



## STUDENT LIFE

<b>Important Documents</b>	<p>Obtain or renew a passport</p> <p>Follow UCEAP instructions to apply for a student visa</p> <p>Submit all required predeparture documents by the deadlines</p> <p>Purchase an airline ticket with a changeable return date</p> <p>Documents for non-U.S. citizens</p>
<b>Applying UCEAP Policies</b>	<p>Arrival and orientation instructions you must follow...</p> <p>Understand UCEAP policies and host country laws concerning conduct...</p> <p>Illegal drugs...</p> <p>Communicate regularly with on-site staff...</p> <p>Enter all travel plans and absences in MyEAP...</p> <p>Identify sexual harassment and report issues to UCEAP...</p>
<b>Cultural Immersion</b>	<p>Prepare for culture shock; it happens to everyone in varying degrees</p> <p>Read about your country and keep up with the latest news</p>
<b>Gender Issues</b>	<p>Be aware of potential gender issues and report any incidents to UCEAP</p>
<b>Diversity</b>	<p>Sexual orientation within the context of a foreign culture</p> <p>Possible racial/ethnic issues</p> <p>Get involved in extracurricular activities when possible</p> <p>Don't allow obstacles to stop you from studying abroad</p> <p>Prepare for reverse culture shock; you will be a different person</p>



## Important Documents

### Obtain or renew a passport

- ▶ If you do not already have a passport, apply for one immediately. Often there are early visa or admission documents that require a current passport.
- The [U.S. Department of State](#) website contains passport information and application or renewal forms for U.S. citizens. Additional information is available from the [National Passport Information Center](#) (NPIC) at (877) 487-2778 or via TDD/TTY at (888) 874-7793.
- Your passport must be valid for the duration of your stay. Depending on your program, your passport should be valid at least 3 to 18 months beyond the end date of your stay. If the passport will expire before that time, you will need to renew it before departure.
- Check with the embassy or consulate of your host country about passport duration and country-specific entry requirements.
- If you are planning to travel before, during, or after UCEAP, check the visa requirements of your host country and the other countries you plan to visit.
- In rare cases, it may be possible to legally get a second U.S. passport for use while your original passport remains with the consulate for visa processing. UCEAP cannot assist you with this process. If you are interested in a second passport, check with the U.S. Passport Agency for details.
- Immediately upon receipt: sign your passport, make copies of the first two pages, and leave one copy with an emergency contact at home. If possible, scan your passport and visa so they are accessible electronically while abroad.
- Update [MyEAP](#) with your passport information. Make sure your name matches the spelling on your passport, including initials, middle names, etc.

### Follow UCEAP instructions to apply for a student visa

A visa (or entry clearance or resident permit) is an endorsement; it may be an actual stamp or sticker placed in your passport by the immigration authorities of the host country, or it may be issued to you electronically. The visa grants its bearer permission to enter and reside in the host country for the purpose stated and for a certain period of time. The UCEAP Systemwide Office will provide you with specific visa and entry requirement information in your UCEAP [Predeparture Checklist](#). If you are not a U.S. citizen, you are responsible for researching the host country's entry requirements.

Each country has different student visa requirements. If your host country requires a student visa prior to arrival, do not enter the host country without one—even though you may be able to enter as a tourist. Once abroad, it can be difficult, even impossible, to obtain the necessary student visa.

A visa is a privilege, not a right. The government of the host country either issues or denies a visa. A host country, via its consulates or embassies, reserves the right to reject a visa application and sets strict rules for obtaining student visas; UCEAP cannot help you if your application is denied or delayed. It is your responsibility to obtain a student visa. Refer to your program-specific visa information for further details. If you do not obtain the proper visa by the deadline, you may not be able to participate in the program.

