

Caltech Scholars Programs

General Information

Official Programs and Application Deadlines:

Melbourne Scholars Program – January 25
Ecole Polytechnique Scholars Program – January 16
Cambridge Scholars Program -- January 25
Copenhagen Scholars Program -- January 25
Edinburgh Scholars Program -- January 25
UCL Scholars Program -- January 25

Caltech offers six official study abroad opportunities for students in any discipline. Students apply during their sophomore or junior year to study abroad during their junior or senior year for one term. All programs are for the Fall Term, except Cambridge, which can be for Fall or Winter Term. Students must apply through the Fellowships Advising and Study Abroad Office and may only study abroad at one of these six official programs. Once accepted into a Scholars Program and nominated by Caltech, students are then guided through the process of applying to the specific university abroad.

Caltech Credit

Students must take a minimum of 36 units at the host university while studying abroad. Students are granted Caltech credit, provided they complete academic work as required by Caltech and the host university, and complete the required evaluation process upon return to Caltech. Students may be granted general, HSS or option credit. It is possible to earn additional units, although students are discouraged from overloading and some host universities prohibit this. Courses taken abroad can fulfill specific course requirements, i.e., replace a Caltech course, as long as the instructor agrees to evaluate the course upon the student's return. This is commonly done, and we keep a list of such courses in our [Equivalent Course Guide](#) which is updated yearly and is available in the FASA Library. There is a process for having courses evaluated and receiving Caltech credit upon returning to campus that all study abroad students must complete. Students must bring back all coursework, notes, exams, essays, problem sets, etc. in order to be evaluated. If accepted into a program, students will be given clear directions on this process.

Courses taken abroad must be taken for a grade, but the grades do not transfer to the Caltech transcript, only the number of units granted.

Students must take at least 50% of their coursework in their option or a closely related field.

Courses by Correspondence: If a student must take a required Caltech class during the term s/he is studying abroad, it is possible to take one Caltech course "by correspondence" with the consent of the instructor. The course must be listed in the proposed course list and if accepted into the program, the student must obtain written approval from the CIT faculty member teaching the course next year. Such classes are taken for a Caltech grade and not as pass/fail unless that is the grading structure of the class. All homework, exams, projects, etc. must be completed by the student by the regular class schedule. This is not uncommon, but students should note that taking a course by correspondence is a large time commitment that will require about one day per week dedicated to the class. All other options should be considered before taking a class by correspondence. Students must register for the class on REGIS as if they were taking it at Caltech, and must obtain a written agreement from the professor/instructor to do so. Such courses must be listed in the Proposed Course List and cannot substitute for the required 36 units taken at the host university.

Application Process

Applicants should currently be sophomores or juniors. Students will study abroad during their junior or senior year. An exception is made for students who are now seniors, who will be officially registered students during the fall or winter of the next academic year and who meet other requirements. Such "Super Senior" applicants should discuss this in their essay.

There is no citizenship requirement, although it may be impossible to accept students from countries that do not have diplomatic relations with our host countries. While the FASA office will provide some instruction, students are responsible for applying for necessary visas and paying all associated costs in order to study abroad.

Our partner universities require that students must be at least eighteen years of age before departing for study abroad.

GPA Requirements:

Cambridge: 3.4

Copenhagen (DTU & KU): 3.0 (2.8 considered)

Ecole Polytechnique: 3.3

Edinburgh: 3.0

Melbourne: 3.0

UCL: 3.3

Sophomores with a cumulative GPA **under 3.0** **are not eligible** to apply for study abroad.

Juniors with a cumulative 2.8 or 2.9 and with a stable GPA may apply for any program if they have at least a term or two of 3.0 or above level work.

KU and DTU are the most flexible about making such exceptions and UCL is the strictest regarding exceptions. Both Copenhagen universities have accepted juniors at 2.8 and 2.9 who have demonstrated a high standard of accomplishments in research, laboratory work or leadership, and have very strong references from faculty in their field. However, such applicants must have a stable or rising GPA and strong letters of recommendation.

