

UCL Scholars Study Abroad Program

Program Description and Application Requirements

Applications due **January 25**

Email all materials including transcript to: SAapplications@caltech.edu & have references emailed to: SAreferences@caltech.edu

Please read the following pages carefully as this information is essential for completing an application.

Introduction and General Information

The UCL Scholars Program is a study abroad program in which Caltech students' study at University College London during their junior or senior year during their Fall Term only. **The dates for 2026 are September 28th through December 18th.** Participants are required to attend the fall orientation that will take place during the week before classes start, which is **September 28 through October 2, 2026.** The orientation program will provide information on the academic system, registrations for classes and the health and counseling services for incoming exchange students. There are usually social events and tours of London in addition to the typical workshops on registration, life at UCL, etc.

Students are required to attend all classes, labs and lectures. Students may travel in Britain or Europe before the program starts or after it ends. It is possible to make an occasional weekend trip to nearby European, however weekend trips must not interfere with lecture, lab, or seminar attendance.

Reading Week: Reading Week occurs mid-term and serves as dedicated time for independent study, reading, and academic work—particularly in humanities and social sciences, which do not hold classes that week. While not a vacation period, students who are on track may take limited travel such as a long weekend or four-day trip.

UCL Location, History and Student Body

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/>

University College London (UCL) is one of the top universities in Britain. UCL was founded in 1826 and was the first university established in London. It was the first university to admit students from any religious or social background and to admit women on equal terms with men. UCL was also the first university in Britain to offer degrees in fields such as literature, modern languages, law, medicine, and engineering.

With about 14,000 undergraduates, UCL is located in an amazing part of central London, the Bloomsbury/Fitzrovia area. The UCL campus is a few minutes' walk north of Oxford Street (one of the main shopping arteries) and the British Museum. There is very convenient access to the London Underground and London area train stations which are minutes away. There is also a robust bus system.

Room and Board

Caltech students live in single rooms in one of the official dormitories.

Due to the longer length of the UCL 12-week semester (compared to the 10-week Caltech term) and the cost of housing in London, there may be a housing supplement charged to cover the additional weeks of room. The amount of the supplement depends on UCL housing fees and the exchange rate. Students on financial aid are eligible for additional funding to cover these costs and costs associated with the additional meals and should talk to the Caltech Financial Aid Office about this.

Academic Program

UCL is composed of 11 faculties:

- Arts and Humanities
- Bartlett (Built Environment)
- Brain Sciences
- Engineering Sciences
- Institute of Education
- Laws
- Life Sciences
- Mathematical & Physical Sciences
- Medical Sciences
- Population Health Sciences
- Social and Historical Sciences

Students are admitted to one department in science or engineering related to their Caltech option and must take at least half of their courses (30 UCL credits) within that department.

Students are allowed to take classes in the following STEM departments: Civil, Environmental, & Geomatic Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Computer Science, Biomedical Sciences, Biological Sciences, Molecular Sciences, Neuroscience, Chemistry, and Earth Sciences and any social science or humanities department that allows fall term only students to take classes in their department.

Students are not allowed to take courses in the following departments: Biochemical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Electronic and Electrical Engineering, Management Science & Innovation, Law, Physics & Astronomy, and Mathematics.

Biological and Biomedical Science departments require a minimum GPA of 3.5 for applicants, and the Computer Science department requires a minimum GPA of 3.9 to apply. Neuroscience department requires a minimum GPA of 3.7. Experience shows that departments requiring a GPA higher than 3.3 also require very strong reference letters. These may change due to how the programs is impacted.

Students can look for courses by subject from this website:

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/study-abroad-ucl/study-abroad-guide/subjects>

Caltech students must choose an Admitting Department from within the **Faculty of Engineering (Mechanical only), Faculty of Mathematical & Physical Sciences, or the Faculty of Life Sciences**.

Since classes for next fall are not yet listed, applicants should list classes based on the current schedule. When listing classes for your application, list in UCL credits only; do not include US or ECTS. Students accepted to UCL will be allowed to make changes with permission from the FASA Office and CIT professors.

This page lists the faculties and individual departmental homepages. On each department's home page, you can click on the undergraduate degree program: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/about/who-we-are/faculties-and-departments>.

Pre-Health students, please note that students **cannot** take courses in the Faculty of Medicine. However, within the Faculty of Life Sciences, there are three departments that are very popular with pre-health students: Biological Sciences, Biomedical Sciences, and Molecular Biosciences. Students can also take courses in the Department of Pharmacology, the Department of Physiology, and the Department of Anatomy and Developmental Biology, but cannot apply for admission to these departments. There are also courses of particular interest to Pre-Health in the fields such as psychology and global health.

Students must take exactly 60 UCL credits. With instructor approval, a 12-unit Caltech requirement may be fulfilled by an equivalent UCL course. Yearlong (30-credit) courses are NOT permitted. Students may take all 60 credits in science or

engineering or up to 30 credits in humanities or social sciences.

Note that courses will be designated Fall Term (FT), Spring Term (ST), or Year in the UCL course listing.

Caltech study abroad at UCL only happens in the fall so students can only take classes from departments that allow fall entry.

Classes in the humanities, social sciences, or in a foreign language can be taken to fulfill humanities and social science requirements, if you obtain Caltech's HSS departmental permission after acceptance into the program. (You do not need to seek their permission as part of the application process.) Students can take interesting classes such as an Art in London, taught in a different art gallery each week by a different art specialist, or a course on the Architecture of London. Other fascinating classes such as Egypt in London and London Before the Great Fire are also taught. See the art history, anthropology, archaeology, political science, and literature class listings in the Study Abroad Guide for more information: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/study-abroad-at-ucl/subjects>.

Each UCL course will have a seminar, lab, or tutorial session attached to it. While lectures can have several hundred students, the related seminars, labs and tutorials are much smaller. Some tutorials are a one-on-one with the instructor.

Some classes have their exams at the end of the year, when Caltech students are back at Caltech. Students will not take the final exams given at the end of the year, but WILL BE REQUIRED to take any semester final exams if such are given and do all required work by the end of the semester in December. Caltech students will be evaluated UCL faculty on a Course Report Form and will also receive a grade on a UCL transcript. Students will take all UCL courses for a grade, but these grades will not transfer to Caltech -- only credit/no credit will appear on the Caltech transcript. However, students will be able to order and submit an official UCL transcript showing grades to graduate schools or organizations that provide fellowships such as the NSF or Hertz.

Caltech will have its own selection process for students applying to UCL. Therefore, if you come across any directions on the UCL web pages about how to apply for affiliated student status, please ignore this information, as Caltech students must be selected by Caltech and will then be admitted by UCL.

Additional information for students studying abroad can be found at: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/international>. Click on Study Abroad and then on study options or subjects. If you need more information about a course, go to subjects from the link above and look for the point of contacts email and write to that person for a course description or syllabus. These are listed by subject. It is important to start to investigate UCL classes as soon as possible since full course description are often not available online and must be obtained by writing to the Affiliate Tutor.