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CONTACTS

For INCOMING students to UCSC

[Vanessa Orey](#)

Assistant Director, International Student Services

- **Students**, please direct inquiries to:
istudent@ucsc.edu
- **Mobility staff**, please direct inquiries to:
incoming.exchange@ucsc.edu

For OUTGOING students from UCSC

[Ashley Bayman](#)

Assistant Director, Global Learning

- **Students**, please direct inquiries to:
globallearning@ucsc.edu
- **Mobility staff**, please direct inquiries to:
outgoing.exchange@ucsc.edu

Program Websites

[Exchange - International Student Services & Programming](#)

[Exchange - Division of Global Engagement](#)

For balance and agreement inquiries

[George Sabo](#)

Director of Global Initiatives

exchange@ucsc.edu

Mail/Courier Address

University of California, Santa Cruz

Mailstop: Global Engagement

1156 High Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95064, USA

Tel: +1-831-459-2858 | Email: global@ucsc.edu

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Quarter	Enrollment Period	Instructional Period	Final Exams
Fall 2026	Late July/Early August	Sep 24 - Dec 4	Dec 7 - 11
Winter 2027	November	Jan 4 - Mar 12	Mar 15 - 19
Spring 2027	Late February/Early March	Mar 29 - Jun 4	Jun 7 - 10
Summer 2027	May	see ‘Summer Session’ below	

Notes: Students are advised to arrive up to one week prior to the beginning of the ‘Instructional Period’. **Housing Move-In and Orientation** for Exchange students is typically held in the later part of the week prior to the first day of instruction.

See [additional future calendars here](#).

ELIGIBILITY

The Exchange Program ("Program"), administered by the Division of Global Engagement at UC Santa Cruz, is designed to allow students who are regularly enrolled in recognized, degree-granting programs at partner institutions outside of the U.S. to study at UC Santa Cruz in non-degree visiting status for one quarter, up to a full academic year (three quarters).

UC Santa Cruz will only consider applications from students who are officially nominated by their home institution for exchange study. Students who are accepted to UCSC as exchange students will continue to pay any applicable tuition and/or fees to their home institution during their exchange period, and will receive a reciprocal waiver of tuition and some fees at UCSC (*See note in table below re: *Additional Fees*).

Criteria	Minimum Requirement
Agreement with Home Institution	Students interested in pursuing exchange study at UC Santa Cruz are advised to begin by inquiring with their home institution study abroad/mobility office about the nomination process at least 6-8 months before their desired/intended term(s) of exchange study. An applicant's home institution must have a valid student exchange agreement established with UC Santa Cruz at the time of nomination and application.
Enrollment	Applicants must be currently enrolled full-time in a recognized degree-granting program at their home institution outside the U.S.
GPA	Minimum of 2.5 GPA on a 4-point scale (or its equivalent)
Class Standing	Applicants must have successfully completed the equivalent of one entire academic year (typically, two semesters) of coursework at their home institution by the time their mobility period begins.
English Proficiency Requirement (if applicable)	All applicants whose home institution is in a country where English is not the native language, or whose language of instruction in high school (secondary school) was not English, must adequately demonstrate English proficiency as a part of their application process. Applicants may demonstrate proficiency by submitting valid scores from one of the following tests: • TOEFL: Minimum score of 4.5 on the Internet-Based (iBT) edition ◦ Minimum score of 80 on previous format may be valid until December 2027 • IELTS: Overall band score of 6.5 or higher • Duolingo English Test (DET): Minimum score of 115 • Cambridge C2 Proficiency/ C1 Advanced/ B2 First: Minimum score of 176 • Additional tests recognized by the UCSC Office of Admissions may also be considered for demonstrating English proficiency. • A full list of English Proficiency Requirements can be found online TOEFL and IELTS scores are valid for up to 2 years from the testing date. Cambridge qualifications do not expire. If necessary, UC Santa Cruz reserves the right to request further proof of sufficient English proficiency (e.g., documentation used for admission to the home institution, interview with applicant, scores from an additional UC-recognized English-language proficiency test).

