

Mo'orea Spring Island Sustainability Program



Student Handbook

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Welcome to the Mo'orea Spring – Island Sustainability Program!

This University of California program is run through the Environmental Science, Policy and Management Department (ESPM) at UC Berkeley in coordination with Berkeley Study Abroad and is based at the UC Gump South Pacific Research Station, located in Mo'orea, French Polynesia. Gump Station is host to renowned scientists from around the world and has been providing exceptional educational opportunities to UC students for over 30 years. The University of California's Gump Station houses NSF's Mo'orea Coral Reef Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER) site and the Biocode Project, making the island and its reefs among the best-studied in the world, while creating a dynamic interaction for students with international researchers, including those at the nearby French research station CNRS-EPHE CRIOBE.



Making a just transition to environmental sustainability is perhaps humanity's greatest challenge in the 21st century. Islands serve as model systems for exploring issues affecting this transition around the world. Mo'orea in French Polynesia is perhaps the best-studied small island in the world and the Island Sustainability Program offers you a chance to learn how this complex tropical system is navigating the Anthropocene.

The Island Sustainability program provides an exceptional learning experience and advanced training for undergraduates like yourself. It draws on the diverse interdisciplinary research carried out at the Gump Station by leading researchers from around the world, blended with the traditional wisdom of the Polynesian people. The incorporation of the cultural and

traditional aspects of the program is made possible through the unique partnership between UC Berkeley and the Tahitian community via the Atitia Center.

This partnership is with a Tahitian community-based organization, the Association *Te Pu 'Atiti'a*, which is made up of local educators and traditional experts. The Atitia Center develops common educational and research programs focused on marine and terrestrial biodiversity, traditional knowledge, culture, and the relationship between human societies and natural ecosystems. Students will also be exposed to a variety of local and international NGOs working in the region and will benefit from the blend of European, American and Polynesian perspectives affecting all aspects of life and sustainability on the beautiful, tropical islands of French Polynesia.

Mo'orea is an island located 11 miles north of Tahiti. It is a rural island with several villages and towns. The island and its nearshore marine ecosystem are one of the best-studied systems in the world. Mo'orea is recognized as an unusually resilient coral reef; current studies are examining the factors that underpin this resilience.

Island Sustainability French Polynesia – Program Outline

- 5 courses over an intensive 10-week field program + 1 week Spring Break + a remote Capstone project (3 weeks)
- Credits: 15 semester units
- After checking in at Gump Station on Mo'orea, students will begin the program with several weeks in the field on Tet'aroa atoll and Temae beach on Mo'orea. They will then circle back to be based at Gump Station for the remainder of the program. An excursion to Tahiti will also be arranged during the program.



PROGRAM STAFF

The Mo'orea Spring – Island Sustainability Program collaborates with various partners to make this program possible. Below, please find a list of who is involved and what roles they play:

Berkeley Study Abroad

The Berkeley Study Abroad office at the University of California, Berkeley and its staff assist in coordinating the Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program. If you have any questions regarding registration, course enrollment, program-related events, billing, and other logistical aspects of the program, please contact your program advisors at: mooreaislandsustainability@berkeley.edu.

Program Staff and Faculty

Hannah Stewart, Program Director and Faculty (gumpeducation@gmail.com)

Responsible for running the program and teaching one or more of the courses.

Instructor - Coral Reef Resilience; Co-Instructor - Data Science, Communication and Professionalism

Hannah Stewart is a marine scientist with experience working in temperate and tropical systems around the world. Hannah received her PhD from the [Department of Integrative Biology at University of California Berkeley](#) in 2004. She conducted her graduate fieldwork at the [Gump South Pacific Research Station](#) in Mo'orea, and has continued to work in and around Tahiti and Mo'orea for the past 24 years, including as a postdoc with the Mo'orea Coral Reef LTER ([MCR-LTER](#)), a researcher with the French lab [CRIOBE](#) and with the [Mo'orea Biocode Project](#), Scientist-in-Residence for [Tetiaroa Society](#), and an instructor for UC Berkeley's [Biology and Geomorphology of Tropical Islands Semester](#) and UCLA's Marine Biology Quarter for undergraduates. She has also worked in kelp forests of British Columbia, Washington, and California, and on coral reefs in Belize, Jamaica, Florida, and mentored many undergraduate and graduate students. Hannah is an experienced scientific scuba diver and instructor with Coast Guard advanced training in boat handling, first aid and rescue. She loves adventure and has sailed across the Pacific and throughout French Polynesia on a 38' sailboat, and through the Austral Islands on a traditional Polynesian sailing canoe with the Fa'afaite to raise awareness about a [new MPA effort](#). Hannah is currently Head of Science for [Coral Gardeners](#).



Neil Davies, Gump Station Director

Responsible for overall administration of the Island Sustainability Program while students are on location at the UC Gump Station on Mo'orea.

