



Independent Study Abroad Handbook

UCDAVIS

STUDY ABROAD

Overview

Creating Your Own Study Abroad Experience

Students are encouraged to explore all of their UC-sponsored study abroad options: UC Davis faculty-led programs such as Quarter Abroad and Summer Abroad and the system-wide UCEAP program. Students who cannot find a suitable program within the UC portfolio can enroll in a study abroad opportunity offered by another university or a third-party provider that best fits their academic and personal goals. UC Davis Study Abroad refers to these programs as “independent study abroad programs.”

If you have already decided to study abroad on a program offered by another institution or organization, it's important to realize that you will need to do your own research to make it a successful experience. Because it's not always obvious in a program's description or web site, you will need to carefully research and understand what the program will provide. Some programs are quite structured and organize all aspects of the program such as housing, registration, excursions, insurance coverage, and onsite support, whereas others will not offer much more than access to an overseas university, leaving the student to do the rest.

This handbook will get you started: the “why,” “what” and “how”. It will help support your study abroad experience by including things for you to consider, criteria for choosing a reputable program, what documents you will need to gather and complete, and how to process them with the right departments before, during and after your program. University procedures may seem slow and tedious as you navigate throughout the process, but you will succeed if you carefully follow the information in this handbook and review the advice and checklists. The processes are set up to support your success, not to thwart your progress! Submitting the *Independent Study Abroad Leave Form* is only one small part of the process. You should meet with an advisor at UC Davis Study Abroad **at least two quarters prior** to studying abroad.

Why file for Independent Study Abroad Leave?

Students who participate in independent programs **on study abroad leave** can:

- Have the freedom to choose among a wide variety of academic programs around the globe.
- Transfer academic coursework with a grade of C or better toward major, minor and GE requirements. Coursework must meet the academic standards of UC Davis and come from an accredited university recognized by UC Davis.
- Apply their federal and state financial aid (Pell, Direct Loans, Perkins, and Cal grants) toward the cost of the program. The following campus based grants and scholarships from UC Davis cannot be transferred to non-UC programs: UCG, USCH, SUG, UCDCF, MR50, MR51, MR49, NRH2 and NRH3.
- Get advice from UC Davis Study Abroad on how to choose a program and getting transfer credit.
- Maintain their UC Davis email, MyUCDavis, and SISWEB access. You are automatically assigned pass times which allows you to register for UC Davis courses on campus while abroad.

Classification of Programs

“Independent” programs are programs offered by another university or study abroad provider that offer classes at accredited universities abroad.

Some programs will use a **third-party provider** to support the student during the experience abroad. Many will provide housing, excursions, health and safety coverage, and even course selection. All program costs are paid directly to the provider. The specific program's courses will be reviewed and pre-approved or denied for transfer credit to UC Davis through the Independent Study Abroad leave process.

The term **“direct enrollment”** refers to the option of UC Davis students applying directly to a foreign university as a visiting international student. This is the most independent option for study abroad and requires students to be highly organized. Students are often required to research and apply for visas, housing, and transportation on their own and there may be little pre-departure support. The specific program's courses will still be reviewed and pre-approved or denied for transfer credit to UC Davis through the leave process.

The study abroad leave procedure is the same for programs with a provider, and direct enrollment.

Please review the chart below for issues to consider regarding your academic plan and, if applicable, financial aid status.

UCD Leave options	Study Abroad Leave	PELP	Withdrawal	Summer
Length of Leave	1-3 Quarters Not summer	1 Quarter	Multiple quarters	Summer - not considered leave from UCD
Advising	UCD Study Abroad: student should meet with advisor to start the independent study abroad leave process	UCD Study Abroad does not assist or advise students	UCD Study Abroad does not assist or advise students	No advising needed
Academic Planning	The student follows the steps outlined in this handbook to complete UCD Study Abroad's Independent Study Abroad leave process.	Student only needs to meet with Major/Minor/College Advisor (not with UCD Study Abroad)	Student only needs to meet with Major/Minor/College Advisor (not with UCD Study Abroad)	Student only needs to meet with Major/Minor/College (not with UCD Study Abroad)
Course Review and Pre-Approval	Yes. Verification of transfer units prior to departure and upon return.	No. Official program transcripts will be reviewed by Undergraduate Admissions only after study abroad program ends.	No. Official program transcripts will be reviewed by Undergraduate Admissions only after study abroad program ends	No. Official program transcripts will be reviewed by Undergraduate Admissions only after study abroad program ends
Course Credit if approved	Transfer credit will be noted on transcript, no grades or course titles are listed	Transfer credit will be noted on transcript, no grades or course titles are listed	Transfer credit will be noted on transcript, no grades or course titles are listed	Transfer credit, will be noted on transcript - no grades or course titles are listed
Financial Aid	Possible - if you are a current FA recipient, some of your aid may be available	No	No	No
Fee	\$300	\$60	\$60	\$0

Choosing a Program

Factors to Consider

The success of your study abroad experience depends on careful planning; students are advised to start this research **at least** two quarters prior to studying abroad. From academic considerations such as how your course will fulfill university requirements to more personal ones such as the food and climate in your location, you need to research your options and choose the program that's right for you. The information below will help get you started on narrowing your focus and making a well-informed decision:

Why do you want to study abroad?

- Are you interested in a specific location or field of study?
- Do you want to immerse yourself in a new culture?
- Do you want to learn a new language or improve your skills?

- Do you want to widen your global perspective?

What kind of experience are you looking for?

- Do you want to create your own program or have all the details organized by a program provider?
- Do you want to travel to several different locations or stay in one city?
- Do you prefer an urban or rural environment?
- Do you want to be with other Americans, or do you prefer to be in classes with locals, residents or other international students?

What type of housing do you prefer?

- Living in a dorm, apartment, or hostel?
- Living with a host family and locals?
- Do you want to live with other Americans?
- Will your housing include a kitchen, or what type of meal plan will be offered?

