to matters such as media, politics, public trust, and institutional legitimacy; big data, surveillance, artificial intelligence, and automation in contemporary political, economic, and social life; cultures and economies of entertainment and spectacle, consumerism, narcissism, addiction, and distraction; struggle and contestation surrounding racial, ethnic, sexual, national, and religious identity; nihilism, fundamentalism, secularity, and the challenges of religious and political radicalization.

### **Dissertation Fellowship Positions** **Terms and Applications**

The International Center for the Humanities and Social Change at the University of California, Santa Barbara, invites applications for the position of dissertation fellowship scholar for the academic year 2017-2018. Applicants must be advanced to candidacy at an accredited university. The fellowship is also open to international applicants.

Dissertation fellowship scholars will receive a fellowship grant of \$30,000 in exchange for active participation in the Center's 2017-2018 program. Duration of the award is nine months, beginning in the fall quarter of the 2017-2018 academic year. Scholars are required to be in residence during the entire fellowship period. The Center is especially interested in candidates who can contribute to the diversity and excellence of the academic community through research and service.

Primary consideration will be given to applications submitted by May 30, 2017, but all applications will be considered until positions are filled. Dissertation fellowship scholar applications should be submitted to <https://recruit.ap.ucsb.edu/apply/JPF01011> and should include:

- Cover letter
- Curriculum vitae
- Brief statement (1000 words maximum) summarizing the applicant's intellectual interests, scholarly training, and research agenda as these relate to our year's projected themes
- Dissertation prospectus
- Writing sample (ideally a drafted dissertation chapter or published article)
- Two letters of recommendation

The University of California is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Inquiries regarding the Center, its program, and the fellowship positions may be addressed to **[hsc@hfa.ucsb.edu](mailto:hsc@hfa.ucsb.edu)**

### **Postdoctoral Scholar/Lecturer Positions** **Terms and Applications**

The International Center for the Humanities and Social Change at the University of California, Santa Barbara, invites applications for the position of postdoctoral scholar and lecturer for the academic year 2017-2018. Applicants must possess a PhD granted from an accredited university within the last five academic years. The postdoctoral scholar and lecturer position is also open to international applicants.

The postdoctoral scholar and lecturer positions are one-year appointments with the possibility of renewal. Salary, as based on UC's salary scales and candidate qualifications, will be provided in exchange for active participation in the Center's program and for the teaching of three courses during academic year 2017-2018. Course topics and departments will be decided through consultation between the fellow, Center Director, and Dean of the Humanities and Fine Arts. Postdoctoral scholars and lecturers are required to be in residence for the entirety of the Center's 2017-2018 program. The Center is especially interested in candidates who can contribute to the diversity and excellence of the academic community through research, teaching, and service.

Primary consideration will be given to applications submitted by May 30, 2017, but all applications will be considered until positions are filled. Applications should be submitted to <https://recruit.ap.ucsb.edu/apply/JPF01014> and should include:

- Cover letter
- Curriculum vitae
- Brief statement (1000 words maximum) summarizing the applicant's intellectual interests, scholarly training, and research agenda as these relate to our year's projected themes
- Copy of the dissertation and/or other representative publications
- Three brief course proposals or courses syllabuses, and teaching evaluations if available
- Two letters of recommendation

The University of California is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

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