TAIWAN
Fall, Spring, and Academic Year
2011-12 Program Guide
The University of California, in accordance with applicable Federal and State law and University policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy,* disability, age, medical condition (cancer-related), ancestry, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran. The University also prohibits sexual harassment. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities. Inquiries regarding the University’s student-related nondiscrimination policies may be directed to the campus Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action office.

*Pregnancy includes pregnancy, childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth.
YOUR UCEAP NETWORK

EAP Online
Bookmark your Participants program page; it contains vital resources and requirements you need to know before you go abroad, including the Predeparture Checklist, UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad, Program Calendar, EAP Student Budgets and Payment Vouchers, and policies.

Local EAP Support
Campus EAP Office
The Campus EAP Office coordinates recruitment, student selection, orientation, and academic advising, and serves as your primary contact during the application process.

UCEAP Systemwide Office
The UCEAP Systemwide Office establishes and operates programs and coordinates EAP administration for all UC campuses from its headquarters in Goleta, California. You will work closely with the following Systemwide Office staff:

Program Advisors communicate program information, both academic and operational, to students and campuses, and coordinate and provide academic and administrative support in all aspects of your participation.

Operations Specialists coordinate the logistics of the program. Document requirements, visa application instructions, health and safety precautions, placement and acceptance by the host institution, arrival and on-site orientation, and housing arrangements are examples of program details the Operations Specialists coordinate.

Academic Specialists advise on academic policies; review and record courses taken abroad for UC credit; process student registrations, petitions, and grades; and document and maintain students’ academic records.

Student Finance Accountants assist primarily with EAP statements, program fee collection, and financial aid disbursements (in conjunction with your campus Financial Aid Office).

Contact Information
Program Advisor
Michelle Hertig
Phone: (805) 893-2831; E-mail: mhertig@eap.ucop.edu

Operations Specialist
Amy Frohlich
Phone: (805) 893-2831; E-mail: afrohlich@eap.ucop.edu

Academic Specialist
Eva Bilandzia
Phone: (805) 893-2598; E-mail: ebilandzia@eap.ucop.edu

Student Finance Accountant
Linda Monda
Phone: (805) 893-5928; E-mail: studentfinance@eap.ucop.edu

UCEAP Systemwide Office
6950 Hollister Avenue, Suite 200
Goleta, CA 93117-5823
Phone: (805) 893-4762; Fax: (805) 893-2583
Study Center Abroad

The contact below advises students on academic matters, provides information on cultural events, assists with program logistics, and offers support with personal matters.

A local faculty member, who serves as the UCEAP Liaison Professor, administers EAP programs at National Taiwan University along with a coordinator. They advise students on academic matters, provide information on cultural events, assist with program logistics, and offer support with personal matters.

Ms. Jill Lin
Exchange Student Advisor
Office of International Affairs
National Taiwan University
1, Sec. 4, Roosevelt Road
Taipei 106, TAIWAN

Phone: (011-886-2) 3366-3366
Office Phone: (+886-2) 3366-2007, ext. 226
E-mail: linjill@ntu.edu.tw

Emergency cell phone: (+886-2) 3366-9119 or (+886) 958-099-505

Phone Number Codes

U.S. international code ............... 011
(dial this to call from the U.S.)
Taiwan country code ............... 886
Taipei city code ..................... 02

Approximate Time Difference

16 hours
ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Academic Program

Minimum Requirements:
- Attendance at all orientation sessions
- Full-time course of study while on EAP; minimum of 21 UC quarter units each semester

National Taiwan University (NTU) provides courses in a wide range of fields in English or, for qualified students, in Chinese. You may not take NTU freshman courses or NTU courses that are not approved by the EAP Study Center.

If you have the language ability, prerequisites, and the permission of the instructor, you may take courses taught in Chinese (traditional characters)—including advanced Chinese language and literature. Confer with the course instructors to determine if your language skills and command of the terminology of the subject—in Chinese—are adequate to succeed in the courses. If you take courses taught in Chinese, you are required to write your exams and papers in Chinese and must be able to use specialized terminology in Chinese. Lectures and assignments in Chinese may be more difficult than anticipated.

You may not make arrangements for early exams or other means of completion of course work before the official end of the regular NTU semester.

Registering for NTU Courses

NTU course registration procedures require patience and determination, as they are not the same as those used at UC. The course registration process is completed after the orientation program in Taiwan. The campus-wide schedule of classes and course descriptions are available on the NTU website.

You may sit in all the NTU classes you are interested in during the first two weeks of the semester (add/drop period) to find out if you can fully comprehend the language as well as the course content. When you submit your course selection form as required by NTU, the Study Center staff will review it and, if needed, the Liaison Professor will consult with you to ensure that you can keep up with the classes and finalize your study list.

You will complete MyEAP Study List registration for both ICLP and NTU courses. If you take NTU courses that have not previously been taken by EAP students, you will need to provide the course information online at the time of MyEAP course registration and you may be asked to provide additional information as needed. If you do not provide the required information, EAP cannot post the courses or grades to your UC record.
Course Information
Course material is likely to be less structured and less clearly outlined than material presented in UC courses. Professors usually do not provide detailed syllabi with specific reading assignments and course expectations. Some course descriptions in English and links to course websites are available on the NTU website (also accessible via the EAP website). Departments may post course descriptions on a bulletin board outside the department office.

Courses are usually in lecture format, though oral presentations by students are also common. Classes generally offer fewer opportunities for classroom participation than UC courses. Although classroom practices vary depending on the professor, there is usually less discussion than you would find in UC classes.

Grades and Exams
Attendance is mandatory for all classes; more than three absences will result in a lower grade or the withholding of credit altogether.

Generally there is one midterm exam and one final exam, or only a final exam. Many instructors do not give quizzes or homework, but language courses do require considerable homework. Some courses require term papers.

Do not confront your instructors about grades.

If you have concerns about test scores and grades, discuss them only with the EAP Liaison Professor or Program Coordinator—never with the professor of an individual course. Students in Taiwan do not discuss their grades with their professors because professors would take offense at such behavior.

