

Thailand UCEAP Advising Notes

Objective

This document is an advising tool written by a Berkeley Study Abroad advisor to review program specific details that may impact a student's decision to apply for an 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. The best source of detailed program information are the [UCEAP webpages for Thailand](#). If any concerns you have are not addressed on the UCEAP website or this Advising Notes document, please contact the [BSA Advisor](#) for this program.

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Quick Links

Below is a summary of the 2026-2027 UCEAP Taiwan programs available to Berkeley students:

Immersion

[Thammasat University](#) | Fall, Spring, Year
[Mahidol University](#) | Fall, Spring, Year

Internship

[Summer Internship, Bangkok](#) | Summer

Video and Blog Resources

There are a number of resources provided by UCEAP to help students learn about their study abroad options. Here are some you can check out:

- [3-minute Travel Guide – Bangkok, Thailand](#)
- 2024: [New in Thailand | International Education Week 2024](#)
- 2021: [Study Abroad in Asia and Oceania | UCEAP Open House](#)
- 2020: [Study Abroad in Korea, Singapore, and Thailand | UCEAP Study Abroad Fair](#)
- 2016: [UCEAP Thailand](#)

Here are some videos made by a UC Student about her experience on the Public Health program in Summer 2018:

- [Arriving in Thailand](#)
- [Exploring Bangkok: Chatuchak Market & Grand Palace](#)
- [Thai Cultural Introduction](#)
- [Day in my Life at Thammasat University](#)
- [My Life in Thailand, Finals & Food](#)
- [Traveling to Mae Sot](#)

Citizenship and Passport Considerations

Non-U.S. citizens must contact the [Royal Thai Consulate General in Los Angeles](#) to determine visa requirements prior to application for the program. The visa process may require additional documents and longer processing time for non-U.S. citizens. In addition, make sure that your passport and U.S. re-entry permit will be valid for the entire length of time you will be abroad. If necessary, contact the [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services](#) (USCIS) if you have questions about re-entering the U.S.

Students who are in the process of applying for U.S. citizenship or making any legal name changes are **not** eligible to apply unless the changes will be completed before application to the UCEAP program. There are no exceptions to this.

For all UCEAP Thailand programs, students cannot be accepted to a Thai university without a valid passport. Your [UCEAP application](#) will state how long your passport must be valid after the end date of the program (typically 6 months after return) and when a photocopy of it will be due. If you do not have a passport or need a renewal, please review the Passport Information section of the [UCEAP How to Apply Page](#), and take action immediately.

Financial Considerations

Semester and year UCEAP programs in Thailand typically cost **less** than a semester or year at UC Berkeley (including the airfare to/from Thailand!), so they are highly recommended for students on a tight budget. However, students receiving financial aid need to be aware that financial aid while on UCEAP is based on the cost of the UCEAP program rather than the cost of attendance at Berkeley. Contact a financial aid counselor with any questions about study abroad and financial aid at travelaid@berkeley.edu.

All UCEAP students are encouraged to apply for a [UCEAP Scholarship](#), which offers awards at varying levels for summer, semester, and year programs. For more information, visit the UCEAP Scholarships page.

US Citizen Pell Grant recipients are encouraged to apply for the Gilman Scholarship, which offers a possible award of up to \$5000. For more information, visit gilmanscholarship.org.

Another scholarship to explore is the [Freeman-ASIA Scholarship](#). NOTE - this scholarship requires a service proposal. Please meet the Berkeley Study Abroad Advisor *before* submission to go over the proposal in detail and whether this is supported by BSA.

More information on financial aid and scholarships can be found on our website:
<http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/finances>

Financial aid students can request a financial aid estimate for the program here:
<https://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/finances/financial-aid-advising>

Program Considerations - Summer

[Summer Internship, Bangkok](#)

The Summer Internships, Bangkok program is facilitated by [Thammasat University](#).

Program Considerations - Semester & Year

Thammasat University

UCEAP students at [Thammasat University](#) can select from a variety of courses taught in English through the International Programs in areas including business administration, economics, development studies, politics, international relations with an Asian focus, literature, history, Thai language, religion, and cultural studies. These faculties are located on the Tha Prachan campus in central Bangkok. Courses in departments other than the ones listed above are taught in Thai and operate on a different academic calendar, so they are not available to UCEAP students.

Students in Thai Studies courses are mostly international, while students in Economics, Business Administration, British and American Studies, and Politics and International Relations courses are mostly Thai.

