UCEAP Taiwan Advising Notes

Objective

This document is an advising tool written by a Berkeley Study Abroad advisor to review program specific details that may impact a student’s decision to apply for an 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. The best source of detailed program information are the UCEAP webpages for Taiwan. If any concerns you have are not addressed on the UCEAP website or this Advising Notes document, please contact the BSA Advisor for this program.

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COVID-19 Information

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 certain programs listed in this Advising Notes document have been canceled for the 2021-2022 cycle. All other programs listed are scheduled to proceed at this time, and UCEAP will inform campus offices if there are any updates.

The programs that have been canceled are:
Chinese in Taipei (Summer 2021)
Research in Taipei (Summer 2021)

Last updated February 24, 2021.

Quick Links

Below is a summary of the ’21-’22 UCEAP Taiwan programs available to Berkeley students:

Immersion
National Taiwan University (Fall, Spring, Year)

Video & Blog Resources

There are a number of videos provided by UCEAP or UC Berkeley Students to help students learn about their study abroad options. Here are some you can check out:

Videos
● 2021: Study Abroad in Asia and Oceania | UCEAP Open House
● 2020: Study Abroad in China, Hong Kong, India, and Taiwan | UCEAP Study Abroad Fair 2020

Blogs
● 2014: UC Berkeley Student on the National Taiwan University Fall program
Citizenship and Passport Considerations

Taiwan citizens may apply to Chinese in Taipei and Research in Taipei only if you are a currently enrolled UC student at the time of application.

If you have only Taiwanese citizenship, you are not eligible for the National Taiwan University program. However, you are eligible to apply if you hold dual citizenship. Dual citizenship holders (for example, hold both Taiwan and US passports) ARE eligible to apply using their non-Taiwanese passport.

PRC citizens may apply to the National Taiwan University program for the Fall or Spring terms, but they are ineligible to apply for the year-long term.

If you currently hold or have ever held Taiwanese citizenship, there are important considerations for studying abroad in this program. All male citizens between the ages of 18 and 36 who were born in Taiwan or who have ever held a Taiwan passport are subject to compulsory military training by the Taiwanese government. This policy applies to dual citizens, even if you enter Taiwan on your non-Taiwanese passport. You may also be required to submit additional paperwork. You may obtain additional information from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECO). Contact the BSA adviser for Taiwan if you fall in this category and are considering studying abroad in Taiwan.

Non-U.S. citizens should contact TECO now to determine visa requirements for your country of citizenship. Contact the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) if you have questions about re-entering the U.S.

Students who are in the process of applying for U.S. citizenship or making any legal name changes are not eligible to apply unless the changes will be completed before application to the UCEAP program. There are no exceptions to this.

For all UCEAP Taiwan programs, students cannot be accepted to a Taiwanese university without a valid passport. Your UCEAP application will state how long your passport must be valid after the end date of the program and when a photocopy of it will be due. If you do not have a passport or need a renewal, please review the Passport Information section of the COVID-19 Information for Berkeley Study Abroad Students page, and take action immediately.

Program Considerations: National Taiwan University

NTU provides one of the least expensive UCEAP options in Asia at one of the top-ranked research university partners with whom UCEAP works.

NTU courses taught in Mandarin are for students with native or near-native language ability. Regular NTU subject offerings that are taught in Mandarin use traditional characters.
Occasionally, NTU courses will offer lectures in Chinese with textbooks and other materials in English.

NTU Courses taught in English are in a range of fields and are open to all UCEAP students regardless of language ability. Students can look for courses taught in English on NTU’s website.

UCEAP students can take one Chinese language course offered through the Chinese Language Division (CLD) at NTU.

All courses available to UCEAP students operate on the regular NTU calendar. Fall courses run from September to mid-January and spring courses run from February to mid-June. It is not possible to make arrangements to take exams early for NTU courses. Therefore, it is not possible to depart Taiwan earlier than mid-January or mid-June, respectively. For Fall package students, it is possible to complete final exams at NTU in mid-January and return to Berkeley in time for the beginning of the spring semester.

