

Germany

UCEAP Advising Notes



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 websites, and reviewed by a student in the Program Self-Assessment.

The best sources of detailed program information are the [UCEAP program pages](#) for the Germany options.

Advisor Contact Information

The BSA Adviser for Germany is Renee Camarena (reneecamarena@berkeley.edu).

Language Considerations for Choosing a Program

Students with – or without – German language will find options for them from the UCEAP offerings. Some programs require language study, while others do not. For students with 1 year of German, there will be opportunities to take courses taught in German.

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Program Options

Semester & Year Options

Free, Humboldt and Technical University

These three programs are called “immersion programs” as you will enroll in these Universities and take classes alongside German students.

Students who need courses only in certain fields will be allowed to study there in order to take regular courses taught in English that the normal German students also take. Students who need courses in fields not offered in English will still need to meet the minimum language requirement explained further below in order to study at these universities. To see which fields each university offers in English, please review each University’s course offerings here: [Free](#), [Humboldt](#) or [Technical](#).

Also, [check out this 15 minute information session](#) hosted by UCEAP that describes the three Berlin universities.

Track Choices

There are 2 different track offerings for these universities for Fall semester (or for a full academic Year) and 2 for Spring semester. Please note that some tracks have an Intensive Language Program (ILP)..

Fall ! (and Year) Semester Tracks

Fall/Year (this track includes an ILP)

- Language Requirement: none, but students with 2 years of university-level German, or equivalent, may opt to take some or all courses taught in German.
- Intensive Language Program
 - Students with no German language background will be placed in a beginning level German class.
 - Students with some German will take a language placement test and will be placed in the appropriate level.

Fall/Year (this track includes an ILP)

- Language Requirement: 2 semesters

- Intensive Language Program
 - Students who opt for this track should achieve a German 3/4 level proficiency and may be able to opt to take courses taught in German as a result.
 - Students will take a placement test and will be placed in the appropriate level in the ILP. If they place into the intermediate level then they will complete through German 4 by the end of the ILP.

! [See below](#) for a Calendar issue to be aware of when considering a Fall semester immersion program at Free, Humboldt or Technical University.

Spring Semester Tracks

Spring (this track includes an ILP)

- Language Requirement: none, but students with 2 years of university-level German, or equivalent, may opt to take some or all courses taught in German.
- Intensive Language Program
 - Students with no German language background will be placed in a beginning level German class.
 - Students with some German will take a language placement test and will be placed in the appropriate level.

Spring without ILP (this track **does not** include an ILP)

- Language Requirement: none, but students with 2 years of university-level German, or equivalent, may opt to take some or all courses taught in German.
- If a student with no German opts for this program, they will not receive any sort of language instruction prior to the program.

To assist UCEAP students with the academic differences, the UCEAP Study Center in Berlin teaches the Academic Writing Workshop which walks students step by step through the process for writing a research paper in Germany. The workshop is required for all students who will need to write a research paper (in either English or German) because it is so important that students are given a tutorial on German standards for writing.

UC students have been succeeding at these immersion options for over 50 years, so you can, too!

How to Choose Among the Three Berlin Immersion Universities

It is possible to enroll in one course at either of the two Berlin universities other than the one at which you are officially registered, though few UCEAP students do so due to scheduling and commuting challenges.

Technical University is located west of the city center somewhat north of Free University and specializes in Engineering, Architecture, math, and hard sciences, though some social sciences and humanities courses are also available that might fulfill breadth requirements. For information about courses, including those taught in English see the resources from the [UCEAP program page](#).

Humboldt University is located in the urban center of Berlin; **Free University** is located in the residential southwest quadrant of the city, easily accessible to the city center by excellent public transit. Both are comprehensive universities that offer many subject areas. Please refer to the MyEAP Course Catalog and the host universities' websites to research the disciplines that interest you, starting from the Academics resources on each university's respective UCEAP program page ([Humboldt](#) and [Free](#)).