- ▶ **International travel prior to the Official Start Date may be restricted due to visa processing and issuance.**



## Submit all required predeparture documents by the deadlines

### Your UCEAP Participants Program Page

UCEAP will e-mail you the link to your UCEAP Participants program page, which includes a predeparture checklist, program budget and calendar, insurance forms and instructions, petition forms, and other predeparture resources. It is crucial that you review *all* the tabs on this page; they are titled **Travel Requirements, Money Matters, Calendars, Insurance, Policies, and Petitions**. Most items will only be available online for you to download, complete, and submit. Review the instructions as soon as you receive them—do not wait until the last minute. Return all forms and accompanying documents by the designated deadlines. Failure to submit documents by specified deadlines is cause for dismissal from UCEAP.

### Purchase an airline ticket with a changeable return date

- Do not use a standby ticket to travel to your program site.
- Always check your Program Calendar on the UCEAP website before finalizing a flight reservation.
- If you are on financial aid, you will need to purchase a plane ticket before you receive a financial aid disbursement. Plan for this expense. Neither UCEAP nor the Financial Aid office will reserve or pay for your ticket.
- UCEAP recommends purchasing changeable fares, which will allow you to make changes to your return flight for a fee. Carefully research airfare rules prior to purchasing a flight. Standby and courier fares are not appropriate.
- A few programs offer or require a group flight; check your Predeparture Checklist for details.

### Documents for non-U.S. citizens

- ▶ If applicable, be sure any reentry documents are valid.

Do not apply for U.S. citizenship directly before or during your participation in UCEAP. As a non-U.S. citizen, you must immediately contact the consulate of the country in which you intend to study to determine your specific requirements, which will vary depending on your country of citizenship.

You will likely need to obtain a visa in order to enter and study in the host country. The visa process can take several months, so initiate it as soon as you are accepted for participation in UCEAP. Non-U.S. citizens applying for visas must generally have a valid passport from their country of citizenship plus proof of permission to reenter the U.S., such as a proof of permanent residency status (Green Card), or a readmittance stamp in their passport. If you do not have a U.S. Reentry Permit but have a valid passport, you will likely be denied a visa. You can apply for a U.S. Reentry Permit at a local immigration office. If you already have the permit, make sure it will remain valid throughout your entire stay abroad.

Being out of the U.S. may jeopardize your permanent residence status in the U.S. If you are considering extension of your program participation from a single term to a full year, take the necessary steps before departure to ensure your legal return to the U.S.

If you fail to obtain the proper visa documentation prior to departure, the host country may deny your admittance to the country or limit your stay to a shorter period of time, which would prevent your participation in UCEAP.



## Applying UCEAP Policies

### Arrival and orientation instructions you must follow

You must arrive at the predetermined site in the host country by the specified time on the UCEAP Official Start Date. After arrival, you must attend the mandatory UCEAP orientation. You are required to attend *all* orientation activities. If you arrive late or do not participate in all or part of the required orientation, you may be withdrawn from the program (Student Agreement, Section 10).

### Understand UCEAP policies and host country laws concerning conduct

You are expected to take responsibility for your own actions or inactions. UCEAP policies are based on the principle that students are adults and guests in the UCEAP host countries.

As a member of the UCEAP community, you are expected to comply with all host country laws, UC and UCEAP policies, and host institution regulations, and conduct yourself in a way that supports a scholarly environment. As a UCEAP participant you assume a dual status as both a UC student and a student of the host institution and host country. Therefore, you are subject to, and should be familiar with, student conduct policies of the host institution as well as local laws.

As a participant of an official University of California academic program, you are expected to respect the rights and dignity of other students, staff, faculty, members of the host institution, and local citizens. You must take responsibility for acting in ways that demonstrate respect for yourself and others and recognize that you represent University of California and your country for the duration of your time abroad. UCEAP is committed to maintaining an environment that encourages personal and intellectual growth. It is a community with high standards and expectations for those who choose to become a part of it, and thus establishes rules of conduct intended to foster behaviors that are consistent with a civil and educational setting.

UCEAP holds **you** responsible for knowing and understanding all UCEAP policies and for reading and complying with the UCEAP [Student Conduct and Discipline Policy](#). If you are ever in doubt, ask. These policies are designed for your well-being and an efficient educational program, and to ensure a safe, fair, and successful experience for all students. Ignorance of the policies is not an acceptable excuse for policy violation.