Alumni recommend that students study Thai language, as it will help them learn more about the culture and will delight locals in their daily conversations, such as when they are ordering food.

When researching courses on the Thammasat website, keep in mind that first-year courses (numbered 100s at Thammasat) are not recommended for UCEAP students, and they are transferred back as lower-division UC credit.

Both extracurricular and academic internships are available on all packages of the Thammasat University program. Students during the academic year have the option of replacing one course with an internship arranged after arrival. Opportunities are coordinated by Thammasat's Department of Social Policy and Development. For example, a student in economics might be placed at a corporate, public, governmental, or private organization such as Global Tax or other finance and brokerage firms. Students with interests in media might be placed at Internews. Students with interest in political science might be placed at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or NGOs. Other opportunities include Philips Electronics Thailand, public health organizations, hospitals, and more.

Thammasat students placed in the business department will have the option to pursue a summer business internship as an extension. The minimum requirements for the opportunity include junior or senior standing, a GPA of 2.85 or higher, and previous term (Spring) study in the School of Business Administration International Program at Thammasat. Internships will begin early June to late July (8 weeks), and students will intern full time (35-40 hours a week). Placements are with national and international businesses. The summer portion will be worth 6.6 semester units. Students will live in local apartments in Bangkok. If you are interested in this option, please email the BSA Thailand adviser.

During the semester, the study center takes students out for monthly dinners. Alumni really

enjoyed this opportunity to eat at nice places together.

There are differences between the Thai academic system and the US academic system, and students are encouraged to research the Thai academic culture. You may receive less feedback on academic performance during the term than you are accustomed to at Berkeley.

Mahidol University

This program ran for the first time in summer 2025 and is hosted at the [international college at Mahidol](#) which offers over 400 English taught courses each term in multiple disciplines, mainly in STEM and business. Information will be added as it becomes available. Students interested in learning more about this program should contact the BSA Adviser.

Note on traveling with dependents - This program limits or restricts dependents for this program. This includes housing accommodations. If you are traveling with dependents, it is recommended that you identify a more suitable program that will allow you to travel with them. Please contact the Study Abroad Advisor for additional information.

Traveling before the UCEAP program

Students on a summer program enter Thailand on a 60-day tourist visa, which must be obtained prior to departure from the U.S. Students who enter Thailand earlier than the official program dates in order to travel (pushing their stay over 60 days) will have to apply for a 30-day visa extension in Thailand.

Students on semester or year programs must apply for a student visa prior to departure for the UCEAP program. One requirement of the student visa application is an official letter of acceptance from Thammasat University. Acceptance letters are anticipated in mid-to-late June for the fall and year program, and in mid-to-late December for the Spring program. After you have received your letter of acceptance, you may apply in-person or via USPS to the Thai Consulate in Los Angeles for your student visa. It takes approximately 7-10 business days to process your visa when applying via USPS, or 2-3 business days if applying in-person. Please note the Thai Royal Consulate is closed on both US and Thai holidays. Students planning pre-program travel must be aware that they cannot depart the US without their Thai student visa and plan their travel dates accordingly.

Health Considerations

Bangkok has heavy smog levels, so it is recommended that students with asthma or other respiratory health issues discuss participation in UCEAP Thailand with their physician prior to application. Even if you are healthy, you may experience temporary symptoms, such as irritation

of the eyes, nose, and throat; coughing; phlegm; chest tightness; and shortness of breath.

Considerations for Transfer Students

Transfer students should review BSA's [I am a Transfer Student webpage](#) for an overview of considerations and for transfer eligibility, the UCEAP program page under "dates and eligibility." As a general rule, transfer students are eligible to apply for study abroad programs that take place after the student has completed one term at UC Berkeley (one semester residency requirement). For example, if a student's first term at Berkeley is Fall 2025, the earliest cycle to apply is either Summer 26, Fall 26, or Year 26 -27. This is dependent on application deadlines and the program eligibility requirements. Students should consult with their academic department to confirm College and/or Major study abroad requirements and to confirm when study abroad can fit into their academic plan.

Considerations for LGBTIQ+ Students

Please refer to the [UCEAP Diversity and Identity Abroad page](#) (under LGBTQ students) for more information and resources. For additional information, review BSA's [I am a LGBTIQ+ Identifying Student webpage](#) for an overview of considerations. Thailand is ranked 41st on the [Spartacus Gay Travel Index](#). For additional information, review BSA's [I am a LGBTIQ+ Identifying Student webpage](#) for an overview of considerations.