You should choose the university that will offer you the kinds of courses that you need in order to make normal progress toward your degree. [Click here to view a helpful summary that compares UC Subject Areas at Free and Humboldt Universities.](#)

European Studies (referred to as FU-BEST by Free University)

This is a semester program that requires no prior German. It is offered by the Free University of Berlin in Fall and Spring. Focusing on Berlin and Europe, courses are taught in English to UCEAP and other North American students with no more than German 3 completed by the time of departure.

Consider choosing a homestay in this program. Living with Germans will reinforce the German you learn, and allow you to experience daily German culture in greater depth than if you live in a studio apartment. Please see the webpage for further details.

Unless you need three subject courses to fulfill requirements, consider taking just two plus a more in-depth German language course, as you may enjoy your academic experience more than if you take three subject courses and the less intensive language course. You'll also learn more German which will help you to interact more with Germans. You can read more about the course offerings on the [UCEAP program page](#).

If you want to fulfill breadth requirements, FU-BEST offers quite a few courses that have been pre-approved by L&S, CED, and CNR. See our [College Advising webpage](#) for further information about the process to ask for an evaluation of other courses that you'd like to take for breadth requirements, plus a link to the list of courses pre-approved by L&S, CED, and CNR for breadth requirements. For other colleges, contact the college adviser directly.

! Calendar Issue --- Immersion Fall Semester (*not applicable for European Studies (FU-BEST) Fall which follows the US calendar*):

As the UCEAP program page states, Fall Semester in Germany doesn't end until mid-late February and an early departure from Berlin is not permitted. That means that UCB students will miss Spring Semester back at Cal. For this reason, this option is best for graduating seniors who do not need to return to Berkeley. Other students may still apply for this option, but should investigate and consider the ramifications of not being enrolled at Cal for Spring Semester. (For example, you have to withdraw from Cal for Spring and pay a fee to apply for readmission for the following Fall; Financial Aid stops for Spring; banks may require you to begin repayment of loans; etc.) Please keep all of this in mind before you decide to apply just for Fall immersion. Feel free to discuss this option with the Germany adviser before filling out the application. And remember: it is also possible to extend from Fall to Year once you're in Berlin – you should submit an approved Departmental and College Pre-Approval to Extend Form (DPA) with your application to make this option easier. See the application for the form and further information.

Calendar Issue – Graduating Seniors Spending their last UC Semester in a Immersion Program (*not applicable for European Studies (FU-BEST) Fall or Spring which follows the US calendar*):

If you are in the College of Letters and Science, please be aware that your degree will be dated with the term *after* your final semester on UCEAP. (If you're in a different college, please check on its policy regarding this matter.) For example, if you study just for Fall Semester '21 in Germany, your UC degree will be awarded in May '22 rather than in December '21 and if you study for the entire year or just Spring in Germany, your degree will

be awarded in August or December rather than in May. This delay is due to the fact that in Germany, their first semester ends in February-March and second semester ends in late July so your grades will not arrive at UCB in time from Germany for you to be put on the degree list in the usual month. This is normally not a problem, but if you plan immediately after UCEAP to attend graduate school or apply for a scholarship or job that requires proof of a Bachelors degree, you should ask if the delay in your degree will create a problem for you in your particular circumstances.

Berlin Experience (Fall, Spring)

This is a new program offered by UCEAP in 2024-25 and it is hosted by CIEE. Because it is new, we do not have many details beyond what you can find on the UCEAP website. More information to come!

Summer Options

[CIEE Summer Global Internship in Berlin](#)

For eight weeks, students engage in a full-time internship for 200-240 total hours and take an integrated academic course for six units which qualifies participants for financial aid if they are otherwise eligible. A wide range of fields will be possible. No prior German is required. Summer after Sophomore Year OK.

Exclusivity Agreement for CIEE Summer Global Internship in Berlin

Please note that CIEE has an "exclusivity agreement" with UCEAP for its "Summer Global Internship" program such that UC students must participate in it via UCEAP; they are not allowed to participate in it directly via CIEE. If CIEE offers program options other than the UCEAP program in Germany, then UC students may participate independently of UCEAP and apply directly to CIEE for those. Students who choose to study abroad independently are advised to read our [Independent Study Abroad Guide](#) for important details before applying.

