

## **UC Santa Cruz**

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

The Journal of International Society was founded to provide a platform that many of its founding members felt was lacking at UCSC. A way to continuously engage with topics that we found interesting and that we felt needed to be addressed in order to solve some of our world's most pressing issues. We also sought to allow students to share their best work with the rest of UCSC and to begin familiarizing themselves with a publication process that many will be involved with after their time here. With these goals in mind we set out to establish the Journal and with key institutional support, time, and effective teamwork we have completed our inaugural edition.

Through the process of creating this edition we remarked a variety of trends. The first was the presence of this type of publication at many universities of similar caliber, often directly associated with their schools of international affairs or with international studies departments. This led us to seek out partnerships and mentorship from various departments and faculty, before ultimately finding a home with the Institution for Social Transformation.

Another, much larger trend is the increased desire of students to further their education and attend graduate school. Displayed by increased competition and the ever-growing need to develop an advantage, the application rate for Master's programs grew by seven percent from 2006 to 2016. The Journal of International Society wanted to be one of the those advantages for prospective graduate students at UCSC. Providing an academic avenue for undergraduate research to receive peer review and potential publication was a win-win for the administration and the student body. Building this journal required a lot of discussion and learning from professors across many departments. They were all readily able to see the potential that this journal had for the student body, as a means to receive sought after publication in the academic realm. What quickly became apparent was that students, even those with their sights set on graduate school, had no idea that publication was an avenue for them to advance their goals. Undergraduate





students see publication as above and beyond them, no matter what they've learned and created. Many who encounter academic articles encounter masterfully crafted entries which have received thousands of citations and drastically influenced their field of study. What students do not realize is that while their research may not stand on equal footing with the Titans of academia, they can still stand to provide meaningful and insightful content that can advance research in areas that are of interest to them.

We want those who have read this far to understand that you don't need a Ph.D to contribute to academia. Meaningful academic work has been made across all fields of study. In 2017 Forbes published an Op Ed by the Director of Undergraduate Research at Union College, who stressed that the value of undergraduate research cannot be overstated. He dives into some of the most important achievements in his field being undergraduate projects. The same goes for work in the social sciences. In the realm of social sciences research, common consensus is that undergraduates are under-represented and lack access to some of the meaningful institutions that may be provided in the realm of STEM. These principally include the prevalent system of mentorship and degree of inclusion in ongoing postgraduate projects. Here at UC Santa Cruz, an arm of the gargantuan University of California system, the greatest research institutions in the world, this disparity is accentuated. Despite the acclaim and prestige of UC faculty in the humanities and social sciences, undergraduates suffer from these shortcomings in research structure. Journals like ours are a key tool to address this disparity and are used by our peers across the social sciences in many of the finest universities in the United States.

We hope you enjoy this edition and we look forward to what the future has in store for the Journal and the students it serves as we continue to grow together.





## **ABOUT THE JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY**

Founded in 2018, The Journal of International Society (JIS) is affiliated with the Santa Cruz Institute for Social Transformation. The intention of this publication is to showcase the excellent work of undergraduate students at UC Santa Cruz. The work it publishes aims to foster debate and further the free exchange of ideas surrounding numerous global topics.

Papers published in the Journal span a wide variety of academic disciplines and reflect the diverse student body at UCSC. In a time of global political and social unrest, the journal seeks to provide a platform for these diverse voices to comment on, analyze, and help solve complicated global issues. These voices are further supported by the partnership that JIS has with numerous professors at UCSC who are among the best and brightest in their fields.



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