France
Sciences Po, Paris & Sciences Po, Reims
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.

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

Visa
France Visa: All non-French and/or non European Union citizens 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
Sciences Po, Paris and Sciences Po, Reims do not have a French language requirement. Students who would like to take courses instructed in French at either campus must have completed the equivalent of 4 semesters of college-level French prior to departure.

The 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!

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 program on time. However, you won’t be cleared for participation on the program until the language courses are verified as completed by a grade from your instructor.

Mandatory GPA requirement: There is a mandatory cumulative GPA requirement of 3.2.

Sciences Po, Paris has selection in two stages: In the first stage of selection, which happens no later than March 1 for the Year application and June 30 for the spring application, you will be informed whether the Berkeley campus has selected you for the program. After this, your file is sent on to the University Office of UCEAP, UCEAP, and finally to the Institut d'Etudes Politiques in Paris, where a second and final stage of selection occurs. You will hear your final selection status for the year program anywhere from mid-April to mid-May and for the spring program in November or December.

Choosing Sciences Po
The Institut d’Etudes Politiques in Paris or Reims, nicknamed “les Sciences Po” are popular programs, but they are not the typical study abroad programs. It is definitely more challenging on the academic and personal level at either Sciences Po. However, students who are ambitious and want to do serious academic work abroad should consider applying to the Sciences Po programs. Sciences Po students must adapt to the French university system and an elite school within that system. There are different academic demands for writing and analysis than in U.S. universities. The first few months on the program require that students make an adjustment to the new system. UCB students can have a difficult adaptation experience to a Sciences Po, but will usually become accustomed to how things work by the end of the term.

Substantial background coursework in the appropriate major is required for admission to the program. UCEAP is looking for well-prepared students at the upper-division level in their field of study. Students must have completed all lower division requirements for the major and in addition, have completed at least upper-division courses in the major by departure. Students from majors that are not listed in the eligibility section of the UCEAP website should contact the France Adviser before applying. Business majors, for instance, are eligible to apply for Sciences Po, Reims but not Sciences Po, Paris.
Sciences Po, Reims is the largest of all Sciences Po campuses with around 1,300 undergraduate students. 94 nationalities are represented in the student population. Its special focus is North American and Europe and Africa and Europe. Most courses are taught in English in the North America and Europe focus area. Students must know French to take Africa & Europe courses. The Reims campus has small classes, many student clubs, newer facilities and a dining hall for students. Students also have access to student services staff who speak English. This is a great option for those looking for a tighter community in a more structured, and beautiful, setting.

Sciences Po, Paris is in one a large, expensive metropolitan area. Students must be independent and comfortable problem solving on their own. Campus is spread out and almost all students live in neighborhoods off-campus. Students are responsible for arranging their own housing in Paris, which can take time. Online course enrollment at Sciences Po, Paris occurs only a few days before the start of the UCEAP program and there is no way to know before then which exact courses you will take. Popular courses may not have open spaces after the first day. For this reason it is important that students remain flexible and pre-select a range of possible courses and then choose what is available (similar to enrolling in Berkeley courses). Unlike the Reims campus, staff at Sciences Po, Paris are not guaranteed to speak English.

Students cannot add or drop a course after the first week of the semester. It is not possible to attend various classes during the first week of the term and then add and drop courses from your study list. For this reason it’s very important that you do not sign up for courses which you do not have the appropriate background to take. You will have to complete all courses you sign up to take.