

PhD Program

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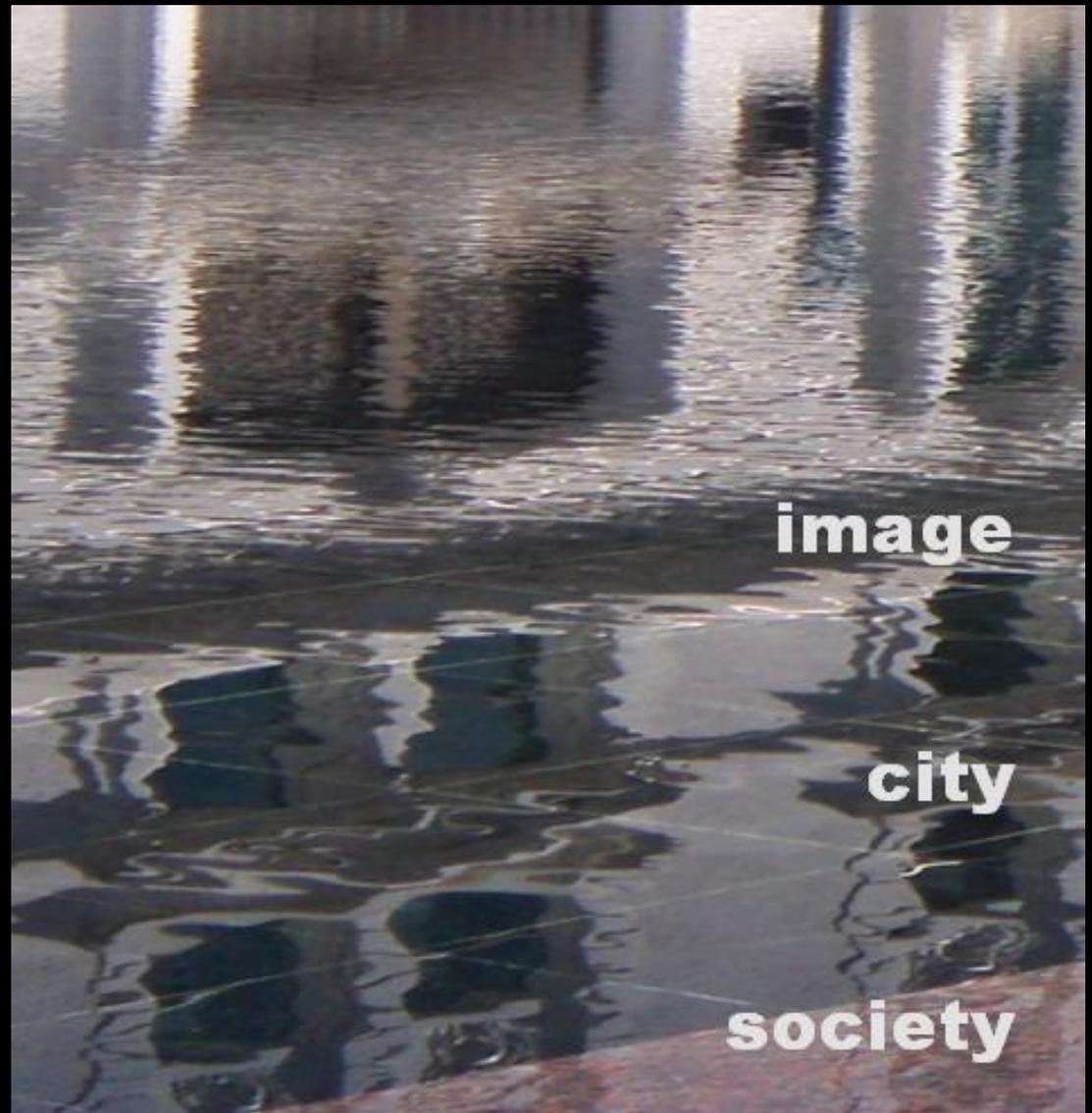
PLANNING

POLICY &

DESIGN

**University of
California,
Irvine**

<http://ppd.soceco.uci.edu/>



About the PhD Program

Since its inception in 1994, the PhD program has grown into a vibrant, and important, intellectual community. We have more than thirty doctoral students currently enrolled in the PhD program. In these few pages, let us share some of the program's beauty, it's alumni's successes, and our students' creativity.

In Pursuit of Theory

Imagine organizations that flicker on and off, with transitory agents who spark new institutions then move on. Then imagine a new framework for capturing these institutional experiments. Imagine transportation systems yet to be conceived, where art takes the same stage as systems engineering. Think of what participation is evolving into, that is able to craft deliberation in the middle of diametrically opposed ideologies. Think of what governance means in cities that increasingly operate in the informal. This is what theory means to us - the thrill of an idea.