What will be the implications of living with locals vs. Americans, eating on a meal plan vs. shopping and cooking

yourself? How flexible are you and adaptable to changing your lifestyle based on other people's daily habits?

Other questions to ask yourself when setting your goals can be found on the "Resource Hub—Choosing a program" web page in the 'Students' tab at <http://studyabroad.ucdavis.edu>.

Refer to the "Comparing UC and Independent Study Abroad Programs" chart (Appendix A) at the end of this handbook to compare and contrast the different program variations.

Resources for Choosing a Program

Study abroad search engines:

- Go Abroad: <http://www.goabroad.com/>
- Institute of International Education Passport: <http://iiepassport.org/>
- Study Abroad: <http://studyabroad.com/>

Additional Resources

- Peer Advisors: Come into the UC Davis Study Abroad office and talk to a front desk Peer Advisor to talk about all types and kinds of study abroad opportunities.
- UCD Study Abroad Advisor: Schedule an appointment with the professional staff advisor for the independent study abroad leave.
- Past students on a given program (contact your provider!)

Financial Aid

If you are granted study abroad leave, you may be eligible to use Federal and State (not campus) Financial Aid for your study abroad program including loans. Financial Aid recipients must maintain a full-time course load while abroad and ensure that courses will transfer back to UC Davis—otherwise, aid may be revoked if already disbursed. More details about the process are found in the section "Stage Three" on page 5 and on page 7 "What UC Davis students on study abroad leave need to know/do".

The following funds **are not** disbursable to students on study abroad leave:

- University Grants: **UCG, USCH, SUG**
- University Campus Fee Grant: **UCDCF**
- Regent Scholarships: **MR50, MR51, MR49, NRH2, NRH3**

Note: Financial Aid is **not** available for students participating on independent programs during the summer.

Academics

Ideally, students work out their 4-year plan with their Departmental Advisor and/or College Dean's Office that incorporates their study abroad goals and plans as soon as possible.

An International Admissions Specialist, **not** the College or Major Department, is responsible for determining if courses taken at an institution abroad will be transferable to UC Davis. The criteria for transferability include:

- the host institution abroad must be recognized by the Ministry of Education in that country or be accredited by a regional accrediting authority recognized by UC
- the coursework must not duplicate or overlap courses already completed at UC
- coursework must be comparable to courses offered within UC.

The college and major department cannot determine transferability. The college and major department are responsible for determining if the transfer coursework will satisfy major/minor requirements or GE requirements.

How transfer credit works

General Units toward graduation:

If a student only wants to **earn units abroad toward completion of total units to graduate**, then he or she should first identify detailed course descriptions within his/her chosen program. He/She should list these courses on the independent study abroad leave form and submit it to the UC Davis Study Abroad office. It is not necessary to meet with either the Major Advisor or College Dean's Office. The student then attends and completes the program abroad and has an official transcript sent to Undergraduate Admissions.

Major or Minor Credit

If a student wants to take classes abroad that will fit his/her major, the student should identify courses offered by their chosen program. He/She should then meet with his/her major advisor to review suitability for the course requirements of that major (however, course approval is conditional until upon completion of the program). The student then enters the classes on the study abroad leave form and submits it to **the UC Davis Study Abroad office**.

General Education requirements

If a student only wants to take classes for GEs, he/she would meet with the Dean's Office to

review suitability for the **GE requirements for that college**; however, the actual GEs will only be approved **after** the student returns from the program abroad and the student shows proof of completion and provides the supporting documentation (i.e. the syllabus and completed work). The student then writes the classes on the study abroad leave form and submits it to the UC Davis Study Abroad office.

Academic Units

Students on Independent Study Abroad Leave need to understand how the host academic institution issues academic units. A study abroad company **does not** issue academic units, a foreign or American university issues the units.

In additions, units to be considered for transfer from a non-UC study abroad provider must be issued by an **accredited** institution. What does “accredited” mean? Universities around the world are accredited by the Ministry of Education (or comparable government entity) in that country. The student must identify the accrediting institution by researching or contacting the study abroad provider. For study abroad programs offered by American universities, a student can research whether or not the host institution is accredited by looking on the website of the U.S. Department of Education.

When researching the program and completing the independent study abroad leave form, the student must be able to provide documentation of how the study abroad program issues units or credits to appear on the official transcript. Each university or study abroad company handles it differently. Some study abroad providers act as the host institution and some study abroad companies work with a partner academic institution (either foreign or a US school). **The provider’s web site should include this type of information** and if not, the student must contact them for clarification.

For example, the student should the number of weeks in the term (semester, quarter, trimester, etc.) and how many hours per week he/she will be in class. Will the study abroad company issue semester units or some other type of units? **The student should print this information** for himself/herself and **submit it with the leave form** (see more in the section below).

The following is an example of how one study abroad company describes their credit policy on their web site:

“Semester/year students in Italy complete 4-5 courses and receive 12-18 credit hours per semester session. Quarter students complete 4 courses and receive 13 credit hours per quarter session (10 semester credit hours). Most courses are equivalent to three semester credits each, though some language classes may be worth four or more credits. The program fee includes a

maximum of 16-17 credits per semester session (except for the 18 credit super-intensive programs in Florence, Rome, and Tuscany); however, students may take additional courses for credit for an additional fee per course. Students in all semester programs are required to take at least one Italian language course per session. Students are strongly encouraged to enroll in at least one Italian language course per semester. Summer students complete 1-2 courses and receive 3-7 credit hours per summer session, or approximately three credits per course. The program fee includes a maximum of seven credits per summer session; however, students may take additional courses for credit for an additional fee per course.”

Senior Residence

All students must meet the University of California Senior Residence requirement. In many cases, the Senior Residence requirement prohibits study abroad on independent study abroad programs during the last two or three quarters at UC Davis, because last 35 of 45 units of their degree should not be “transfer units.” Students in this situation who want to study abroad outside the UC system in their senior year must meet with their College Dean’s office to determine if they will be in or out of compliance.

