
Chicago Studies

Department Website: <http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu>

Chicago Studies (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu>) engages the intellectual, creative, and civic energies of University of Chicago undergraduates in the life of the diverse communities that make up this city. A partnership between the College via the Program on the Global Environment (PGE) (<http://environmentalstudies.uchicago.edu>) and the Office of Civic Engagement (OCE) (<http://civicengagement.uchicago.edu>), Chicago Studies provides opportunities for students and faculty to engage with and learn from the people and institutions of Chicago, encouraging integration of these experiences with their academic interests and reciprocal collaborations between the campus and the city. Through Chicago Studies, the College seeks to make possible intensive, place-based academic encounters, while also helping students critically think about cities through urban-focused course offerings.

Chicago Studies sponsors a regular workshops and seminars series (co-sponsored with UChicago Urban (<http://urban.uchicago.edu>)) on Chicago-focused research and social issues that introduces College students to potential mentors and research topics. This workshop is complemented by a one-day symposium on Chicago-engaged research (including capstone projects executed as part of the Chicago Studies Certificate Program (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/certificate/capstone>)). The “Engage Chicago through Research” data portal (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/research>) collects and promotes Chicago-focused datasets and research, including student research, to further promote the study of the city. And each year, the *Chicago Studies Annual* also collects the best essays written by University of Chicago undergraduates on the history, politics, and cultural life of Chicago for publication in a professionally edited and designed journal. A committee of College faculty considers submissions, which may be from any discipline, each spring.

As a partnership with the University’s Office of Civic Engagement (<http://civicengagement.uchicago.edu>), Chicago Studies offers and curates co-curricular experiences (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/events>) that introduce students and faculty to events, resources, and organizations throughout the Chicago region. Students in the College can also obtain advising and resources to connect their programs of study with partners and communities across the city. Chicago Studies works closely with Career Advancement (<http://careeradvancement.uchicago.edu>), the Institute of Politics (<http://politics.uchicago.edu>), the Pozen Family Center for Human Rights (<http://humanrights.uchicago.edu>), and other Civic Engagement– and University Community Service Center–sponsored programs such as Summer Links (<https://ucsc.uchicago.edu/page/summer-links-2018>) to connect students with substantive internship and research fellowship opportunities with organizations engaged in the life of the city.

Chicago Studies Quarters

The Chicago Studies Quarters offer a cohesive set of courses that join classroom instruction with experiential learning opportunities, using the city and the region as a laboratory.

The Chicago Studies Quarter (CSQ) (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/quarter>) is a selective, quarter-long academic program that allows a small cohort of students to devote an entire term to the intensive study and exploration of the distinctive folkways and civic codes that distinguish Chicago as a world city. Admitted students enroll in three interrelated courses with a common theme, taught by distinguished scholars in various disciplines. Like Study Abroad courses, CSQ courses utilize excursions within the city, guest speakers, and engagement with civic groups and leaders to enrich class readings and assignments. Participants in the CSQ are required to take all three course offerings, but may register for a fourth course of their choosing provided it does not conflict with the required classes or the mandatory excursions held on Fridays.

Chicago Studies Quarter: Calumet (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/calumet>) focuses on topics of human land use in the Calumet Region just south and east of the city. It is a full-time, one-quarter experience intended to help students bridge theory and practice in environmental studies. The program features four integrated courses, projects, field trips, guest lectures, and presentations.

The Chicago Studies Quarters are designed for undergraduates in good academic standing who have completed at least two quarters of study in the College. While the program stipulates no minimum grade-point average, an applicant’s transcript should demonstrate that the applicant is a serious student who will make the most of this opportunity. The Chicago Studies Quarters are open to University of Chicago undergraduate students only; applications from outside the University are not accepted. For more information, please contact Sabina Shaikh (sabina@uchicago.edu) or Emily Talen (talen@uchicago.edu), faculty directors for Chicago Studies.

Courses about Chicago

In addition to the Chicago Studies Quarter, the College offers other courses that explore aspects of Chicago’s ecology, culture, politics, history, social structure, and economic life. Many of these courses are cross-listed between departments, meaning many of them may fulfill requirements in multiple academic programs; most are integrated into the Urban Environments track of the Environmental and Urban Studies major. Some of them may also contribute to students’ completion of the academic requirements of the Chicago Studies Certificate Program (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/certificate/courses>). The courses listed here represent a sample of what is often available, depending on departmental offerings. Current, thematic listings of such courses are also available on the Chicago Studies website (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/courses>).

Historical, literary, artistic, or social scientific explorations of Chicago**Courses using Chicago as a focus or a significant example**

- ANTH 25325 History and Culture of Baseball
- CRES 27501 Urban Indians: Native Americans and the City
- ECON 26600 Urban Economics
- ENGL 22903 Literature of the City: Between Utopia and Dystopia
- SOCI 20215 Urban Health
- TAPS 23600 Improv and Sketch

Courses involving active or community-engaged learning in Chicago

- ENST 27420 Urban Gardens: Therapeutic, Educational, and Community Building Practicum
- PBPL 26200-26300 Field Research Project in Public Policy I-II

Chicago Studies Certificate Program

Undergraduate students who wish to integrate their academic inquiry with positive impact in Chicago through sustained community engagement, urban scholarship, and creative expression, now have the opportunity pursue a certificate in Chicago Studies.

Students may begin pursuing the Chicago Studies Certificate Program (CSCP) at any time during their College careers. This will require an initial (and highly preliminary) proposal for how one hopes to fulfill the requirements and an advising session to discuss the plan and resources available to support it. That mandatory advising is provided by the Chicago Studies staff within the Office of Civic Engagement (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/about>), with a second required meeting before proposal of the capstone project.