Neil Davies has been Executive Director of UC Berkeley's [Gump South Pacific Research Station](#) in Mo'orea, French Polynesia since 2000. He received his PhD in evolutionary genetics from University College, London, and has conducted fieldwork across

the Caribbean, Latin America, and Pacific Islands. He serves on the boards of the [Genomic Standards Consortium](#), the [Blue Climate Initiative](#), and the [Tetiaroa Society](#). As a Research Affiliate at the [Berkeley Institute for Data Science](#) (BIDS), his research focuses on sustainability science and how biodiversity genomics can contribute to a computational model of place - including the 'datafication' of whole social-ecological systems from genomes to society. He co-founded the [Island Digital Ecosystem Avatars \(IDEA\) Consortium](#) and is co-author of the book [Biocode: The New Age of Genomics](#) (Oxford University Press)

George Roderick, Program Faculty
Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management (ESPM)
 Professor of record - for all program courses

George Roderick is William Muriece Hoskins Professor and former Chair of the [Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management \(ESPM\)](#) at Berkeley. He also has faculty affiliations with the [Essig Museum of Entomology](#) and the [Berkeley Institute for Data Science](#). His research focuses on global change, especially the impact of biological homogenization and biological invasions in the Pacific. Research includes studies of the origins of endemic, indigenous and non-indigenous insects and spiders, processes associated with colonization and invasion, species interactions including biological control, and response to environmental change. He has been teaching and doing research at the Gump Station since 1999, and before that he taught at the University of Hawaii, Manoa. George is an avid nature photographer with work featured in scientific journals, outdoor magazines, and popular TV. Hannah, Neil, and George, developed the Island Sustainability Program in response to growing student interest in environmental sustainability and place-based learning.

PROGRAM CALENDAR

Please find below a preliminary list of important dates for the program. Please be aware that certain dates are subject to change. Should any updates to this calendar be made, you will be informed.

DATE	DESCRIPTION
October 2025 (Date TBD)	Program Welcome (TBD)
November 13 th , 2025	Pre-Departure Orientation
Early December (Date TBD)	Build a Better Fieldwork Future Workshop
January 19 th , 2026	Students arrive independently at Gump Station on Mo'orea
January 20 th , 2026	Orientation at Gump Station
January 21 st , 2026	Chartered Group Flight to Teti'aroa Atoll
January 22 nd – February 13 th , 2026	On site courses begin – Teti'aroa Atoll/Temae Beach, Mo'orea
February 14 th , 2026	Group travel from Temae Beach to Gump Station Gump Station Housing Move-In On site courses continue
March 29 th – April 5 th , 2026	Program Spring Break Students Depart Housing (Travel or Return Home)
April 6 th – April 26 th , 2026	Students Complete Capstone Projects Remotely (Faculty Accessible remotely during this 3-week period)

PROGRAM COURSEWORK & ENROLLMENT

Overview of Program Coursework

All Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program students will be enrolled in the 5 required, inter-related program courses. Fieldwork is a major emphasis of your coursework, and students will experience fieldwork in marine and terrestrial habitats on and around Teti'aroa, Tahiti and Mo'orea. The courses are related and build on one another, so aspects of all courses will surface throughout your time abroad.

- (1) **Island and Coral Reef Resilience and Ecosystem Services** (ESPM 109A, 3 Units) provides an overview of the processes affecting island and reef formation and function, and the natural and human benefits derived from the resources created by these systems. Students will participate in restoration efforts on Teti'aroa, and learn about the ecosystem services important for local communities, traditional values, and sustainable tourism.
- (2) **Polynesian Culture and Society** (ESPM 109B, 3 Units) This course provides an overview of Oceania, and immerses students in how the first peoples of these islands understand and interact with their island homes - from a traditional to modern perspective via a deep dive into the writings, art, music of the region. Traditional marine resource use and geopolitics of the region are discussed to understand the history that shapes modern Polynesia.
- (3) **Issues in Biodiversity** (ESPM 109C, 3 Units) explores the terrestrial and marine diversity around Teti'aroa and Mo'orea through field projects, and examines issues including habitat loss, invasive species and diseases (coral and plant diseases and mosquito-borne public health threats such as zika and dengue), genetic diversity, and eco-informatics.
- (4) **Environmental Planning, Policy, and Management** (ESPM 109D, 3 Units) explores traditional and modern land and sea use strategies and approaches to sustainability, as well as new technologies that aim to secure food, energy and water supplies. Students will interact with locals, community groups, policy makers and researchers to understand the larger questions about sustainable development, using these small islands as a microcosm of challenges being faced globally and the opportunities for sustainability.
- (5) **Data Science, Communication, and Professionalism** (ESPM 109E, 3 Units) will teach students effective oral and written reporting to different communities, and how to structure and organize research programs through a combination of opportunistic guest lectures by experts in the area and excursions. This will engage students in discussions around the role of science in society, its interactions with local and traditional knowledge and the impacts of data and technology, with consideration of ethical, legal and social issues. Students will also learn about Data Science for environmental sustainability through the case study of the Island Digital Ecosystem Avatar (IDEA) Consortium. Students will carry out a project to create a proposal related to sustainable management. Projects must demonstrate incorporation of what has been learned throughout the program as well as data science and scenario-based planning techniques.

It is your responsibility to be aware of your academic requirements, so please familiarize yourself with your major and college requirements by reviewing your college/major websites. Additional information regarding major and breadth credit fulfillment can be found in our [Program Course Key](#).

Course Enrollment

Program staff will be enrolling you in your five required program courses before the end of Fall semester. Students must remain enrolled in all five on-site courses, AND complete their remote capstone project after the on-site program is complete. Due to the academic design of the program, students must remain enrolled in all five courses. Dropping from any course would not be possible and considered as a withdrawal from the program. Dual enrollment in UC Berkeley courses outside of the Mo'orea Spring program curriculum is not possible.