Each student has different issues that could impact the senior residence requirement, for example, participation in the UC program in Washington D.C.

Please note the following advice for students meeting with their college dean’s office about senior residency:

1. Get an appointment with a professional **staff** advisor, not a peer advisor.
2. Try to document in writing a summary of what has been discussed. This can simply be an email to/from the staff Advisor summarizing the student’s academic plans for their program abroad (i.e. how many units they plan to transfer) or a copy of any senior residence petition submitted.

Duplication of Courses

The student should carefully read the course descriptions and syllabi of the classes offered abroad and compare them very closely to the descriptions and syllabi of the courses already taken at UCD. If the academic content of the class abroad looks very similar to courses already taken, then the student should assume that it will not be transferable. A student can consult an academic advisor or dean’s office advisor for additional assistance in discerning how much content, if any, can overlap.

An example of this situation is as follows: a student has taken intermediate level Japanese at UC Davis prior to departure. When he arrives in-country, the study abroad provider gives him a language placement test to determine his language level. The study abroad provider places him in an intermediate Japanese class that has shares most of

the same content as the intermediate level Japanese class he already took at UC Davis. However, he is not allowed by the host institution to enroll in the higher level because his Japanese comprehension and verbal skills are not adequate for the higher level. This means that he will possibly not obtain transfer credit for the units earned abroad. This student will have to determine if he would rather take the class for personal enrichment (and forgo the units), or choose another class that doesn't duplicate the prior coursework and therefore will allow him to earn full credit. In his case, he had to select another course because his financial aid was dependent on him having a minimum load of **transferable** units (12 units to maintain compliance with Financial Aid for the semester).

Returning to Classes

Readmission is guaranteed for students on the study abroad leave assuming you resume academic work by enrolling in courses, satisfy any holds that may have been placed on your registration, and pay your registration fees for the quarter specified for return by the established deadlines. If you fail to enroll in courses on the agreed-upon quarter, **you will be automatically withdrawn from the university.**

Applying for Leave

Eligibility

To be eligible for the Independent Study Abroad Leave, students must:

- be registered undergraduate students at UC Davis.
- have not completed a previous study abroad leave during their undergraduate career.
- be enrolled in a recognized (i.e. accredited) study abroad program for credit.
- maintain a full-time course load during the entire term abroad.

Stages of the Leave Process

STAGE ONE

Schedule an Advising Appointment

If you need advice on how to select a program or you have selected your preferred program(s) and are ready to apply for the leave, set up an appointment with a UC Davis Study Abroad advisor. This meeting needs to happen at least **two quarters prior** to the program start date. You will go over your plans, review any questions not answered by the handbook, discuss your responsibilities while on leave, and get the leave form. You may not request this form by email. It will only be given to you after you have had an in-

person advising appointment to discuss your study abroad plans and understand the process.

Submit the Leave Form to UC Davis Study Abroad

Because the form can only be submitted once, it is **imperative** that the form includes as much academic information about the program and courses as possible, including how the units will be issued (see "Academic Credits/Units" section). The leave form will not be processed without adequate academic details and course descriptions! Syllabi are helpful but not required if the course descriptions include enough detail (for example, learning outcomes/objectives of the course, the number of hours per semester/term and/or the number of times that the class meets). In addition, students must find and print out the provider's policy on course credit/transcript information, usually found somewhere in the provider's web site.

In addition, the **non-refundable** fee for the study abroad leave is \$300. The fee will be posted to your UC Davis student billing account **when the leave form is first submitted to UC Davis Study Abroad.**

When to submit the form?

Leave forms will be processed by UC Davis Study Abroad **six times a year** according to the following schedule which varies according the program's start date. Forms submitted earlier than these dates will not be processed in advance of the deadline below. Forms that have been completed without all required information will also not be processed.

Study abroad program dates	Deadline:
Fall Qtr & Academic Year	Priority: Feb 15 Final: May 1
Winter Qtr / Winter & Spring Qtrs	Priority: August 15 Final: Oct 1
Spring Quarter only	Priority: October 15 Final: December 1

STAGE TWO

Review of the Study Abroad Leave

Your form will be reviewed and returned within one month of the respective deadline above. The courses on the form will be individually pre-approved or denied for transfer credit. You will be notified via email once the leave form is ready to be picked up at UC Davis Study Abroad. You should take this form (and this handbook) with you abroad.

STAGE THREE

This stage is only required for students seeking major/minor/GE credit or financial aid.

MAJOR/MINOR CREDIT: Submit the Leave form to your department for review

If you would like the classes to be taken abroad to fulfill major/minor requirements, take the signed form to your Major/Minor Advisor for review. Meet with the Advisor to discuss your proposed classes and review the syllabi for course equivalencies. Credit is conditional until courses are complete and the units are transferred. Refer to the "Academics" section above for more information.

GE CREDIT: Submit the Leave form to your college for review

The college can review the courses to determine the likelihood of GE credit. They will not be able to approve them formally until return. Credit is conditional until the courses are complete and the units are transferred.

FINANCIAL AID

After your leave form has been processed, UC Davis Study Abroad will send you a PDF of a special financial aid form for study abroad leave. This form is called the "financial aid **contractual agreement**" or "financial aid **consortium agreement**" depending on your provider (UC Davis Study Abroad will make this determination and send you the correct form for your provider). You will then forward the PDF document to your provider or host institution to complete the information, which includes the tuition, fees, and living expenses of the program. They then need to fax it **DIRECTLY** to the UC Davis Financial Aid office. The Financial Aid office will then prepare your financial aid package at the same time they process financial aid for all campus students (not before).

NOTE: The provider often takes several weeks to complete the form and fax it to the UC Davis Financial Aid office. In addition, the Financial Aid office may also take several weeks to process the fax and take the necessary next steps to alter your aid package for studying abroad. This is why the study abroad leave process (Stage One) cannot be started at the last minute or your financial aid abroad might not get re-packaged in time.