The grading scale published by NTU or announced by NTU instructors is not the scale used to convert NTU numerical scores to UC letter grades. For example, do not expect a score of 80 to be a UC grade of A. You may discuss questions about grades with the EAP Liaison Professor.

The host university reports grades to the EAP Liaison Professor. Once grades are available, the Study Center reviews and forwards them with recommendations to the UCEAP Systemwide Office. When grades are received at the Systemwide Office, they are processed as a group, not individually, and are then sent to UC campus registrars. You will receive an automatic e-mail notification when your grades are transmitted to the registrar. You will then be able to view your grades through MyEAP.

Fall grades are not usually available until late February or early March due to the late NTU calendar and Chinese New Year holidays. Spring grades are usually available in early August.

For more detailed information about grades, see the Academic Information chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.
EAP Students Say...

Every academic process in Taiwan takes longer than you think it will. The person assisting you has to contact three people to get information and after that there are still six places you need to go (this doesn’t include going back to the same place).

Be prepared for the shock of a new and different academic culture. Read up on it, understand that you’re not the only one going through it, and learn to recognize its symptoms.

NTU’s teaching style is definitely different from UC’s. You’ll spend more time preparing and doing homework.

Don’t get discouraged by the fact that Taiwanese is more commonly spoken than standard Chinese. Taiwanese is helpful, but standard Chinese is a necessity.

Academic Environment

The academic environment is mature, open-minded, and diverse. Only the best students in Taiwan have the opportunity to study at NTU. They are generally more mature than UC students and are more advanced in their chosen fields.

The Taiwanese sense of academic discipline is strong. Students are expected to attend all class sessions fully prepared. Traditional Taiwanese relations between student and teacher are based on implicit respect of the teacher by the student and a strong acceptance of responsibility by the teacher toward the student. The position of a university professor is prestigious and students defer regardless of their own personal opinion of an instructor. Most faculty members hold doctoral degrees, and lectures by well-known international scholars are a regular feature of the curriculum.

You are urged to demonstrate a high degree of cultural sensitivity and to avoid inappropriate behavior toward professors, which could cause misunderstandings and negative attitudes toward you as well as toward the University of California. Take any disagreement or disappointment about course content or load, format of exams, assignments, grades, or any other academic matter to the EAP Liaison Professor or Program Coordinator, not to the instructor.

Plan to give serious attention to your academic purpose for going to Taiwan. If you take a job, travel when classes are in session, or miss or try to manipulate classes for personal reasons, you will be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.
EXTENDING UCEAP PARTICIPATION

Plan Ahead to Extend

You are encouraged to extend your program with UCEAP at any time. Discuss the possibility of extension with the NTU Office of International Affairs.

Approval of extension is based on a number of factors, including space at the host university, academic and behavioral performance, and the support of your UC campus department. New incoming EAP students receive priority for spaces before extending students.

Before departure, submit an approved Departmental and College Pre-Approval to Extend (DPA) form to your Campus EAP Office. You will submit a Request for Final Approval (RFA) form in order to activate the extension request. If you do not submit an approved DPA before departure, submit a Petition to Extend form, which requires campus and department approval and can take one to six weeks to process.

If you extend your participation remember to extend your visa prior to your original visa expiration date.

▶ Once your extension is approved, notification will be sent to your home campus registrar, Financial Aid Office, and Campus EAP Office. For information about the steps you need to take in regards to finances, see the Extension of Participation chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.
CULTURAL AWARENESS

Educate Yourself

Get acquainted with your new host city, country, and culture before you leave the U.S. Travel guides and travel-related websites are excellent resources. You will also need to understand the local culture and history and keep up with current events. These sources should help you prepare before departure.

Recommended Periodicals

- Asia Week
- China Daily
- The China Quarterly

Recommended Books


Kelly, Robert Lonely Planet Taiwan, 7th ed., Lonely Planet Publications, 2007; online at lonelyplanet.com


Recommended Viewing and Listening

Vecchione, Judith (Executive Producer) Tug of War: The Story of Taiwan, 2000 (Video).


In Taiwan, books printed in English are plentiful but can be expensive. The American Cultural Center of the American Institute in Taiwan has a lending library of more than 15,000 volumes and a respectable collection of American newspapers and journals, including the Wall Street Journal and New York Times.
EAP STUDENTS SAY...

Get used to having no personal space; it’s crowded.
Asian Americans have a unique status in Taiwan. The assumption is that if you look Chinese you should be able to speak Mandarin.

Social Conduct

Respect
Taiwanese culture is undergoing rapid change that can be seen in the younger generation. However, the more durable traditions include veneration of the elderly and propriety. You may experience behaviors that would be considered discriminatory in the U.S., but are considered acceptable in Taiwanese society. Try to observe such behaviors impartially to avoid applying U.S. standards and expectations to the Taiwanese in their own culture.

Social conduct in Taiwan is regulated more by custom than by written law. For example, they have a distinct sense of what is proper to discuss. The Taiwanese will also ask personal questions, merely out of curiosity. Do not take it as an insult. If you do not feel comfortable answering questions, politely sidestep them.

In Taiwan, American frankness can be interpreted as rude. While EAP students may not be aware of their own rudeness or cultural blunder, the Taiwanese will notice both. If they are affected by the offensive behavior, they simply avoid the offender in the future. Try to avoid showing anger, as this is considered culturally insensitive in Taiwan and would result in the student “losing face.”

The Taiwanese are a group oriented society. Whereas the West emphasizes individualism, Taiwanese activities are often outgrowths of some group, family, profession, school, or community.

Drugs and Alcohol

Never feel pressured to drink. The Office of International Affairs can help you devise polite and friendly ways to avoid drinking without losing the camaraderie associated with it.

Although drug use is extremely low, alcohol use is greatly tolerated. It is common to see intoxicated people in late-night trains and at stations. If you are of legal age, use your judgment and never display intoxicated behavior in public places. Students who continually abuse drinking, behave disorderly, or cause problems for housing authorities or the host university will face disciplinary action by UCEAP.

