Mexico UCEAP Advising Notes

Objective

This document is an advising tool written by a Berkeley Study Abroad (BSA) Adviser to review program-specific details that may impact a student's decision to apply for a UCEAP program. The document is not a summary of eligibility requirements, academic, housing, application, and other logistical details freely available to students on the UCEAP and BSA website. If any concerns you have are not addressed on the UCEAP website or the Advising Notes document, please contact the BSA Adviser for this program.

Table of Contents

Summary of Programs
Semester & Year Programs
- Field Research in Mexico
- National Autonomous University of Mexico
- Leadership in Social Justice and Public Policy
- Tec de Monterrey (ITESM)

Summer Programs
- Contemporary Mexico
- Community and Global Health in Mexico
- Engineering Research in Monterrey

Travel Documentation
Language Prerequisites
Students with Disabilities
LGBTQIA+ Identifying Students

Summary of Programs

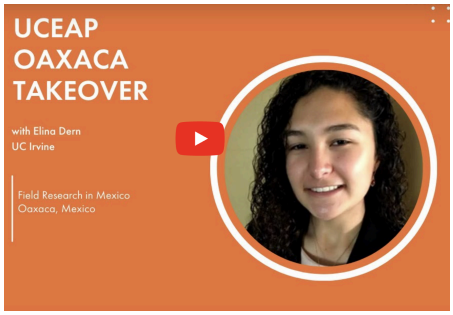
Field Research in Mexico | Fall
National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) | Fall, Year, Spring
Leadership in Social Justice and Public Policy | Year
Tec de Monterrey (ITESM) | Fall, Spring, Year
Contemporary Mexico | Summer
Community Health in Mexico | Summer
Engineering Research in Monterrey | Summer – *NEW! Program page coming soon*

Semester & Year Programs

Field Research in Mexico (Fall)



How Study Abroad Helped Me Embrace The Complexities of All My Identities
Elisabet Raquel García



UCEAP Mexico Takeover with Elina Dern | Field Research in Mexico

Early Start Date

This program starts during the summer and it is not possible to arrive late to the program because of a job, internship or other summer school coursework commitments.

Academics

This program offers a set menu of courses. It is not possible to take any additional courses or substitute any other coursework. The first three courses, Intensive Spanish, Contemporary Mexico, and Field Research Methods, are offered in the first five weeks of the program while the students are in Mexico City. The fourth course, the Field Research Project, is offered during the last 11 weeks of the program while students are at the field research sites. Coursework is offered entirely in Spanish.

Research Projects

It is possible to do a field research project in almost any field of study. Students are assigned a mentor to provide support for their research project. It may be possible to extend from the Fall Research in Mexico program to the Spring UNAM semester if they have a 2.75 or higher cumulative GPA.

Application Requirement: Personal Statement

In 1-2 Pages: Describe your interest in Mexico and any ideas you have for your research project. Include your name.

National Autonomous University of Mexico - UNAM (Fall, Year, Spring)



Berkeley Stories: Andres S



Berkeley Stories: Dalia N G

Fall/Year Early Start Date

The fall and year UNAM program starts during the summer and it is not possible to arrive late to the program because of a job, internship or other summer school coursework commitments. There is a mandatory Intensive Language Program for the first five weeks of the program for students with all levels of Spanish (including heritage speakers). Students will be tested when the program starts and placed into an appropriate level of Spanish.

Spring - UC GPA Required

Students applying to the Spring UNAM program must have a UC GPA at the time of application.

Application

Students must submit a letter of recommendation by a college instructor in the UCEAP application. Please request this well in advance of the program deadline.

Academics

Students may only apply to one facultad (department) and take courses within that facultad. If you are a double major and need to take courses in more than one facultad, you must request

this very early after being selected for the program. It may be too late to accommodate this if you wait until the program starts. All courses are instructed in Spanish, and all coursework is in Spanish.

