France
Options outside Sciences Po, Reims and Sciences Po, Paris
UCEAP Advising Notes

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to present challenges related to health concerns and international travel. UCEAP has been updating their website’s Coronavirus Notice with up-to-date information on program cancellations for the 2021-2022 cycle. All programs listed in this Advising Notes document are scheduled to proceed at this time, and UCEAP will inform campus offices if there are any updates.

Last updated Nov. 2020

Objective of the Advising Notes Document
This document is an advising tool written by a Berkeley Study Abroad adviser to review program specific details that may impact a student’s decision to apply for a UCEAP program. The document is not a summary of eligibility requirements, academic, housing, application and other logistical details freely available to students on the UCEAP and BSA website. If any concerns you have are not addressed on the UCEAP website or the Advising Notes document, please contact the BSA adviser for this program.

Adviser Contact Information
For BSA Adviser name, email and drop-in advising hours, visit our website.

Visas
Visa for Summer Programs: U.S. citizens are not required to obtain a visa for summer programs that last under 90 days. Students considering extending to a fall study abroad program in France will need a visa.

France Visa: All non-French and/or non European Union citizens studying abroad for more than 90 days are required to apply for a visa through Campus France in order to study abroad in France. Students will be provided detailed instructions by UCEAP after they are admitted to the program.

European Union and French Citizens: Students who are French citizens have no restrictions on applying to UCEAP-France programs. French citizens and/or EU citizens do not need visas to study in France and do not have to apply to Campus France.

International Students from outside the European Union: UCEAP supplies visa forms and information only to U.S. citizens applying to study in France. International students should contact the French consulate in San Francisco to inquire how to apply for a visa to study in France.

Year Long Applicants
For any student applying to a year-long program, the France visa application requires two certified copies of a birth certificate. All students going on Year programs need to order two certified copies of a birth certificate at the same time they apply for UCEAP.
Most U.S. citizens will be able to order their birth certificate from www.vitalchek.com. U.S. citizens can also telephone the county clerk in the county of birth to obtain the birth certificate. Please request these well in advance, as the process to obtain them may be lengthy. The birth certificates will be required to obtain a long-stay visa in France. Do not submit photocopies of certified documents.

Students who do not hold US passports may find it difficult to obtain a certified copy of their birth certificate. In this case, submit a photocopy of some sort immigration document or your original birth certificate, and attach a letter explaining why the birth certificate is unavailable. The document and the letter must have a French translation attached to each. You will be required to submit two (2) notarized sets of copies (document, letter and translations) about a month after application submission.

Language

Verification of Language Prerequisites: The UCEAP France application instructions explain how to determine whether you have satisfied the language requirement through course work, test scores or equivalent knowledge. Students who do not have academic verification of language acquisition or of having satisfied the language prerequisites (grades on transcripts, AP, IB or SAT test scores) but who believe they have equivalent knowledge can be evaluated by an instructor in the UCB French Department. You must have this evaluation prior to applying for the program!

Finishing Language Prerequisites Before Departure: You can take prerequisite language courses the semester or summer before departure for the program if the timing works out with the start date of the program—you must begin your UCEAP Program on time. However, you will not be cleared for participation on the program until the language courses are verified as completed by a grade from your instructor. Some programs may have French language GPA requirements.

Intensive Language Program Waivers for France Immersion Fall/Spring/Year Programs: Students with native-speaker fluency in French at the college level (in areas of reading, writing and speaking) may petition to be excused from the Intensive Language Program by sending an email to the France Adviser.

Housing Options

Many programs in France offer a choice between an apartment and a homestay. Housing assignments are first-come, first-served, so watch for the deadline to submit paperwork. French language acquisition is much greater if a student lives in a homestay.