➤ Refer to the UCEAP Substance Abuse Policy for details.
EAP STUDENTS SAY...
What you get out of EAP is what you put into it. If you practice the words and try to speak as much as you can, your language skills will improve tremendously.

Improve Your Language Skills
The more standard (Mandarin) Chinese you know before departure for Taiwan, the more rewarding your time abroad will be. Prior to departure, work to improve your written and spoken Chinese.

The following are good ways to prepare:

- Read aloud (anything in Chinese) for 20 minutes at a time. Strive for correct pronunciation; read progressively faster, maintaining correct pronunciation. If possible, make a recording to pinpoint problems in pronunciation and intonation.
- Read Chinese newspapers and magazines, using a dictionary as necessary.
- Search the Internet and read Taiwanese websites in Chinese.
- Listen to Chinese language CDs.
- Seek out people fluent in Chinese for conversations and vocabulary practice.
- Keep a journal of Chinese phrases, expressions, whole sentences, and structures that you would like to add to your vocabulary.
- Practice Chinese aloud. Use phrases picked up from conversation and reading.
- Practice reading and writing traditional complex characters (used in Taiwan).
- Use a Chinese language computer or video game.
- Watch Chinese movies. Watch once with the subtitles, then turn the subtitles off and watch again. Focus on movies in contemporary settings rather than historical dramas.

Advanced Students
- Read two books in Chinese, one fiction and one non-fiction.
- Read a book in Chinese in your major.
- Practice writing about your major field and other interests in Chinese.
Additional information about passports, visas, and other required documents is provided in the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad and Predeparture Checklist.

ARRIVAL & ORIENTATION

Travel Documents

Taiwan Citizenship and Military Service Requirement
Taiwan’s Ministry of Education does not allow Taiwanese citizens to participate in exchange programs. However, dual citizenship holders are not restricted to this regulation, but you must provide a copy of a non-Taiwan passport.

Taiwan-born men between the ages of 18 and 40 who return to the country may be required to serve in the Taiwanese military. Fully investigate all matters pertaining to your citizenship and military service obligations before leaving the U.S. You may obtain additional information online from the Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office.

Visa
A visa is an endorsement, usually a stamp, placed in the passport by the authorities of the host country. The visa grants its bearer permission to enter and reside in the host country for the purpose stated. U.S. citizens are required to obtain a visitor’s visa at a Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in the U.S. prior to departure. More details about the visa process are provided in the EAP Predeparture Checklist online. Do not apply for a visa until you receive a host university Acceptance Letter.

After registering for courses and receiving a Student Identification Card, you will officially apply with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Taipei for a resident or visitor visa extension. If you stay for only one semester you can choose to apply for visitor visa extension instead of applying for resident visa. Note that the resident visa application requires another health examination once you arrive in Taiwan. Within 15 days of receiving a resident visa, you must apply for an Alien Residence Card (ARC) at the National Immigration Agency.

You may obtain visa information and requirements from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Offices in either Los Angeles or San Francisco. For more information and a listing of other U.S. locations of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, visit the TECO website.

Photocopies
It is easier to replace lost or stolen documents if you have photocopies. Make photocopies of all important documents, including passport photo pages, vaccination certificates, travelers check receipts, airline tickets, student ID, birth certificate, credit cards (front and back), etc., then leave a set of copies at home with a parent or guardian and pack a set in various pieces of luggage. Spending a few moments copying documents now can save time and energy if something is lost or stolen.
“EAP STUDENTS SAY...”

Think about how much you want to pack; then take half.

Deodorant is not something Taiwanese people really use, so it’s a bit difficult to find here.

There are mosquitoes everywhere—take bug repellent and after-bite medication.

Remember to take a pair of walking shoes for when it rains. I only took my flip-flops and regretted it.

Skies are often overcast (but it’s still hot) and rain is frequent. It’s cold and wet in the winter.

When winter rolls around, Taiwan stays pretty humid, but it starts raining a lot more. The temperature also can drop to around 40°F.

Prepare yourself for air pollution and more noise than you’ve ever experienced.

Packing Tips

- The EAP Student Budget does not include funds for the purchase of clothing abroad.

You can find almost everything you need in Taiwan.

Essential

- Dressy outfit (a sport coat, tie, dress, etc.) for special events
- Deodorant
- Small, lightweight gifts
- Warm clothing for winter
- Shoes that slip on and off easily
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Prescription medications (see the Health chapter of this guide for information on transporting prescriptions abroad)
- Travel guide with a detailed map of Taipei
- Pictures of family, friends, and the UC campus to share with new friends

Optional

- Laptop
- Raincoat and rain boots
- Vitamins and cold medications
- Mosquito repellent and after-bite medicine

Shipping

Do not ship luggage in advance.

Avoid shipping items to Taiwan. You can buy most items in Taipei at reasonable rates. If you cannot fit essentials into baggage, take only those things that you will need immediately. You can have friends or family members mail goods to you in Taiwan after you arrive. Shipped packages should be labeled “used personal clothing” or “used personal supplies.” All incoming parcels will be opened and inspected by customs and you may have to pay duty. Keep in mind that what you take to Taiwan and items that you acquire abroad must later return home with you.

Climate

The Tropic of Cancer bisects Taiwan. The climate in Taipei is hot and humid in the summer and mild in the winter. Two months of warm rains, usually beginning in May, usher in the summer. Taipei is hottest from July through September, with the temperature soaring to around 100°F.

Due to Taiwan’s industrial growth, there is a pollution problem that is reflected in the local noise, water, and air. The air in Taipei is heavily polluted much of the time. If you have allergy or sinus medication that works well, take enough to last for your entire stay in Taiwan, as similar medication may not be available locally.
When traveling, always personally carry your passport, visa, airline ticket, prescription medications, and money.

