

University of Chicago Scholars Program

Deadline date: 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. You will find most of your questions answered.

Introduction and General Information

Caltech sophomores and juniors can apply to participate in the UChicago Scholars Program. Students can only study away at the University of Chicago in the Fall Term of their junior or senior year. Students must be nominated by Caltech and cannot apply directly to the University of Chicago. The University of Chicago has a minimum GPA requirement of 3.5 to apply. As with all Caltech study abroad programs, students take courses for Caltech credit and can often find courses that fulfill option requirements.

Term dates for Fall 2026 are September 28-December 12 with a week of orientation starting before the Fall term.

Location, History and Student Body

The University of Chicago is in the Hyde Park (and adjacent Woodlawn) neighborhood on Chicago's south side, in Illinois about 7 miles from downtown Chicago. Being in Chicago provides tremendous opportunities: vibrant city life, museums, public transportation, and the beauty of autumn in the Midwest. UChicago was incorporated in 1890, with major support from industrialist John D. Rockefeller and the American Baptist Education Society. The first classes began in October 1892 on the Hyde Park campus. The institution has become internationally recognized for research and has pioneered major academic disciplines landmark scientific achievements. The campus architecture evokes the Gothic Collegiate style, intended to evoke the great older universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

UChicago has more than **400 student organizations**, covering civic engagement, politics, entrepreneurship, music, theatre, improv comedy, intramurals, and more. Many of these organizations have "join nights" early in term.

UChicago is still "university-town" in feel but is embedded in a large city — so plan for transit times, introduction to urban environment, and neighborhood navigation.

Room and Food

The UChicago Housing is described a "House System": seven residence halls contain 48 Houses—communities of faculty, staff, and students who live, eat, debate, and play together. Campus North Residential Commons (opened 2016) offers singles, doubles, apartments, community lounges, outdoor courtyard, and music practice rooms. Exchange students will typically live in a UChicago residence hall with other UChicago students.

UChicago features four dining commons (Baker, Bartlett, Cathey, Woodlawn) offering varied menus and

accommodating dietary needs. Your meal plan will be part of your residence agreement and is very much like Caltech's food plan. Living in Chicago, you'll also have access to the city's diverse culinary scene — ideal for exploring off-campus meals, café culture, and neighborhood dining.

Academic Program Overview

Caltech exchange students can take up to **4 classes**. Students will take 2 classes in their Caltech option, and the other 2 classes are their choice providing the student meets the requirements for the class. This means that students can take two electives in the humanities or social sciences or 2 more required classes in their option. You can take a graduate level course if you have the background knowledge. One of the classes could also be taken in one of the professional schools listed below if the student meets the requirements and the class is approved by U. Chicago.

[The Booth School of Business](#), the [Law School](#), the [School of Social Service Administration](#), the [Harris Graduate School of Public Policy Studies](#), or the [Toyota Technological Institute of Chicago \(TTIC\)](#).

Classes numbered 1000 to 1999 are introductory or first level. Classes numbered 2000 or 2999 are upper level and 3000 and up are grad level. There are no engineering undergraduate majors at the University of Chicago except for molecular Engineering. Caltech students cannot apply in Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, or Chemical Engineering as these majors do not exist. EE, Mech E, and Chem Eng would need to research alternative majors that would enable taking two classes for option credit. Chemical Engineering or Bio-engineering students may consider Chemistry or Molecular Engineering which includes chemical and soft materials.

Classes are 100 units each = 9 CIT units, except when taking an equivalent and Caltech option required class at UChicago that is equal to 12 units at Caltech.

UChicago's STEM fields are strong: physics, chemistry, mathematics, molecular engineering, computer science, and statistics. Check overlapping times, labs, recitations; some UChicago courses may meet M/W or T/Th, so ensure they fit your schedule. If you plan to take humanities/social science electives, check the grading, workload, and how they fit your overall plan.

Science Majors at UChicago

Astronomy and Astrophysics	Biological Chemistry	Biological Sciences
Computational and Applied Mathematics	Computer Science	Data Science
Environmental Science	Geophysical Sciences	Mathematics
Molecular Engineering	Neuroscience	Physics

<http://collegecatalog.uchicago.edu/>
<https://coursesearch.uchicago.edu/>

Caltech students will meet 1:1 with someone from UChicago to discuss courses and registration procedures. Registration for classes opens a couple weeks before the term starts.

Students must take each class for a letter grade if that is how the course is graded; the pass/fail option is

not permitted. Caltech will receive your official UChicago transcript, but letter grades will not appear on your Caltech transcript. You will receive credit for the courses you complete, though the grades from UChicago will not be factored into your Caltech GPA.