[Technical University Summer in Berlin](#)

Experience a high-velocity, English-taught program at one of Germany's top technical universities. After a short course on innovation management or German language, focus on a single, month-long course in engineering, architecture, urban design, communication or other fields. Get both theoretical and practical, hands-on experience. Includes trips to companies and research facilities in Berlin, a city with a strong industrial-artsy feel. Summer after Sophomore Year OK.

[Berlin Summer \(referred to as FUBiS by Free University\)](#)

Students take two courses: either German language or courses taught in English or a combination of both. No prior German is required. L&S has also pre-approved quite a few courses from this program for breadth requirement. See our [College Advising webpage](#) for further information

Please note that prior to departure, FUBiS requires a deposit to confirm a housing arrangement, in some instances the full housing payment. Students receiving financial aid are not exempt from making the deposit to guarantee university housing and will need to make arrangements to make this payment on time. Some students

borrow the money from family or friends until they receive their financial aid near the official start date of their program, and then reimburse their lender.

Summer vs Semester at Free University

Unless there is a reason why you can study abroad only in the summer, I would encourage you to study abroad for a semester for five reasons.

- 1.) The summer program in Berlin lasts only 4 weeks and costs ~\$9,000. The semester lasts 16 weeks and costs ~\$20,000. Airfare is included in those budgets. So four times as long, but only ~twice as expensive.
- 2.) Financial aid works normally for a semester, so if you receive full financial aid at Cal, you will receive financial aid to cover the entire UCEAP budget, even if it is higher than Cal. Summer is not considered a regular term, so the financial aid that is available does not always cover the full budget. It varies by student. Visit our study abroad financial aid counselors in 160 Stephens Hall. They can tell you what you are likely to receive for a summer or semester based on your current Financial Aid data in CalCentral.
- 3.) If you study abroad in summer, you can't get a job to earn money.
- 4.) There are more courses offered in a FU-BEST semester than a FUBiS summer. See the course listings on the UCEAP webpages for details.
- 5.) The longer you can be in Berlin, the better your German will become, and the more you will learn about the culture. So keep all this in mind as you deliberate about the best timing to study in Berlin. Feel free to discuss this with the BSA Germany adviser.

Other Important Notes

Financial Aid and Scholarships for Study Abroad

- View UCB financial aid details and many scholarship opportunities on our [webpage](#). Deadlines to apply for scholarships are earlier than you may think, so do your research now!
- Some scholarships that are good for students going to Germany:
 - Max Kade grants - The UCB German Department hopes to have these available for summer options at Free University (pre-ILP or the summer option only – TBD) so check with the German Dept in Dwinelle Hall.
 - [Duttenhaver Scholarships for UCEAP year-long programs](#)
 - [UC Berkeley's Institute of International Studies Merit Scholarships](#) – non-need-based scholarships of up to \$2,000 each to support undergraduate research (can be done abroad) in any area of international studies (deadline is usually in November)

Taking German Language Classes P/NP

German classes fulfilling the minimum language requirement for the immersion options may be taken P/NP, but with your application you must provide a written note from your instructor or the German Department stating what your letter grade would have been. It is your responsibility to make arrangements for this without prompting from the Germany adviser or BSA office.

Competitiveness of the Programs

Most students who meet the minimum eligibility requirements and submit a well-prepared application with an articulate Statement of Purpose have a good chance of being selected, though we cannot make guarantees.

Fall Applicants Urged to Get Pre-Approved for Extension

Fall applicants are urged to submit the College and Departmental Pre-Approval to Extend (DPA) form with their UCEAP application, even if they think they do not wish to extend. Students are encouraged to get the approval signatures from their department and college on this form, as then they will know that these two campus units have already granted their approval. Without these signatures on the form, students who decide they'd like to extend once in Berlin will have to initiate a Petition to Extend at the study center, then wait many weeks while it is routed to UCEAP and UCB to find out if their department and college approve of the idea.