Information from the U.S. Department of State's [2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Thailand](#) is as follows:

Criminalization: No law criminalized expression of sexual orientation or consensual same-sex sexual conduct between adults.

Violence and Harassment: LGBTIQ+ persons reported police harassment of individuals who identified as nonbinary or whose appearance did not match the sex on their identification card. If arrested, such persons had to appear in court in attire associated with their sex assigned at birth.

In the case of sexual crimes against LGBTIQ+ persons, police tended to downplay sexual motives, abuse, or harassment. NGOs stated that when LGBTIQ+ individuals reported harassment, often no action was taken or responsibility to prove the claim was put on the survivor. LGBTIQ+ students were reportedly targeted and unjustifiably punished or bullied by teachers and other students often for their appearance or not conforming to dress codes to match their sex assigned at birth, especially in the Deep South. Civil society groups reported harassment of LGBTIQ+ persons in military camps by trainers, supervisors, and fellow soldiers.

LGBTIQ+ persons reported police and polling station workers questioned their identity because their appearance did not match the sex on their identification card. Police did not track data on hate speech or hate crimes, such as killing of transgender women, limiting understanding on the

extent of the problem.

Discrimination: The law prohibited discrimination by state and nonstate actors based on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics, including in employment. The law recognized LGBTQI+ individuals, couples, and their families but did not grant them rights equal to those of other persons, such as marriage. The law mandated gender equality and prohibited discrimination “due to the fact that the person is male or female or of a different appearance from his or her own sex by birth.” NGOs, however, stated the law was not enforced, citing instances of LGBTQI+ individuals being evicted from their homes with few options for recourse. The UN Development Program and NGOs reported LGBTQI+ persons experienced discrimination, particularly in rural areas. The UN Development Program also reported that the media represented LGBTQI+ persons in stereotypical and harmful ways resulting in discrimination.

NGOs and the United Nations reported transgender persons faced discrimination in various sectors, including in the military conscription process, when in detention, and in education because of strict policies in place at most schools and universities that required students to wear uniforms that aligned with their biological gender. LGBTQI+ persons reported barriers to accessing gender-affirming care. Access to gender-affirming surgery was limited to a few Ministry of Public Health-approved specialists in Bangkok.

In April and June, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security published a warning about monkeypox, HIV and AIDS, and sexually transmitted infections using photographs of individuals from a Pride event and mentioning entertainment areas popular with LGBTQI+ persons, further stigmatizing the community.

Despite legal protections, members of the LGBTQI+ community faced frequent discrimination in the workplace, partly due to common prejudices. Transgender workers reportedly faced even greater constraints, and their participation in the workforce was often limited to a few professions, such as cosmetology, entertainment, and sex work.

Availability of Legal Gender Recognition: The law did not permit transgender or nonbinary persons to change their gender on identification documents.

Involuntary or Coercive Medical or Psychological Practices: There were reports that government agencies attempted to involuntarily subject LGBTQI+ persons, especially children, to so-called conversion therapy. Some individuals assigned as male at birth but who did not identify as such were forced to join military training, especially in the Deep South, or become Buddhist monks in the belief that these experiences would “normalize” their gender identity. Some individuals assigned as female at birth faced so-called corrective rape or forced childbirth. According to Intersex Thailand, some intersex children were subjected to involuntary and irreversible genital surgeries, which was not illegal.

According to Marriage Equality Network, in most cases so-called conversion therapy was forced on LGBTQI+ persons by their family or religious community. Advocacy groups emphasized the impact of such practices on the mental health of LGBTQI+ persons and the lack of state-funded mental health resources available to members of this group.

Restrictions of Freedom of Expression, Association, or Peaceful Assembly: No such restrictions on LGBTQI+ individuals or topics were reported, but due to fear and stigma, self-censorship of LGBTQI+ communities in the south, such as not hosting Pride events, was common.

Considerations for Students with Disabilities

Students seeking accommodations should review BSA's [I am a Student With Disabilities webpage](#) for an overview of considerations. If you receive accommodations at UC Berkeley and would like to know if they are also available in the program abroad that interests you, it is a good idea to email your BSA adviser to inquire about your specific needs. That way, if your needs cannot be accommodated in that program, you can investigate other programs that might.

