

# UCEAP Thailand 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 Thailand](#). 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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## Quick Links

Below is a summary of the 2024-2025 UCEAP Thailand programs available to Berkeley students:

	Summer 2024	Fall 2024	Year 2024-25	Spring 2025
<b><i>Immersion</i></b>				
<a href="#">Thammasat University</a>		X	X	X
<b><i>Internship</i></b>				
<a href="#">Summer Internship, Bangkok</a>	X			
<b><i>Major</i></b>				
<a href="#">International Economics</a>	X			

## Video & Blog Resources

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

- [3-minute Travel Guide – Bangkok, Thailand](#)
- 2021: [Study Abroad in Asia and Oceania | UCEAP Open House](#)
- 2020: [Study Abroad in Korea, Singapore, and Thailand | UCEAP Study Abroad Fair](#)
- 2016: [UCEAP Thailand](#)

Here are some videos made by a UC Student about her experience on the Public Health program in Summer 2018:

- [Arriving in Thailand](#)
- [Exploring Bangkok: Chatuchak Market & Grand Palace](#)
- [Thai Cultural Introduction](#)
- [Day in my Life at Thammasat University](#)
- [My Life in Thailand, Finals & Food](#)
- [Traveling to Mae Sot](#)

## Citizenship and Passport Considerations

Non-U.S citizens must contact the [Royal Thai Consulate General in Los Angeles](#) to determine visa requirements prior to application for the program. The visa process may require additional documents and longer processing time for non-U.S. citizens. In addition, make sure that your passport and U.S. re-entry permit will be valid for the entire length of time you will be abroad. If

necessary, 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 Thailand programs**, students cannot be accepted to a Thai university without a valid passport. Your [UCEAP application](#) will state how long your passport must be valid after the end date of the program (typically 6 months after return) 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 [UCEAP How to Apply Page](#), and take action immediately.

## Financial Considerations

Semester and year UCEAP programs in Thailand cost **less** than a semester or year at UC Berkeley (including the airfare to/from Thailand!), so they are highly recommended for students on a tight budget. However, students receiving financial aid need to be aware that financial aid while on UCEAP is based on the cost of the UCEAP program rather than the cost of attendance at Berkeley. Contact a financial aid counselor with any questions about study abroad and financial aid at [travelaid@berkeley.edu](mailto:travelaid@berkeley.edu).

All UCEAP students are encouraged to apply for a [UCEAP Scholarship](#), which offers a \$1000 award for summer 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). Another scholarship to explore is the [Freeman-ASIA Scholarship](#).

More information on financial aid and scholarships can be found on our website: <http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/finances>

Financial aid students can request a financial aid estimate for the program here: <https://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/finances/financial-aid-advising>

## Impacted (Limited Capacity) Programs

All summer programs in Thailand (International Economics and Summer Internship, Bangkok) have a limited number of spaces available due to field trip or internship placement logistics. These programs are also known as Limited Capacity Programs and we typically receive more applications than we have allotted spots on the program. Nominations are on a first come first serve basis. Students should not be discouraged from applying to their first choice; however, all applicants are encouraged to consider programs in other countries for suitable alternatives as a backup.

The selection criteria we will use for impacted programs include:

- Prerequisite or major requirements (if applicable)
- Class Standing
- GPA
- Student's coursework background and training in relevant areas

- Completeness and thoroughness of application. Incomplete applications without sufficient reason could be denied immediately.

In the event you are denied from your first choice program, the BSA Adviser will work with you to find an alternative UCEAP program or discuss other options. Review the UCEAP program page's "dates and eligibility" section for a full list of eligibility requirements. For the full list of limited capacity programs, see the [How to Apply](#) page.

## Program Considerations – Summer

### Summer Internship, Bangkok

The Summer Internships, Bangkok program is facilitated by [Thammasat University](#). For the Summer Internship, Bangkok summer 2024 program, qualified students who apply for this program will be nominated to this program on a **'first come first serve basis'** based on their UCEAP application submission date/time. UCEAP applications for the 2024-25 cycle of participation will open on Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 9:00 am (PST) and students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. On the BSA website's [Explore](#) tool, you will be able to see that application filing period for specific programs.

All students, regardless of what term they are applying for, must submit both the UCEAP and Berkeley Study Abroad applications. Please consult the [application instructions](#) and your BSA Adviser if you have questions about the application process.

### International Economics

The International Economics program is facilitated by [Thammasat University](#) and has a set curriculum. Students take the following two courses for a total of 6.6 semester units:

1. Topics in International Economics, 3.3 upper division semester units
2. Topics in Development Economics, 3.3 upper division semester units

Applicants for this program must be *declared Economics majors*, and they should be prepared for a strong academic program with project-based coursework. The program also includes a week-long field trip to another Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member country (location varies each year).