Official EAP Start Date
You are responsible for making your own transportation arrangements to and from Taiwan (even if you are on financial aid) and for arriving on the Official EAP Start Date. This includes reserving and purchasing airline tickets (purchase a changeable ticket). Standby tickets are not appropriate.

Program dates and arrival information are posted on the EAP website. As stated in the EAP Student Agreement, if you fail to appear on the official EAP start date, you are subject to dismissal from the program.

The program start date can change due to unforeseen circumstances. You are responsible for making modifications in your travel itinerary to accommodate such changes. EAP is not responsible for unrecoverable transportation charges incurred for independent travel arrangements. To stay informed of program changes, update MyEAP with any changes to your contact information (mailing address, e-mail, and phone number).

You may arrive early if your visa status permits. Students arriving before on-campus housing opens must make arrangements for other accommodations.

Most students will arrive at Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport, 25 miles southwest of Taipei. There is a tourist information desk in the arrivals area open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Bus services operate at regular intervals during the day while taxis are available at all hours. Visit the International Airport Guide website for more information about airport services. NTU’s Office of International Affairs offers a free pickup service in predetermined time slots on the arrival date. They will e-mail you information about how to sign up for this service a month before the program begins.

Financial Aid Students
Your financial aid package is based partly on the EAP Student Budget for the program. The estimated round-trip airfare amount is based on the cost of a changeable student fare to Taiwan. If your independent travel costs are greater than the airfare estimate in the EAP Student Budget, notify your financial aid counselor. Neither EAP nor the Financial Aid Office can guarantee that the additional cost will be funded by financial aid.

Orientation
You will attend a mandatory orientation session in Taiwan that will cover information such as:

- Placement exam
- Deadlines for course selection
- Academic issues
- Excursion information
- Health and safety issues
- Campus tour
- Culture shock

You will also have the opportunity to meet other exchange students, international degree students, and volunteer students. There is usually a free dinner reception after the orientation.
EAP STUDENTS SAY...

I bought a used bike, rusty and old, but great for getting around campus. Having a bike made life incredibly convenient.

Student discount bus passes are available. Wait until you have your student ID before getting a bus pass.

Taipei has a convenient and affordable transit system called the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT), which has two lines near campus.

Get an MRT card. It works for the bus. The best travel is by bus and MRT.

There’s more to Taiwan than Taipei. It’s easy to just hop on a train or bus for the weekend and it’s relatively cheap.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation on the island is generally good, including bus, airline, and train services. Railway service in Taiwan is extensive and inexpensive. You may travel independently on weekends and holidays, but you must make your own arrangements and inform local staff of your travel plans.

Roads in Taiwan’s major cities (especially Taipei) are generally congested, and the many scooters and motorcycles that weave in and out of traffic make driving conditions worse. Exercise caution when crossing streets because many drivers may not respect your right of way. There is an efficient subway system (known as the MRT) that runs to most parts of Taipei easily. There are two stations located near the campus.

Taxis are plentiful in Taipei. The drivers need the full address of the destination in Chinese. Rides from campus to most parts of the city cost less than NT$200. Tipping is not expected unless the driver assists you with luggage. However, if you use the trunk, there is an additional charge. There are also additional night surcharges between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. The base price for a taxi is about NT$70.

The Taipei bus system provides frequent service and convenient routes throughout the city. Fares are determined by zones, and you are charged as you travel between zones (or for travel within a zone). Rush hour conditions are crowded. Buses usually stop running at about 10:30 p.m.

Most EAP students buy bikes once abroad. Used bikes are available for purchase at inexpensive prices at the bicycle shop on the main campus.

▶ EAP discourages riding motorcycles and motor scooters in Taiwan. See also Traffic and Transportation Safety in this guide.
It is important that you carefully read all of the information available in the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad and discuss it with the person who will assist you with your finances while you are abroad.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Understanding Your Finances

Understanding your finances before, during, and after EAP is crucial to having a successful time abroad. The following list outlines just a few of the many things you will need to know before departure.

Detailed information on the following topics can be found in the Money Matters chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad:

- Contact information for finance questions
- How to estimate the cost of your program
- Budget instructions and information
- How to and who can make payments to EAP
- EAP student account information
- Banking before and after arrival
- Fees and penalties
- Loan information
- How financial aid works while on EAP (how do I get my financial aid from my home campus and how are my fees paid)
- Various forms (e.g., direct deposit, etc.)

MyEAP Student Account

Your MyEAP Student Account is similar to your home campus Financial account. It will be available as soon as you are selected for your program in MyEAP. The fees that you owe UCEAP are posted to your account, and you can make payments through this account using e-checks or credit cards (MasterCard or Discover). Fees will be applied after your program predeparture withdrawal date, which is listed in MyEAP.

EAP Student Budget

Carefully review your EAP Student Budget.

Your EAP Student Budget lists the fees you will pay to UCEAP and an estimate of the personal expenses you will need to plan for. It does not include the cost of recreational travel or personal entertainment. The fees due to UCEAP will be posted to your MyEAP Student Account after your program predeparture withdrawal date. Program fees are subject to change. View your EAP Student Budget frequently.

Instructions

- Download and print your EAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers.
- Note the deadlines on the Payment Vouchers.
- Give the EAP Student Budget and Payment Vouchers to the person responsible for paying your EAP bills. Sign them up for Third Party Authorization so they can make payments online.

For further information see the Money Matters chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad and the Money Matters tab of your Participants Portal. If you are on financial aid, see also the EAP Financial Information web page.
Handling Money Abroad

Travel to Taiwan with at least U.S. $450 to cover transportation from the airport, the initial move-in costs (bed linens, cleaning supplies, key deposits, housing, etc.), and the first few days in Taipei. The amount of funds you will need for the first month will vary depending on your situation; EAP recommends bringing at least U.S. $800. You may bring up to the equivalent of U.S. $5,000 into Taiwan without declaration.

If you need to exchange foreign currencies into New Taiwan Dollars (NTD), the Taoyuan International Airport is the most convenient place.

