

Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo

The educational philosophy of Tsunesaburo Makiguchi as envisioned by Daisaku Ikeda finds its expression in Soka University of America. The school opened in Calabasas, California, in 1987. An undergraduate campus is being built on a 100-acre site in Aliso Viejo, California. It will accept its freshman class in September 2001.

What the world most requires now is the kind of education that fosters love for humankind, that develops character—that provides an intellectual basis for the realization of peace and empowers learners to contribute to and improve society.—*Daisaku Ikeda, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation lecture, New Delhi, India, October 21, 1997*

HELPING students learn how to create value in their lives, their communities and the world is a central tenet of the Soka Schools founded by Daisaku Ikeda. The Soka Schools, which range from kindergartens to the 8,800-student Soka University of Japan, have established a tradition of humanistic learning and scholarship where the focus is on each student's growth and development. *Soka* means "to create value."

The mission of Soka University of America includes providing students with an outstanding education, preparing them for the workplace and responsible, effective citizenship in the multicultural world of tomorrow. SUA Calabasas currently offers a graduate program in Second and Foreign Language Education. When the Aliso Viejo campus opens in 2001, it will offer an undergraduate program of Eastern and Western perspectives taught across a traditional liberal arts curriculum.

The uniqueness of the school's approach lies in the comparative teaching of international perspectives, the Core Curriculum, Learning Clusters and an emphasis on language, art and culture. The Core Curriculum is a series of four sequential courses taken by all undergraduate students, introducing them to the major issues of self and society. The Core courses will examine in comparative perspective such areas as the self; the roles that science, myth and religion play in formulating how we view the world; the complexities of human rights in a pluralistic society; and issues of war, peace and non-violence.

The Learning Clusters are courses in which students and faculty, working in small teams, research and propose solutions to socially significant themes. Acquiring the critical tools of investigation and analysis will be integral to the Learning Cluster experience. In addition, the program will require three years of study of a foreign language and internship abroad.

SUA, Aliso Viejo at a Glance

- An independent, selective, four-year liberal arts college opening September 2001
- Outstanding faculty dedicated to bringing out the best in students
- 12-to-1 student-faculty ratio

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- Open to students of all nationalities and beliefs
- Comparative study of Eastern and Western perspectives across the curriculum
- Unique Core Curriculum and three years required study of second language (Chinese, Japanese and Spanish offered initially)
- Required semester of internship abroad
- Library with 225,000-volume capacity, reading rooms, rare book facility
- Computer access in classrooms, library, residence halls and outside gathering areas
- Beautiful 100-acre campus in Southern California two miles from the Pacific Ocean
- Campus surrounded by a 3,400-acre wilderness park

Who Can Attend?

The college will be open to highly motivated students of all nationalities and beliefs who have excelled in a range of academic courses, as well as other talents, skills and achievements. The successful applicant will:

- Typically be in the top fifteen percent of their senior class
- Take the SAT/ACT (scores will be one of many factors considered)
- If English is not your native language, take TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and possess strong English listening, comprehension and speaking skills
- Complete an essay in English regarding personal goals, interests and accomplishments

Sports and Activities

The Aliso Viejo campus expects to be an NCAA Division III competitor and will apply for admission to the Southern California Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. In time, the college expects to field men's and women's intercollegiate teams in basketball, soccer, volleyball, cross country/track and field, swimming, golf, tennis, water polo, baseball (men) and softball (women). Also, the community of Aliso Viejo offers excellent recreational opportunities.

Tuition and Financial Aid

Aliso Viejo expects tuition to be comparable to similar private liberal arts colleges in Southern California. In addition to providing other sources of financial aid, the college is conducting an International Scholarship Drive to provide scholarships for students who would not be able to attend without financial assistance. □