Grades & Grading Options

All courses are offered for UC Berkeley credit and will appear on your transcript as Berkeley courses with letter grades. You are expected to remain on-site at the Gump Station and attend classes regularly during all academic sessions. You are expected to be on time and participate in all class components including excursions, guest lectures, and other class related activities. Failure to abide to the attendance policy and/or participate in all class components may impact your academic grade.

Note that Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program students will be enrolled in their courses on a Letter grade basis by default. If students wish to select the Pass/Not Pass option, they can change their grading option via Cal Central by the set spring semester deadlines. If a deadline has passed, students should contact their college advisor regarding the process to submit a late petition for enrollment changes. Consult with your academic advisors if unsure how the Pass/Not Pass option will impact major/minor or graduation requirements.

PROGRAM LOCATION & VENUE

The island of Mo'orea and surrounding nearshore ecosystem is one of the best studied island ecosystems on the planet, being home to the Gump Station – housing NSF's Mo'orea Coral Reef Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER) site, and the Moore Foundation's Biocode Project – and the CNRS-EPHE CRIOBE research station – housing France's Center of Excellence for Coral Research. Terrestrial and marine monitoring and inventories have been collected and archived for over 40 years.



Facilities at the Gump Station include a dock, boats (small skiffs to a 26-foot research boat), wet lab with flow-through seawater system, SCUBA facilities, and a fleet of vehicles. Small boat use and scientific diving are overseen by UC Berkeley's Dive Safety Officer (DSO). A large air-conditioned research building contains general use labs, molecular laboratory, conference room, and office space for visiting researchers. Refer to the [Gump Station User Guide](#) for a comprehensive list of site details and resources.

Traditional cultural knowledge is also rich on Mo'orea and easily accessible to students via the Atitia Center, a cultural and educational center adjacent to the research facilities on the UC Gump Station property. The Gump Station's Atitia Center is located on the southern half of the UCB property and is devoted to community outreach and educational activities. The Center is a partnership with a Tahitian community based organization - Association Te Pu 'Atiti'a - largely made up of local educators and traditional experts. The Atitia Center develops common educational and research programs focused on marine and terrestrial biodiversity, traditional knowledge, culture, and the relationship between human societies and natural ecosystems.

HOUSING & MEALS



Gump Station Housing

Students will be housed in double or triple occupancy rooms in the Gump Station student dormitory accommodation. In their rooms, each student will have a bed covered by a mosquito net and equipped with sheets, blankets, and pillows. Students will be provided with one bath towel. The student dormitory contains shared bathrooms and showers on every floor, a large communal kitchen, dining area, laundry facilities and a small classroom.



Teti'aroa Housing

During your field trip on Teti'aroa, students will be housed in the small Ecostation dormitory. At the Teti'aroa Ecostation dormitory, students will be housed in rooms shared with up to 5 students. Students may want to bring their own light bedding (such a sleeping sac/liner or sheet set) and pillowcase (pillows will be provided).



Temae Beach Housing

During your field trip on Temae Beach on Mo'orea, students will be housed at the Hirinaki Temae Beach House. At the Beach House, students will be housed in large, dormitory-style rooms shared with up to 12 students.

Meals

Full board (3 meals per day) is provided during the entire program via local caterers (no meals are offered during Spring Break).

Roommates

Roommates will be assigned by program faculty, however moves/trades are possible upon mutual agreement between students.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES & FIELD TRIPS



Teti'aroa Atoll Field Trip

As part of the program, all participants will begin their program by taking part in a two-week field trip to the atoll of Teti'aroa (starting January 21st), which will provide valuable insight into Polynesian atoll culture, and provide an opportunity for students to experience and explore the habitats of this low-lying atoll. Teti'aroa is relatively close to Mo'orea (2 hours by boat), and the Teti'aroa Society's Ecostation provides camp housing, internet access, wet and dry labs, ample access to the atoll's lagoon and terrestrial habitats. Dining services are provided at the on-site staff facilities. Students will be transported to Teti'aroa via chartered plane from Gump Station. At the end of this field trip, students will be taken on a group flight or boat to Tahiti, then a ferry to Mo'orea, arriving at Temae Beach.



Temae Beach Field Trip

After departing Teti'aroa, students will begin their field trip on Temae Beach, located on the island of Mo'orea. While at Temae Beach, your home base will be the Hirinaki Temae Beach House. Temae Beach is about 7 miles west of Gump Station. Your onsite courses will continue at Temae Beach, with unfettered access to the water, and plenty of opportunities to explore the richly diverse local ecosystem. At the end of this field trip, group travel will be arranged from Temae to Gump Station.

Atitia Center | Te Pū 'Ātiti'a

Traditional cultural knowledge is rich on Mo'orea and easily accessible to students via the Atitia Center, a cultural and educational center adjacent to the research facilities on the UC Gump Station property. The Gump Station's Atitia Center is located on the southern half of the UCB property and is devoted to community outreach and educational activities. The Center is a partnership with a Tahitian community based organization - Association Te Pū 'Atiti'a - largely made up of local educators and traditional experts. The Atitia Center develops common educational and research programs focused on marine and terrestrial biodiversity, traditional knowledge, culture, and the relationship between human societies and natural ecosystems.