In recent years, Taipei has improved its banking system to such an extent that many American ATM cards work without any problem. Many students use this method to obtain funds in Taiwan. Using an ATM can provide you with direct access to your bank accounts at home. Ask your bank for details regarding international ATM use prior to departure.

All 7-Elevens on and off campus now have ATMs. ATM cards and credit cards with PLUS and Cirrus logos allow you to access your home bank accounts and withdraw cash. Foreign banks set the limits on the amount per transaction you can withdraw and the transaction fees. Contact your home bank for details.

You can also use travelers checks in Taiwan but they are not always accepted (especially at smaller stores). Sometimes they are treated as personal checks, which are subject to an additional collection charge. If you use travelers checks, plan to cash them at large banks or at the American Express (AmEx) office, if the checks are from AmEx.

Banking

Taiwan Post and Hua Nan Bank have branches on the NTU campus. To open an account, you need your passport and Alien Residence Card (ARC). OIA suggests depositing NT$500 in your account for the first time and requesting an ATM card.

You may open a savings account at the post office. Many locals maintain these types of accounts. You will need your passport and student identification card to open an account. There are no fees for opening bank accounts. Funds in these accounts earn modest interest and are available for withdrawal either at the postal savings window or from a cash-dispensing machine in the post office lobby. The post office is open Monday through Friday.

If you do not have a personal checking account and do not wish to open one before leaving for Taiwan, you may cover your expenses in the following ways:

- Take a supply of travelers checks sufficient to cover expenses for the term or year.
- Have telegraphic transfers or certified checks sent to you periodically; EAP does not recommend you receive personal checks made out to your name.

Past EAP students who did not have checking accounts in the U.S. wished they did for the convenience of international transactions.
Transferring Money Overseas
Money can be cabled from an American bank to your local account in about a week. Money is first cabled from the American bank to the central office of the Taiwan bank; the funds are then transferred by mail to the local branch, where it is made available. The process can be expedited by two or three days for an extra fee.

The basic charge for the procedure is set by the American bank. Determine the charges before departure and verify that your American bank can transfer funds in this manner.

Credit Cards
The American Express office in Taipei will cash personal checks for cardholders. Contact AmEx for details. As with other check-cashing arrangements, cashed checks are issued in local currency.

You can use Visa and MasterCard to obtain cash at Bank of America and Citibank. Inquire with the issuing bank or card office about limits on the amount of cash available. Some companies set daily or weekly limits on the amount of cash that they will issue. You can use Visa, American Express, and MasterCard for purchases in many restaurants, shops, and hotels in Taipei and in some other large cities in Taiwan.

Credit card companies normally charge a fee when cash is withdrawn from a home account. In addition, some companies limit such withdrawals to NT$8,000 per day. Check with your credit card companies in advance for details.
CCC

Cell coverage varies by provider, but is pretty good within Taipei city. There are signal boosters in the underground tunnels of the MRT that give you great reception underground.

It is convenient to have your own computer, especially if you want to make Skype calls to the U.S.

COMMUNICATIONS ABROAD

For practical information on Taiwan before and after arrival, visit Taiwan’s Information for Foreigners website.

Cell Phones

Most students obtain cell phones upon arrival.

Overall, cell phone rates are comparable to what you might pay in the U.S. Most students use cell service very sparingly and text message often to keep the bill down. Once you decide on a cell phone service provider, you can choose prepaid or regular billing (most students get prepaid). You may buy prepaid cards at any of the convenience stores on or around campus to refill your account.

International Calls

Previous EAP students recommend buying prepaid cards at the telecom service centers in the Taoyuan International Airport when you arrive, as the procedure is somewhat less convenient in Taipei.

Many U.S.-based long-distance phone companies provide special services that make it easy to place international calls. Some provide a toll-free access number that connects with an operator in the U.S. Others provide the means to charge long-distance calls either to a credit card or to a third party. Investigate the possibilities before departure and shop for the best services and rates.

Voiceover Internet Protocol (VoIP), the technology for transmitting voice conversations via the Internet, is popular with students who take a laptop abroad. Social networking software such as Skype is a popular choice to make free or low-cost calls over the Internet. Many returnees report that they used Skype once a week to connect with family in the U.S.

Computer Access and Use

You are permitted to use NTU’s computer facilities. Computer rooms with PCs are conveniently located and have become EAP hangouts on campus.

Most EAP students have taken laptops to Taiwan. Dorm rooms have high-speed Internet access. Most NTU professors require that students type assignments. Once you register with the Office of International Affairs, you can use the on-campus wireless network.
HOUSING & MEALS

Where Will I Live?

You will be assigned to a dorm based on your preference indicated in the NTU application for admission. Housing contracts are paid (in cash) at the administrative cashier’s offices. At the dorm, you will pay the key deposit, obtain keys, and sign the housing contract with the building custodian. You cannot choose your roommate; instead, you will be assigned roommates by NTU. You will live with international and local students. Unless otherwise instructed, all students (even those on financial aid) must make their housing payment for the entire semester shortly after arrival. The payment must be made in Taiwanese dollars.

University housing in Taiwan is guaranteed to all exchange students. When you submit the NTU online application for exchange students, you will be asked whether or not you need accommodations. Checking “yes” on the NTU online application indicates that you want on-campus accommodation. This is guaranteed housing for exchange students and you will automatically be assigned to a university dorm without further notice.

If you do not want to live in the university dorm, you may make other arrangements. If you would like to find an alternate living arrangement, plan to arrive in Taiwan early. One useful way of finding off-campus housing is to look for advertisements of rooms or apartments for rent on the bulletin boards around campus. Note, however, that NTU’s Office of International Affairs does not provide assistance in locating off-campus housing.