** Additional Fees: Based on their chosen course enrollments, exchange students may also be subject to additional 'Course Fees' which are assessed to cover costs of course materials. These Course Fees are not included in any reciprocal tuition waiver and will be the sole responsibility of the student. See [Registrar - Course Fees](#) for more details.*

All international students at UCSC, including exchange students, are subject to a miscellaneous fee of \$110 per quarter to cover administrative, orientation and programming needs. Exact costs are subject to change.

APPLICATION TIMELINE & PROCEDURES

Starting Quarter	Nomination Deadline	Application Deadline	Application Review Period	Result Notification Emailed	Certificate of Eligibility Issued
Fall	February 15	March 15	February - April	April	May-Jul
Winter	August 15	September 15	August - October	October	Nov-Dec
Spring	October 15	November 15	October - December	January	Feb-Mar

STEP 1:

Home Institution Staff
Nominates Student(s)

- A. **Submit the [UCSC Nomination Form](#)** for each student by the applicable nomination deadline above. The form requires the following details for each nominated student:
 - Biographical data: full passport name, date of birth, and student email address
 - Proposed study duration, e.g. one, two, or three quarters
 - Academic level and year, e.g. undergraduate; graduate; 2nd year, 3rd year, etc.
 - Academic field(s) of study at home institution, i.e. academic major
 - Most recent academic term GPA and English proficiency score (if applicable)
- B. **Upload supporting documents for each nominated student.** The nomination form submitter will receive an automated email within one week of submission containing instructions on how to login to the UCSC iGlobal application system to securely upload the following required supporting documents for each nominated student:
 1. Most recent official academic transcript
 2. Proof of English proficiency (if applicable)
 3. All supporting documents must be:
 - a. Scanned copies of official, original documents, verified by an appropriate authority at the home institution, and provided in English, or accompanied by an English translation.
 - b. Uploaded securely by an appropriate authority at the home institution. Documents should not be sent by email or uploaded directly by students.

STEP 2:

Student Completes
Application

- Nominated students will receive an email, normally between 1-4 weeks after the relevant nomination deadline, with instructions to log in to the iGlobal system to complete an application by the appropriate application deadline (see table above).
- **Passport:**
 - Students should be prepared to upload a copy of their valid passport biographical/photo page as part of their application.
- **Academic Information:**
 - Students will select an academic focus area on their application and receive initial information about enrollment planning resources. As an exchange student at UC Santa Cruz, their ability to enroll in specific courses cannot be guaranteed, and will be subject to approval by the offering academic department and/or instructor based on their ability to meet course prerequisites (see '[Course Restrictions](#)' below), and space availability.
 - Students are advised to read course descriptions and prerequisites carefully to determine whether they have acquired the necessary academic knowledge and background at their home university to be successful in a particular course at UC Santa Cruz in which they hope to enroll.
 - Students will register for their courses themselves online, in the MyUCSC enrollment system, at a later date (see '[Academic Calendar](#)' section for details).
 - Students are advised to maintain flexibility with their enrollment plans and list several alternative choices in the event their first choices are not being offered in their term(s) of study, or otherwise unavailable for enrollment.

STEP 3:

UCSC Staff Reviews
Applications and Notifies
Students of Results

- Applications and supporting documents will be reviewed to ensure nominees meet eligibility and application requirements.
- Successful applicants will receive an official email notification of acceptance and instructions on next steps, in accordance with the '[Application Timeline](#)' above.