Through the program, you will be immersed into the way in which the first peoples of these islands understand and interact with their island homes, from a traditional to modern perspective, and with insights on human-environment interactions. You will be presented with necessary historical and cultural context including basic language training, archeological field trips and interactions with local youth and elders at the Atitia Center and beyond to learn about local customs, traditions and attitude.

BILLING, PAYMENT, & PROGRAM COSTS

Billing & Payment

You do not pay at the time that you apply for the program. You will receive a bill for your program fees that will appear on your Cal Central My Finances tab under Billing Summary for Spring 2026. Fees will be posted in November after you are enrolled in your program courses.

For specific due dates, please check your Cal Central account My Finances tab. All charges must be paid in full by the deadlines listed in your My Finances tab under Billing Summary. Note: this excludes charges to be paid directly by Financial Aid.

Program fees include tuition, pre-departure preparation, onsite orientation program, room and board at Gump Station, excursions, program activities, and 24/7 emergency support, as well as administrative, academic and programmatic support abroad. Students are responsible for their airfare, SHIP insurance, and other out-of-pocket personal costs not covered by the program. Personal expenses (souvenirs, daily individual transportation, medical expenses, toiletries, etc.) are universally excluded from the program fee.



Delegating Access to your CalCentral Financial Information

To better monitor and manage your finances abroad, it is recommended that you give authorization to a parent, guardian, or family member to be able to access, view, and discuss your account with UCB Billing and Payment Services. If you would like to grant authorization to release account information to a third party, you initiate this through CalCentral. For more information, refer to [this step-by-step guide](#). You may revoke this authorization at any time, should you choose to do so.

Estimated Program Costs

FALL 2025 / SPRING 2026 MO'OREA STUDENT BUDGET

2021-22 Cohort and earlier (base)			2022-23 Cohort		2023-24 Cohort		2024-25 Cohort		
	Campus	Mo'orea	Campus	Mo'orea	Campus	Mo'orea	Campus	Mo'orea	
Tuition and Fees			Tuition and Fees		Tuition and Fees		Tuition and Fees		
Tuition & Fees	7,277.00	7,277.00	7,544.00	7,544.00	7,868.00	7,868.00	8,210.00	8,210.00	
Health Insurance Fee	2,429.00	2,429.00	2,429.00	2,429.00	2,429.00	2,429.00	2,429.00	2,429.00	
Subtotal	9,706.00	9,706.00	9,973.00	9,973.00	10,297.00	10,297.00	10,639.00	10,639.00	
Mo'orea Housing & Program Fee*	8,029.00		8,029.00		8,029.00		8,029.00		
Total	9,706.00	17,735.00	9,973.00	18,002.00	10,297.00	18,326.00	10,639.00	18,668.00	
Out-of-Pocket Expense Budget (for financial aid purposes)			Out-of-Pocket Expense Budget (for financial aid purposes)		Out-of-Pocket Expense Budget (for financial aid purposes)		Out-of-Pocket Expense Budget (for financial aid purposes)		
Room & Board	11,199.00	3,294.00	11,199.00	3,294.00	11,199.00	3,294.00	11,199.00	3,294.00	
Additional Food	1,080.00	953.00	1,080.00	953.00	1,080.00	953.00	1,080.00	953.00	
Books & Supplies	721.00	200.00	721.00	200.00	721.00	200.00	721.00	200.00	
Transportation**	415.00	1,100.00	415.00	1,100.00	415.00	1,100.00	415.00	1,100.00	
Personal	1,369.00	1,208.00	1,369.00	1,208.00	1,369.00	1,208.00	1,369.00	1,208.00	
Total	14,784.00	6,755.00	14,784.00	6,755.00	14,784.00	6,755.00	14,784.00	6,755.00	
Total COA	24,490.00	24,490.00	24,757.00	24,757.00	25,081.00	25,081.00	25,423.00	25,423.00	
<small>* incl. housing, ground transportation, some textbooks, programming activities</small>		<small>* incl. housing, ground transportation, some textbooks, programming activities</small>		<small>* incl. housing, ground transportation, some textbooks, programming activities</small>		<small>* incl. housing, ground transportation, some textbooks, programming activities</small>		<small>* incl. housing, ground transportation, some textbooks, programming activities</small>	
<small>**estimated roundtrip airfare & Gump Station transfer</small>		<small>**estimated roundtrip airfare & Gump Station transfer</small>		<small>**estimated roundtrip airfare & Gump Station transfer</small>		<small>**estimated roundtrip airfare & Gump Station transfer</small>		<small>**estimated roundtrip airfare & Gump Station transfer</small>	

For your reference, the budget above shows estimated costs for participating in the Mo'orea Spring 2026 - Island Sustainability Program, and a comparison to the cost of attending the Spring semester on campus. Keep in mind that when fees are assessed on your account, the Mo'orea Housing & Program Fee will be broken down into two charges: a cost for 'Room & Board' and a cost for 'Other Program Fees'. Also, please note that cost estimates are based on a student's cohort status.

The Financial Aid and Scholarships Office uses the finalized Spring 2026 program student budget to determine your financial need for your study abroad program as well as the amount of financial aid that can be offered to you.

Actual tuition, fees, and charges are yet to be finalized, and subject to change by the Regents of the University of California, and could be affected by increases or reductions in State funding or other developments.

FINANCIAL AID



Financial aid is available to help fund your participation in the Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program.