Misconduct abroad refers to actions that, in the judgment of UCEAP, jeopardize student welfare or that of the program. Such actions include, but are not limited to:

- Threats or the use of physical and/or verbal violence
- Violating the laws of the host country or institution
- Openly abusing the customs and culture of the community
- Damage to or destruction of other people's property
- Alcohol or substance abuse
- Harassment of any kind
- Eviction from your lodging
- Obstruction or disruption of teaching or other Program activities
- Unauthorized absence from classes or from the Study Center
- Exceeding the number of unexcused absences from class allowed for the Program
- Failure to submit a completed MyEAP Study List by the deadline set by UCEAP
- Academic misconduct (cheating, fabrication, forgery, plagiarism, or facilitating academic dishonesty)

It is your responsibility to read and comply with all policies. Inappropriate conduct abroad is a *direct* violation of the UCEAP Student Agreement, which you have signed, and can result in dismissal from the Program.



## Illegal drugs

- ▶ You are expected to read and comply with the UCEAP [Substance Abuse Policy](#).

UCEAP will impose disciplinary action, including dismissal, on students who violate the UCEAP Substance Abuse Policy, including drunkenness and/or any abuse of alcohol. Specific sanctions from the host country for alcohol-related legal violations may also occur; the student's UC campus will be notified of all sanctions.

### Mailing Illicit or Controlled Substances Is Illegal

Receiving illegal substances (such as drugs or drug paraphernalia) through the mail will subject you to UC and host country regulations. Mail is often opened by host country customs officials before delivery to the recipient abroad. If you are found in possession of illegal substances, you will be dismissed from UCEAP and you may be placed under immediate arrest, face a local trial and jail term, be expelled from the country, or worse, depending on the local laws. The sender is liable to USPS and U.S. federal laws and regulations, and punishments may include imprisonment and hefty fines.

### Communicate regularly with on-site staff

On-site support may include either a UCEAP Study Center or Liaison Office. The office itself may be a UC-only office, it may be a professor's office, or it may be a host institution office used by all international students. On-site administrators may be UC or local faculty supported by local staff. Take advantage of services at your host institution, such as the International Office, Student Health, or Housing Office.

While abroad, the Study Center or Liaison Office will be your first point of contact for all matters. Among other things, the administrator or on-site staff will provide you support by advising on academic matters, program logistics, and personal issues; providing information on cultural activities; and responding to on-site emergencies. Contact information for your Study Center or Liaison Office is provided in your Program Guide.

### Enter all travel plans and absences in MyEAP

Click on the "Travel Signout" link in MyEAP under Participation. In the event of an emergency, UCEAP will need this information to contact you.

### Identify sexual harassment and report issues to UCEAP

UCEAP is concerned about students facing sexual harassment abroad. Knowing how to identify harassment—whether it is between you and another student, professor, teaching assistant, homestay family member, or dorm authority, etc.—and where to report an incident can help to maintain a safe, harassment-free environment. Be sure to read the UCEAP [Sexual Harassment Policy](#).

Sexual harassment may include:

- Derogatory remarks made about clothing, body, or sexual activities based on gender
- Disparaging remarks, jokes, and teasing based on gender
- Visual materials or pictures that unnecessarily sexualize the environment or that you find offensive
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity and dates
- Unnecessary and unwanted touching, patting, or pinching
- Demanding sexual favors accompanied by overt threats concerning such things as your job, grades, letters of recommendation, etc.
- Verbal harassment or abuse
- Any electronic communications which include any of the above
- Physical assault



Harassment issues may be particularly difficult to identify abroad, where cultural norms are often very different from those in the U.S. A fair rule of thumb is to assume that sexual harassment consists of any unwanted sexual advances and behavior of a verbal, visual, written, or physical nature in living arrangements or in educational or work environments.

Note that the U.S. description of sexual harassment may differ from the host country description. In such a case, you are encouraged to discuss these issues, if you feel comfortable, with the Study Center or Liaison Office administrator to determine an appropriate course of action.