Students who complete the certificate will have that designated on their transcript. The transcript designation and the certificate itself are standalone recognitions, conferred by the College and the Office of Civic Engagement without reference to students' formal degree programs. However, completion of the Chicago Studies Certificate does fulfill the internship/field study requirement of the Environmental and Urban Studies major.

The Chicago Studies Certificate Program includes the following components:

1. Introductory Civic Impact Training Experiences (at least 3)
2. Chicago-Focused Courses (at least 3)
3. High-Impact Community Engagement
4. Capstone Project

1. Introductory Civic Impact Training Experiences (at least 3)

These not-for-credit, non-curricular introductory experiences—some of which are facilitated by external organizations—expose students to local civic actors, civic leadership skills, and Chicago social issues, and are open to all University of Chicago students. As a first stage of the certificate, students must participate in three of these to help them frame, focus, and reflect on the kind of impact they hope to have as engaged scholars. At the end of this, students declare a focus for their certificate work: an issue, an organization, a neighborhood, a population.

A list of currently available civic impact trainings (“modules”) may be found on the Chicago Studies Certificate Program website (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/certificate/modules>). A number of existing programs sponsored by the Office of Civic Engagement and its partners (both internal and external) may also fulfill one or more of these requirements; students should discuss this during their initial advising appointment with Civic Engagement’s Chicago Studies team (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/certificate/enroll>).

2. Chicago-Focused Courses (at least 3)

Each academic year, the University offers a wide range of courses that study Chicago in some capacity (see Courses about Chicago above for examples and the Chicago Studies Certificate Program website (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/certificate/courses>) for details).

The Chicago Studies Certificate requires completion of three such courses with a C– or above. Successful completion of any of the Chicago Studies Quarters will satisfy this requirement. Otherwise, students will need to propose and receive faculty approval for a specific theme and receive subsequent approvals for each course chosen along the way.

Petitions should be made in advance of enrollment and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, in relation to the petitioner’s stated rationale for including specific courses in their program of study and engagement. The General Petition Form (<https://college.uchicago.edu/sites/college.uchicago.edu/files/GeneralPetition.pdf>) is available on the College website and should be directed to Dr. Sabina Shaikh (sabina@uchicago.edu) (Sabina@uchicago.edu), faculty director for Chicago Studies. Advising on this academic component and selection of appropriate courses is available through the Program on the Global Environment (<https://pge.uchicago.edu>) and accessible via the Chicago Studies Certificate Program website (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/certificate/courses>).

3. High-Impact Community Engagement

Program participants must demonstrate a sustained, impactful engagement with Chicago's diverse communities in the following ways:

- complete at least 200 hours of community-benefiting engagement in Chicago; AND
- receive a positive recommendation from a community-based supervisor of or partner in their engagement; AND
- articulate both academic learning and skills development from this experience and its relevance to the student's capstone project in a significant way.

Advising on the selection of appropriate engagement opportunities is available through UCSC. Some examples of existing opportunities that could fulfill this program requirement include:

- 200+ hours of documented volunteer engagement on a single community issue through leadership in a community service recognized student organization
- 200+ hours of student employment with a single community organization or on a single issue through community-based Federal Work-Study
- completion of the University Community Service Center's Summer Links (<https://ucsc.uchicago.edu/page/summer-links-2017>) internship and social justice education program
- completion of the Institute of Politics (<http://politics.uchicago.edu>) Summer Political Internship (in Chicago)
- completion of a Pozen Family Center (<http://humanrights.uchicago.edu>) Human Rights Internship (in Chicago)

Program participants may also petition the University Community Service Center to use an experience not listed here toward the certificate requirements. Information about available and forthcoming engagement opportunities, as well as the mechanisms for their approval and documentation, can be found on the Chicago Studies Certificate Program website (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/certificate/engagement>).

4. Capstone Project

A Capstone Project is a high-impact learning practice that requires students to integrate, apply, and articulate their learning across a sequence of experiences. Many capstones will be completed during the fourth year of study, but it is possible to complete a capstone earlier.

To receive the Chicago Studies Certificate and transcript designation, program participants must successfully produce a major paper, project, or product (e.g., a discipline-based research project, investigative journalism series, creative production, action research product, etc.) that:

- integrates aspects of the student's academic and community-based learning throughout the student's fulfillment of previous certificate components; AND
- takes Chicago either as its focus OR uses it as a significant example (for works focused on broader urban themes); AND
- responds to a community-defined priority or question, including being presented as such to one or more relevant publics.

Advising on and approval of capstone project proposals is run by the Chicago Studies team within the Office of Civic Engagement (<http://civicengagement.uchicago.edu>), which can assist students in identifying appropriate community partners, issues, and audiences for capstones from Civic Engagement's citywide network of collaborators. Completed capstone projects are adjudicated and validated by a small committee of faculty, staff, and community partner readers. Students are required to present their capstones at the annual Chicago Studies Symposium.

In the case of capstone projects based on or closely related to a student's formal academic work (e.g., a BA thesis), the adjudication committee will assess only the capstone's successful integration of the student's academic and community-based learning, as required for the certificate. Such evaluations should not be taken as direction of the student's formal discipline-based academic research.

In addition to the required participation in the Chicago Studies Symposium, students should also, whenever possible, directly present their capstones to relevant publics in the broader community as an expression of reciprocal benefit to those whose community-based knowledge has helped to inform their completion. Where appropriate, capstone projects may also be submitted for potential inclusion in the Chicago Studies Annual (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu/annual>).

Questions about the Chicago Studies Certificate Program may be directed to Chris Skrable (cskrable@uchicago.edu), associate director for community-based research and experiential learning in the Office of Civic Engagement. Additional information is also available on the Chicago Studies website (<http://chicagostudies.uchicago.edu>).

Primary Contacts

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Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Times was used instead of Trajan.

Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.