The [Financial Aid and Scholarships Office](#) will award federal, state, and institutional funds to all eligible students who have completed a 2025-2026 FAFSA, and will partner with you to ensure your cost of attendance and financial aid awards are adjusted to reflect your participation in the program.

You are encouraged to meet with a Berkeley Study Abroad financial aid counselor to review your estimated financial aid package based on the program budget. Contact travelaid@berkeley.edu with your questions.

When the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office calculates the amount of aid offered for participation in the Mo'orea Spring program, they consider not only the tuition and program fee charges but also any out-of-pocket expenses students may incur during the program. The charges posted directly to your CalCentral My Finances tab for the tuition and the program fee are part of the total expenses that will be incurred while abroad.

If a student requires financial aid to cover program costs, it is their responsibility to obtain confirmation in advance of any program deadlines. The inability to pay the program fee or tuition is not a valid reason to receive a refund of the fees associated with the Mo'orea Spring Program.

Aid cannot be disbursed more than 10 days prior to the start of instruction of on-campus courses at UC Berkeley (start of Spring semester instruction is January 20, 2026). Your financial aid awards are disbursed into your CalCentral billing account, and will pay all charges owed for the Spring 2026 term, including SHIP insurance if you are enrolled in SHIP. Students must make a plan to pay all pre-departure expenses such as airfare prior to any Spring 2026 loans being applied to CalCentral ten days prior to the start of instructions at UC Berkeley.

To learn more:

- Understand how your aid will be disbursed with [Financial Aid Payments and Refunds](#)
- Pose questions to the aid office by [contacting](#) Cal Student Central or travellaid@berkeley.edu
- Request a financial aid package estimate via the [Berkeley Study Abroad Financial Aid Advising website](#)

Receiving Your Awards

The Financial Aid and Scholarships Office begins disbursing financial aid to your account approximately 10 days before instruction begins each term. Make sure that you have signed up for [Direct Deposit](#) (Electronic Funds Transfer or EFT) is active to ensure timely receipt of your funds.

UC Berkeley reserves the right to adjust awards to correct any awarding errors. Changes to qualifying information or revisions of federal, state, or institutional policy may result in updates to aid eligibility and adjustments of financial aid awards. **Dates and deadlines are subject to change.**

WITHDRAWAL & CANCELLATION

Protocol: To cancel your participation in the Mo'orea Spring Program before departure please log into your BSA Portal and complete the 'Request to Cancel Form'. **Talking to program staff about your intention to cancel, or sending a request via email is not considered an official request.** Please be sure to review the cancellation policy carefully for details on deadlines and fees. If you are denied admission by Berkeley Summer Sessions and Study Abroad because you do not meet the eligibility criteria or the program is full, you will not be obligated to pay any program-related fees.

If you cancel your participation, or are administratively dropped from the Mo'orea Spring Program for failure to meet program requirements, Berkeley Study Abroad staff will drop you from your Mo'orea Spring Program required course(s).

Fees & Policy: If you receive financial aid and you cancel your participation prior to departure for the program, your financial aid will be repackaged based on the campus budget. Depending on the timing of your cancellation you may receive a bill for financial aid previously disbursed to you based on the Mo'orea Spring Program budget.

The cancellation policy for the Mo'orea Spring Program will be:

- Students who cancel on or after November 30, 2025 will be assessed a non-refundable \$500 fee.
- Students who cancel after instruction begins will be assessed a prorated percentage of remaining fees based on the schedule established for all students, which can be found on the Office of the Registrar [website](#).

PROGRAM ORIENTATIONS

Pre-Departure Orientation

All Mo'orea Spring 2026 - Island Sustainability Program students are invited to attend the Virtual Program Welcome in October (exact date and details to follow via email and in your BSA portal). The Program Welcome is a great opportunity to meet your program cohort, program staff, receive an overview of the program, and much more. Consider this your formal welcome to Mo'orea Spring 2026 - Island Sustainability Program!

On November 13th (details to follow), you will be required to attend the virtual program Pre-Departure Orientation. This orientation will cover health and safety abroad, and practical information and tips to prepare you for your semester abroad in Mo'orea.

In December (details to follow), before your departure for the Island Sustainability Program, you will be required to attend a virtual training workshop, entitled "Building a Better Fieldwork Future". With fieldwork being such an integral part of your program experience, this important workshop focuses on giving you the tools to ensure that field settings are safer, more equitable, and more welcoming for all field scientists. It identifies the unique risks posed by fieldwork and offers a suite of evidence-based tools for students and instructors to prevent, intervene in, and respond to sexual harassment and assault. Through a series of practical intervention scenarios, this workshop guides participants on how to be an active and engaged bystander, how to report incidents, and how to engage within field settings to minimize risk.

On-Site Orientation

Upon your arrival at Gump Station at the start of the program, you will receive a comprehensive on-site orientation. During this orientation, students will meet the UC Gump Station staff and receive extensive information about health, safety and emergency procedures; program academics and housing; the local area and transportation, and much more. At the start of your field trips to Teti'aroa and Temae Beach, you will also receive in depth orientations.



ACADEMIC POLICIES

Berkeley Academic Policies

Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program students are expected to abide by all University of Berkeley Academic policies during the summer session and while abroad. Please review the [Berkeley Academic Guide](#) to learn more about policies relating to student conduct, grades, etc.

