An emphasis in Critical Theory, under the supervision of the Committee on Critical Theory, is available for doctoral students in all departments at UCI upon approval of the student’s faculty advisor or associate dean in accordance with departmental policy. Ph.D. students may, with Committee approval, complete the emphasis in addition to the degree requirements of their graduate program. Although there is no change in the existing Ph.D. program requirements or procedures, if the student wishes to have a letter (signed by the Dean and by the Director of Critical Theory) testifying that the student has satisfactorily added this theoretical dimension to the graduate program, then additional requirements must be met. Critical theory at UCI is understood in the broad sense as the study of the shared assumptions, problems, and commitments of the various discourses in the humanities. The faculty regards critical theory not as an adjunct to the study of one of the traditional humanistic disciplines but as a necessary context for the study of any humanistic discipline.

Admission to the emphasis may be granted by the Critical Theory Committee in response to the student’s petition. The petition normally is submitted by the middle of the second year of graduate study, after completion of one HUMAN 270 seminar, and upon the recommendation of the Workshop’s instructor or a faculty representative of the student’s department.

Requirements
(1) a three-quarter Critical Theory Workshop, conducted preferably by a team of instructors, conceived as a reading group, and developed with the input of all participants, where significant texts are discussed and analyzed in class. No term papers are required, and the course is graded Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory only. Students receive credit for this course only in the spring quarter. For the first two quarters, the course is 0 units with IP grading; (2) three HUMAN 270 courses offered under the supervision of the Committee. At least three such courses will be offered each quarter; (3) participation in two mini-seminars (six–eight hours) offered by visiting scholars (and sponsored by the Committee) on the visiting scholar's ongoing research; and (4) a dissertation that reflects the students’ preparation in critical theory; alternatively, a research paper written under the guidance of one or more of the Emphasis faculty and submitted to the Director.