Trust your judgment and intuition. If a situation makes you uncomfortable, it needs to be addressed. Never ignore sexual harassment. Ignoring it will not make it go away; most likely it will just make it worse. Both males and females can be sexually harassed, and the perpetrator can be male or female and of the same or opposite gender. Seek help from UCEAP and on-site personnel, who can provide counseling and advice and act on your behalf to remedy a problem.

### If You Experience Sexual Harassment

- Trust what you are feeling.
- Many people feel ashamed or humiliated because of the harassment. It is not your fault and you do not have to endure it.
- Take one step at a time—it is easy to feel overwhelmed. If possible, talk to the harasser.
- Clearly and firmly tell the harasser that you want the behavior to stop. If you can, tell the harasser how the behavior makes you feel.
- Let the harasser know that you will take further action if the harassment does not stop.
- Keep records. It is very important to write down dates, times, places, and witnesses to what happened.
- If you receive any notes, e-mail, or written letters from the harasser, keep them. You can use documented information to support a complaint.
- Report the incident to the UCEAP Study Center or Liaison Office. They can help you resolve the issue and provide counseling and guidance. If you need further assistance, or if you do not feel comfortable with the Study Center or Liaison Office, contact the UCEAP Regional Director for your program. Refer to the following [contact information](#) or [contact your UCEAP Title IX Sexual Harassment Officer, Inés DeRomaña](#).
- Call (805) 893-7936 or e-mail to leave a confidential message. When you establish contact, indicate that you are being sexually harassed and leave a phone number and a good time to return your call. All messages are confidential.

### What to Do if You Are Accused of Sexual Harassment

If you are told that your behavior is inappropriate and/or offensive, you must immediately stop the behavior. People perceive certain behaviors, jokes, and gestures, etc., differently. What may be acceptable to you may be extremely offensive to someone else. Sometimes due to the difference in culture you may not think your comment(s) or behavior is offensive. Nevertheless, you should try to understand the other person's feelings and concerns and respect his or her request to stop the sexual harassment.



### For More Information

Please refer to the UCEAP [Sexual Harassment Policy](#).

Contact information for UCEAP's Title IX Sexual Harassment Officer:

Inés DeRomaña

Office phone: (805) 893-7936

Mobile phone: (805) 451-1704

E-mail: [ideromana@eap.ucop.edu](mailto:ideromana@eap.ucop.edu)

In addition, all UC campuses provide sexual harassment education materials online, including information on applicable laws, where to go for help, etc. Most UC campuses have a dedicated Sexual Harassment/Title IX Office and Officer whom you can contact for help as well.

For information about Sexual Assault, refer to the [Safety](#) chapter in this guide.



## Cultural Immersion

### Prepare for culture shock; it happens to everyone in varying degrees

To adapt successfully to a new culture, it helps to know what to expect from both the foreign environment and yourself. For details on this topic, review “[Cross-Cultural Adjustment](#)” by Dan K. Smith, former Associate Director of the International Students and Scholars Office at UCSB.

### Read about your country and keep up with the latest news

Research and learn about your new host country, institution, and city (where to travel, transportation expenses, how to shop in a market, what the weather is like, how to meet locals, health and safety risks, etc.). There are many excellent travel guides available.

Begin your research as soon as possible. Learn about the local culture and the academic culture in which you are to be immersed. Most UC libraries have host country newspapers and periodicals. Be sure to closely consider sections on these topics in your Program Guide. In addition, the Internet has endless resources with country information.

Read as much as you can before departure. Other good orientation publications include the Lonely Planet and Rough Guide series as well as the *Survival Kit for Overseas Living: For Americans Planning to Live and Work Abroad* (by L. Robert Kohls, 4th ed., 2001).

UCEAP returnees are an excellent source of information about practical details such as the locations of ATMs abroad or the exact size of linens to pack. The Campus EAP Office can provide you with the contact information of returnees who have indicated they are willing to advise departing students.



