

STUDY ABROAD & STUDY AWAY APPLICATION DIRECTIONS FOR ALL PROGRAMS

Deadline for all application materials: 5 pm, January 25, 2025

Email all materials to the Fellowships Advising & Study Abroad Office: SAapplications@caltech.edu
References should email their recommendation forms and letters to: Sareferences@caltech.edu

Please follow these directions:

- All application materials must be submitted as one PDF document to SAapplications@caltech.edu.
- Assemble your application in the order listed on the Study Abroad/Away “Application checklist”.
- Title your application document “First name Surname” (e.g., “Wei Chen”). *A preferred name may be indicated by quotation marks (e.g., Alexandra “Sasha” Morelli).*
- Type your name in the right corner of the document header, ensure it shows in each page of the proposal.
- Ensure page numbers are shown on each page (use the page number function of your word processor).

GPA requirements:

- Applicants must have a 3.0 GPA minimum for Edinburgh, DTU, KU, and Melbourne.
- The Cambridge minimum GPA is 3.6, and at least 3.3 GPA for *UCL, and 3.6 for École Polytechnique.
 - *UCL exceptions include 3.5 Biological and Biomedical Sciences; 3.9 strongly suggested for Computer Science.
- There is a 3.5 minimum GPA for the University of Chicago Study Away program.
- Cambridge applicants must apply to alternative program(s), and not just Michaelmas and Lent terms.
- Alternative program(s) are also strongly suggested for UCL and University of Chicago.

Note that you should consult the information handout on each program to obtain the specifics on the academic program and websites essential to preparing the proposal. Please read these carefully.

Application Directions

Applicants must prepare the proposal and complete other paperwork according to the directions below and as detailed in each program’s handout. All required materials, including two references and an unofficial transcript, must be turned in to FASA by January 25. Applicants are urged to begin to investigate course offerings by December at the latest.

All applicants must:

1. Complete Study Abroad/Away checklist and Application form.
2. Complete Proposal. See directions below.
3. Submit a current copy of their transcript and course degree audit. Unofficial transcript is acceptable.
4. Submit two Study Abroad (or Study Away) Reference forms and official, signed letters of reference supporting your desire to participate in study abroad or study away.

Please request letter writers to comment on your academic qualifications and record, research experience, character and maturity for study abroad/away, and how a term away/abroad might add to your personal growth and academic experience.

Additional reference information:

- 1st reference must be from a Caltech professor, instructor (not grad student), academic advisor or research supervisor (university or national laboratory) in your **primary option**. Employer references are not allowed.
- 2nd reference can be as above, or from a university other than Caltech, or from a graduate TA in your option or highly related field. Again, not employer references.
- 3rd optional reference; only submit if the reference can comment on some aspect of your academic missing in previous references (e.g., a professor outside of your option, your RA or area rep).

Note that the focus of the references is academic, but your reference writers should comment on your motivation and personal preparation for study abroad. To obtain the strongest references, it is best to provide them with information about your academic and personal motivation for study abroad (or away) with a copy of your transcript and resume.

Please tell your references that pending acceptance into the Caltech Study Abroad (or Study Away) Program, these letters will be sent to the partnered host universities; the letters should be typed and physically signed. See directions on "Reference Form" for delivery instructions to the FASA office.

The two required letters must be from faculty, postdocs, or professionals in your academic field or a closely allied field (see below).

First Required Letter: The first letter must be from a member of the professorial faculty at Caltech or from a Caltech or postdoc instructor (not a TA) in the student's option or a closely related field who has taught the student, officially advised the student, or supervised the student's research.

- In the case of transfer students or 3/2 students, this letter may also be from a faculty member at their previous university. *Professorial faculty includes those with the title of assistant, associate, or full professor.*

Second Required Letter: The second letter may be from another professor or instructor from Caltech or any university who has taught the applicant in a class related to their **STEM** option, who supervised them in their **STEM** option, or from an advisor in their **STEM** option. This letter may be from a non-professorial Caltech faculty member, an instructor, faculty/professionals from other universities who have advised the student, taught the student or supervised the applicant's research or work in a field related to their **STEM** option.