Every Fall, some students do choose to extend, so get pre-approved while you're on campus in order to reduce your stress in Berlin. *Special note to Berlin FU-BEST Fall applicants:* if you do not get the DPA signed, you will have to decide to initiate a Petition to Extend with the study center within the first month of your arrival in Berlin in order to meet the very early deadline used by Free University for Spring registration. If you miss that deadline, you will not be allowed to extend. Far easier to get the signatures on the DPA as part of your EAP application.

Grad Students

Some UCEAP programs are open to graduate students. Since this varies from program to program, please check out the individual program page you are interested in on the UCEAP website. Check out our [Graduate Students webpage](#) for some information to help you get started.

DSP Students

If you receive accommodations at Cal and would like to know if they are also available in the program abroad that interests you, it is a good idea to email your BSA adviser to inquire about your specific needs. That way, if your needs cannot be accommodated in that program, you can investigate other programs that might.

LGBTQI Students

Here are a few resources you may wish to explore if you identify as a member of the LGBTQI community:

[How to Pick Where to Study Abroad as an LGBTQIA+ Student](#)

[IES Germany Diversity Resources](#)

[State Department resources for LGBTI Travelers](#)

Medical Marijuana

Marijuana is not legal in Germany, even if you are approved for medical marijuana use in California. Please consult with your primary care physician for a legal substitute before applying to the program.

Graduating Seniors Spending their last UC Semester Abroad in any UCEAP Program

Graduating seniors must enroll in a full course load while abroad, even if they do not need the courses or units for graduation. (Requests by DSP students who provide documentation may be considered for a reduced course load.) Only one-third of units taken abroad may be on a P/NP basis (so about one course); the rest must be letter-graded.

UCEAP Alumni/ae and Reciprocal Exchange Students as Resources

UCEAP alums and students studying at Cal from our partner universities in Germany are some of your best resources for information about the program. If you would like to be put in touch with alums or reciprocity students, simply send the BSA Germany Adviser an email addressed to the alums or reciprocity students (e.g., "Dear alums, or Dear Reciprocity Students, I have some questions about the program or your university...") and the message will be forwarded to them.

Differences between UC and German Universities

Though UCEAP is a UC program, it is *not* "UC Abroad"! You might encounter two different educational approaches while you study in Berlin, depending on which courses and professors you take. Higher education in the EU is undergoing standardization that makes it seem a bit more like the American higher educational approach than it did in the past. The traditional German educational system - which you may still encounter - is very different and you can't rely on your assumptions and study habits from Cal to prepare you for this academic style. In it, German professors will not "force-feed" you with reading assignments, papers every week, pop quizzes or mid-terms. There is far less structure in this approach than at Cal. Students are treated more like graduate students in that they are expected to take the initiative to read books that interest them and to do independent research on topics they find stimulating. Some UC students feel a certain academic void in Germany if they take mostly the old-style courses because they think they don't have any homework to do. For each course, you'll have to introduce yourself as a UC student to the professor and work out some UC-style papers or exams that can be graded. Even those assignments may leave you feeling under-challenged academically. So...

Independent Research

You might want to give serious consideration to doing independent research on a topic that interests you personally - perhaps a topic similar to one you might choose for a senior honors thesis. Your research, if done well, could actually serve as a good foundation for a senior honors thesis, if you choose to write one. You could use many research methods and resources such as interviews, surveys, archives, museums, art galleries, businesses, government offices and agencies, etc. You don't need to limit yourself to what Berlin has to offer, rich as it is. You could plan research trips to other parts of Germany. Be creative - do something that you could accomplish only in Germany! Make the most of your EAP semester or year! Feel free to discuss your ideas with the BSA Germany adviser in Stephens Hall. Additionally, you should discuss your ideas with your major adviser and professors in the context of writing an honors thesis. They may be able to offer some research guidelines as well as suggestions about sources of research material in Germany.