Recommendation: After the financial aid form is completed and sent by the study abroad company/host institution to the UC Davis Financial Aid office, have your provider also mail you a copy of what was faxed. This is important to have for your records so that nothing falls through the cracks between the provider and the UC Davis Financial Aid office (during certain periods of the year, the UC Davis Financial Aid office receives hundreds of faxes in one day!). You may contact the Financial Aid office directly if you have any questions by visiting the front desk in Dutton Hall or sending an email to

undergradfinaid@ucdavis.edu. It is recommended to bring a copy of the fax that was sent by your provider to their office so that you have a copy of the full fees for your program. The advisor at the UC Davis Study Abroad office will not be able to see how and when the financial aid is disbursed as she does not have access to student's individual billing records.

Withdrawing/Cancelling

If you decide not to participate in the study abroad program and want to withdraw from the study abroad leave, **send an email** to the UC Davis Study Abroad advisor explaining the nature of your cancellation. You will then be re-coded in SISWEB to show that you plan on taking classes in Davis, not abroad and therefore, you will need to register for your classes at UC Davis. **No students will be refunded the \$300 fee (no exceptions).**

Pre-departure Planning

General and Travel Information

Website Resources

The Resource Hub on UC Davis Study Abroad's web page includes information on getting started, types of programs, factors to consider, and how to finance study abroad. The web site is:
<https://studyabroad.ucdavis.edu/students/resources.html>

Passports and Visas

It may sound obvious, but make sure you have a valid [passport](#) and one that has an expiration date at least 6 months past the date you plan to return to the United States. It can take up to 8 weeks to get a passport so don't leave it to the last minute. The Business Center at the ARC offers Passport and Passport photo services. If you are not a permanent US resident, discuss with your program provider what supplemental documentation you need to have for entry requirements for the program destination (such as a tourist or student visa) or any special documents you will need to re-enter the United States.

Most programs will also require a VISA. The visa process should NEVER be left until the last minute. It is your responsibility to make sure you obtain a visa for the country where you will be studying. Contact your program provider for directions and supporting documentation.

Program-Specific Information

In addition to the web site describing the program, your provider will probably send you a pre-departure guide that will include both general and country-specific information. It will probably include the following topics:

Housing and Meals

What kinds of accommodations are provided in the price of the program? How far is the local transportation from the housing to the classroom site? What's the neighborhood like? What kind of meals will be offered at the housing location or will you be cooking your own meals? If you get to choose your housing or meal plan, remember the questions posed in the section "Factors to Consider." How will living with Americans, international students, or locals change your experience?

Travel

Research the program's information on flight recommendations and booking your airfare (as it may be part of the program price). What are the required arrival and departure dates? What do you do if you arrive early or leave late? Research the location's geography and political climate, cultural preparation for your destination, how to register yourself with the [State Department](#) and/or local embassy, entry/exit requirements such as if you need a visa, local currency, a packing list for what to bring, how you will get to the classroom location and using public transportation, etc.

Program-Specific Information

Your provider may describe the number of units and/or hours of class time, how you will register for your courses abroad, the details of the academic program such as a syllabus or itinerary, and what types of field trips or excursions, if any, are organized or included in the price. You may also have questions about communication such as internet access, whether or not you need to bring a laptop or buy a local cell phone, and if there will be a study center or place where students can meet with the local staff. Your program should also provide an onsite orientation.

UC Davis Study Abroad does **NOT** offer a pre-departure orientation for students who are participating on an Independent Study Abroad Leave, so make sure to follow up with your program provider regarding any unanswered questions.

Also, make sure you understand the provider's cancellation policies and deadlines. No matter which program you select, consider **trip cancellation/interruption insurance**.

The following are not endorsed or recommended by UC Davis; however, they are a good place to start your research:

- [Travel Guard](#)
- [STA Travel- Travel Insurance](#)
- [Travel Insurance Services](#)
- [Insure My Trip](#)

Health and Safety

Medical Insurance & Health Matters

While on the study abroad leave, you will not be covered by UC Davis SHIP health insurance or services. Therefore, you are responsible for acquiring adequate health insurance coverage while abroad and between terms. Study abroad providers may include coverage, some have elective coverage, and some may require students to provide their own insurance coverage. You must contact the provider directly for more information. If you have a private insurance policy, you should ensure that coverage will extend abroad. Make sure you read up on any immunizations required for the destination. The Center for Disease Control's web site has country-specific travel tips: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>.

Some students in the past have used the following search engine to find health insurance, <http://studentsabroad.com/resources.asp#Insurance>, or compared plans and rates of companies such as HTH, TravelGuard, Medex, and STA Travel's insurance. UC Davis does not recommend or endorse any specific company and all students should thoroughly research companies based on their own criteria for selection.

NOTE: SHIP insurance covers students only during terms in which they have paid fees to UC Davis, and only for the dates of that term. Summer coverage is initiated by spring quarter fees; therefore, students on study abroad leave during spring quarter will not be covered by SHIP insurance during the summer. Additionally, there may lapse between your last day at UC Davis and your study abroad program start date, and/or between your study abroad leave end date and when you return to UC Davis. You are responsible for securing insurance for coverage during this time.

Free UC Travelers' Insurance for all UC students

Register at least 30 days prior to your departure at <http://uctrips-insurance.org/>. This free insurance covers students for security extraction, emergency medical evacuation, and repatriation and other travel assistance services. This insurance is supplement to your primary international health insurance, not a replacement.

Emergencies (natural disaster, medical, program)

UC Davis cannot provide assistance for emergencies to students on independent study abroad programs. Therefore, you should know how your provider describes their risk management and health and safety procedures. What kind of onsite support do they provide during an emergency? What happens if there's a natural disaster or political unrest occurs and do they communicate regularly to their students or expect them to stay abreast of current situations on their own? What are their communication policies? What happens if you have an accident (major or minor) and what can you expect of your provider or host institution? How will your family reach you if there's an urgent matter back at home in the U.S.?