Students going to NTU in the Fall, Spring, or Year packages must complete a Medical Examination Report as part of their host university application, including a chest x-ray. This medical exam is in addition to the regular UCEAP Health Clearance (instructions will be provided after selection to the program) and can cost between $200 and $300 to complete at the Tang Center. The cost of the health clearance is factored into the UCEAP budget for the program, but financial aid recipients must plan carefully for pre-departure expenses that occur before the disbursement of financial aid for UCEAP. The exam can also be completed upon arrival at NTU.

Program Considerations: Chinese in Taipei
(canceled for Summer 2021)

This program offers intensive language study in Chinese from beginning to advanced levels. Students and earn 8 semester units on the program. Please note that this program is not open to native Chinese speakers, because there is not coursework offered at this level.

Program Considerations: Research in Taipei
(canceled for Summer 2021)

This program offers a variety of research opportunities. Available departmental labs include the College of Science, College of Electrical Engineering & Computer Science, College of Engineering, College of Bio resources and Agriculture, College of Life Science, College of Public Health, and School of Veterinary Medicine. Click here for current project descriptions and the leading professors’ background and specialties.
Students earn 4 semester units for research and 2 semester units for a culture course, for 6 total semester units.

Prospective students are encouraged to accept placement in this program only if they are certain they will be able to participate within the lab they are assigned. Lab research placements such as this are often competitive; if you accept and later decline a placement, you may be taking an opportunity away from students who were not nominated. Research teams at NTU also count on having nominated students as part of their lab, so you are encouraged to accept the placement only if you can commit to participation in the program.

Considerations for LGBTIQA+ Students

Taiwan is included on UCEAP’s list of tolerant destinations for LGBTIQA+ students. Nations on this list are included based on recognition of same-sex unions and the existence of human rights laws prohibiting discrimination against gay individuals. This resource considers potential risks as they specifically affect members of the LGBTIQA+ community, and not necessarily the overall threats posed to all students traveling and studying abroad. As in many countries, tolerance levels vary by region; major cities may be more accepting of the LGBTIQA+ community than rural areas. You can review the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2019 from the U.S. Department of State for more information.

Taiwan poses a low threat to LGBTIQA+ individuals. Social acceptance is mixed, with attitudes generally split between younger, progressive generations and older, more conservative ones. Reported instances of violence against LGBTIQA+ individuals were rare, and the police response was adequate.

Existing Taiwanese law poses a low threat to the LGBTIQA+ community. Homosexuality is explicitly legal, as is being transgender, although it requires a six-month consideration period. Taiwan outlawed surgical requirements for transgender individuals in January 2015.

Considerations for Students with Disabilities

If you receive accommodations at UC Berkeley 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.

For programs in Japan, accommodations for a reduced course load are unfortunately not possible due to student visa restrictions. However, students may be able to seek other accommodations that are outlined in a DSP letter, such as extra time on exams.
Considerations for Graduating Seniors

If you are a graduating senior who is applying to a Spring package program, please be advised that the finals period may stretch into June or July. Returning to Berkeley to walk in a commencement ceremony is an unrealistic expectation for Spring participants. If walking in graduation is very important to you, we recommend that you apply to the National University Singapore, as there is a better chance that program will end before commencement. As an alternative to walking in a Spring ceremony, there is also a UC Berkeley "December Graduates Convocation" if you would like to have the experience of walking in graduation (not department specific). Similarly, you can wait and walk in the following Spring departmental ceremony.

Graduating seniors participating on a spring program should ensure they are on the Spring degree list. If you are not yet on this degree list, you should contact your UC Berkeley College Adviser to petition moving your expected graduation term. However, spring grades are often not reported to UCEAP until mid-August, so your grades will not arrive in time for your degree to be processed with the spring degree list (which occurs in mid-July). You will be automatically removed from the spring degree list and placed onto the summer degree list, which is processed in October. Thus, your diploma would display a summer graduation date rather than a spring graduation date. This policy is subject to change. For all students, after your UCEAP grades arrive and you are waiting for the next degree list to be processed, you can request a "Certificate of Completion" from the Berkeley Registrar that can serve as "proof" of graduation.

Diversity Abroad Resources

BSA recognizes that there are many nuances to exploring your identities abroad, and these articles may not be representative of all identities and experiences. Diversity Abroad’s resources, however, are a great starting place for your exploration. You can find a variety of articles to help you prepare for your study abroad experience.