

To: Interested Students Abroad

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Regards: International Study Opportunities, UC Berkeley  
Berkeley International Study Program in Letters and Science

Subject: Important Information for Fall 2018 Semester

Date: February 20, 2018

The information given here is, to the best of my knowledge, correct. However, there may be some minor errors or mistakes. The memo is updated continuously in order to minimize such.

This memo must be read carefully, as carefully as you would read a memo that contained urgent materials for an exam. Doing so will take time, as there are many details to consider. However, once the memo has been read and absorbed, the prospective student should have acquired a clear and concise understanding of how to relate and communicate with their home university as well as with the University of California, Berkeley.

#### Visiting Students versus Degree Students

Most students at UC Berkeley have been admitted as degree students. They are enrolled in programs that take several years to complete, involving lecture courses as well as individual work with academic advisors. These programs lead to degrees such as BA, MA, PhD, JD, MBA, etc. Admittance into these programs involves a number of steps, such as taking standardized tests (e.g. SAT, GRE, GMAT), providing letters of recommendation, submitting essays, and so on. UC Berkeley is very competitive, with about 83,000 students applying and about 65,600 not admitted each year. A limited number of international students get admitted to earn a degree at UC Berkeley. In academic year 2013-2014, there are only 1,647 international undergraduate degree-seeking students, about 9 percent of the undergraduate student body. The admission rate for international student applicants is less than 10%.

An alternative way for international students to study at UC Berkeley for one or two semesters is through the University of California Education Abroad Program (EAP), which has limited space, and is restricted to a few institutions (in Brazil 2, Mexico 1, Norway 0, South Korea 1, and so forth). They do not receive a degree from the university.

There is one other way for international students to study at UC Berkeley for one or two semesters – and that is by taking courses through the UC Berkeley Extension International Concurrent Enrollment program (see below). To do so, students must be invited by a professor or department and we are inviting you to participate in Fall 2018. Some of you may choose to study in Summer 2018 and/or Spring 2019 as well.

#### Opportunity for Visiting Students to Study at UC Berkeley

The UC Berkeley Sociology Department has established a program, referred to below as the *Berkeley International Study Program in Letters and Science*, in which international students at a number of different universities across the globe are invited by Professor Trond Petersen to take

courses in the participating departments (see the attached brochure for the list of participating departments). These students take UC Berkeley courses through the UC Berkeley Extension International Concurrent Enrollment program on a space availability basis.

### **Concurrent Enrollment course enrollment**

The program you attend is sponsored by the Department of Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. The Department issues the invitations to students to study here, and all classes you will take are in the participating departments in the University of California, Berkeley, classes you will take together with regularly matriculated students at UC Berkeley, students who come from all Departments and Schools in the university. Your official status will be that of a “Concurrent Enrollment” student.

It is important to understand that Concurrent Enrollment students are enrolled *after* all other students, and this may take a couple weeks. There may be some classes which will not have space in them for visiting students, and we will work with all students to identify alternative courses prior to the semester beginning and during the first few weeks of instructions. Students have until the end of the fifth week of instruction to finalize their class schedule for the semester.

### **Fall and Spring Semesters at UC Berkeley**

The Berkeley International Study Program has the capacity to admit a limited number of students for Fall and Spring semesters, as well as the Summer Session. The students will be accepted as visiting students and are required to take 12 credits in courses that are in the participating departments. Please note that some of you may come from universities which require a greater number of units to be enrolled in, and we will communicate with you about that as we plan your semester with us.

We are able to admit students both at the undergraduate and the graduate level, however, courses at the graduate level are limited and most students take bachelor-level courses. Many of our graduate level courses are designed for doctoral students, so students in their masters-level programs should consider taking courses at either the undergraduate or graduate level (or a combination of both).

### **Duration of Exchange Student Period at UC Berkeley**

Students may come to UC Berkeley for one or two semesters. Most students visit for one semester, but in some cases, it may be possible to stay for two semesters: the Spring and Fall or Fall and Spring semesters. Students may also extend their visit by taking courses during the Summer Session. If you are uncertain, you should apply now for one semester, and you will be given the opportunity to extend your stay for a second semester while you are in Berkeley.

### **Courses**

Students are expected to enroll in 12 units in the participating departments. These 12 units may not include courses taken in non-participating departments at UC Berkeley, unless otherwise approved by the Berkeley International Study Program staff. If this, for some reason, cannot fit into your study program in your home university, perhaps this program is not the right one for you, or you can do studies for which you will not later be credited in your home university.