UNAM is a very large university with a history grounded in student activism. Berkeley students have reported an interactive and dynamic learning style in the classroom and lively student life/activism that occurs outside the classroom. Please note that student strikes occur regularly which may lead to changes in course availability throughout the semester and in these cases, Casa de California staff work closely with students to make alternative academic arrangements.

Internships

Students interested in an internship work with the Casa de California staff to identify an internship placement after they arrive in Mexico City.

Leadership in Social Justice and Public Policy in Mexico City and Sacramento (Fall + Spring)

This program is a combination of the UNAM Fall Semester and a Spring Semester in Sacramento, CA at the UC Sacramento Center, where students do an internship and take courses.

Early Start Date

This program starts during the summer and it is not possible to arrive late to the program because of a job, internship or other summer school coursework commitments. There is a mandatory Intensive Language Program for the first five weeks of the program for students with all levels of Spanish (including heritage speakers). Students will be tested when the program starts and placed into an appropriate level of Spanish.

Application

As part of the UCEAP application for this program, students must upload a completed UC Sacramento application as well. This application has many steps and requires you to work with multiple offices on campus. It takes time to complete so be sure to start early.

Students must submit two letters of recommendation in the UCEAP application, on UC Berkeley letterhead and signed by the writer. Please request these well in advance of the program deadline.

Students must also write a statement of purpose in Spanish for the UCEAP application.

Academics

This leadership program has a focus on Latinx and US/Mexico bi-national issues, starting with coursework at the top University in Mexico and a bridging Leadership course, followed by a semester of political science coursework and an internship experience in the U.S. In Spring semester, students take the California Policy Seminar, an independent study course in political science theory, during the spring term. Students also meet with a mentor who will supervise the preparation of an extensive paper relating the internship and experiences in Mexico to the concepts, literature, and theory of political science. This is an excellent program for students interested in pursuing public policy, social change work, and growing their professional skill set and network.

Internships

In the Spring semester, students are placed in an internship with the assistance of the UC Sacramento staff that is tailored to students' backgrounds, skills and career goals.

Tec de Monterrey - ITESM (Fall, Year, Spring)

In 2025-26, this new program will be offered at the Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM) aka Tec de Monterrey, specifically the Mexico City campus.

Academics

Students can take coursework in English in various subject areas such as business, economics, communication, design, computer science, engineering, and political science. Close to 100 classes in English are available at the CDMX campus with additional Business and Education classes available at the Santa Fe campus.

Tec also offers Spanish language courses from beginner to advanced levels. You will complete a placement exam as part of the course selection process to determine your language level and your ability to take other courses taught in Spanish. A high intermediate/advanced level of proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking is required by Tec to take classes taught in Spanish.

Summer Programs

Contemporary Mexico



Berkeley Stories - Natalie M, Summer in Mexico City

This program is for students with any level of Spanish language who wish to study Spanish language and Mexican history & culture. Students in this program study at La Casa de California, the UC Center in Mexico City, with other UC students.

Academics

Three sections of Spanish are offered for beginners, intermediate and advanced/native speakers. In addition to the language course, students participate in two other courses taught in English. This program also offers excursions to places like the Pyramids, the Xochimilco floating gardens and to the Bellas Artes Concert Hall, which complement the lectures.

Community and Global Health in Mexico

This program allows you to interact with communities to better understand social conditions that affect local health. It operates in Puerto Escondido, Oaxaca, a sleepy beach town. It is run by Child Family Health International and the Oasis Language School. The program includes a Spanish Language for Health course, a practicum in the health field, a homestay, cultural activities and site visits. The practicum experiences take place at a public health center and are focused on child and maternal health. This is a great option for students seeking practical global health experience on a local-level and to increase their medical Spanish language skills.

Engineering Research in Monterrey – *NEW!*

This is a new program starting in Summer 2027 that will offer engineering research opportunities in these fields:

- Biomedical Engineering
- Biotechnology and Chemical Engineering
- Mechanical, Mechatronics, and Robotics Engineering

- Civil and Sustainable Development Engineering
- Industrial and Systems Engineering
- Computer Science, Data Science, and Digital Systems
- Electronics, Engineering Physics, and Nanotechnology
- Innovation, Technology, and Business Digital Transformation

A background in engineering is recommended but not required. This program will be hosted by Tec de Monterrey, and will provide housing on their campus.