While Abroad

Safety Abroad

In the event of an emergency, you should understand and follow your provider's policies and protocol. If you are unable to reach your provider or host institution's emergency personnel, you may contact UC Davis Campus Dispatch at 530-752-1230. The call will be reported and channeled to staff at UC Davis Study Abroad who will attempt to contact your provider on your behalf.

Availability of University Services

You are not considered a regular UC Davis student during the time of your leave and are not eligible to receive normal university services except for the following:

- You will retain your UC Davis email account
- You will have online access to MyUCDavis and SISWEB.

Registering for Classes

During your study abroad leave, you are considered a "continuing student" and will be issued registration appointments via SISweb (same as the normal procedure while you are in Davis). Your registration pass times may occur while abroad. Plan to register during your pass times, taking into consideration the difference in time zones. The pass time listed is Pacific Standard Time, NOT the time in the country where you are physically present.

To find out when you can register for your classes, visit the Registrar's web site:

http://registrar.ucdavis.edu/html/academic_calendar.html. If you need more help, you can download the current term's *Class Schedule and Registration Guide* (available by navigating through the Registrar's Office's web site). It shows that Pass Times are made available starting on a certain date (for example, November 1st for Winter Quarter but the actual Pass Time 1 registration period does not begin until November 8 through November 19).

Course Load and Post-Departure Withdrawal

If you withdraw in your study abroad program after it has begun (or elect to take less than a full load of coursework), you **must** notify UC Davis Study Abroad and the Financial Aid Office.

Every student's aid package is individualized. If you enroll in less than a full-time load when abroad, your aid may be affected. If you withdraw completely from your study abroad program and your aid has already disbursed, **you may be required to refund the money to the UC Davis**. You must communicate **any changes that affect your full-time status** (less than 12 transferable units per quarter)

to the UC Davis Study Abroad independent study abroad advisor immediately AND the UC Davis Financial Aid office.

If you withdraw completely and are on leave for longer than one quarter, make sure to let UC Davis Study Abroad know what quarter you plan to return to Davis.

Words of advice from a past UC Davis student on independent programs

"While abroad, stay in contact with your Academic Advisor(s). The benefits are twofold: (1) You can ask them about specific courses once you are on your program (re: transferring credit for major/ minor academic requirements) and (2) they'll remember you when you return, making the entire process potentially smoother—send them a postcard and bring back a small souvenir. SAVE ALL OF YOUR WORK, including syllabi, essays, in class assignments, prompts, midterm exams, final exams (it is better to over-save than under-save). Saving your work will give you a better shot with your academic adviser regarding transferring coursework for major/ minor academic requirements. You will appear organized and prepared for your return meeting—advisers love this (they are short on time). Pay close attention to the time difference while abroad when noting your pass times. Many students miss their pass times because they forget to factor in the time difference. Understand the university system: [UC Davis Study Abroad]'s role, the Major/ Minor (Dept) Adviser(s)' role, the host institution's role (if applicable), the study abroad provider's role (if applicable), and YOUR ROLE." (Rachel Goldstein, Israel, 2008).

Academic Reminders

- Save all of your class documents! You will need your syllabi, notes, papers, and tests if you are fulfilling a G.E. or major/minor requirements. Ask your department or Dean's Office what specifically you will need when you return to Davis.
- If you have any questions about academic issues while you are abroad, contact your Major/Minor Adviser, your Dean's Office or UC Davis Study Abroad.
- If you need to withdraw while you are abroad, you will contact both your provider or host institution AND the Education Abroad Center. If you do not notify UC Davis Study Abroad in writing (email is fine), you will be in violation of the terms of the leave. If you do not notify the EAC and you are receiving financial aid, you will be in violation of the conditions of financial aid and will be subject to any consequences as outlined in your terms.
- Give instructions to your provider or host institution to have your **official transcripts** sent to (1) UC Davis Undergraduate Admissions and (2) yourself. It's always a good idea to have a set for yourself in case the paperwork does not arrive at its intended mailed destination (if you hand-

deliver it to the Undergraduate Admissions office in Mrak Hall, it must be in a **sealed** envelope). **DO NOT HAVE TRANSCRIPTS MAILED TO THE UC DAVIS STUDY ABROAD OFFICE.**

Mail the official transcript to the following location at UC Davis:

**Undergraduate Admissions
University of California, Davis
One Shields Avenue
Davis, CA 95616**

Don't forget to...

- Register for your classes at UC Davis while you are abroad for the quarter you return. When registering during your pass times, taking into consideration the difference in time zones.
- Financial Aid students: if you return to UC Davis during a new academic year (Fall), DO NOT forget to complete and submit a FAFSA application by the deadline in early March (www.fafsa.ed.gov)

Upon Return

Resources

Visit the UC Davis Study Abroad “**Get Involved**” web pages for up to date advice, resources and campus links, and information about staying involved in the international education community:

http://studyabroad.ucdavis.edu/students/returnee_getinvolved.html .

Academics

As noted in the above section “While Abroad,” you will have already given instructions to your provider or host institution to have your transcripts sent to UC Davis for the transfer units. If you are also petitioning to fulfill major/minor or GE requirements, you will need to submit your syllabi, notes, papers, and tests where appropriate, i.e. to your major department or to your college Dean’s Office.

Stay in Touch

UC Davis Study Abroad wants to hear from you! Your fellow Aggies want to know about your experiences abroad. The **Aggies Abroad Network** is a hub for you to share all your stories, blogs, and adventures from abroad, and get your daily dose of Study Abroad social media! Also, don’t forget to enter your favorite photos in the UC Davis Study Abroad Photo contest! Find it all here:

<http://ucdavisabroad.com/>.

Frequently Asked Questions

General and Academic Questions

Are there specific programs designed for my major?