## Gender Issues

### **Be aware of potential gender issues and report any incidents to UCEAP**

One of the most rewarding aspects of study abroad is making friends with people who have grown up in a different culture. In order to have a successful and safe experience, it is important to be aware of the cultural differences affecting gender roles.

Women studying abroad outnumber men by about 2 to 1; therefore, while some men may be harassed, women experience more sexual harassment and sexual assault.

Learn about different gender role expectations and cultural norms regarding relationship roles and dating, and practice strategies for dealing with unwanted attention. In a cross-cultural context, communication, like everything else, may become more complicated. The culture of the host country or language barriers may cause people to interpret your words, gestures, and body language differently than the way you mean them (and vice versa). The direct way of saying certain things may strike some listeners as too harsh. Communication problems, especially misunderstanding and misinterpretation, are common frustrations that you may experience.

Your own sense of personal boundaries (personal space around you) can have a different interpretation from culture to culture. Do not assume you know customs and personal boundaries in a new culture. For your safety, you must learn them. Be observant; you may notice that host country people stand closer to or farther apart from each other than what's common for Americans.

Harassing behavior is annoying at best and threatening and dangerous at worst. It is important to be aware that in many instances, the intentions of the accused may be regarded as irrelevant in determining whether her/his behaviors constitute sexual harassment; it is the effect of the behavior on the recipient that may define a hostile environment. Eye contact between strangers or a smile at someone passing in the street, which may be common in the States, may result in totally unexpected invitations. Observe the locals and be aware of cultural cues.

Although cultural differences may account for some discomfort, never endure verbal or physical abuse. Depending on the situation, if you feel threatened, remove yourself quickly from the situation or ask someone and/or local authorities for help. Trust your intuition and obey instincts sending you warning signals. Decline offers that trigger anxiety and avoid situations that make you nervous. Only you can determine how best to handle a situation.

Preparation and research about gender relations before departure will help you deal with unexpected situations. For example, many campuses and communities offer free or low cost self-defense and assertiveness classes. Such classes are good preparation for dealing with unwanted attention or abuse.



## Diversity

### Sexual orientation within the context of a foreign culture

The [Rainbow Special Interest group of NAFSA](#), the association of international educators, provides an excellent website on LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered) issues in relation to studying and living abroad. The site offers extensive lists of travel guides, journals, and books, as well as newsletter articles, a bibliography of LGBT texts with culturally specific information, lists of related organizations, and other links for students. You may also find country-specific information at your Campus EAP Office.

Before departure, reflect on the culturally based ideas and definitions of sexual identity. For example, does the right to be LGBT in the U.S. conflict with the host country's religious or cultural values and traditions? How will you reconcile personal human rights with the cultural values of the host society? Consider how your identity as an LGBT person may affect relationships with host nationals, cultural adjustment, and the overall education abroad experience.

In preparing to study abroad, consider the following:

- Become familiar with the laws of the host country, particularly those pertaining to LGBT persons. ( [Amnesty International](#) website.
- It is important to realize how behavioral signals that mean one thing in the U.S. may mean something completely different in the foreign culture. Depending on the situation, the consequences can be serious. Physical harassment, assault, and rape are threats that both women and men have to consider when interacting across cultures because of the chance of misinterpretations of behavior. Furthermore, the legal system in the country may not offer protection for the victim when issues of sexual orientation or other behavior are involved. Explore and research the cultural, legal, and social issues relevant to the country where you plan to study and travel. You will find that attitudes and tolerance toward gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered individuals vary from country to country, and even within the U.S. Some countries are more welcoming and legally protective than the U.S, while others may be less accepting and more restrictive. For example, in many parts of the world, being lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered is not seen as a right, but rather as a behavior forbidden by law. If necessary, are you willing to hide your sexual orientation? After finding out about the laws of the host country, would you reconsider your options? You are likely to encounter a significant range of attitudes regarding LGBT issues while abroad.
- While your UC study abroad office may be inclusive of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered perspectives, the in-country staff and faculty may represent another office and culture with a different climate. Depending on this climate, you may need to look outside the office for support related to sexual identity issues or LGBT community information.
- Reflect on what it means to leave behind a support system of friends and family. Being LGBT abroad has been described by some as a second coming out. How will you reestablish your identity abroad?
- Before you leave the U.S., we encourage you to learn about the culture-specific norms of friendship and dating for relationships between people of any sexual orientation. Doing this research will allow you to understand the cultural codes and avoid potentially difficult situations.
- Inform yourself of important safe sex practices. You might consider purchasing the most current edition of one of the various gay and lesbian international reference guides before departing from the U.S.



