Need to Know: Senegal

Objective of the “Need to Know” Document
The Need to Know document is an advising tool written by a Berkeley Study Abroad adviser to review program specific details that may impact a student’s decision to apply for an EAP 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, and reviewed by a student in the Program Self-Assessment. The best source of detailed program information is always the UCEAP Program Guide from the prior academic cycle. If any concerns you have are not addressed on the UCEAP website, in the Program Guide or Need to Know document, please contact the BSA adviser for this program.

Advisor Contact Information
For BSA Adviser name, email and drop-in advising hours, visit http://studyabroad.berkeley.edu/contact/advising

Application Materials
Students must complete CIEE and host university application materials after their selection to the program. Students should note that the CIEE and host university application will require items that may take additional time to prepare, including, but not limited to, letters of recommendation, official transcript, and passport-size photos.

Note for Transfer Students
Students must be matriculated at the University of California for at least one semester before being eligible to apply for the Senegal program. A 2016 spring admit transfer student is therefore ineligible to apply for the fall 2016 Senegal program.

Language Prerequisite
The minimum language prerequisite for the program is the equivalent of one year of university-level French by the end of the last term before departure. Please consult with the BSA adviser for more information regarding how to fulfill this requirement.

Curriculum
Students may notice striking differences between their home educational system and the Senegalese model, which is based on the French system. While students in the U.S. are accustomed to a very structured system, the Senegalese method generally requires students to take greater initiative and responsibility in a less structured environment. Some American students could misperceive a course as having a light workload or few assignments, but students are expected to engage in a great deal of individual study and extensive reading outside of the classroom.

Two Tracks are available through this program:
1. Language & Culture Track
   a. Requires two semesters of university-level French
2. Development Studies Track
   a. Requires 5 or more semesters of college-level French (or equivalent) and a minimum of two courses beyond the introductory level in Anthropology, Development Studies, Francophone Studies, Sociology, Urban Studies, and/or International Relations

Students who wish to participate in the Development Studies track should mention this in their application statement of purpose and must indicate their interest later when completing the CIEE application. Students cannot apply for this program on site.

Housing
All students live in a Senegalese home in a furnished room. Living with a Senegalese family enables students to have daily contact with French and/or Wolof languages and learn about family and social life in Senegal, which are crucial aspects of the culture. While French is the official language of the country, Wolof is most commonly spoken in the homes of the host families. Students will realize the challenges of living in a multiethnic and multilingual society as they learn to function in both languages.

Host families tend to view U.S. students as adopted children and expect them to eat meals and spend time with their family and friends. Homestay placements are determined on the basis of a preliminary questionnaire and confirmed on
site in consultation with the housing coordinator. It is important to keep in mind that the Senegalese live simply, and such amenities as washing machines and microwaves are not commonly available. Meals tend to be considerably less varied than in the U.S.; rice and fish are considered staple foods in Senegal. A meal stipend is given to students so that they may supplement and vary their diet.

Although some students are within a 20-minute walk from campus, others should expect to commute by bus or taxi on a daily basis. A transportation stipend is given to students living in the neighborhoods that are not within walking distance of campus.

Financial Resources
CIEE offers scholarships and grants based on merit and financial need. An application for CIEE scholarships is available at [http://www.ciee.org/study/scholarships/](http://www.ciee.org/study/scholarships/). The CIEE scholarships application must be sent directly to CIEE and is a separate document from the CIEE Study Center Program Application.

Visa and Entry Clearance
Due to the late issuance of entry clearance documents and the time required for visa application processing, travel after the UC term ends and before the official program start date is not recommended.

Important Health Note
Peanuts are the main crop of Senegal and everywhere the aroma of peanuts permeates the air. They are practically unavoidable in Senegal and the majority of dishes contain some form of peanuts. CIEE will require a doctor’s note for any student with peanut allergies so that they can better understand the severity of the condition. According to CIEE, students whose allergies are severe enough to induce anaphylaxis are better suited on a different program.

Special Demands of the Program
Health and safety remain primary issues of concern for study in Senegal, particularly crime/security and motor traffic. Students should review the Program Guide to familiarize themselves with risks associated with participation on the program.

Students should familiarize themselves with the role of race, gender, sexuality, and religion while studying in Senegal, and develop appropriate expectations according to personal backgrounds and self-identification. LGBTIQ students are invited to reference the UCEAP LGBTIQ Community Resource Page to learn about host country laws and norms.

Given the special demands of the program, it is highly recommended that applicants meet with the BSA adviser prior to submitting an application.