If you find a study abroad program that is offered by another American or foreign university or third-party provider that looks like a good fit for your major, you should meet with your Major Advisor as soon as possible to find out if the courses offered will potentially be eligible for credit for the major. Having the advisor review and pre-approve the actual courses is critical if you want to make sure that the course fits into your requirements for the major. UC Davis Study Abroad will first review the selected courses for general transferability, then the major advisor will determine if they fulfill major requirements.

Don’t forget to check out your options within the UC portfolio of study abroad programs. Both the UC Davis Summer Abroad and Quarter Abroad programs offer subject-focused coursework. The UCEAP program also has specific programs that have coursework abroad that can satisfy your major requirements. Please visit the “Academics” page at UC Davis Study Abroad’s web site to see if your department and UC Davis Study Abroad have recommendations for your major.

What are the prerequisites and eligibility requirements to study abroad?

It depends on the program. All prerequisites and eligibility requirements should be listed on the program web sites.

How can I go on a semester program when UC Davis is on quarters?

Students on Fall Term programs will miss Fall Quarter at UC Davis (assuming your program ends no later than December, but some Fall programs abroad end as late as February and therefore, you would be missing Winter Quarter in Davis), but will earn 18-24 quarter units of credit. Students on Spring Term programs will miss Winter and Spring Quarters and earn 18-24 quarter units. Students on year-long programs need to earn 36-48 quarter units, comparable to a year on campus. It is very important to confirm the program start and end dates because some programs do conflict with the UC Davis academic calendar.

How can I meet senior residence requirements and study abroad my senior year?

You may be able to participate in a UC study abroad program during your last quarter/summer at UC Davis, provided you haven’t exceeded your 225 units (Engineering majors excluded). All college and major requirements must be fulfilled before you leave or during your year abroad. If you want to go on an independent provider’s program (outside the UC system), you must receive **written prior approval from your college Dean’s office.**

Will I graduate on time if I study abroad?

Yes. Creating an academic plan with your major advisor will help you choose a program and courses that will fit with your degree. The earlier you begin this process, the better it will work!

How can I avoid reaching my Unit Cap and still study abroad?

If you study abroad on a Spring semester program (but please read the program's information carefully as there are some variations), you will typically be absent from the UCD campus for 2 quarters, but will only be receiving 18-24 units of credit for your semester abroad. This will decrease the number of units you earn for that academic year.

What affect will studying abroad have on my GPA?

Coursework taken on programs administered by the University of California should figure into your GPA. Coursework taken on an independent study abroad program is transfer coursework and will not be calculated into your GPA.

What if I failed a class abroad? It won't appear on my transcript or be calculated into my overall GPA, will it?

For independent study abroad programs, grades will not be included in your UC GPA. However, like a UC transcript, that record is permanent and will stay with you (for example, when you are applying for graduate school). Failed classes will not transfer and therefore, will not satisfy any requirements. Please note, there are consequences: if you are on financial aid and fail your classes, you will be liable to return your aid.

I am abroad and some of the courses I listed on my study abroad leave form that were reviewed and approved are not offered this semester at my host institution abroad. What do I do? How do I select courses that I didn't list on the form? Will they transfer? Will I get units and credit?

Students are encouraged to include additional alternate courses on the leave form: 6-8 courses for the semester (or quarter) and 12-14 courses for the year. This will allow you the flexibility to choose courses that have already been reviewed and pre-approved for transfer credit (and if applicable, satisfying requirements for your major).

UC Davis Study Abroad has no control over courses offered by a third-party provider or host institution; therefore, there is a chance that you may have to take alternative courses abroad beyond those you listed on the leave form.

Can I go on an independent study abroad program during the summer?

You may attend an independent study abroad program over the summer if you'd like. However, there is NO study abroad "leave" during the summer. The independent study abroad leave is only for students who want to get pre-approval for transfer credit on non-UC study abroad

programs during the **regular academic terms of Fall, Winter, Spring semesters or year**. You will not be able to get pre-approval for transfer units for summer study abroad. You will only be able to submit your official transcript (along with detailed course descriptions and syllabi) AFTER you return from your study abroad experience and hope that the units transfer.

Undergraduate Admissions does not have the staffing or resources to pre-approve your summer classes offered outside the UC system but they are willing to process your official transcript upon return (simply mail it to them within 60 days of the study abroad program).

Leave Procedure Questions

Should I meet with a UC Davis Study Abroad advisor about going on a program offered by another school or third-party provider?

Yes! First, you should review UC programs (UCEAP, UC Davis Quarter Abroad and UC Davis Summer Abroad). When you determine these programs don't work for you, and can identify another program that can, come by the UC Davis Study Abroad office to schedule an appointment with an advisor to discuss your options and the study abroad leave process. When? You should start the process **at least 2 quarters** before your study abroad program.

How do I receive GE credit for courses taken abroad?

By submitting and completing the study abroad leave form, you will have already received pre-approval for general transferability of units earned abroad; however, this does not guarantee that the courses will satisfy the GE requirements. If you want pre-approval for GE credit for an independent study abroad program, you will need to meet with the Dean's office of your College to find out which courses abroad will be eligible for GEs. After your program is completed and you return to Davis, you will bring a copy of a detailed syllabus and all coursework to the Dean's Office for their review of actual coursework. In most cases, GE credit is only reviewed and approved after you return.

How and when will my time abroad be noted on my transcripts?

Similar to how transfer units are noted on transcripts. Units are posted soon after Undergraduate Admissions receives an official transcript for your program. Your host institution, course titles and grades will not appear; therefore, it is important to request a host institution transcript from your provider or host institution for your own records.

How do I get an official transcript/ documentation of my coursework (and grades received) from my host institution/ study abroad program? How long will it take? What do I do with it? Do I need to turn it in to Undergraduate Admissions?

You need to contact your provider or host institution to find out about their policies and procedures and how long it will take. You must submit it to Undergraduate Admissions within 60 days after the program ends.