For the International Economics summer 2024 program, qualified students who apply for this program will be nominated to this program on a **'first come first serve basis'** based on their UCEAP application submission date/time. UCEAP applications for the 2024-25 cycle of participation will open on Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 9:00 am (PST) and students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. On the BSA website's [Explore](#) tool, you will be able to see that application filing period for specific programs.

All students, regardless of what term they are applying for, must submit both the UCEAP and Berkeley Study Abroad applications. Please consult the [application instructions](#) and your BSA Adviser if you have questions about the application process.

## Program Considerations – Semester & Year

## Thammasat University

UCEAP students at [Thammasat University](#) can select from a variety of courses taught in English through the International Programs in areas including business administration, economics, development studies, politics, international relations with an Asian focus, literature, history, Thai language, religion, and cultural studies. These faculties are located on the Tha Prachan campus in central Bangkok. Courses in departments other than the ones listed above are taught in Thai and operate on a different academic calendar, so they are not available to UCEAP students.

Students in Thai Studies courses are mostly international, while students in Economics, Business Administration, British and American Studies, and Politics and International Relations courses are mostly Thai.

Alumni recommend that students study Thai language, as it will help them learn more about the culture and will delight locals in their daily conversations, such as when they are ordering food.

When researching courses on the Thammasat website, keep in mind that first-year courses (numbered 100s at Thammasat) are not recommended for UCEAP students, and they are transferred back as lower-division UC credit.

Both extracurricular and academic internships are available on all packages of the Thammasat University program. Students during the academic year have the option of replacing one course with an internship arranged after arrival. Opportunities are coordinated by Thammasat's Department of Social Policy and Development. For example, a student in economics might be placed at a corporate, public, governmental, or private organization such as Global Tax or other finance and brokerage firms. Students with interests in media might be placed at Internews. Students with interest in political science might be placed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or NGOs. Other opportunities include Philips Electronics Thailand, public health organizations, hospitals, and more.

Thammasat students placed in the business department will have the option to pursue a summer business internship as an extension. The minimum requirements for the opportunity include junior or senior standing, a GPA of 2.85 or higher, and previous term (Spring) study in the School of Business Administration International Program at Thammasat. Internships will begin early June to late July (8 weeks), and students will intern full time (35-40 hours a week). Placements are with national and international businesses. The summer portion will be worth 6.6 semester units. Students will live in local apartments in Bangkok. If you are interested in this option, please email the BSA Thailand adviser.

During the semester, the study center takes students out for monthly dinners. Alumni really enjoyed this opportunity to eat at nice places together.

There are differences between the Thai academic system and the US academic system, and students are encouraged to research the Thai academic culture. You may receive less feedback on academic performance during the term than you are accustomed to at Berkeley.

For the Thammasat University Fall 24 and Year 24 - 25 programs, qualified students who apply for this program will be nominated to this program on a **'first come first serve basis'** based on their UCEAP application submission date/time. UCEAP applications for the 2024-25 cycle of participation will open on Wednesday, November 1, 2023 at 9:00 am (PST) and students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. On the BSA website's [Explore](#) tool, you will be able to see that application filing period for specific programs.



All students, regardless of what term they are applying for, must submit both the UCEAP and Berkeley Study Abroad applications. Please consult the [application instructions](#) and your BSA Adviser if you have questions about the application process.

For the Thammasat University Spring 25 program, qualified students who apply for this program will be nominated to this program on a **‘first come first serve basis’** based on their UCEAP application submission date/time. UCEAP Spring applications for the 24 - 25 cycle of participation will open on Monday, April 15, 2024 (PST) and students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. On the BSA website’s [Explore](#) tool, you will be able to see that application filing period for specific programs.

All students, regardless of what term they are applying for, must submit both the UCEAP and Berkeley Study Abroad applications. Please consult the [application instructions](#) and your BSA Adviser if you have questions about the application process.

## Traveling before the UCEAP program

Students on a summer program enter Thailand on a 60-day tourist visa, which must be obtained prior to departure from the U.S. Students who enter Thailand earlier than the official program dates in order to travel (pushing their stay over 60 days) will have to apply for a 30-day visa extension in Thailand.

Students on semester or year programs must apply for a student visa prior to departure for the UCEAP program. One requirement of the student visa application is an official letter of acceptance from Thammasat University. Acceptance letters are anticipated in mid-to-late June for the fall and year program, and in mid-to-late December for the Spring program. After you have received your letter of acceptance, you may apply in-person or via USPS to the Thai Consulate in Los Angeles for your student visa. It takes approximately 7-10 business days to process your visa when applying via USPS, or 2-3 business days if applying in-person. Please note the Thai Royal Consulate is closed on both US and Thai holidays. Students planning pre-program travel must be aware that they cannot depart the US without their Thai student visa and plan their travel dates accordingly.