STEP 4:
Student Requests DS-2019

- The email notification of acceptance will provide students with instructions on how to access their new ucsc.edu email address. **Students should access and continue to monitor their ucsc.edu email address for any important messages from campus offices.**
- An additional email (subject: Action Required: New SEVIS Immigration Checklist) will also prompt students to return to the iGlobal system to request a DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility form, the official document required to apply for a J-1 visa to enter the U.S. The DS-2019 is produced electronically by the International Student Services office at UCSC.
- To request the DS-2019, the student should prepare and upload the following documents in iGlobal:
 - A copy of the applicant's valid passport biographical/photo page
 - Applicable proof of funding / financial sponsorship information (see '[Budget](#)' below).
 - Note: DS-2019 documents are not required for U.S. citizens.
- Once ALL required documents have been uploaded and reviewed to the satisfaction of the International Student Services Office, the student is notified via email when the DS-2019 is ready. The student must download, print, and physically sign the DS-2019 (with a pen) and use this original document for the visa application with the U.S. Consulate/Embassy. Additional guidance is provided during this time on the student's next steps.

BUDGET

All students applying for a J-1 visa to the U.S. will be required to show proof of funding to cover estimated 'Cost of Living,' which is the total figure in the table below, based on the student's anticipated duration of study (1, 2, or 3 quarters).

Estimated Cost of Attendance for Exchange Students

Fee Type.....Number of Quarters:	1	2	3
Non-Resident Tuition, Student Services, & Campus Fees *	<i>Reciprocal Waiver</i>		
Int'l Student Fee (\$110 on quarterly basis) *	\$110	\$220	\$330
Room & Board (on-campus) **	\$6,976	\$13,952	\$20,928
Books & Supplies **	\$419	\$838	\$1,257
Transportation **	\$384	\$768	\$1,152
Personal Expenses **	\$806	\$1,612	\$2,418
Health Insurance (UC SHIP) ***	\$1,252	\$2,504	\$3,756
TOTAL	\$9,947	\$19,894	\$29,841

NOTES:

* All amounts subject to change without notice. Estimates above are based on currently available fees amounts for AY 2026-27. Applicable amounts for AY 2027-28 are likely available in Summer 2027. Actual tuition & fees are subject to change by the UC Regents and could be affected by increases or reductions in State funding, or other developments.

* Int'l Student Fee is charged on a quarterly basis (\$110 per quarter), and helps support the services we provide in International Student Services and Programs, such as international student advising (which includes immigration advising), and programming to help with all aspects of life at UC Santa Cruz.

** Room & Board, Books & Supplies, Transportation, & Personal Expenses amounts represent an estimated cost for students, determined annually based on statistical data from a variety of sources including periodic surveys of UCSC students. Individual costs in these categories may vary. For off-campus rental options, including market costs for one-bedroom apartments and other housing arrangements, please refer to the [UC Santa Cruz Community Rentals website](#).

*** UC Regents mandate that all students maintain health insurance coverage. All students are automatically enrolled in and charged for UC SHIP unless they submit a request for waiver to the [UC Santa Cruz Health Center](#) (see '[Health Insurance](#)', for more details).

ACADEMIC MATTERS

Selecting a Major

- While exchange students are non-degree-seeking at UC Santa Cruz, they will still select a major at UC Santa Cruz on their program application to formally affiliate with for the duration of their study at UC Santa Cruz. Some majors have restricted enrollment, or are not open to exchange students.
- Before selecting a major, students should review the table of '**Impacted Majors**' below to ensure that they meet all necessary requirements.
- Students are not limited to courses in their selected UC Santa Cruz major. They may pursue enrollment in courses offered by other departments if they meet course prerequisites and space is available in that course. A student's UC Santa Cruz major may differ from their home university major, but students should select a major that reflects *their primary academic interests* while studying on exchange at UC Santa Cruz.
- See a list of [Academic Majors at UC Santa Cruz here](#).