Can I extend my program for another quarter/semester? How do I do that with the study abroad leave?

Yes, for consecutive terms only. You would need to submit a new leave form by the deadline. Contact UC Davis Study Abroad as soon as possible if you are considering extending while abroad.

Can I go on a program for more than 1 quarter? What about a full academic year?

Yes, if approved for the study abroad leave (students may be on study abroad leave for a quarter, two quarters, or year). An important note to consider: students who opt to file a PELP Leave instead of the study abroad leave may only be on leave for one quarter during their studies at UC Davis.

What does “pre-approval” mean?

Undergraduate Admissions, not the College or Major Department, is responsible determining if courses taken at an institution abroad will be transferable to UC Davis. The criteria for transferability include: the host institution abroad must be recognized by the Ministry of Education in that country or be accredited by a regional accrediting authority recognized by UC; the coursework must not duplicate or overlap courses already completed at UC; the coursework must be comparable to courses offered within UC. Courses are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The major department determines whether or not a course satisfies the major requirements.

Please note: all courses reviewed for the study abroad leave are 1) provisional and 2) credit is not based on the school alone.

- 1) Provisional because if the course is pre-approved before departure, and that course ends up being materially different when the student takes it (fewer units, different assessment, etc.) there is a possibility that the transfer credit could change when admissions receives the transcript. Students should be aware that UCD is provisionally approving based on what is submitted and UC Davis Study Abroad cannot be responsible for any changes that the host institution may make after the fact. Final transfer credit is always determined when Undergraduate Admissions receives the transcript. At program completion, students should ALWAYS reconfirm courses with their departments, check in with UC Davis Study Abroad if they change their enrollments, etc.
- 2) Some third-party providers also have a *working agreement* with UCEAP (the

University of California system-wide study Education Abroad Program). Under this agreement, UCEAP courses are reviewed and awarded UC credit under the academic oversight of UC Faculty (UCEAP Study Center Directors, Systemwide UCEAP, and the Academic Senate). Students who choose to direct enroll at the same institution where UCEAP students study are subject to the same transfer credit review as non-UCEAP institutions. The Education Abroad Center recommends that students participate in a UCEAP program at the schools unless there are extenuating circumstances that have been discussed with a UC Davis Study Abroad advisor.

I will not be able to get the exact course names, numbers, or units from the study abroad provider until very soon before school starts. What should I do?

Turn in your Independent Study Abroad Leave form with course descriptions for the past classes offered by the provider that you want to take **IF** the provider can tell you that they will likely be offered when you are attending the program. Then once the official classes are posted, resubmit the actual courses that you will take if they are different than the ones on the original leave form. Alternatively, you can wait until the deadline for the leave form, hoping that the host university will be able to come up with a true schedule of classes offered.

How do I register for classes before I return to UC Davis?

Students on study abroad leave can register for classes before returning to UC Davis by using SISWEB. The leave ensures that you will still have access to your email, MyUCDavis, and SISWEB while you are abroad. It is important that students monitor their UC Davis email account while abroad for information sent from the Registrar’s Office about registration dates and pass times. Students should consult with their academic advisors before going abroad to plan the courses that they will take while abroad and also to plan their classes for their first quarter back at UC Davis.

Financial Questions

How expensive will study abroad be compared to staying at Davis?

Many programs are comparable in price to UC Davis or even less, as are the costs of living. In addition, financial aid is available if you complete the study abroad leave process. Scholarships are sometimes offered by the company or institution organizing the program. Visit the UC Davis Study Abroad’s web site “Finances” page in the “Considering Study Abroad” section to learn more about funding your study abroad program.

When/how do I start the financial aid process?

In order to get your financial aid packaged in time for your term abroad, you must start the study abroad leave process 2 quarters before you plan to study abroad. The reason is that it will sometimes take up to 3-5 weeks to review your proposed courses abroad on your leave form and determine each course's transferability. Also, you will only get financial aid while on the independent study abroad leave if you are taking a **full load of approved courses** that can be transferred to UC Davis (usually about 12 units per quarter).

In addition, you will not receive the special financial aid form for the leave (called the "contractual agreement" or "consortium agreement" depending on your provider) from the UC Davis Study Abroad Advisor until the International Admissions Specialist has reviewed your proposed coursework. So it's a step by step process that takes time. You cannot wait until the final deadline to submit your independent study abroad form to the UC Davis Study Abroad office or your financial aid may not get packaged in time for your program abroad. The financial form given to you by the UC Davis Study Abroad Advisor will need to be sent to your provider or host institution (who then faxes a completed and signed version to the UC Davis Financial Aid office). The provider sometimes takes several weeks to complete the form and fax it to the UC Davis Financial Aid office. The Financial Aid office often takes several weeks to process the fax and do the necessary procedures for re-packaging your aid.

Will my financial aid be available for an independent study abroad program?

It depends. If you apply for and are granted study abroad leave status, you may be eligible to use some of your Financial Aid for your study abroad program. If you are not a Financial Aid recipient and you would like to apply, please visit the [UC Davis Financial Aid Web site](#) for information regarding the process. Financial Aid recipients must maintain a full-time course load while abroad and ensure that courses will transfer back to UC Davis, otherwise aid may be revoked (even if already disbursed). If you choose not to apply for study abroad leave (for example if you withdraw from UC Davis or file a PELP leave), financial aid will not be available for your program. Financial Aid is not available for independent study abroad programs during the summer.

Glossary of Terms

Contractual Agreement: This is a term used by the UC Davis Financial Aid Office and UC Davis Study Abroad for a particular financial aid form for students on Independent Study Abroad Leave. This form is sent to the student to send to his/her provider or host institution. The provider completes the required information about the cost of the program, fees, housing, living expenses, etc. This information is required for the UC Davis Financial Aid to

appropriately re-package the correct amount for a student's financial aid while abroad.

