

**Student Profile**

**Arnold Alahverdian – History PhD Program**



**Your Time at UCI**

What made you decide to pursue a graduate degree?

*I have always wanted to have a career in a field that I am passionate about. Graduate school provides the prospect to contribute to historical understanding through research or teaching.*

Why did you choose to come to UCI?

*One of the professors who specializes in my area of study is at UCI's history department. I decided to try the MA program and I really liked the department and the faculty. Therefore, I was convinced that I wanted to continue my studies here. I will be a fourth-year PhD student beginning this September.*

If you are conducting research, how would you explain your research and its significance to your grandparent?

*I study a period of persecution and revolts in the fifth-century Middle East and how authors talk about these events. I also study how they wrote about holy war in that period.*

What are your hobbies/passions outside of research?

*I am a soccer fanatic and I try to watch my favorite teams play when I have time. I also like walking and hiking along the beautiful Orange County coastline. I plan on making non-research-related reading a hobby again after I graduate.*

**Reflections**

What are you most proud of accomplishing (so far) in your graduate program?

*Having learned how to apply diverse theories and methods to my work, as well as having acquired the ability to read in several more languages in a short period of time are the accomplishments I am most proud of so far.*

What is your most memorable moment/experience at UCI to date?

*I enrolled in a fencing class at the ARC last year and I found it both demanding and enjoyable.*

What advice do you have for a new graduate student in your program?

*Being a graduate student is more than just a full-time commitment, it is a lifestyle. Make sure you come in with good work ethics. If you are a procrastinator like I am, learn the skill of time management early if you don't want to lose sleep. Anticipate changing your research topic in the first few years, as this is not uncommon.*

### **Career**

What do you see yourself doing in five or ten years?

*I hope to have a full-time job where I can apply some of the skills I have acquired during the course of my graduate studies. Ideally*

How do you hope to make a difference?

*In regard to my current research: By studying the relationship between socio-political developments and persecution in the late antique world, I seek to provide a new lens through which we can interpret causation both in the past and today. Also, by analyzing narratives of sanctified violence from various religious communities in late antiquity, I want to debunk some of the misconceptions that we find about the idea of holy war in popular discourse.*