Academic policies and procedures allow students to clearly understand their rights and responsibilities. They protect the integrity of the UC Berkeley degree and provide fair and transparent guidelines for activities related to teaching and learning across campus.

UC Berkeley students are expected to familiarize themselves with all academic policies. Students seeking clarity on academic policies relevant to or beyond those stated in the Berkeley Academic Guide should consult with the appropriate office.

Attendance Policy

You are expected to remain at the host institution location and attend classes regularly during all academic sessions. Expect classes to be held Monday-Friday. Attendance is monitored closely by immigration authorities due to recent changes in immigration policies. Consistently missing class can have a bearing on your right to stay in the country for the duration of the program.

Students are required to attend all course meetings. Course meetings include site visits and excursions. Violation of the attendance policy may result in sanctions including a lower grade, loss of course credit, or dismissal from the program.

Grades

All Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program courses will be taught by UC Berkeley faculty. You will earn direct UC Berkeley credit and grades for all coursework. All course information including subject areas, course numbers, course titles, and units will appear on your official UC Berkeley transcript with final grades that will be calculated into your cumulative GPA.

All grades reported to the UC Berkeley campus registrars are considered permanent and final. A grade may not be changed except to correct a documented clerical or procedural error. With the exception of grades of Incomplete (I) or In Progress (IP), no grade may be revised by reexamination, reassessment or completion of additional work.

Good Academic Standing

Students must be in good academic standing at UCB before participation in the program and must remain in good academic standing from the time of application to the end of the program. Please note that transcripts will be reviewed after Fall grades are posted, and if a participant enters academic notice status or demonstrates 12 or more units of incomplete coursework, it may lead to administrative withdrawal from the program due to lack of eligibility. In addition, students must maintain good academic status, as determined by UCB (minimum GPA of 2.0), during participation in the program.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

In addition to remaining in good academic standing, financial aid regulations require that students meet specific Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements to maintain eligibility for financial aid. You are expected to review the Financial Aid regulations regarding [Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\) for Undergraduate Students](#).

Unit Load Requirements

Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program participants are **required to maintain a minimum 13 unit load** in order to be considered a full time student. There will be serious visa and financial aid repercussions for students who fail to carry a minimum load.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT & OTHER ACCOMODATIONS

Registering with DSP

Mo'orea Spring Program participants are encouraged to disclose any accommodations (physical, academic, etc.) they may need as early as possible. Program staff will work with you through the interactive process to provide reasonable accommodations to the extent possible given the realities of the country to which you will be traveling and the time at which the accommodation request is made. It is recommended that you reach out to the program staff and to the Disabled Students Program as accommodations are determined by an individual assessment of each student.

If you have a documented disability, and are registered through Berkeley DSP office (Disabled Student's Program), make sure to request an accommodations letter from DSP documenting your accommodation requests for the Mo'orea Spring Program **well before departure**. The letter must be on letterhead and must be signed. Please submit the letter to your **Berkeley Study Abroad Program Advisors** at mooreaislandsustainability@berkeley.edu.

HEALTH INSURANCE

While abroad, you will be enrolled in UC Berkeley's Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP), if you have not chosen to waive SHIP coverage with proof of equivalent private insurance. While abroad you are able to use your SHIP insurance under the services of **AES (Academic Emergency Services)**, which provides non-emergency medical/travel assistance, medical referrals, medical monitoring, medical evacuations, and can even help to find a local pharmacy. View [this helpful guide](#) with instructions on how to use SHIP Insurance/AES abroad.



Students are automatically enrolled in SHIP at the beginning of each academic year, but have the option to waive SHIP coverage with proof of equivalent private insurance. During your study abroad program, you are also enrolled in [UC Berkeley Student Travel Insurance](#), which does not qualify as major medical coverage according to guidelines set by the Affordable Care Act (and does not satisfy SHIP waiver criteria).

Mo'orea Spring students must either stay enrolled in SHIP insurance for Spring 2026 and pay the SHIP fee on CalCentral (due in mid-January 2026), OR waive SHIP insurance for Spring 2026 using private insurance that meets SHIP waiver criteria. If you waived SHIP insurance using private insurance at the beginning of the 2025-2026 academic year, your SHIP waiver will continue for Spring 2026, and no further action is required.

If you are enrolled in SHIP for Fall 2025 but you wish to waive out of SHIP insurance for the Spring semester, you must complete an online opt-out waiver. For more information, please visit the UHS Website, contact the UHS office via phone at (510) 642-5700, or email ship@berkeley.edu. If an emergency situation should arise abroad, you should contact local authorities and medical staff. Whenever possible, local program staff should be kept informed regarding safety concerns or issues.

Teladoc: Offered through SHIP, Teladoc provides students with 24 hour access to virtual healthcare appointments and the ability to see board-certified medical professionals for things like the flu, common colds, and more through phone, tablet, or laptop. Students can also access mental health clinicians for [counseling and psychiatry](#) with Teladoc. Both medical and counseling services will require a co-pay of \$15. Students who waive out of SHIP are not eligible for Teladoc.

UC Traveler's Insurance: Enrollment in UC Travel insurance (see the list of student resources on the right side of the website) is mandatory and cannot be waived (the premium for the UC travel insurance is paid by the University of California). This insurance plan does not cover routine physicals and is not intended to replace your domestic major medical plan and cannot be used to waive out of University Student Health Insurance.