Course Registration

Prior to arrival, students will be informed of their enrollment timeline and invited to register for courses through the [campus online system, MyUCSC](#). All students will be given an enrollment appointment which they can confirm in MyUCSC. Note that all times will be listed in the registration system in local time in California (PST or PDT, depending on time of year). For additional detailed guidance on the enrollment process, including videos and screenshots, see here:

- [Student Enrollment FAQ and Guides](#)
- [Enrollment Appointment FAQ](#)
- [Enrollment Videos](#)

Course Numbering

- Undergraduate courses are classified as "lower division" or "upper division." Lower-division courses (numbered 1–99) are designed for first-year and second-year students but may be taken by more advanced students as well. Upper-division courses (numbered 100–199) are designed for third-year and fourth-year students but are open to first-year and second-year students who have sufficient background and the consent of the instructor in charge.
- Graduate courses (numbered 200–299) are either restricted to graduate students or open only to those who can show the instructor they have completed sufficient upper-division coursework basic to the course subject matter. See [Course Restrictions](#) below for more details.

Searching for Courses

- The [General Catalog](#) provides general descriptions of courses and prerequisites.
- The General Catalog does *not* indicate availability of a specific course in a particular quarter.
- To look up class availability by quarter, students are advised to research the individual departmental webpages to see if a particular course will be offered in a particular academic year and quarter. -OR -
- Students may search for courses by quarter and department and also see whether a course is full or has a waitlist by using the [Class Search Tool](#).

Course Credit

- Unless otherwise specified in the course description, each course earns 5 quarter credits.
- All physical education courses are noncredit. Other noncredit courses include certain graduate seminars.
- Laboratory courses, music courses involving individual lessons or ensemble participation, as well as some special-interest seminars and individual studies courses carry less than 5 credits and are designated accordingly.

Course Load and Unit Requirements

- Exchange students typically enroll in three 5-credit courses per quarter (15 units total), or equivalent.
- Full-time enrollment (minimum 12 units each quarter) is required of both U.S. and non-U.S. citizens. Non-U.S. citizens must enroll full time in the required course units each term to maintain immigration status.
- Students whose first language is not English may consider limiting first-term enrollment to the minimum 12 units.
- Unless [special permission](#) is granted, maximum enrollment is 19 units each quarter.

Official Transcript

If there are no outstanding holds on a student's account, one electronic copy (.pdf) of the student's official transcript will be sent automatically to the student approximately 6 to 8 weeks following their final quarter of study at UCSC. Additional [official transcripts](#) may be ordered by the student at their own expense.

Credit Transfer

Credits may be transferred according to policies of the student's home institution.

COURSE RESTRICTIONS

Selecting Courses

Unless otherwise agreed to between UC Santa Cruz and an applicant's home institution, these course restrictions will apply to all exchange students' enrollments. Access to specific courses cannot be guaranteed and students must maintain a flexible Study Plan with several alternative course selections to avoid disappointment if first-choice courses are unavailable. With the exception of the specific course restrictions noted below, and subject to prerequisite requirements, students are free to select their courses. Students typically select courses within the academic area of their major at their home/host institution(s), although enrollment outside the major is often possible in lower-division courses (numbered 1-99) that do not have prerequisites.

Prerequisites

Many academic departments screen students' transcripts carefully for prerequisite courses. Students interested in enrolling in upper division coursework (numbered 100-199) must have completed equivalent prerequisite coursework at their home institution and achieved satisfactory grades in those courses, as determined by the offering department (see *course descriptions in [class schedule](#) for prerequisites; additional notes on general prerequisite requirements below*).

Graduate Level Courses

Exchange students who are sufficiently prepared (typically those who are currently in their third or fourth year of an undergraduate program, or enrolled in a graduate level degree, MSc, or MA, at their home institution) may enroll in graduate courses at UCSC (numbered 200 and above) with permission of the faculty teaching the course, and occasionally, the appropriate Dean. Students should be prepared to select alternative courses.