Program Extensions (Fall to Spring)

A student who completes the fall French in Paris or Only in Paris fall program may extend to the spring semester at the University of Bordeaux in English or French, depending on the student’s language level at the time of transition to the Bordeaux program. Students studying during the fall semester at Univ of Lyon or Univ of Bordeaux may extend to the spring semester at the same university. Filling out the Departmental Approval to Extend Form at the time you submit your original UCEAP application indicates your interest in extending. You’ll be asked to make the final decision whether to extend or not during the fall semester. Students who extend can take courses in the Bordeaux universities in French if they speak, read and write French at the equivalent level to someone who has completed two years of college-level French.

Choosing between study at a Sciences Po in Paris, Reims, Bordeaux or Lyon:
The Institut d’Etudes Politiques in Paris or Reims or “Sciences Po, Paris or Reims” are popular programs, but they are not the typical study abroad program. They are more academically and personally challenging. Students who are ambitious and want to do serious academic work abroad should consider applying to the Sciences Po in Paris or Reims programs. More information about these options can be found here.

Students who want a less academically demanding experience, with plenty of time to explore France and travel, should consider applying instead to one of the programs listed below.
University Bordeaux
The University of Bordeaux immersion program offers a French or English track for students at varying language abilities. Six Bordeaux universities participate in the exchange. A wide variety of fields of study are offered except for the French in Bordeaux program in which the courses are fixed. On site the Bordeaux in French and Bordeaux in English tracks are considered one big program; students share cultural activities and have the same housing options.

University of Lyon
This is also an immersion program. Courses are only instructed in French and students must have completed a minimum of 4 semesters of French to participate in this program. Students applying to the University of Lyon program will be able to take courses at the Sciences Po, Lyon in French. Students will also be able to take courses in French in other university departments in other fields of study. Check out Julia’s Instagram Story from her time in Lyon!

Studies in English in Lyon, France has been cancelled and is no longer offered by UCEAP.

Field Research & Internships in Paris and Strasbourg (also Brussels in Belgium) are relatively new programs for UCEAP but have been in existence for many years on their own. Students need fluency in French language and must have taken 5 semesters of college-level French (French 1-4 at Berkeley or the equivalent plus one upper-division course).

The program will provide five weeks of intensive coursework followed by a 12 week long internship that provides hands-on experience in the field. All participants also write a research paper in French during the latter part of the program. You can find more information about the program on the Paris and Strasbourg pages of the Institute for Field Education (IFE) website.

Instruction is in French and courses are set by the program. Only U.S. based students are enrolled in the courses. Courses are listed on the website and cover the sociology, history and cultures of Belgium and an introduction to Dutch language.

Please note the research and internship program is offered in three locations: Brussels, Paris, and Strasbourg. Although you will apply initially to one of these locations through UCEAP, in your application to the internship provider you will rank two locations in order of preference. You will be assigned to one of these two choices based on the best internship placement for you.

UC Study Center Paris Programs
Programs are hosted by the UC Study Center in Paris are listed below. Every student in these programs is a UC student so these are not immersion programs like the ones described above that take place at a French university. The menu for courses are small and tend not to be major-specific. Students take courses together at the UC Study Center and instructors are encouraged to utilize Paris as the classroom which makes for an interactive learning experience.

Students may choose to live in apartments or homestays. If they choose apartments, they will live with other UC students and have the option to indicate roommate preference after being admitted to the program. Apartments vary in terms of layout, age of the building and location in Paris. Similarly, host families live in a variety of neighborhoods in Paris and can consist of anywhere from a single host parent to a large multi-generational family.

The programs below are very similar and mostly differ in the type of coursework offered.

French in Paris, Summer (Intensive or Semi-Intensive)
This program’s coursework focuses on French language acquisition and cultural immersion. Students apply for either semi-intensive track or the intensive track based on their experience with French language prior to the program start.
French in Paris, Fall
This program’s coursework focuses on three consecutive French language courses and one upper division elective course.

Food, History, and Culture in Paris, Fall
This program’s coursework is less-language intensive though does require students to take one French language course. It was formerly called the Only in Paris program.

Social Justice and Activism, Spring
This is a relatively new program that has not yet had any Berkeley participants. More details to come!