Call for Undergraduate Research Assistants in UCSB's "Making the Humanities Public" Project

- Conduct research on the humanities in public life, journalism, public communications, and digital-humanities and data-journalism methods of analyzing media (e.g., "topic modeling").
- $500 stipend for meeting together periodically with a faculty member (Alan Liu) and graduate student (Jamal Russell) during Winter and Spring quarters of academic year 2016-2017.
- Earn course credit in Spring quarter.
- Option to apply for campus Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities (UCRA) grant.
- Add title of "Arnhold Collaborative Research Fellow" to your c.v.
- If interested, email Prof. Alan Liu, Dept. of English, aylui@english.ucsb.edu

"Making the Humanities Public" is one of the UCSB English Department's new Arnhold Collaborative Research Projects designed from the ground up to involve undergraduates in research alongside faculty and graduate students. This particular project is associated with the 4Humanities.org project started at UCSB to research and advocate for the value of the humanities in society. It is open to undergraduates from all departments and programs.

The basic idea is that in Winter quarter, up to 10 undergraduates will attend a meeting approximately every other week supervised by a graduate-student Arnhold Collaborative Research Advisor. Some meetings will also be supervised by Prof. Alan Liu, who will provide orientation to research goals and methods (including contemporary methods of "digital humanities" and "data journalism"). Working together, students will use read sample articles mentioning the humanities that 4Humanities.org has gathered from major newspapers (guided by a computational "topic model" of themes in the fuller set of over 30,000 articles that 4Humanities has collected.) The goal is to examine how terms such as "humanities" and "liberal arts" and narratives related to those terms are treated in the public media.

Then, in Spring quarter, students will work together in teams to create two or more advocacy projects for the humanities that draw on lessons learned in the previous quarter. For example, projects could take the form of: creating an interactive "timeline" or "storymap" of the humanities in America, writing a press-release or op-ed campaign; creating a social media campaign; designing posters or infographics; writing a work of creative fiction; scripting a pilot for a TV show; making a video; interviewing community members willing to speak up for the humanities; etc. Students can choose to enroll in English 199RA in Spring to earn course credits for their project; and they can apply for UCSB's "UCRA" (Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities) grants of up to $750 to assist with student projects.

Value for Students: The "Making the Humanities Public" project helps train students interested in the humanities, journalism, public communications, and digital humanities (as well as today's data-journalism). Students will be introduced to data-assisted methods of textual interpretation; will learn to extend their critical/interpretive skills to journalistic media, the Internet, political discourse, and so on; will gain an overview of today's idea of "the public" and the "public good"; and will study and practice key forms of public argumentation and innovative digital or print projects. (If possible, visits will be arranged with staff from UCSB's Office of Public Affairs and Santa Barbara's newspapers or media stations.)