The UC Travel insurance provides medical and non-medical benefits and evacuation coverage. You are eligible for travel insurance benefits during your program period and for 14 days of personal deviation, which can occur before or after your program and is cumulative. Here is a summary of the [coverage](#).

Chubb-AXA Global Travel Assistance: Medication Research

If you would like help in researching whether your medication is legal and available in French Polynesia, you can request assistance from Chubb-AXA Global Travel Assistance (AXA Assistance for short). Give them your program details including the start-date and provide travel insurance **policy # N04223822**.

Use the following information to contact the Chubb-AXA Global Travel Assistance.

- Outside the US: +1- 630-694-9804 (collect call option)
- Inside the US: +1-855-327-1420
- Email address: medassist-usa@axa-assistance.us

You will receive an in-depth health and safety tutorial during your Pre-Departure and On-Site Orientations, which will include advice on what to do if you get sick abroad, emergency planning and response, etc.

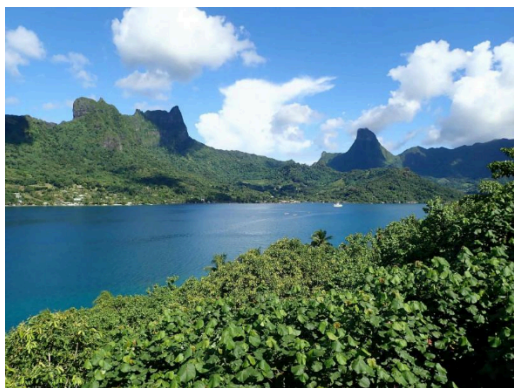
PREPARING TO TRAVEL TO MO'OREA

Passport

A valid passport is required to participate in the Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program. It is important to ensure that your passport is valid beyond **June 30, 2026**. If you have not yet provided Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program staff with a clear copy of your passport, please make sure to do so well before program departure.

Immigration Requirements & Visas – Stays Shorter Than 90 Days

US Citizens: Under the visa waiver scheme, American citizens are allowed to stay in French Polynesia for up to "90 days in any 180 day period" without a visa so long as they have a valid *Protocole D'accueil* (program staff will arrange for this). The 180 days is a moving window counting back from the date you are in French Polynesia. You can enter and leave French Polynesia, but the cumulative time you are in French Polynesia (inclusive of arrival and departure days) must not exceed 90 days in the previous 180 days. See [Short Stay Schengen guide](#) and [Calculator](#) (which enables you to see if you could be in French Polynesia on a given date without breaching the rules).



EU Citizens: Only a valid EU passport is required. There are no visa requirements for citizens of the European Union, but non-French citizens who stay longer than 90 days should register with the municipality (Commune) where they live.

Other Nationalities: Please check with Program Adviser to see whether your country participates in French Polynesia's visa waiver scheme, and if so how long you are able to come without a visa, or if you must acquire a visa in advance of departure.

Note that all students **MUST** depart from French Polynesia in advance of reaching the 90 day mark (April 19th, 2026).

Flights

Arrival: Students will be responsible for booking their own travel to Papeete (PPT) Tahiti International Airport, and arriving at Gump Station on Mo'orea on the set program start date: Monday, January 19th, 2026 (students should arrive by noon). Tahiti is readily accessible from California. Direct, non-stop flight times are about 8 hours from Los Angeles or San Francisco. Papeete (PPT) Tahiti International Airport is served by several international airlines including Air Tahiti Nui, Air France (LAX), French Bee (SFO), and Hawaiian (HNL). **Please Note:**

Students are free to book flights arriving before January 19th, but would be responsible for their own accommodations any time before the official program start date, January 19th (accommodations at Gump Station will be provided solely starting January 19th).

Refer to the [Gump Station User Guide](#) for detailed directions and recommendations for travelling between Tahiti and Gump Station.

All students will be housed at Gump Station for the first two nights of the program January 19th-20th, departing for Teti'aroa on January 21st, 2026 via chartered airplane.

Departure: Students will be responsible for booking their own travel home. Program housing will end at the beginning of Spring Break, March 29th, 2026. Spring Break will run from March 29th – April 5, 2026. Students are welcome to travel around French Polynesia during this time, or return home.

Please note, though it is fine to buy one-way tickets in either direction between the US to Tahiti, and possible to mix and match airlines, it is important to have bought your return trip back from Tahiti to the U.S. BEFORE leaving the U.S. Often this is requested as proof that you intend to return home within the 90 day period upon boarding and entry.

Packing

Here are a few essential items to bring with you abroad:

- Travel adapter for electronics
- Laptop
- Sunscreen – including for your lips!
- Bug Spray
- Clothing for hot weather
- Swimwear and sun protective water clothing (ie: rash guard)
- Good walking/hiking footwear
- Water footwear (ex: Chaco or Teva sandals)
- Slip-on Shoes (such as flip flops – also readily avail in Tahiti)
- Sleeping sac/liner/sheets, including a pillowcase
- Beach Towel
- Scuba mask, snorkel, and fins (with booties)
- Day Backpack - waterproof
- Headlamp
- Good sunglasses (polarized if you can)
- Hat



Medication

You may want to bring over-the-counter medications for common cold and flu symptoms, especially if you have a brand you prefer. **If you take prescription medications, make sure to bring more than enough medication for your time abroad as some medications are not readily available overseas.** It can be extremely difficult or even impossible to have prescription medications refilled or sent to you while you are overseas (this includes birth control). Do not pack prescription medications in your checked luggage.