Program Preference:

Students applying to Ecole Polytechnique are allowed to apply to other programs as back-ups, but if accepted to Ecole Polytechnique, they must withdraw their other applications.

Students applying to Cambridge or UCL as their first choice should propose a second choice due to the large number of applicants. A third choice is recommended if applying to Cambridge and UCL as your top two choices. Otherwise, students are encouraged to apply to more than one program (Cambridge, Copenhagen, Ecole Polytechnique, Edinburgh, Melbourne, and/or UCL). Students applying to only one of the above six programs should have a good reason for doing so and are not given preference for that program in relation to those applying to multiple programs. Applying for multiple programs increases chances of studying abroad, even if students are not selected for their top choice.

To begin the application process, students should read through the handout for the programs they are interested in and start researching the course offerings at each university. Any further information needed about the applications can be found in these handouts and the Application Directions.

Disciplinary and Academic Standing

Applicants must be in good academic and disciplinary standing. They should be mature and responsible individuals who have the ability to adapt well to a new country and academic environment. Students going abroad in the fall must clear up all extensions by August 1 before they depart, and must be reported to the FASA Office. Students going to Cambridge Lent may not take any extensions the term before they study abroad. All "I's" will be considered on a case by case basis.

The Cost of Study Abroad

Students are charged standard Caltech room, board, tuition and fees during their term abroad. The cost of each study abroad program is approximately the same as a Caltech term, although often there is a supplemental charge due to the longer term abroad. Most universities are on the semester system, so have

longer terms, which results in additional costs for food, housing and personal expenses. Students are responsible for their own travel arrangements and visa fees. There are also other costs associated with living abroad: public transportation, entertainment, additional travel, etc. Students should budget accordingly for these.

Financial aid is available for study abroad programs, but it is the student's responsibility to request additional funds in his/her financial aid budget. Financial Aid will usually cover the supplemental charges. There is also a no-interest travel loan available to pay for flights to and from the host university. Please consult the Financial Aid Office for details on applying for and eligibility for financial aid related to study abroad.

Living Abroad

Students live in Caltech-approved housing in each location. Most often students live in single rooms in an apartment-like situation, with a shared bathroom and living space, and access to a kitchen. Students must live in program-designated housing and may not arrange their own housing. Most programs require students to cook for themselves, or provide access to dining halls. At Cambridge, students eat in a dining hall.

Study Abroad Policies

Students must attend all classes, lectures, tutorials, labs, etc. No time conflicts are allowed. All coursework must be completed before leaving the host university, and no extensions are allowed. Students must return to Caltech in time for classes the following term and to complete the Caltech portion of the Course Evaluation Process on campus. **Students must be enrolled at Caltech for the term following their term abroad.**

Students are encouraged to travel before or after their term abroad begins. If the program has a term holiday or reading week and the student is up to date with all work, travel can also be done at this time. Weekend and day trips are options for local travel. The local areas around each university abound with interesting nooks worth exploring. Do not apply to study abroad if your sole reason for going is personal travel. It is first and foremost an educational experience.

Additional Resources

More information is available on each of these programs in the Fellowships Advising and Study Abroad Office, and on our website <http://fasa.caltech.edu/studyabroad>. Each program has its own information handout with full details about the different departments, housing, academic structure, cultural experience, etc. Students should read these carefully for each program.

Do not hesitate to come by the Fellowships Advising and Study Abroad (FASA) Office, Rm. 319 in the Center for Student Services, if you have questions. It is helpful if you call first, x2150, to schedule a meeting time. We will handle walk-in questions during posted walk-in hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-11am and 2-4pm. The FASA Library is open every week day during office hours (8am-5pm, closed for lunch 12noon-1pm) for students to look through previous proposals, lecture lists, prospectuses, study abroad student surveys, etc. You do not need an appointment to use the library.