Whatever your own sexual orientation, keep in mind that there may be LGBT students in the UCEAP group and other groups in the host country. Some will be 'out,' some not, and some may just be coming to terms with their sexual identity. Sensitivity to this diversity within your own group and the diversity of the host culture will further enrich your overall UCEAP experience.

### Additional Resources

- [Amnesty International](#)
- The [International Lesbian and Gay Association \(ILGA\)](#)
- [Behind the Mask](#) (a website magazine on lesbian and gay affairs in Africa)

### Possible racial/ethnic issues

The extent to which you may encounter race-based prejudice in other countries depends on the cultural, socio-economic, and political situation of the host country, and on the education level, perceptions, and attitudes of individuals you may encounter abroad. People abroad have different cultural norms and tend to be less "politically correct" than people in the U.S. Political correctness is not universal and may not apply to your specific situation.

In an international context, your race may be less of an issue than your nationality. Many U.S. students of color are surprised by this. In some countries race is discussed more casually than it is in the U.S. In other countries, it may be avoided and more taboo. Research what kinds of contact and relations your minority group has had in your host country.

In many countries, locals are not well-informed about the ethnic and racial diversity of the United States, and they may expect all Americans to be Caucasian. In addition, some country cultures regard more highly lighter skin, a perception based more on an aesthetic bias than any racial prejudice and one that may have existed for a long time. Students of color, in particular, should not take local citizens' views of skin color personally and should try to consider them within this context. In addition, people in villages may have a difficult time seeing some people of color as Americans.

In dealing with issues such as race, keep a few points in mind. First, be aware of your own self-image and expectations. Keep in mind that other people's reactions may reflect their own curiosity about you. Before reaching any conclusions in new situations, it is also important to keep in mind your own cultural assumptions. If any troubling incidents arise, speak to the UCEAP representative or the local contact at the host institution.

### Get involved in extracurricular activities when possible

Join sports teams, music groups, or any student clubs that interest you; this is the best way to enjoy your time abroad and learn about the host culture.

### Don't allow obstacles to stop you from studying abroad

Decide before you go that you will give the program a chance and that you will not immediately withdraw at the first obstacle. At some point, you *will* face challenges and obstacles, but overcoming them is possible. Discuss concerns with UCEAP staff to determine solutions to potential problems before they become unmanageable.

### Prepare for reverse culture shock; you will be a different person

After returning from the program, the Campus EAP Office will send you information about cultural reentry issues and activities (usually scheduled for the fall), which include gatherings and volunteering opportunities to recruit or advise future UCEAP students. You are encouraged to participate in these activities. If you do not receive the information, contact the Campus EAP Office for an update.



The following books provide excellent information about intercultural issues:

- *\*Intercultural Communication: A Reader*, Larry A. Samovar and Richard E. Porter, editors; Belmont: Wadsworth Pub. Co., 2003. Series title: Wadsworth series in communication studies.
- *\*Toward Internationalism: Readings in Cross-Cultural Communication*, Louise Fiber Luce and Elise C. Smith, editors; Cambridge, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers, 1986.
- *Learning Across Cultures: Intercultural Communication and International Educational Exchange*, Gary Althen, editor; Washington, DC. Order from Publications Order Desk, National Association for Foreign Student Affairs (NAFSA), 1860 19th St., NW, Washington, DC. 20009, 1981.

\*These titles are available from [Intercultural Press](#), Yarmouth, Maine. Intercultural Press also has a rich listing of books about specific cultures.