Consortium Agreement: This is similar to the "contractual agreement"; however, this form is for third-party providers who are part of a "consortium" agreement with UC Davis. The form is sent to the student on independent study abroad leave to send to his/her provider or host institution. The provider completes the required information about the cost of the program, fees, housing, living expenses, etc. This information is required for the UC Davis Financial Aid to appropriately re-package the correct amount for a student's financial aid while abroad.

Education Abroad Center (EAC): the former title of the UC Davis Study Abroad office. You will likely hear this outdated title referred to often by other campus departments, and possibly even printed on forms. The name change was made official November 1, 2013.

Faculty-led: Instructors are from home university and teach subjects in their specialty abroad and credit is issued by US university leading the program. Examples: UCD Summer Abroad, UCD Quarter Abroad, and some independent study abroad programs which would be led by faculty from other institutions, not UC Davis, and therefore credit is issued by the university organizing the program.

Immersion or Direct Enrollment: Through the study abroad program student enroll directly in a partner institution in a foreign country and take courses alongside regular degree-seeking students of that institution. Examples: some but not all UC Education Abroad Program (UCEAP) programs and some independent programs. Although students may take regular coursework, they bypass much of the regular admissions process of the host institution and are not matriculating for a degree in the same way native students are.

International School: Students take courses with other study abroad (international) students from around the world, but generally not with students from the host country. Examples: some UC Education Abroad Program "UCEAP" and independent study abroad programs. It varies widely.

Island: The study abroad provider creates special courses/programs for American students that may or may not be offered in conjunction with a host university. Examples: Some UCEAP, UC Davis Summer Abroad, UC Davis Quarter Abroad, and some independent study abroad programs. These are also similar to "Branch Campus/Study Center Models" because they are largely separated from foreign institutions.

Joint: Faculty are from UC and the partner institution; courses are with students from both UC and the partner

institution. Example: some EAP programs and some independent study abroad programs.

NUCSA or NUCSA Leave: An outdated institutional term for “independent study abroad leave”. The term came from the acronym “**N**on-**UC** **S**tudy **A**broad” leave. The term

“NUCSA” has historically been used across the campus, for example, by staff at the Registrar’s Office, Undergraduate Admissions, and Financial Aid for UC Davis students going on study abroad programs outside the UC system. Therefore, you may still hear other offices or departments on campus refer to your Independent Leave as “NUCSA”.

Comparing UC and independent study abroad programs

	UC Education Abroad Program (UCEAP)	UC Davis Quarter Abroad (QA) and Summer Abroad (SA)	Independent study abroad
DESCRIPTION	University of California’s system-wide study abroad program provides academic opportunities for UC students at over 150 institutions in 35 countries.	Quarter Abroad and Summer Abroad programs are unique to our campus in that these programs are taught or led by UC Davis faculty in an international setting	If a UCEAP, QA, or SA program does not meet your needs, there are many programs sponsored by organizations and universities outside of the UC system. While we do not endorse or recommend specific programs, resources for and referral to independent study abroad program are available at the UC Davis Study Abroad office.
ACADEMIC CREDIT	<p>UC credit and grades are earned for EAP courses.</p> <p>Major or minor requirements may be satisfied if approved by your major or minor advisor. General education or language requirements may be satisfied if approved by the Dean’s Office of the college where your major is located.</p>	Coursework taken through Quarter Abroad and Summer Abroad programs provides direct credit in the same way classes taken on the UC Davis campus does.	<p>Students participating in study abroad programs should discuss their academic plans with their academic advisor(s). Academic Planning Forms are available at the UC Davis Study Abroad office.</p> <p>Major or minor requirements may be satisfied if approved by your major or minor advisor. General education or language requirements may be satisfied if approved by the Dean’s Office of the college where your major or minor is located.</p>
REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requirements vary by program but most programs require a 2.85 to 3.0 GPA. - Language prerequisites vary by program. - Program selection is made by UCD and UCEAP system-wide staff and host universities. - Application deadlines vary by program but early submission of applications is encouraged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 and be in good academic standing to be eligible. - Language prerequisites and application deadlines vary by program. - A student conduct clearance form from Student Judicial Affairs must be submitted before consideration for Quarter Abroad and Summer Abroad. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program requirements and deadlines will vary according to the provider. -If you are going on study abroad leave for your program, you will need to meet with a UC Davis Study Abroad advisor in order to obtain and complete the appropriate forms. Deadlines will vary by program.
TRANSCRIPTS	Course titles, units and grades appear on your UCD transcript and are included in your UCD GPA and count towards graduation. Grades are generally posted within 3 months of the end of the program.	Because coursework taken through Quarter Abroad and Summer Abroad are UC Davis classes, grades will appear on the transcript and calculated into the GPA with no delay.	Credit obtained through a study abroad program outside the UC system will appear as transfer credit on the transcript – it will not include course titles, units, or a letter grade.
	If you are eligible for financial aid you will continue to receive it on UCEAP. Students who did not qualify for financial aid in the past may be eligible for a student and/or parent loan. Financial aid recipients must demonstrate	If you are eligible for financial aid you will continue to receive it on Quarter Abroad and Summer Abroad. Students who do not qualify for financial aid may be eligible for a student and/or a parent loan. Financial aid recipients must demonstrate satisfactory	If you apply for and are granted study abroad leave status, you may be eligible to use some of your Financial Aid for your study abroad program. If you are not a Financial Aid recipient and you would like to

<p>FUNDING</p>	<p>satisfactory academic progress while abroad.</p> <p>Scholarships are available.</p>	<p>academic progress while abroad.</p> <p>Travel Awards are available.</p>	<p>apply, please visit the UC Davis Financial Aid Web site for information regarding the process. Financial Aid recipients must maintain a full-time course load while abroad and ensure that courses will transfer back to UC Davis, otherwise aid may be revoked (even if already disbursed). *If you choose not to apply for study abroad leave, financial aid will not be available for your program. **Financial Aid is not available for independent study abroad programs during the summer.</p>
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