All students participating in BISP are required to take a one-unit course called “*Strategies for*

*Cross-Cultural Communication*,” Sociology 198. This course provides information and tips that will help students succeed in a new academic environment and help them make the most of their cultural experience here in Berkeley. It is also a great way for students to meet and talk with other students in English and practice new skills they are learning. The instructors also provide academic support advising to students. There will be space in this course for all of our visiting BISP students and this unit will count towards the 12 units you need for the semester. This is the only course you will enroll in that is only for visiting international students. All other courses you enroll in will be alongside UC Berkeley students.

Almost all students are admitted to the courses they choose, but some departments occasionally have a few courses that will not have space due to high demand by UC Berkeley students. For this reason, we do not guarantee admittance to any particular course. If there is a course that you are required to take as a requirement of your home university, you should consult with the staff at your home university to find out what will happen if you cannot get enrolled in that course, so that you know the risks before coming to Berkeley.

It is not possible to register in advance for courses. Registration for all Concurrent Enrollment students takes place during weeks 1-5 of the semester. Concurrent Enrollment students will attend the courses they are interested in and the instructor will let them know if they are admitted after the first couple of weeks of classes have met. Students will pay tuition fees for their courses after the fifth week of instruction is complete. This process will be explained in detail at the orientation meeting before classes begin.

To find out more information about the courses, please go to the schedule's website for course descriptions: <http://classes.berkeley.edu>

Here at UC Berkeley, each instructor writes their own syllabus and it may change from one semester to the next. In general we do not get the syllabus from the instructor for each course until the time the class starts meeting. This is due to the fact that professors have full control over their courses. This system may be very different from the system in your home country, but there is nothing to do about this. But you may find syllabi from these courses, if they were taught in the past, on each department's website. Required readings, type of exams and other assignments, and lectures may differ from semester to semester, but you can get an idea of how an instructor likes to teach their course.

### **Rules Regarding Full-Time Student Visas to the USA**

In order to obtain a student visa and to legally stay in the US students must be registered as full time students. This requires taking a minimum of 12 units in our program. The US Immigration authorities demand that students are registered as full time students, and also control that they actually are doing this.

### **Courses for graduate students**

All students need to enroll in 12 course credits/units. It might be difficult to get admitted to graduate courses as a Concurrent Enrollment student. Students should come prepared to take undergraduate courses, and be approved to potentially take all undergraduate courses if they are not able to get admitted to any of our graduate courses at the PhD level.

We highly recommend that graduate students discuss with their advisor before coming to UC Berkeley, which undergraduate courses we offer could count for their degree. They also should be in contact with program staff in the months prior to the semester beginning to convey their course interests.

## Course Transcript

Approximately 4-6 weeks after the final exams, the student will be able to look up their grades on their UC Berkeley Extension account. Course grades and units earned within the UC Berkeley system are included. These grade reports are not the same as a transcript of all courses taken at UC Berkeley. The BISP Program will provide a complementary transcript for each student, which is sent directly to the coordinator at their home university, provided that they sign an authorization form at the end of the semester. If a student needs to have an additional transcript sent to themselves or to another institution, they should order one to be sent through the UC Berkeley Extension office. Information on how to order a transcript is also available on their website. These transcripts can be sent by mail or email.

## UC Berkeley units and domestic academic institutions

Local rules and procedures determine the amount of credits a student will get at his/her home university for courses taken while at UC Berkeley, and how those courses may or may not satisfy degree requirements. UC Berkeley is a well-known and highly ranked academic institution, and generally students seem to get full credit locally for courses taken at UC Berkeley. However, this is outside the control of UC Berkeley and of the Berkeley International Study Program.

It is usually a good idea to discuss with your home university whether the credits will transfer before deciding to apply to the Berkeley International Study Program. You should speak with an advisor for your degree program about the courses you plan to take and requirements you need to fulfill abroad. In some cases approval in advance from the home academic institution may be required in order to get full credit upon return. Such approval is also, in some countries, important in order to obtain student loans for studies at UC Berkeley.