Professional masters programs at UCSC have restricted enrollment and require additional program fees. As such, certain courses within the following programs are not available to visiting exchange students:

- MS Quantitative Econ and Finance
- MS Natural Language Processing
- MA Education/Credential Program
- MS Human Computer Interaction

Impacted Majors

The academic majors listed in the table below are considered "impacted" meaning that the department's courses are in high demand. Therefore availability of courses in these fields will be limited and may be restricted by the department.

Major	Notes
Art	<i>All applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.</i> Studio Art: Enrollment is limited. Students should plan to enroll in only one or two studio courses per quarter. Students must have completed introductory studio courses in the area of study if they plan to take upper-division studio courses (numbered 100-199). Students should be prepared to take courses in other departments to maintain full-time enrollment. Theater Arts, Dance, Music: Supplementary materials, such as audition tapes, may be required. Enrollment in private music lessons offered by the department may not be permitted, or may only be available for an additional fee. Courses in practical training (e.g., acting, design, voice) may be limited.
Biology, Biological Sciences	Upper-Division Prerequisites (must meet ALL criteria below): Biology: one year of introductory biology encompassing animal, plant, and cell biology Chemistry: one year of general chemistry Mathematics: one year of calculus
Economics, Business Economics	All applicants to this field must be economics or business economics majors at their home university. At UC Santa Cruz, courses in this field are listed under: Economics, Business Management Economics, and Global Economics Upper-Division Prerequisites (must meet ALL criteria below): - Introductory Microeconomics (Intermediate Microeconomics preferred or required) - Introductory Macroeconomics (Intermediate Macroeconomics preferred or required) - Calculus - Statistics

Engineering, Computer Science	All applicants to this field must be engineering majors at their home university. The computer science major at UC requires students to have the same preparation as engineering students. Coursework in this field is not open to non-computer science majors. Upper-Division Prerequisites (must meet ALL criteria below): 1. Mathematics: a course in calculus (multivariable), differential equations, and linear algebra 2. Calculus-based physics: courses covering the following areas: mechanics, electricity, magnetism, wave motion, heat, oscillation, physical optics, relativity, quantum physics, and electrodynamics 3. General Chemistry Exception: computer and electrical engineering require only one term of chemistry. Computer science does not require chemistry. 4. Computer Programming: Fortran, Matlab, Java, C++, C Programming, or Python
Film/Film Studies	All applicants to this field must be film majors at their home university. Enrollment in specific courses cannot be guaranteed. For many courses, the instructor's approval is required. Be prepared to provide course syllabi from the film courses you have taken at your home university for enrollment in film courses. At UC Santa Cruz, courses are listed under: Film & Digital Media. Refer to the department's website for available courses by quarter. Screenwriting / Production: Enrollment is limited and generally reserved for students with a strong production background. These courses may not be available to exchange students. Film Criticism / Film History: Courses in these areas are more readily available.
Psychology	Enrollment in psychology courses, particularly laboratory courses, is limited. Upper-Division Prerequisites: 1. Social Sciences: introductory psychology courses, and a course in anthropology, sociology, or the equivalent 2. Mathematics: a course in statistics

HOUSING

On-Campus Housing

Placement in on-campus housing for exchange students cannot be guaranteed, however exchange students may submit an application to be considered for an on-campus housing assignment on a space-available basis. Submission of the housing application by the UC Santa Cruz Housing Office stated deadline is strongly recommended. Within a few weeks after acceptance notifications have been emailed to exchange students, the UC Santa Cruz Housing Office will send an additional email to students [at their ucsc.edu email address](#) inviting them to submit a separate application for on-campus housing with a stated deadline for submission (application fee required, currently \$150 USD, applied to the first housing payment). While students may rank their housing preferences in the application, assignment within a particular community or specific room type cannot be guaranteed.

More details about [on-campus housing](#) can be found online.