In Pursuit of Justice

And, at the same time, we yearn to help build justice in an unjust world. We find ourselves visiting places torn by war and disaster, hoping to find new solutions on the ground. We trace the evolution of micro-finance and the use of information to help the poorest of the poor. We engage residents in discovering how new urbanist schemes can bring, at times progress, at times utter division, to old communities. Afghanistan, Oaxaca, Curitiba, Gusan, California –wherever reform is needed, and wherever communities strive for better, we have a place. That is what theory means to us, too – the depth of meaning and experience.

Curriculum

In the first two years, doctoral students undergo rigorous training in theory and methods. Coursework consists of eight core courses that all Ph.D. students take, along with a broad palette of electives (<http://ppd.soceco.uci.edu/pages/20112012-courses>). In many courses, you will interact with other doctoral students in fields like sociology, management, anthropology, engineering, Latino studies, critical theory, and others. The second and third years transition into increasingly intensive research, beginning with directed studies with one or several professors. Our graduates tend to build an appreciation for both the qualitative as well as the quantitative dimensions of research.

Apprenticeship

Research is practice. It is also about learning to be part of the scholarly community. For these reasons, we value mentorship and try to structure close engagement between the student and a group of faculty, along with other students. Each student is supported by a panel of faculty from their first year onwards, provided space and financial support, and encouraged to participate in any one of a wide array of research centers (<http://socialecology.uci.edu/pages/research-centers-school-social-ecology>). Students design their studies around one of two tracks: PUBLIC POLICY or URBAN PLANNING.

Past Graduates of the PhD in Planning, Policy, and Design at UCI



Mai Nguyen, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Department of City and Regional Planning
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

The overarching theme within Dr. Nguyen's research agenda involves equity within the social and physical world. She combines her background in sociology and urban planning to understand how planning processes and public policies reinforce disadvantages or creates opportunities for underserved populations. Her body of work includes research on: contemporary immigration policy, affordable housing policy, the mobility of Section 8 voucher recipients, residential preferences and segregation, growth management, urban sprawl, and the relationship between urban design and mobility. She is currently working on the Building Resilient Regions project funded by the MacArthur Foundation.

Dr. Quick's work focuses on how managers in public and nonprofit organizations create opportunities for communities to address public issues together. She engages in three related streams of qualitative research: long-term, ethnographic research on civic engagement, interviews of community facilitation practitioners, and analysis of stakeholder engagement processes. She studies these practices across diverse issue areas, including city budgeting and resource management, environmental stewardship, urban master planning and zoning, neighborhood conflicts, transportation, and arts and culture development. Her most recent work in collaborative public management is forthcoming in JPART.

Kathryn S. Quick, M.C.P., Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Public and Nonprofit
Leadership

Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs
University of Minnesota

"I benefited from superb support, especially from my advisor, but also from many other faculty members. They were generous and astute in their guidance."



Erualdo González, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies
California State University, Fullerton

"I worked closely with Conner, Lejano, and Torres --each, in their own way, elevated my thinking about power, race/ethnicity, and inequality. My time at PPD will forever shape my scholarship and practice."

Professor González' research and teaching are at the nexus of community and city planning, focusing in working-class Latino immigrant communities. This includes the impact of participatory action research on urban and community health policy; ethno-cultural and class policy analysis of urban plans; meaning and use of urban environments; resident participation and grass roots organizations; and how "healthy communities" projects may be best planned and evaluated. His recent analysis, using barriological and foucauldian theories, of the conflict surrounding redevelopment plans in downtown Santa Ana, his home town, can be found in Environment & Planning A.

Current PhD Students in Planning, Policy, and Design at UCI

Alexis Hickman

Alexis' research examines the intersection of environmental governance, climate change adaptation, and risk management in vulnerable coastal cities through a fieldwork-based case study of Bangkok, Thailand. Alexis's research was awarded the Public Impact Fellowship, Urban Water Research Center Fellowship, and Newkirk Center research grant. With advisor, Joseph DiMento, Alexis co-authored a book entitled Environmental Governance of the Great Seas: Law and Effect (forthcoming 2012).

Francisco Fernandez

After 15 years as a policymaker in the Mexican federal government, Francisco decided to break new intellectual ground in more deeply understanding urban poverty in Latin America. Combining economics and social theory, Francisco contends that community development strategies can actually reproduce poverty. Drawing on contributions from institutional theory and economic sociology, Francisco's dissertation utilizes a new conceptual framework to analyze this phenomenon.