Also acceptable is a letter from a postdoc who has supervised the student's research or a graduate student who has been a TA or who has helped supervise research that relates to the applicant's **STEM** option. Letters from undergraduate TA's, from employers, or from any HSS faculty will not be accepted as a required letter. If an applicant has a second option under HSS, the required letters must be from someone who has observed the applicant in a **STEM** capacity.

Optional Third Letter: Note that students may submit a **third letter ONLY** if the third letter can tell the committee about some aspect of your experience that the first two letter writers have no knowledge of, especially academic. *Note this is not required and students with three letters are not viewed more favorably than those with two letters!*

A third letter should only be submitted if you feel your two required letters are from people who do not know you as well as the author of the third letter. Letters from your R.A., a Caltech administrator, dean, an employer, or instructor in the humanities or social sciences are acceptable for the third letter only. **Please do not submit letters from high school teachers or counselors, peers, or family friends.**

Proposal Directions:

Note that proposals from previous study abroad and away participants may be reviewed in the Fellowships Advising & Study Abroad Office. Do not copy the format of these proposals, as requirements and format can change each year. Be certain that your proposal includes the elements listed below.

IMPORTANT: Single PDF document, **number** all pages

The proposal will include (in order) the following elements:

1. **ESSAY:** Provide a brief personal narrative (**at least 1/2 page and up to one page single-spaced**) on the value of a term/semester abroad for you academically and personally. Be sure to include a rationale for going abroad or away. **Note** that members of the selection committee are not looking to be entertained; these should be thoughtful statements and students selected to study abroad will have their statement reviewed by host university faculty.

SECONDARY ESSAY for University of Chicago: If a student is applying to the University of Chicago in addition to an international abroad program, the applicant must write **two essays**. In the second essay, you must also provide another brief personal narrative (**at least 1/2 page and up to one page single spaced**) on the academic and personal value of a term away for you. Make sure to include your rationale for studying away from Caltech for a term and how the experience would be uniquely beneficial for you. Remember that students selected to study away will have their statement reviewed by the University of Chicago faculty.

Note that all applicants selected by Caltech to study abroad or away must also be accepted by the host university/Cambridge college — this process happens *after* the Caltech selection process is completed.

2. **PROGRAM FIT:** Briefly describe how each program you are applying for fits in with your course of study at Caltech. If you are applying for several programs with a range of course types, provide this information in the order of your program preference, your **first choice** being your most preferred university program.
3. **PROPOSED COURSE LIST:** For each program, and in order of preference, list each of the courses you wish to take according to the directions below and in the handout "*Proposed Course List Guidelines*". **You should consult the handout on each program to ensure that you fully understand the program requirements.**

Note that you must use the current year's course list at the study abroad/away university, as the next year's class list is not available until summer months. Due to course availability, students selected for study abroad or study away may need to make changes in their proposed class list but will have help in doing so. *When listing classes, list admitting department and option credit classes first.*

4. **If the student is a senior during their term abroad/away and intends to complete an undergraduate thesis**, the faculty member responsible for supervising the thesis work should sign a statement or send the student an email agreeing to the fact that the thesis requirement may be satisfied by increased work during the other two terms, or by some other method. **Submit the letter or email with your application.** It is possible to work on non-experimental aspects of your thesis while away or abroad.

Program-specific Information:

All programs require you to take 2 courses (18 Caltech units) in your option. Refer to program handouts for more specific information.

Cambridge: You will be admitted into a tripos and if in the Natural Sciences (NatSci) Tripos, a specific subject; **you will select classes only in that tripos/subject.** If there are no time conflicts, you may take classes from different parts (Part Ia, Part Ib, Part II, Part III, etc.). In some cases, students may be allowed to take a class from Part I (e.g., a class equivalent to CHEM21a is taught in Chemistry Part I). A minimum GPA of a 3.6 stable or rising is required.

List 4 or 5 courses from the 3rd or 4th year of your tripos, being careful to avoid time conflicts. Remember you can only take classes in one tripos. If you are within the NatSci Tripos, you can only take classes in one subject within that tripos. In the NatSci Tripos, students can take only one or two of the Interdisciplinary Classes, but these are only offered in Lent Term.

