College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences

New Faculty 2005-2006
Christopher Abani  
*Associate Professor of Creative Writing*  
Ph.D. expected 2005, University of Southern California, Los Angeles

Professor Abani’s current research includes language and subversion in the post-colonial context, masculinity, sexuality and the constructions of the monstrous as well as inter-disciplinary possibilities for teaching creative writing. Abani has published three collections of poetry and two novels. He has been a finalist for the Commonwealth Book Prize and the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize. His awards include a PEN Freedom-to-Write Award, a Prince Claus Award, a Lannan Literary Fellowship, a Silver Medal in the California Book Awards, and a Hemingway/PEN prize.

Philip Babcock  
*Assistant Professor of Economics*  
Ph.D., 2005, University of California, San Diego

Professor Babcock’s research interests include Labor Economics, Human Capital, Social Dynamics, and Networks. His approach is interdisciplinary, applying techniques used by economists, to data collected by sociologists and psychologists. His dissertation, “Essays on Human Capital Acquisition,” focuses on factors that drive interpersonal variation in skill acquired during youth. His goal is to use this research as a starting point for broader inquiries into unemployment, poverty traps, wage inequality, and economic growth. Current research investigates empirical relationships between network connectedness, diversity, and long-run skill outcomes.

Feryal Cherif  
*Acting Assistant Professor of Political Science*  
Ph.D. expected 2005, New York University

Professor Cherif joins us after her graduate studies at New York University. Her dissertation, “International Institutions, Transnational Advocacy and the Status of Women,” examines the evolution of the human rights regime, the processes of international norms building and their impact on women’s human rights. Her areas of research include human rights, international organization, and transnational advocacy. She is co-author of the recent publication, *Thinking Inside the Box: A Closer Look at Democracy and Human Rights*.

Lan Duong  
*Assistant Professor of Women’s Studies/Film and Visual Culture*  
Ph.D., 2005, University of California, Irvine

Professor Duong’s research focuses upon representations of gender and sexuality in the cultural productions of Viet Nam and its diaspora in France and the United States. Her dissertation analyzes contemporary literature and films through the motif of betrayal and acts of collaboration. Duong’s future research looks at Vietnamese cinema and youth culture. Her recent articles examine performance and subject construction in Vietnamese American karaoke bars as well as the works of writer Linda Le and filmmaker Tony Bui. A recipient of a UC President’s Dissertation Grant and a Fulbright-Hays Fellowship, Duong has conducted extensive research in Viet Nam and France.
Catherine Gudis  
*Assistant Professor of History*  
Ph.D., 1999, Yale University  

Professor Gudis’ research and teaching interests are in the fields of commercial and consumer culture, advertising, and the built environment, focused particularly on the United States in the twentieth century. Her book, *Buyways: Billboards, Automobiles, and the American Landscape*, traces the relationship between automobility, advertising, and the commercialization of the urban environment. She is a contributor to and coeditor of a forthcoming book of essays entitled “Cultures of Commerce: Representations of Business Culture in the United States.” Professor Gudis has worked for many years as a public historian, most recently completing a large-scale, multimedia project entitled *Curating the City: Wilshire Boulevard* with the Los Angeles Conservancy. Before joining UC Riverside, Professor Gudis was a member of the faculties at the University of Oklahoma Honors College and Northern Illinois University.

David Herzberger  
*Professor of Hispanic Studies*  
Ph.D., 1975, University of Illinois  

Professor Herzberger comes to UCR from the University of Connecticut, where he was Head of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages. His main areas of research are twentieth-century Spanish novel and contemporary Spanish theatre. He is also interested in the relationship between fiction and historiography, especially in the context of dictatorship. Professor Herzberger has also explored new strategies of writing history and fiction in post-Franco narrative during Spain’s transition to democracy over the past thirty years. He is currently working on a piece on memory, women, exile, and history in Spain over the past half century.

Kelly Huffman  
*Assistant Professor of Psychology*  
Ph.D., 2000, University of California, Davis  

Professor Huffman is a neuroscientist who studies development and evolution of the mammalian neocortex. She studies mechanisms involved in neocortical development, specifically the establishment of discrete neocortical areas and the ‘wiring’ of the brain, using molecular, genetic, and neuroanatomical approaches. Her future research will focus on how neocortical gene expression and alterations in sensory input regulate cortical plasticity. She employs state of the art molecular techniques to better understand genetic mechanisms as well as the epigenetic activity-related mechanisms involved in the generation and maintenance of the complex cerebral cortex. She has published in many science journals, including *Journal of Neuroscience*, *Cerebral Cortex* and *Journal of Comparative Neurology*, and has received grant funding from the NIMH and the Giannini Family Foundation.
Pashaura Singh  
Professor of Religious Studies  
Ph.D., 1991, University of Toronto

Professor Singh comes to UCR from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, where he taught Sikh studies, Punjabi language, and Religions of India for thirteen years. He combines a command of classical and colloquial Punjabi and Hindi languages (including a working knowledge of Sanskrit) and a sound knowledge of traditional Sikh learning, manuscripts in archaic forms of Gurmukhi script and Indian religious traditions, with a mastery of contemporary issues in textual studies, canonicity, hermeneutics, literary theory, and history of religions. His work on the Adi Granth (sacred Sikh scripture) and early Sikh history is widely noted. His most recent monograph, “Life and Work of Guru Arjan,” is forthcoming from Oxford University Press.

Karthick Ramakrishnan  
Assistant Professor of Political Science  
Ph.D., 2002, Princeton University

Professor Ramakrishnan joins us from the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC), where he was a research fellow in the governance program. His research interests include political participation, civic voluntarism, and the politics of race, ethnicity, and immigration in the United States. He is the principal investigator on a multi-site research project on immigrant civic voluntarism funded by the Russell Sage Foundation. While at PPIC, Ramakrishnan authored several peer-reviewed reports on immigrant adaptation, local governance, and civic engagement. His articles have appeared in International Migration Review and Social Science Quarterly. He is also the author of Democracy in Immigrant America and is co-editor of a forthcoming volume on immigrant politics from the University Press of Virginia.

Rebekah Richert  
Assistant Professor of Psychology  
Ph.D., 2003, University of Virginia

Professor Richert’s research focuses on cognitive development in early childhood, specifically how children think about fantasy and religion. Before joining the faculty at UCR, she was awarded an International Post-doctoral Fellowship from the National Science Foundation, and spent two years conducting research at Queen’s University Belfast in Northern Ireland and at Harvard University. Professor Richert currently has research projects exploring children’s developing concepts of God, the soul, and religious rituals. She is also researching how children view information learned in fantasy stories and the effectiveness of using fantasy stories as educational tools.