Be sure to keep all medications, over-the-counter or prescription and dietary supplements in their original containers and bring a copy of any prescriptions from your doctor in your carry-on luggage. Please also review the **Mo'orea Spring 2026 - Island Sustainability Program Prescription Medication Guide** for more information.

Banking

Contact your bank before departure to let them know you will be abroad and for what period of time. This will ensure that your bank cards are not flagged for suspected fraud and rejected should you need to use them while abroad.

Take a bank card that enables access to funds in a U.S. bank account at an ATM. Although most U.S. banks will charge currency exchange fees when money is withdrawn from an ATM, ATM withdrawal is the best way to access your money. The local currency is CFP (XPF / Pacific Francs) which is fixed to the Euro.

There are cash distributors outside most banks, at the airports and at shopping centers. Most distributors accept debit or credit cards from major international banks (VISA, MASTERCARD). Most stores and restaurants accept credit cards.

Banks are open on weekdays only; usually 8am-12pm and 1:30pm-4pm, except for the Banque de Polynesie, which is open Saturday mornings, and closed on Mondays. Banks exchange dollars for Pacific Francs, but charge a transaction fee. You must present your passport when exchanging dollars. A US driver's license is not accepted as valid identification. Some banks only change money on certain days, so it is wise to use the distributors.

Cell Phones Abroad

You will be **REQUIRED** to have a cell phone in Mo'orea so that you can be reached in case of an emergency. It is not enough for your cellphone only to work on WiFi. Most students purchase affordable local SIM cards upon arrival in French Polynesia, which can be applied to a personal cell phone which has been "unlocked" (able to accommodate an international SIM card). You may consider unlocking your U.S. smartphone in advance of departure for Mo'orea; check with your provider about your phone's international capabilities. Students can also make calls on their phones (locked or unlocked) using the Wi-Fi at Gump Station. You will be further advised on cell phones during your Pre-Departure Orientation.

Important Apps to Download

Before departing for Mo'orea it will be important to download a few essential apps onto the cellphone that you plan to use while abroad. Please refer to the list below and make sure to install these apps in advance of your departure for Mo'orea:

- [What's App](#) – International Messaging and Calling
- [Duo Mobile](#) – Security Authentication App necessary to access Berkeley systems off campus



NAVIGATING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Studying abroad is an opportunity to learn about your host country as much as your home country. No two students' experiences are the same. As you adapt to your new surroundings, you may notice small to significant cultural differences between French Polynesia and what you're used to at home.

Perceptions of race, gender, and sexual orientation can differ from location to location. To help you navigate through cultural differences, we recommend preparing yourself ahead of time by researching cultural perceptions in your host country. Here are a few resources to help you get started:

- [IES Abroad Diversity Resources](#)
- [What's Up With Culture?](#)
- [Diversity Abroad – Diversity and Inclusion Abroad Guide](#)

MANAGING TRANSITION

Studying abroad provides you with the opportunity for academic and personal growth while becoming an engaged global citizen. As you study abroad, your experience will be shaped by not only your successes but also the challenges you encounter.



Managing expectations prior to your departure can help manage the transition to life abroad, and the stress that can come with feelings of culture shock, loneliness, homesickness, and the reality of studying in a foreign country.

For example, one might have the expectation that studying abroad will be just like studying at Berkeley, but in Mo'orea. The reality is that adapting to studies in a foreign country can be challenging. Certain privileges and amenities that you are accustomed to may not be as accessible abroad, such as Wi-Fi accessibility, air conditioning, etc. We encourage you to maintain an open mind while adapting to your international environment. Negotiating these kinds of perceived differences and challenges contribute hugely to the empowerment and confidence that can be achieved through studying abroad.

Here are a few resources with further information about managing transition abroad:

- [The Emotional Stages of Studying Abroad](#)
- [26 Ways to Reduce Homesickness Abroad](#)
- [Resiliency as a Post-Study Abroad Skill](#)

If you experience challenges managing your transition to life in Mo'orea, be sure to utilize the onsite staff and resources available to support you.

ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANT POLICIES

While participating in the Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program, you are a representative of UC Berkeley. It is your responsibility to not only follow the policies and regulations set by these institutions (some of which are mentioned below), but to also abide by the host country's laws. UC Berkeley may take disciplinary action whether or not action is taken or requested by the partner institution. This includes violations related to housing, alcohol, controlled substances (including marijuana), as well as other violations specified in program policies.

Please Note: Any violation of the [Berkeley Code of Conduct](#) occurring while participating in the Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program may result in dismissal from the program, and will also be reported to the UC Berkeley Center for Student Conduct which may lead to further sanctions as deemed appropriate by the University. In addition to the Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program [policies](#), you must read the Berkeley Code of

Conduct thoroughly, becoming familiar with how the various provisions apply to your participation. If you are dismissed, you will be deemed no longer a participant in the program and must vacate program housing. You will be required to make your flight arrangements to depart Mo'orea and return home.

STAYING IN TOUCH

You can look forward to more information regarding program preparation and details in the coming weeks and months. We will primarily be communicating with you via email, so please make sure to check your Berkeley email inboxes frequently. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Mo'orea Spring - Island Sustainability Program Advisers at: mooreaislandsustainability@berkeley.edu.