Internships

It is also possible to do an internship during your immersion semester or year in Berlin. It can count as one of your courses if you do it for academic credit. The UCEAP Study Center in Berlin can assist you once you arrive. See the Internship information on each university's UCEAP webpage for details.

Media Resources

In order to aid with your study abroad process, the Study Abroad team has compiled media resources from UCEAP and Universities. These resources include YouTube videos that provide an overview of a location or university, and student blog posts and more. These resources can be used to give you a better understanding of what your study abroad experience may be like!

UCEAP Resources

[Berlin Calling! UCEAP Programs in Germany | International Education Week 2021](#)

[Study Abroad in Germany | UCEAP Study Abroad Fair](#)

[Study Abroad in Northern Europe | UCEAP Virtual Study Abroad Fair 2021](#)

Free University Berlin

[Study at Freie Universität Berlin | Global Campus](#) (YouTube)

[Life in Berlin I Freie Universität Global Campus](#) (YouTube)

[Welcome to FU-BEST](#) (YouTube)

Humboldt University Berlin

[Campus Mitte Tour](#)

[Campus Adlershoe Tour](#)

VIEL GLÜCK!

Free University	Humboldt University
American Studies	African/ Asian Studies
Art History	Anthropology
Communication	Art History
Comparative Literature	Communication*
Economics/ Business Administration	Comparative Lit**
English	English
German	Geography
History	German
Latin American Studies	History
Philosophy	Philosophy

Political Science/ International Relations Psychology	Psychology Sociology Urban Studies Women's and Gender Studies
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Details:

African/ Asian Studies

HU: rather comprehensive course offerings

American Studies

FU: broad focus (history, political science, sociology, economics, literature, culture), prestigious John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies, also interesting for students of Political Science, History, Sociology, Economics, Literature

HU: focus on literature and culture

Anthropology (see/under: Cultural Studies)

FU: Social and Cultural Anthropology (focus on countries outside of Europe, rather small field of study)

HU: European Anthropology (includes Jewish Studies courses)

Art History (no Art at FU/ HU!)

FU: broad field of study; possibility to focus on different regions of the world

HU: rather broad field of study, with one focus on Berlin & Hermann von Helmholtz Center of Cultural Techniques (somewhat practice-oriented approach)

*** Communication**

FU: Institute for Media and Communication Studies (includes Journalism)

HU: BA is combination of Music and Media Studies

**** Comparative Literature**

FU: Peter Szondi Institute for Comparative Literature (broad field of study)

HU: no BA, Comp Lit only within German Lit

Economics/ Business Administration

FU: broad field of study, diverse, comprehensive course offering

HU: smaller field of study, more math-oriented

Overall, FU department ranked significantly higher re. student services, research (+ research reputation), library

English

FU: Literature, Linguistics, Cultural Studies

HU: Literature, Cultural Studies, special focus on Linguistics

Geography

FU: field of study appears less encompassing than HU

HU: Geographical Institute (broad field of study)

German

FU: German Philology

HU: Two Departments: a) German Lit b) Language and Linguistics

Both with broad fields of study and a diverse, comprehensive course offering; both with very high rankings in student support

History

Both universities with broad fields of study and diverse, comprehensive course offerings

Jewish Studies

FU: Separate department, but not very extensive course offerings

HU: Courses offered in the department of European Anthropology

Latin American Studies

FU: Institute for Latin American Studies

Philosophy

Both universities with broad fields of study and diverse, comprehensive course offerings

Political Science/ International Relations

FU: broad field of study and diverse, comprehensive offerings

HU: not available for BA students

Psychology

FU: apparently emphasis not merely on natural sciences, but also seen as social science (Education and Psychology grouped together), slightly broader field of study

HU: focus on natural sciences (in the School of Math and Sciences, together with Geography, Computer Sciences, and Math), not very broad field of study

Sociology

FU: not available for BA students

HU: broader field of study

Urban Studies

HU: for BA students, part of Geography; separate field of study for MA students

Women's and Gender Studies

HU: Interdisciplinary Institute for Gender Studies