Check back in Fall 2026 for more details.

Travel Documentation

U.S. Passport Holders

U.S. citizens must have a passport to study abroad in Mexico.

Mexican Passport Holders

Students who are Mexican citizens have no restrictions on applying to UCEAP Mexico programs and do not need a visa to study in Mexico.

Non-U.S. and Non-Mexican Passport Holders

UCEAP supplies visa forms and information only to U.S. citizens applying to study in Mexico. International students should contact the Mexican consulate to inquire how to apply for a visa to study in Mexico. The UCEAP Office will not supply special assistance to non-U.S. citizens applying for visas.

Language Prerequisites

Students applying to National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) or the Leadership and Social Justice in Public Policy program are required to submit an Official SIELE (global) or DELE Spanish Language Certificate equivalent to at least a B2 (upper intermediate) level of proficiency, or at least a B1 (intermediate) level if interested in studying at studying at the School Of Philosophy And Letters and the School Of Political And Social Sciences. Students interested in these specific departments can apply with a B1 Spanish language certificate.

Students applying to other Mexico programs with a language requirement must have documented verification of language acquisition at the college level (grades on college transcripts, AP, IB, or SAT test scores) at the time of application for a program with a Spanish language requirement. Students who do not have academic verification, but believe they have

equivalent knowledge, may request a language placement exam by emailing the Mexico Adviser.

You can take prerequisite language courses the semester before your program starts. However, you won't be cleared for participation on the program until grades are posted.

Students with Disabilities

While in Mexico, you may find accessibility and accommodation very different from what you expect in the US. Mexican law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities, however, the law is not effectively enforced. Public buildings and facilities continue to be in noncompliance with the law requiring access for persons with disabilities, as do most hotels and other tourist facilities.

Review how to request disability-related accommodations on the I am a Student with a Disability page.

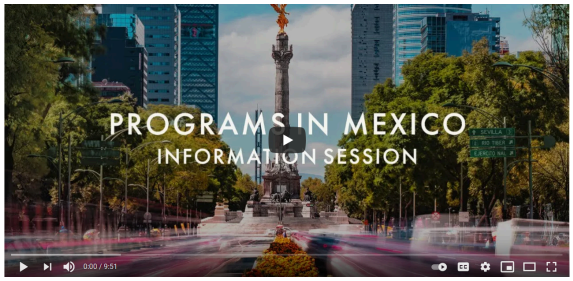
LGTBQIA+ Identifying Students

Threat to safety in the LGBTQIA+ community is low. Societal tolerance ranges from mixed tolerance to tolerant. The LGBTQIA+ community enjoys legal protections in Mexico. However, discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity remains, including sporadic reports of violence targeting LGBTQIA+ individuals. Exercise discretion in identifying publicly as LGBTQIA+.

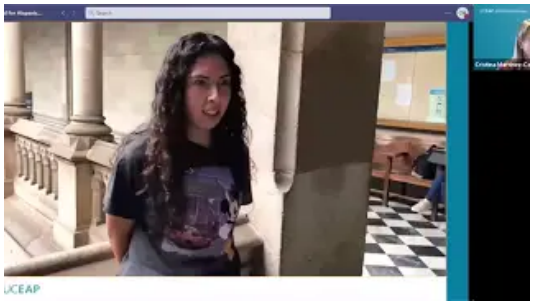
Review tips and resources for LGTBQIA+ Identifying Students.

Resources

Videos



Programs in Mexico Info Session



[Study Abroad for Hispanic and Latinx Students Info Session]

Social Media

Follow the [UCEAP Mexico Instagram] (@uceap_mexico) for content from students and staff on UCEAP Mexico programs!