DTU: You must take three to four courses at DTU plus the Danish culture course at KU; the Danish culture class is 7.5 ECTS, which is equal to 9 Caltech units. Total DTU ECTS should be ~ 35 including a Danish culture course (taken at KU). **All DTU courses are equal to 9 Caltech units, unless equivalent to a specific 10-12 Caltech course. Be aware of the DTU block schedule to avoid time conflicts.** A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required, however 2.8 GPA possible if student can show ability to do 3.0 work in their option.

KU: No more than 35 ECTS may be taken. Students must take two 7.5 ECTS science classes in the first block, and one 7.5 ECTS science course in the second block, plus a Danish culture course. You may select a 7.5 ECTS humanities class taught in English as an alternative to a Danish culture course; the list of humanities courses changes each year. Consult the KU list of courses taught in English (see the program handout for more information). **Any upper-level class (3rd or 4th year) can be taught in English**, this is a university rule at both KU and DTU. A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required.

École Polytechnique: *Juniors may apply, current sophomores will not be considered.* You will take four courses in your Programme d'Approfondissement (PA). Must have minimum 3.6 GPA and have intermediate level of proficiency in French language. Students must take a formal evaluation with a Caltech French instructor to evaluate your reading, writing, and speaking ability. Additional École Polytechnique application required. Students will list French Language as a required fifth class for 3 HSS units.

Edinburgh: You will be in the College of Sciences and Engineering (CSE), admitted to the department most equivalent to your option. A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required to apply. Please note:

- Two classes (18 Caltech equivalent units) must be taken in the Edinburgh admitting option-equivalent department
- Both 10 & 20 Edinburgh credit classes equal 9 Caltech units, except when the student needs credit for a 12 Caltech unit-equivalent class.
- Students must take a minimum of 60 Edinburgh credits and at least four classes; they can take up to a maximum of 80 total Edinburgh units (maximum of five classes).
- 40 EDIN credits can be taken in the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science (CHSS) **provided** they have at least 40 units in the CSE and five 5 classes or 80 credits. A 20 credit class can be taken in CHSS if the student has at least 30 credits and three classes in the CSE.
- Students can take two to 40 units in the Biomedical Sciences track in the College of Medicine as long as they have 40 units in the CSE, do not exceed the 80 unit maximum and five class maximum for all colleges.

Melbourne: Students will take four classes, at 12.5 credits each, and half of them must be in your option. Melbourne is the only program where you can apply in your HSS option; students must take 50% of classes in this option. The University of Melbourne offers research classes (see [Melbourne Handbook](#)). ***Students must list ten classes (subjects) for the application.*** A Minimum GPA of 3.0 is required to apply.

UCL: You will have an Admitting Department (typically the department of your Caltech option) in which you must take at least 50% of your coursework. Two additional classes can be taken in the Admitting Department or another subject including the humanities and social sciences. Please **note** that visiting students are only allowed to take level 1 Economics courses and cannot be admitted into Economics. You must list 60 UCL credits total, most UCL classes are 15 UCL units each. Regarding fall classes with a second semester part, students must confirm what topics are covered in the fall. A minimum GPA of 3.3 is required.

Exceptions: Biological Sciences and Biomedical Sciences require minimum 3.5 GPA. For Computer Science, a GPA of 3.9 is strongly suggested since admission is highly restricted. **You must verify that your admitting department allows “fall term only” students.**

U Chicago: Students can only take four classes while on study away at the University of Chicago—no exceptions. This program requires you to take two courses (18 Caltech units) related to your primary option. Up to two classes can be taken in any subject (science, engineering, humanities, social sciences) provided a student meets prerequisites. **Note well:** use the current year’s fall course list when selecting classes and only search for fall quarter classes. University of Chicago course search engine linked [here](#).

University of Chicago professional schools.

If certain requirements are met, juniors or seniors may register for one class in the following professional schools at the University of Chicago:

- Booth School of Business
- The Law School
- School of Social Service Administration
- Irving B. Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies.

Note well: With the exception of the Booth School of Business courses, after acceptance to Study Away at University of Chicago, the student must petition the University of Chicago's Dean of Students for approval to register for a professional school course. This means that Caltech students need to list alternate classes in the College (undergraduate program) if they want to take a class any of the schools listed above since a petition is required after acceptance and once fall 2024 classes are posted. You can only take **one** class of the four in one of the graduate schools.

No classes can be taken at the University of Chicago Medical School.

More information on each program can be found in the school-specific scholars program handouts.