## Health Considerations

Bangkok has heavy smog levels, so it is recommended that students with asthma or other respiratory health issues discuss participation in UCEAP Thailand with their physician prior to application. Even if you are healthy, you may experience temporary symptoms, such as irritation of the eyes, nose, and throat; coughing; phlegm; chest tightness; and shortness of breath.

## Considerations for Transfer Students

Transfer students should review BSA's [I am a Transfer Student webpage](#) for an overview of considerations. As a general rule, transfer students are eligible to apply for study abroad programs that take place after the student has completed one term at UC Berkeley (i.e., if their first term at Berkeley is Spring 2024, the earliest they could study abroad is Summer 2025. If their first term at Berkeley is Fall 2024, the earliest they could study abroad is Spring 2025). This applies for all UCEAP Programs in Thailand.

## Considerations for LGBTIQ+ Students

Taiwan is included on UCEAP's [list of LGBTIQ-tolerant countries](#), which was compiled using information from the [Spartacus Gay Travel Index](#). For additional information, review BSA's [I am a LGBTIQ+ Identifying Student webpage](#) for an overview of considerations.

Information from the U.S. Department of State's [2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#) is as follows:

No law criminalizes expression of sexual orientation or consensual same-sex sexual conduct between adults.

The LGBTI community reported that police treated LGBTI victims of crime the same as other persons except in the case of sexual crimes, where there was a tendency to downplay sexual abuse or not to take harassment seriously.

The law does not permit transgender persons to change their gender on identification documents, which, coupled with societal discrimination, limited their employment opportunities.

The UN Development Program (UNDP) and NGOs reported that LGBTI persons experienced discrimination, particularly in rural areas. The UNDP also reported media represented LGBTI persons in stereotypical and harmful ways resulting in discrimination.

Legislation mandating gender equality prohibits discrimination “due to the fact that the person is male or female or of a different appearance from his or her own sex by birth” and protects transgender students from discrimination. The country's Fourth National Human Rights Plan, covering the period 2019-22, was approved by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board in March and by the cabinet in June. The plan includes LGBTI persons as one of 12 groups in its action plan.

NGOs and the United Nations reported transgender persons faced discrimination in various sectors, including in the military conscription process, while in detention, and because of strict policies in place at most schools and universities that require students to wear uniforms that align with their biological gender. Some universities relaxed dress codes during the year, partly in response to student-led protests that called for reforms in the educational system. In June, Thammasat University announced it would allow students to wear uniforms that match their chosen sexual identity while also outlining a

code of conduct that prohibits bullying, insulting, discriminating, or intimidating behavior by faculty or students towards LGBTI students.

In May 2019 the Ministry of Education introduced a new curriculum incorporating discussion of sexual orientation and gender diversity for grades one to 12; this followed two years of advocacy by the LGBTI community. NGOs continued to encourage the Ministry of Education to make the curriculum compulsory, and continued to work with the ministry on curriculum development and to organize training courses to prepare teachers to teach it effectively.

## Considerations for Students with Disabilities

Students seeking accommodations should review BSA's [I am a Student With Disabilities webpage](#) for an overview of considerations. 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.

Students with emotional support animals or service animals will need to request accommodations from their UCEAP Program Specialist prior to departure on their UCEAP program. Emotional support animal accommodation requests are not guaranteed. Below are additional resources to consider:

Traveling Internationally with a Guide Dog or Service Animal

*Pros and cons, legal and health considerations for going abroad with your service animal*

<http://www.miusa.org/resource/tipsheet/serviceanimal>

10 Steps to Bring Your Service Animal or Guide Dog to Another Country

*Start planning early and consider international quarantine and vaccination laws*

<http://www.miusa.org/resource/tipsheet/10steps>

Should I Take My Guide Dog or Service Animal?

<http://www.miusa.org/resource/tipsheet/guidedogdecisions>

Caring for Your Guide Dog or Service Animal Abroad

*Learn tips for supplies to take along, climate preparations, and animal health while traveling internationally*

<http://www.miusa.org/resource/tipsheet/preparingyouranimal>

For the Thammasat University program, an exchange student needs to take at least 9 TU credits (=15 UC quarter units) to be considered a full time student and qualified for an Education Visa.

## Considerations for Graduating Seniors

Graduating seniors participating in a spring semester program should ensure that they are on the Spring degree list. If they are not yet on this degree list, students should petition to move their graduation term with their UC Berkeley college. However, Spring package 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. More information can be found in the [I am a Senior page](#).

## Considerations for Undocumented Students

The Advance Parole processing timeline can take anywhere from 10-13.5 months to process and it is highly encouraged that students interested in studying abroad reach out to the BSA office as soon as possible to discuss the next steps to submit an early application. The BSA Office collaborates with the [Undocumented Student Program](#) and the [East Bay Community Law Center \(EBCLC\)](#) to support undocumented or DACA students interested in studying abroad. For more information, review the [I am an...Undocumented Student](#) page.

## 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 as well as a [Thailand Destination Guide](#).