Students with emotional support animals or service animals will need to request accommodations from their UCEAP Program Specialist prior to departure on their UCEAP program. Emotional support animal accommodation requests are not guaranteed. Below are additional resources to consider:

[Traveling Internationally with a Guide Dog or Service Animal](#)

Pros and cons, legal and health considerations for going abroad with your service animal

[10 Steps to Bring Your Service Animal or Guide Dog to Another Country](#)

Start planning early and consider international quarantine and vaccination laws

[Should I Take My Guide Dog or Service Animal?](#)

[Caring for Your Guide Dog or Service Animal Abroad](#)

Learn tips for supplies to take along, climate preparations, and animal health while traveling internationally

For the Thammasat University program, an exchange student needs to take at least 9 TU credits (=15 UC quarter units) to be considered a full time student and qualified for an Education Visa.

Considerations for Graduating Seniors

Graduating seniors must enroll in minimum full time course load while abroad, even if they do not need the courses or units for graduation. Requests by DSP students who provide documentation may be considered for a reduced course load.

If you are a graduating senior who is applying to a Spring package program, please be advised that the finals period may stretch into June or July. Returning to Berkeley to walk in a commencement ceremony is an unrealistic expectation for Spring participants. If walking in graduation is very important to you, we recommend that students apply to a program that aligns with the UC Berkeley academic calendar (ex - [National University Singapore](#)), as there is a better chance that the program will end before commencement. As an alternative to walking in a Spring ceremony, there is also a UC Berkeley "December Graduates Convocation" if you would like to have the experience of walking in graduation (not department specific). Similarly, you can wait and walk in the following Spring departmental ceremony.

Graduating seniors participating in a spring semester program should ensure that they are on the Spring degree list. If they are not yet on this degree list, students should petition to move their graduation term with their UC Berkeley college. However, note that Japan spring program grades are often not reported to UCEAP until mid-September or October, so your grades will not arrive in time for your degree to be processed with the spring degree list (which occurs in mid-July). You will be automatically removed from the spring degree list and placed onto the summer or fall degree list. Thus, your diploma would display a summer or fall graduation date rather than a spring graduation date. **This policy is subject to change.** Please confirm with your College advisor directly which degree list you would be placed in. Typically grades post back to your CalCentral 3 months after your program end date. For all students, after your UCEAP grades arrive and you are waiting for the next degree list to be processed, you can request a "Certificate of Completion" from the Berkeley Registrar that can serve as "proof" of graduation.

If students are planning to pursue graduate school, an internship, or job immediately after a UCEAP program ends, please coordinate with the graduate school or job prospect directly to discuss whether an updated transcript can be provided at a later date. If you have a job lined up or will be attending graduate school the following fall, your transcript may not be up to date before August. If you require it, please contact the [UCEAP Academic Specialist for your program](#) to request a "verification letter." *Please first confirm with your prospective employer or grad school whether they will accept this as a supplement to your transcripts while your UCEAP grades are being processed.*

More information can be found in the [I am a Senior page](#).

Considerations for International Students and Undocumented Students

If you are an international student on an F-1 or J-1 visa, refer to the [Entry to the U.S.: Travel and Re-Entry](#) updates from the Berkeley International Office (BIO). Berkeley Study Abroad is unable to advise on United States visa related inquiries. Should you have any additional questions,

[contact BIO](#) directly for further advising. Students can also refer to the [I am an...International Student page](#).

The Berkeley Study Abroad office welcomes applications from all students, regardless of country of origin or immigration status. However, due to the high risks involved and the rapid changes affecting immigration policies, it is critical for undocumented students to seek advice from an immigration attorney and the Undocumented Student Program office before proceeding with any plans to go abroad.

Note for students interested in traveling after January 20, 2025: Based on recent guidance from the [University of California Immigrant Legal Services Center](#), international travel beyond January 19, 2025 is not advisable due to increased risk of those with Advance Parole (AP) being denied reentry into the United States. For further questions, please check with the [Undocumented Students Program \(USP\)](#), an immigration attorney, or the [East Bay Community Center Law Center \(EBCLC\)](#).

Notice from East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC): Our program is now only serving students who are undocumented, DACAmented, or hold humanitarian protection such as asylum, and unfortunately, the EBCLC immigration unit is at capacity for new general community clients. If helpful, we maintain a list [on our website](#) of referrals to other immigration legal services nonprofits and private attorneys.

For more information, review the BSA [I am an...Undocumented Student](#) page.

BeGlobalii Resources

BSA recognizes that there are many nuances to exploring your identities abroad, and these articles may not be representative of all identities and experiences. BeGlobalii's resources, however, are a great starting place for your exploration. You can find a variety of [articles](#) to help you prepare for your study abroad experience.