There are two dormitories; these include the International Youth Center (IYC) and the Prince House-NTU Dorms (a.k.a. BOT). Due to the limited number of rooms, there is no guarantee that you will get your first choice, but you will get housing. The IYC dormitories are older, but have been renovated recently and are very comfortable. The Prince House-NTU Dorms have two different locations: 1) Prince House-NTU Chang-Hsing Dorms and 2) Prince House-NTU ShuiYuan Dorms, launched in 2008 and 2009 respectively. They are privately owned and operated by the Prince Housing and Development Corp., though the allocation is centralized by the NTU Student Housing Service Division. Both Prince House dorms are located just across the street from NTU.

International Youth Center (IYC)

All IYC rooms are shared by at least two persons. It is not possible to apply for a single room or to select your own roommate. Rooms are equipped with single bed frames (futon mattress excluded), desks, desk lamps, bookshelves, closets, central air-conditioning, Internet connection, and telephone outlets (internal calls only). You may purchase an affordable futon mattress and are advised to purchase sheets and towels after you arrive. Shengli Shopping Mall is right outside of MRT Technology Building Station (Brown Line), where you can find basic supplies within walking distance.

Each floor has communal bathrooms and a shared study space. Meals are not provided but the building has a convenience store and a cafeteria. You may purchase meals at reasonable prices very close to campus. The IYC dormitory has ping-pong tables and workout facilities, laundry facilities (coin-operated washing machines and tumble dryers), a living lounge, a kichenette equipped with handy kitchenware, an entertainment room, and a movie theater.
“EAP STUDENTS SAY...”

Prince House dorms are very close to the night markets, so it makes finding meals convenient. There is a McDonald’s and a KFC across from campus, and Pizza Hut and Dominos deliver to the dorms.

You can find vegetarian food in many restaurants if you learn the proper phrases in Chinese. There are also vegetarian restaurants that specialize in combinations of vegetables and tofu.

Drink something new every day instead of getting tapioca milk tea all the time.

“...

Prince House

Both private and shared rooms are available at the Prince House, and all rooms have private bathrooms. Residents are responsible for cleaning their own bedrooms and bathrooms and purchasing their own cleaning supplies. The Prince House dormitories are comprised of several buildings. All buildings have a lobby, a meeting and dining area with basic kitchenware—including a microwave oven and rice cooker—leisure facilities (ping-pong and billiard tables and workout facilities) on the ground floor and a laundry room in the basement.

Rooms are equipped with private shower and WC, bed frame(s) (futon mattress excluded), desks, bookshelves, closet, refrigerator, central air-conditioning, cable TV output, and Internet and telephone connections (internal calls only). You may purchase an affordable futon mattress and are advised to purchase sheets and towels after you arrive; these can be found in the 7-Eleven stores next to the dorms. In addition, there normally is used bedding from previous students free of charge. Upon arrival, you may check with the dorm counselors for availability if you have trouble buying new bedding.

Meals

The dorms allow cooking in designated areas or the shared kitchen on certain floors. In addition, there are many university eateries and inexpensive private restaurants on and off campus. There is an abundance of restaurants from every region of China. In addition, there is no problem finding Western food.

The quality of restaurants in Taiwan is as varied as the cooking styles. Food quality ranges from elegant, expensive meals to questionable snacks from city pushcarts. Enjoy the specialties of inexpensive local noodle stands, Western restaurants, and typical American fast food. Most restaurants close at about 9:30 p.m., although street vendors often are open after midnight.

Fruit and vegetable stands in every price range are located throughout Taiwan. For the most part, prices are less expensive near universities. Beef is available, but expensive; pork products are superior to those in the U.S. There is also plenty of chicken, duck, fresh fish, and seafood.
Extracurricular Activities

Get Involved

Participating in extracurricular cultural and social activities while on EAP is an excellent way to meet people, improve your language skills, and integrate more fully into the community. Join clubs, sports, musical, theater, or arts groups; volunteer at local organizations, attend lectures and receptions held in academic and community circles, and get the most out of your time abroad! This section highlights a few of the many activities students have enjoyed in Taiwan, but the opportunities are not limited to those mentioned here.

Social Life

People in Taipei commonly go to movies, parks, shops, night markets, and museums. They spend time visiting friends, hiking, and traveling to scenic spots around the island. Socializing in Taiwan often centers on eating, so people frequently go in groups to restaurants and coffeehouses. If you are invited to a meal, offer to pay your own share, even as a guest.

Sports

You can participate in numerous sports activities while in Taiwan, including rugby, martial arts, tennis, badminton, squash, bowling, ice and roller skating, aerobics, swimming, and golf. NTU’s Sports Center offers a plethora of activities, including tai chi and yoga classes. In addition, activities are offered at local parks. Variations of kung fu, such as fan and sword, are also offered at the parks. Soccer fields and basketball courts are located at the university. Taiwan is surrounded by water and has plenty of great natural beaches. Baseball, gymnastics, and basketball are available at the Sports Center.

Tutoring

The Taiwanese are eager to practice their English and may deluge you with requests to tutor them (even casual offers of tutoring will be taken seriously). Although teaching English might be a good way to get to know people, it can become time-consuming. Furthermore, exchange students are not legally allowed to work in Taiwan.

Religion

While Buddhism and Taoism are widespread, the most common religion is known as The Popular Religion or the folk religion, which incorporates elements of the two, as well as the doctrine of Confucius, which still forms the moral fiber of the Taiwanese people. Confucius’ birthday, September 28, is a great traditional holiday. You can also find Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim services near the university.

Shopping

There is a surprisingly wide array of goods for sale in Taiwan and prices are comparable to or less than those in the U.S. Retailers still practice bargaining. Previous EAP students have recommended shopping at the night markets including Ximending and Shilin.
HEALTH

Physical Health
Stay healthy and avoid lowering your body’s resistance. The change in diet and climate may cause an upset stomach and possibly diarrhea until you adjust to the new environment. Wash your hands with soap and water frequently. If you suffer from allergies, be prepared for sinus illness that may be worse than in the U.S.

If you feel sick or have a medical emergency, seek medical attention and contact local staff as quickly as possible. They will have recommendations on which clinic to visit and the necessary medical insurance claim forms to complete. Local staff may be able to assist you if you need to make special arrangements with your professors due to extended absence from class.

