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. Please note that all the Russia programs described in this Advising Notes document has been cancelled for the 2021-2022 cycle. We encourage you to identify another program of interest for this cycle and/or to apply for this program in a future cycle.

Date last updated: December 14, 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 websites. If any concerns you have are not addressed on the UCEAP website or in 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 http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/advising

The UCEAP Russia programs are administered on-site by the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE). For the most complete information, we recommend that you study the UCEAP and CIEE program pages together:

UCEAP Russian Area Studies program page (Fall and Spring Semesters Only)
UCEAP Russian Language program page (Summer, Fall, Spring and Year)
CIEE Russia Programs landing page

As a UCEAP participant, you should be referring to the UCEAP program pages for eligibility, academic policies and cost information.

Exclusivity Clause
Please note that CIEE has an "exclusivity agreement" with UCEAP for its "Russian Language" and "Russian Area Studies" programs such that UC students must participate in them via UCEAP; they are not allowed to participate in them directly via CIEE. If CIEE offers program options other than the UCEAP programs in Russia, 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: https://myapp.berkeley.edu/independent.pdf

Application Process
All UCEAP students must initiate their application through the Berkeley Study Abroad Applicant Portal to be considered for UCEAP participation: http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/uceap-how-apply. Please take care to
follow the provided instructions! You will be required to submit a language evaluation form completed by a professor of Russian to CIEE at a later date if you have studied Russian.

Note for Transfer Students: Students must complete at least one semester at UC Berkeley before departure.

**Competitiveness of the Programs**

Students who meet and maintain the minimum eligibility requirements and submit a complete and well-prepared application with an articulate Statement of Purpose will have a very good chance of being selected.

**Scholarships**

CIEE offers scholarships and grants based on merit and financial need. Students will have access to the CIEE online scholarship application once they begin their CIEE online application.

All UCEAP students are encouraged to apply for the UCEAP Promise Award, which offers a $2000 award for semester programs. For more information, visit the [UCEAP Scholarships](#) page.

US Citizen Pell Grant recipients are encouraged to apply for the Gilman Scholarship, which offers a possible award of up to $5000. For more information, visit [gilmanscholarship.org](http://gilmanscholarship.org).

More information on financial aid and scholarships can be found on our website: [http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/finances](http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/finances)

**IMPORTANT NOTE re: Russian language levels and instruction**

The Summer Russian Language (SRL) program now includes beginning, intermediate, and advanced language levels. Students can also now take Beginning Russian in the Summer Area Studies (SAS) program. No prior Russian is required for either summer option now. The SRL language courses are more intensive and grammar-oriented; the SAS language courses are more communication-oriented. The semester-length Russian Language Program (RLP) still requires through Slavic 4; the Russian Area Studies semester program (RAS) has a maximum of Russian 3. See the UCEAP Russia program webpages for further details in the Academics link for each option: [https://uceap.universityofcalifornia.edu/study-abroad-in-russia?f%5B0%5D=country%3A40](http://uceap.universityofcalifornia.edu/study-abroad-in-russia?f%5B0%5D=country%3A40). Consult with Professor Anna Muza in the Slavic Dept regarding placement in the appropriate level of Russian course when you return to Cal, as it will vary depending on how much Russian you knew before you left, which program you participate in abroad, and how hard you work on your language acquisition while you’re in Russia.

If you are a heritage speaker of Russian and have never taken a Russian course at Cal, you must ask Prof. Anna Muza to complete a language evaluation of your Russian proficiency and upload it with your other UCEAP Russia application materials. See the application instructions for more details and the form to fill out.

Consider majoring or double-majoring in Russian. See their Major Advising Page - click on the study abroad options link at the bottom of this webpage: [http://slavic.berkeley.edu/undergraduate/](http://slavic.berkeley.edu/undergraduate/)

**Taking Russian Language Classes at Cal P/NP**

Russian classes you take at Cal may be taken P/NP, *but with your application you must provide a written note from your instructor or the Slavic Department stating what your letter grade would have been. It is your responsibility to make arrangements for this without prompting from the Russia adviser or BSA office.* This is required even for the options that have no minimum language requirement or minimum Language GPA. A Language GPA must still be calculated and provided to UCEAP by our office.

**Passports, Visas and International Travel Prior To the Program**
Your passport must be valid for 6 months beyond the end date of the UCEAP program in Russia. Check the UCEAP Russia webpage to see the tentative end dates. If you don’t have a valid passport, apply right away so that you have it in your possession by March 1 for Fall, or by September 1 for Spring.

Due to lengthy Russian visa processing times, travel after the UC term ends and before this EAP program is highly discouraged. Please discuss any potential pre-program travel plans with your BSA Adviser.

Instructions on travel and Visa/Entry Clearance will be provided in your UCEAP Pre-Departure Portal, which will be available to you after you have been selected for the program.

Student who were born in Russia, have Russian Citizenship and/or have Russian parents
Male students who have Russian citizenship or were born in Russia and did not formally renounce their Russian citizenship can be conscripted into the Russian military if they are 18-27 years old and have not satisfied their Russian military service requirement. Check with the U.S. State Department or the Russian Government for more information.

Students (male and female) who have both Russian and American citizenship, or who have American citizenship but were born in Russia, should also contact the U.S. State Department or the Russian Government regarding their ability to obtain a Russian visa with an American passport.

Students (male and female) who were born in the U.S. but whose parents are Russian Nationals are generally considered Russian citizens and may not be able to obtain a Russian visa with an American passport. Check with the U.S. State Department or the Russian Government for more information.

Applicants who fall into any of these categories should notify the UCEAP Russia Program Specialist at kgeorgieva@uceap.universityofcalifornia.edu.

HIV Test
The Russian consulate will require a negative HIV test result with your name on it in order to grant a student visa. More information will be available in your UCEAP Portal after selection. The HIV test result is not a requirement of the Health Clearance required by UCEAP; it is only for the student visa.

Special Demands of the Program
Students are responsible for reviewing all informational materials and resources provided by UCEAP and CIEE and are expected to do independent research on Russia, the city of St. Petersburg and the surrounding area. Students should also familiarize themselves with the role of race, gender, sexuality, and religion while studying in Russia, and develop appropriate expectations according to personal backgrounds and self-identification. Students should familiarize themselves U.S. Department of State Country Page for Russia.

LGBTQIA+ Travelers
Be sure to carefully read the “Local Laws & Special Circumstances” section of the U.S. Department of State Country Page for Russia where it addresses LGBTI Travelers, and the U.S. Department of State LGBTI Travel Information page. While LGBTI students should exercise caution in discussing their sexual orientation or gender identity with people they do not know well, students on the program report feeling safe and comfortable in general.