## Tuition at UC Berkeley

The costs for required courses at UC Berkeley for the Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 semesters, for 12 units (with a basic cost of USD \$750 per unit), are as a minimum as follows:

### *Fees:*

USD	200	International Application fee (paid with online application, non-refundable)
USD	125	Concurrent Enrollment Application fee (due 30 days prior to semester start)
USD	700	Health Insurance Fees (due 30 days prior to semester start)
USD	250	Cal 1 Card fee (due after the fifth week of instruction)

USD	1275	Sum of Fees
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### *Tuition:*

USD	750 per unit	(due after the fifth week of instruction)
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### *Sum Fees and Tuition:*

USD	10,275	for 12 units
USD	11,025	for 13 units
USD	11,775	for 14 units

*These fees are based on the Fall 2018 semester. Please check the Concurrent Enrollment page of the UC Extension website (<http://extension.berkeley.edu/static/student-services/concurrent/#fees>) for the most up to date fees.*

*Note: All fees are subject to change.*

## Language tests

For students who have taken coursework at a university where the primary language of instruction is English, UC Berkeley generally allows dropping the English language tests. Students from countries where English is not the primary language are required to take the TOEFL or IELTS test. UC Berkeley Extension requires students to have either a TOEFL score of at least 90 IBT or 550 paper-based or an IELTS score of at least 7.0. There may be some alternative tests that are acceptable, please check with [bispinsoc@berkeley.edu](mailto:bispinsoc@berkeley.edu) with any questions.

The Berkeley International Study Program has the ability to waive the English language test requirement in cases where we have assessed the language skills of the student and feel they have a high enough language comprehension level to succeed in Berkeley. Such waivers are given in the invitation letter from Trond Petersen addressed to International Concurrent Enrollment. When applying for admittance to the Concurrent Enrollment Program at UC Berkeley, a copy of this letter must be enclosed. We will issue this waiver letter after conducting the interview process in person or by computer.

## Student Visa to the United States

UC Berkeley Extension office will issue all the documents required to obtain a student visa from the U.S. Embassy in your country. UC Berkeley Extension is very efficient at this. All required documents are issued within four weeks of receiving a completed application for admittance, and sometimes even faster than this.

Students will have to submit required documents to the U.S. Embassy, as well as make an appointment for an interview at the embassy in their country. There is a cost for the SEVIS ID and to the U.S. Embassy. It usually takes approximately 2 weeks to receive a visa from the U.S. Embassy once the interview has taken place, although the time will vary by location.

It is recommended that you make an appointment at the U.S. Embassy as soon as you receive the required documents from UC Berkeley Extension.

## Housing in Berkeley

There are many different types of housing available to visiting students. Most of our visiting students live in apartments or homes. Some will live in dormitory style accommodations such as the International House. Students are responsible for obtaining their own housing, but we provide several resources to assist students. Once students have been invited to our program, a list of housing options is sent out, and student can connect with others who are looking for housing.

Housing in Berkeley is relatively expensive. A room in a shared apartment or house typically costs about USD 800-1000 per month depending on the type of housing and how many students are sharing. Housing that is closer to the UC Berkeley campus is generally more expensive than housing farther away and accessible by public transportation.

Living in shared housing, where each person typically has her/his own bedroom, and shares kitchen, bathroom and living room(s) with 2-3 other persons, is a good way to get to know Americans and learn the language. Around campus, there are a number of apartments where there might be a room in a shared student house. We also have a Facebook site for Berkeley students and our international

visitors to communicate about housing options. To join go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BISPHousing>

There are several websites which can be used to find housing and get an impression of the housing market in Berkeley. Most landlords prefer or require tenants to apply in person, so you will have to wait until you arrive in Berkeley to sign an agreement. However, many students find housing before arriving in Berkeley through other international students who need to move out before their one-year lease is up. We recommend sites such as [housinganywhere.com](http://housinganywhere.com) or <https://sfbay.craigslist.org/>. *Please use caution and do not send money online until you are certain that it is a reputable apartment website.*

### Other facilities at the university

Students coming to UC Berkeley get access to a lot of other facilities as well, such as the campus libraries, recreation facilities, campus bus services, and more. Fees to use these facilities are included in the Cal I Card fee that you pay prior to the semester starting.

The university does not have designated reading areas for students. For reading and coursework, many students use the libraries. It is highly recommended that you bring your own portable computer.

### Work in the USA

Students should anticipate not working while in Berkeley.

### Fall 2018 & Spring 2019 Academic Calendar

#### Fall 2018 Semester

- August 15: All students should plan to be in Berkeley by this date for mandatory orientation sessions
- August 22: Instruction starts on this date
- September 3: Labor Day Holiday, no instruction
- November 12: Veterans Day Holiday, no instruction
- November 21-23: Thanksgiving Holiday Break, no instruction
- December 10-14: Final Examinations

#### Spring 2018 Semester

- January 16: All students should plan to be in Berkeley by this date for mandatory orientation sessions
- January 21: MLK Holiday, no instruction
- January 22: Instruction starts on this date
- February 18: President's Day Holiday, no instruction
- March 25-29: Spring Break, no instruction
- May 13-17: Final Examinations