Sung Jin Park

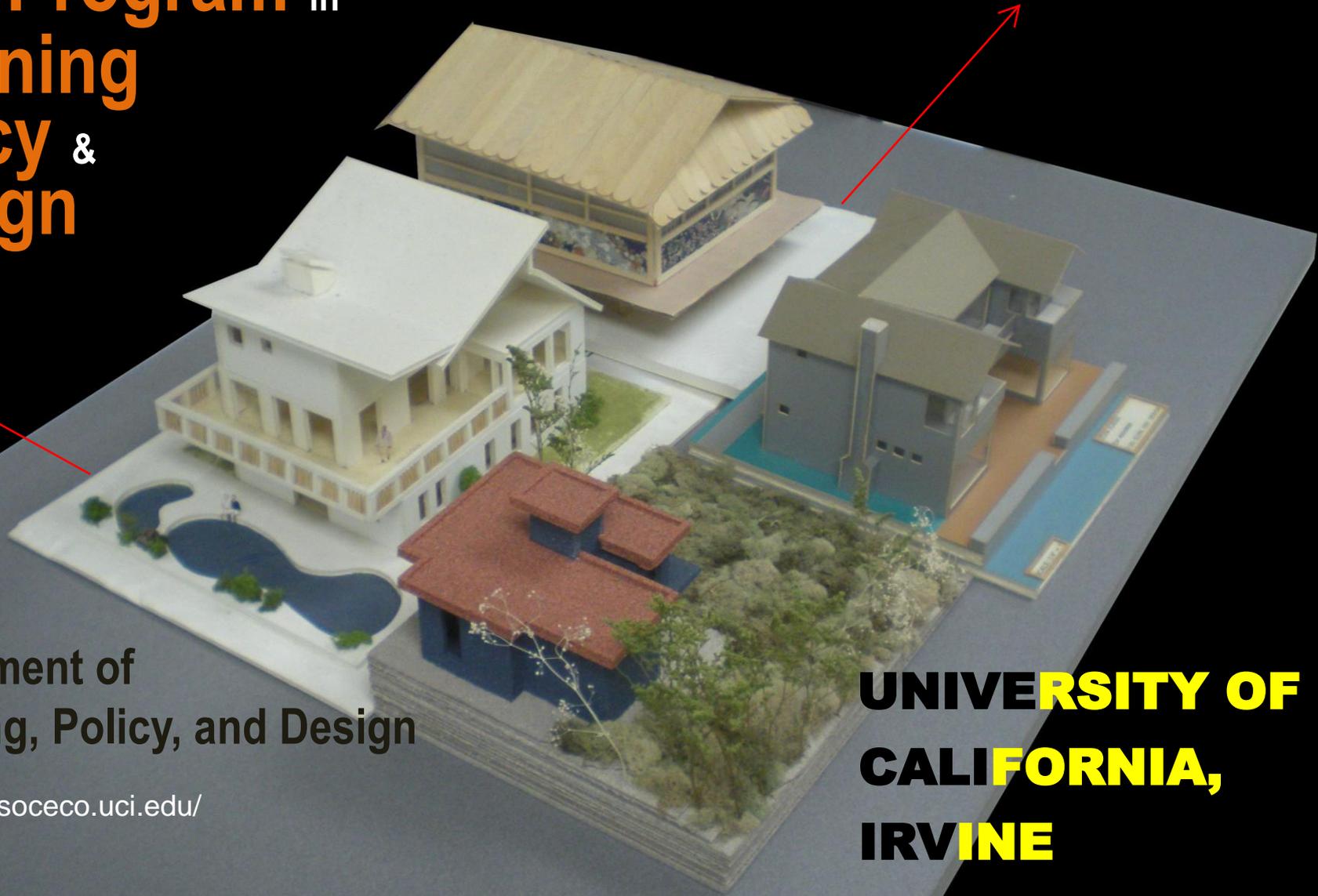
Before coming to UCI, Sung Jin earned a Master's in Public Policy from the University of Southern California. Her research integrates theories of implementation, e-governance and practice. Her dissertation focuses on the role of technology in international development and poverty alleviation –ICT4D. She completed her field research in Aurora, Philippines last summer and is currently writing a dissertation titled "A Theoretical Exploration of Local Organizational Outcomes: Institutionalization, Temporary Organizations, and the Middle-Range Agent." She co-authored an article on carbon trading regimes in the journal, ES&T, and is first author on another article on novel risk analytics based on possibility theory.

Wei Li

Wei's expertise is in urban economics. He utilizes hedonic pricing methods to value urban amenities and disamenities – e.g., employing a spatial Durbin model in assessing changes in property values in Los Angeles due to green space. In another hedonic study, he found a one percent increase in the proportion of truck traffic along the Alameda corridor to decrease the value of a typical \$420,000 house nearby between \$2,000 and \$2,750. He has a forthcoming article in Landscape and Urban Planning.



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urban design studio