College Affiliation

All students, whether they choose to live on or off campus, will become affiliated with one of the ten residential colleges at UC Santa Cruz, typically either [College Nine](#) or [John R. Lewis College](#). Students who live on campus typically (though not always) reside within the [International Living Center](#). These residential settings provide academically and socially supportive environments to help new students transition to campus life and get the most out of their UC Santa Cruz experience. **Learn more about the [10 Colleges at UC Santa Cruz](#).**

Off-Campus Housing

If a student chooses to live off campus, they will be responsible for finding their own accommodation. The [Community Rentals](#) Office at UC Santa Cruz provides resources to support students in this process.

IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

UC Immunization (including COVID-19 Vaccine) and Tuberculosis (TB) Screening

All new incoming students to any UC campus must comply with the [UC Immunization Policy](#) which requires students to provide evidence of certain vaccinations (including COVID-19) and screening for TB risk. Exchange students will receive notification of vaccination requirements and further instructions at their [ucsc.edu](#) email address after they have received notification of acceptance. To achieve compliance, students should gather their medical records and enter their data via the secure [Health e-Messenger](#) (managed by the UC Santa Cruz Health Center) prior to arrival on campus. Faxing or emailing records does not meet compliance. **Learn more here:** [Health Center Vaccine Information](#)

Health Insurance

The UC Regents mandate that all students be covered by a health insurance plan. Therefore, all exchange students are automatically enrolled in and charged for the UC Student Health Insurance Plan (“[UC SHIP](#)”) unless they choose to submit an online insurance waiver by the published deadline confirming they have another form of acceptable health insurance coverage. Determination of acceptability of coverage is made solely by the UC Santa Cruz Health Center. Students will be informed by email at their [ucsc.edu](#) email address of the insurance waiver procedure and the deadline to request a waiver, which is approximately one month prior to the first instructional day of each quarter. The cost for UC SHIP coverage varies each quarter (see ‘[Estimated Costs](#)’ above). **Learn more:** [Health Center - UC SHIP Insurance Information](#)

STUDENT LIFE

Summer Session

Summer Session is open to ALL students, including any exchange students who may choose to start their studies early or extend them into the summer, *on a fee-paying basis only*, but at significantly reduced tuition rate. If an applicant to the UCSC Exchange Program is interested in combining Summer Session with study in the regular academic year (i.e. fall, winter, spring quarters), please contact us as early as possible to determine appropriate application steps.

Summer Session	Instructional Period (<i>Exact dates vary each summer; see link below for details</i>)
5-week, session 1	Late June - Late July
5-week, session 2	Late July - Late August
8-week session	Late June - Mid August
10-week session	Late June - Late August

See specific session dates, course availability, and application details here: [Summer Session - International Student - How to Enroll](#)

International Student Orientation

Before classes begin, all newly arriving exchange students should plan to attend the International Student Orientation which offers social programming and a variety of information about maintaining one’s visa status, campus resources, course registration, academic advising, and other support services. **Learn more:** [International Student Orientation](#)

Global Mentorship Program

Pairs new incoming international students with trained Peer Mentors who are knowledgeable and experienced UCSC students. The program aims to ease the transition of incoming students into the campus community by connecting them to resources, engaging them in activities, and offering a support system as they navigate cultural, academic, and social challenges. **Learn more:** [Global Mentorship Program](#)

Events

Global Programming hosts events throughout the year. **Learn more:** [ISSP Events & Workshops](#)

Student-Led Clubs & Organizations

UCSC has over 150 registered student organizations and associations based on academic, athletic, ethnic, religious, political, and cultural interests. **Learn more:** [SOMeCA Organizations](#)

UCSC Athletics & Recreation Department

Promotes physical activity and encourages health and wellness through a diverse offering of classes, workshops, outdoor adventures, intramural sports, tournaments, clubs, and recreational facilities. **Learn more:** [Recreation Department](#)

Other Useful Links

- [Learn More about UC Santa Cruz](#)
- [The Beloved UC Santa Cruz Mascot, the Banana Slug](#)
- [UC Santa Cruz in the News](#)