Health Risks

Refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Travelers’ Health website, which provides health information specific to your destination.

Infectious Diseases
UCEAP continually monitors information from the CDC and World Health Organization in addition to host university and country resources, and will work closely with experts on UC campuses to provide timely and current information to you as needed. Regarding avian flu, it is important that you exercise care and avoid poultry farms, contact with animals in live food markets, any surfaces that appear to be contaminated with feces or fluids from poultry or other animals, and eat only thoroughly cooked poultry products. Note that, in the event of a pandemic, UCEAP’s ability to assist students abroad may be severely limited by restrictions on local and international movement imposed by foreign governments or the United States for public health reasons.

Refer to the EAP Current Alerts webpage for updated information on avian flu and H1N1 swine flu.

Water
Do not drink tap water unless it has been boiled, filtered, or chemically disinfected. Do not drink unbottled beverages or drinks with ice. Locals do not drink water straight from the tap. Boil tap water to avoid bacterial illness. To be extra safe, let the water boil rapidly for one minute. Electric teapots are inexpensive.

Smoking
On January 9, 2011, Taiwan banned indoor smoking, becoming the 17th in the world and the second country in Asia acting to protect people’s health. Under the new rule, all offices and indoor facilities like department stores, restaurants, cafés, cinemas, airports, and railway stations will ban smoking.
Prescriptions
If you require prescription medications, contact the UCEAP assistance provider, Europ Assistance, at (866) 451-7606 to ensure that your medication is legal and/or available in Taiwan. In addition, you can contact TECO, the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, in Washington or one of the other offices in the United States for specific information regarding customs requirements. Since pharmacies in Taiwan will not acknowledge U.S. prescriptions, take enough medication to last the entire time you are abroad.

Pack prescription medications in your carry-on luggage and store it in the original, labeled containers. Upon arrival, Taiwan customs officials may ask for a copy of the prescription or letter from a physician with a detailed explanation including the purpose, generic name of the medication, and prescribed dosage.

Prescription lenses (including contact lenses) can be fitted in Taipei and are less expensive than in the U.S. Bring your prescription with you in case you need to get another pair while you are abroad. Note that the UCEAP Insurance Plan does not cover this cost.

Over-the-counter medications are available, though brand names may differ from those found in the U.S. In many cases, similar Japanese, British, or German brands of medicine are available. Know the generic name and chemical makeup of your medicines in case you need to purchase them while in Taipei. Counterfeit drugs remain a major problem in Taiwan. Police officials have estimated that as many as 40 percent of Taiwan pharmacies carry counterfeit drugs.

Health Facilities
NTU has a health clinic that provides basic first aid and other minor medical services. NTU’s Medical School Hospital or other local hospitals can address more serious medical needs.

Medical care in Taiwan can be good, but medical equipment and well-trained support staff are often lacking. Although there are many doctors with excellent training, most see large numbers of patients every day. Physicians are well trained; many speak English and have studied in the U.S. State-of-the-art medical equipment is available at many clinics and hospitals. Information about health care, including a listing of physicians, dentists, and medical providers, is available on the American Institute in Taiwan website.

Generally, doctors and hospitals in Taiwan will expect immediate cash payment for health services. You will need to pay for services up front and then submit a claim for reimbursement through the health insurance agent for EAP.

Ambulances
Public ambulances are not recommended. Although they may be summoned by calling 119, most are poorly equipped, do not have medically trained staff, and dispatchers do not speak English. Upon private request, some hospitals will dispatch paramedic crews to a limited geographic area. In the Taipei area, Taiwan University Hospital provides this service (phone: 886-2-2312-3456). Most times, the best alternative is to take a private car or taxi to the hospital. In case you must use a taxi, always carry with you the name (in Chinese) of the closest hospital to which you would like to be taken.
Insurance

The Taiwanese government runs a government-funded insurance program. All exchange students residing in Taiwan for more than four months are required by law to apply for the National Health Insurance; the cost is included in the incidentals line item of the UCEAP Student Budget. See the EAP Student Budget online.

You are also covered by the mandatory UCEAP Insurance Plan, which is paid by the University of California. You must pay for medical services at the time they are rendered, but will be reimbursed after submitting the proper insurance claim forms and receipts (see the Insurance tab of your Participants program page for forms and instructions).

Emotional Health

Speak with returnees and gather as much information as possible before you leave for Taiwan.

Do not be surprised to think, “It’s not what I expected.” Expect the unexpected. Life in Taiwan is fast paced with large crowds, noise, and pollution. For diversion, past students have discovered that some sort of regular activity—whether with an interest group like a chorus or hiking club, or study of traditional dance, archery, or calligraphy—offers a way to practice using Mandarin and to get a break from textbooks. Ask for insight from locals and acknowledge that as a valuable learning experience.

Culture shock and homesickness are normal. It is easy to become worn down from physical and mental stress due to the different environment. To counter this, eat well, stay hydrated, get plenty of rest, share concerns with the Study Center, and be open and accepting of the differences you encounter. It will make your stay more enjoyable as you adapt to the new environment.

The Community Services Center in Taipei offers Western-style counseling services, crisis response, and support groups. Most counselors at the Community Services Center were trained in the U.S. The Center office is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. You can obtain more information by visiting their website or by phone at (02) 2836 8134 or (02) 2838 4947. These phone lines are staffed with English-speaking counselors.
See also the Safety chapter of the UCEAP Guide to Study Abroad.

You are encouraged to read the U.S. State Department's pamphlet, A Safe Trip Abroad.

SAFETY

Crime

Compared with many other Asian countries, Taiwan has relatively low crime rates. Crimes most likely to affect foreigners are petty theft, household break-ins (which increasingly involve criminals carrying weapons), and car theft. Take precautions against pick-pocketing and mugging in Taipei, Kaohsiung, and other major cities, particularly at night markets and other tourist attractions.

If you are a woman, avoid walking alone at night or where there are no other people during the day, just as if you were in any major city in the U.S. or some other unfamiliar location.

In several parts of Taiwan, incidents of purse snatching by thieves on motorcycles have been reported.

In case of theft, keep photocopies of your passport, other identification, and credit cards in a safe place.

Criminal acts should be reported immediately to the local police, the American Institute in Taiwan, and the UCEAP Study Center.

Although the overall violent crime rate in Taiwan is low, you should avoid high crime areas, namely areas where massage parlors, barbershops, and nightclubs operate as covers for prostitution and are often run by criminals.

Do not buy counterfeit and pirated goods, even if they are widely available. Not only are the bootlegs illegal in the United States, you may also be breaking local law.

Criminal Penalties

While in Taiwan, U.S. laws do not apply; you are subject to Taiwanese laws and regulations, which sometimes differ significantly from those in the U.S. If you violate the law, even unknowingly, you may be expelled, arrested, or imprisoned. Penalties for possession, use, or trafficking in illegal drugs in Taiwan are severe, and convicted offenders can expect long jail sentences and heavy fines. Taiwan law also provides for the death penalty for certain violent crimes and drug offenses. If accused of a crime, UCEAP and/or the American Institute in Taiwan would not be able to intervene on your behalf.

Police Services

 Taiwanese police are professional and well-trained. Taiwan has a centralized police force responsible for enforcing the law and maintaining public order. Special duties include: managing entry and exit from Taiwan, immigration, civil defense and disaster rescue, fire prevention and fire fighting, riot control, and assisting in other government affairs when necessary.

Police generally respond to incidents within 15 to 30 minutes, depending on the gravity and location of the crime. While the police respond quickly, they are not always effective at deterring crime. The anti-terror police units are more effective.

Few Taiwanese police speak English. However, local police departments have foreign affairs sections staffed by English-speaking officers capable of handling most situations. Because language barriers are possible, foreigners should speak in a simple manner when reporting crimes.
Disaster Preparedness

Typhoons usually hit Taiwan from July to October, and the country is also subject to strong earthquakes that can occur anywhere on the island. Visit the Central Weather Bureau of Taiwan website, which provides information about both typhoons and earthquakes.

The International Community Radio Taipei (ICRT) provides most areas of Taiwan with English-language programming 24 hours a day. In the event of an emergency or an approaching typhoon, tune your radio to FM 100.7 in the Taipei or Kaohsiung areas and FM 100.1 in the Taichung area.

Expect disruptions to electrical power, telecommunications, water, sewage, and transportation systems following any major earthquakes in Taiwan. Minor earthquakes occur frequently but rarely cause damage. Offshore earthquakes may cause a rise in tide but rarely cause tsunamis. Emergency actions include:

- Turn off the stove and other heat sources.
- Open doors to ensure an exit; this is particularly important in a multi-level building.
- Crouch under a solid table or desk to protect yourself from falling objects.
- Stay indoors during the initial tremor. Venture outside after the danger of falling objects (window panes or signboards) is over. Once outside, protect your head.
- Keep clear of concrete walls, gateposts, and vending machines.

More details on self-preparedness are available on the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

Traffic and Transportation Safety

Roads in Taiwan are well maintained and connect all cities. Many of the main streets have signs in English. Traffic drives on the right.

Traffic congestion in urban areas is intense; many local drivers use scooters or motorcycles and weave in and out of traffic, causing hazards. UCEAP discourages you from operating motorized vehicles.

Taiwan’s public buses and subway are generally considered safe, but passengers—particularly women—should exercise caution when traveling alone late at night.

According to the U.S. Department of State, there have been several incidents of violence committed by taxi drivers against female passengers traveling alone late at night. Protect your wallets, purses, and all valuable items, as pickpockets are present (especially on crowded buses). Carefully select taxis because of crime problems associated with unauthorized drivers. Use phone- or radio-dispatched, licensed taxis. Women should avoid taking taxis alone at night.

Driving

UCEAP strongly discourages operating a scooter or motorcycle in Taiwan. The American Institute in Taiwan reports that three American citizens in Taiwan have died in recent scooter accidents. A license is required to ride a scooter or a motorcycle. The requirements and procedures for applying for a driver’s license for a motorcycle (engine over 50 cc) are the same as those for a vehicle driver’s license.
Emergency Contacts

What Constitutes an Emergency?
Emergencies are circumstances out of the ordinary, unplanned, or unexpected, which threaten the health, safety, and well-being of you and/or your fellow students. The following are considered true emergencies:

- Any situation that places a student or students at risk, including illness or harm, or other traumatic incidents that require immediate response
- A student who has been arrested
- Civil unrest or a natural disaster in the host country

In an Emergency
Contact local emergency services first and then contact the following:

- If you are in the U.S. contact the Operations Specialist at the EAP Systemwide Office. After office hours call the 24-hour emergency phone number at (805) 893-4762.
- If you are abroad contact the Study Center.

Local Emergency Numbers
Taipei Police: (02) 2556 6007

There are also emergency service numbers, although an English-speaking operator may not answer. Like in the U.S., these calls are free. The phone numbers are as follows:

- Fire and Ambulance .......... 119
- Police ....................... 110

The American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) is authorized by law to perform American Citizens Services. If you live in or visit Taiwan, take the time to tell AIT about your trip beforehand. If you check in, AIT can keep you updates with important safety and security announcements. It will also help your friends and family get in touch with you in an emergency. Here is the link to the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program. If you are a resident in Taiwan, you are encouraged also to become a member of AIT’s group email notifications.

American Institute in Taiwan-American Citizen Services
No. 7, Lane 134, Hsin Yi Road, Section 3
Taipei, Taiwan 106

- Phone: (02) 2162 2000 or (02) 2162 2306
- Fax: (02) 2162 2239
- AIT website: www.ait.org.tw
- E-mail: amcit-ait-t@state.gov

The American Citizen Services Unit is located on the second floor of AIT’s Travel Services building, and is open to the public from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. You can find more information on the AIT website.