

Hong Kong

UCEAP Advising Notes

Objective of the Advising Notes Document

This 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 the Advising Notes 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/advising>

Program Changes for 2017-18

The **Global Business in Asia** summer program at HKU has been reinstated for Summer 2017. The program is under the direction of a new professor, but the program structure and academics will remain the same.

Citizenship and Passport Considerations:

Students who were born in Hong Kong and who still hold a valid Hong Kong Permanent Residence Identity Card (HKID) are eligible for admittance and will not need to apply for a visa to study in Hong Kong.

Students who are neither U.S. nor Hong Kong citizens should contact the nearest Chinese Consulate to determine their student visa requirements.

Students who are in the process of applying for US citizenship or making any legal name changes are not eligible to apply unless the changes will be completed before application to the EAP program.

According to Hong Kong Immigration policy, nationals from Afghanistan, Albania, Cambodia, Cuba, Laos, Korea (Democratic People's Republic of), Nepal and Vietnam are not allowed to undertake studies in Hong Kong and will not be issued a student visa.

When booking your flight, keep in mind that your student visa may not arrive until shortly before the start of the program. You are advised not to travel until you have received your student visa.

A valid passport is required to apply to all host universities. If you do not have a valid passport, or if your passport will expire less than six months after the end of your program, please apply immediately.

Semester and year EAP programs in Hong Kong cost **less** than a semester or year at UC Berkeley (including the airfare to/from Hong Kong!), so are highly recommended for students on a tight budget. However, students receiving financial aid need to be aware that financial aid while on EAP is based on the *cost of the EAP program* rather than the cost of attendance at Berkeley. As your student budget decreases, the total amount of your aid decreases, too. Contact a financial aid counselor with any questions about study abroad and financial aid. Counselors from the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office during drop-in advising hours in 160 Stephens Hall. Prior to your visit, please call +1 510 642-1356 to confirm counselor availability.

Transfer Student Advisory:

All applicants to EAP Hong Kong semester programs must have a 3.0 **UC GPA** at the time of application. Applicants for Summer and Fall 2016 programs must have a 3.0 UC GPA after the Fall 2015 term at Berkeley, and Spring 2017 applicants must have a 3.0 UC GPA after the Spring 2016 term at Berkeley to be eligible for admission. Transfer GPAs cannot be considered for admission to EAP Hong Kong programs.

Alumni Blog:

<http://studyinghk.wordpress.com/>

HKUST Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xR55gCctVtM>

UCEAP Hong Kong Site Visit Video:

<https://youtu.be/M5coPQCn6Ks>

Impacted Programs:

In some academic years we receive more applications for **HKU** semester programs than allotted Berkeley spots on the program. The HKU program was NOT impacted on the Berkeley campus for the 2015-2016 program cycle; students should not be discouraged from applying. However, all applicants are encouraged to consider all three of the excellent Hong Kong partner universities offered through EAP. If HKU applicants cannot be accommodated at HKU they will be offered the option to switch to an alternate Hong Kong university, or another EAP Asia program with available space (e.g. China, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand).

Chinese Language Considerations:

There is no language requirement for EAP Hong Kong programs because the majority of courses taken by students at HKU, CUHK, and HKUST are offered in English. However, Cantonese is the language used in dormitories by local students and in the wider Hong Kong community, so some basic knowledge of Cantonese will facilitate interactions both in classes and in everyday activities.

Chinese language study is not a focus at **HKU** and **HKUST** though limited language courses are available. Students with a strong interest in Chinese language study should apply to **CUHK**, and will take a placement test upon arrival in Hong Kong. Students at CUHK can take a maximum of 6 CUHK units (which is 6 UCB semester units) of Cantonese or Putonghua language study.

Students with advanced Chinese skills (usually three years or more at the university-level or the equivalent proficiency) may take regular **CUHK** course work taught in either Putonghua or Cantonese.

Other Academic Considerations:

The **Global Business in Asia** summer program at **HKU** is a multi-site program. Students spend two weeks in Hong Kong, and two weeks in Shanghai.

HKUST programs are not appropriate for students who want to start a new major or study outside of their major. HKUST applicants are accepted to a specific school within HKUST (Business, Engineering, Science, Humanities, or Social Sciences) and are expected to take the majority of their courses from that school. Students interested in the HKUST Business program must be advanced undergraduates with a strong background in economics, management, or business administration, as well as mathematics. All other students are expected to complete some advanced course work in their area of study prior to departure for EAP.

HKU is modeled after the British structure of higher education, offering a full curriculum of course work taught English. After being selected by EAP for participation, students submit host university paper work listing the courses they would like to take at HKU. Students are then admitted into a specific faculty (department) at HKU and are required to take at least 60% of their courses (usually 3 of 5 courses) in the faculty to which they are admitted.

Please note the following faculty restrictions at **HKU**:

Architecture: The Architecture faculty at HKU admits very few exchange students. Students applying to Architecture should have completed at least 1.5 years of relevant studies before applying. In addition to the standard application documents, applicants to Architecture will need to submit a portfolio in Architecture Design. Only single semester (NOT full year) exchange students will be considered.

Economics / Business / Commerce: Courses offered by the Faculty of Business and Economics (FBE) are highly competitive. Students who are in their final year, in particular, should be warned that course enrollment is NOT guaranteed. Students should have already completed the course prerequisites before they request to take a course. Co-registration (e.g taking Microeconomics I and II together in a semester) is not allowed. Economics courses have high emphasis on mathematics.

Law: Students who apply to Law Faculty must be majoring in Law/Legal Studies at UC.

Grading at **HKU** reflects the university's rigorous academic standards. If you apply yourself and adapt to HKU practices and expectations, you can earn good grades.

Due to high demand, **Hong Kong universities** prefer that enrollment in Business and Economics courses be limited to students in Business and Economics related majors. Non-majors are not prevented from taking courses at HKU and CUHK, however, students who do not have a strong background do not typically perform well in these courses. Strong math skills and some background on Chinese or Hong Kong economy are important for success in Business and Economics courses.

Hong Kong universities recently completed a transition from 3 to 4 year undergraduate degree programs. Improvements are expected in housing access, class size and academic calendars, but there may still be issues with class availability due to continued prioritization for local students in a major.

Internships:

In recent year internships have not possible for exchange students in Hong Kong due to immigration policy. UCEAP is discussing this policy with Hong Kong host universities to determine if internships may be possible in the future.

Undergraduate Research, Chinese University of Hong Kong

The CUHK Summer 2017 program may end as late as August 20. The Berkeley 2017 Fall Semester will begin on August 16, with instruction starting on August 23. Participants should be able to return to campus in time for the start of instruction, but please keep these dates in mind if you have student group or housing commitments that will require you to return to campus before August 20. Students are not permitted to leave UCEAP programs early.

Prospective students are encouraged to accept placement in this program only if they are certain they will be able to participate within the lab they are assigned. Lab research placements such as this are often competitive; if you accept and later decline a placement, you may be taking an opportunity away from students who were not selected. Research teams at CUHK also count on having selected students as part of their lab, so you are encouraged to accept the placement only if you can commit to participation in the program.

Graduating Seniors:

If you are a graduating senior who is applying to the **HKU Spring** program, please be advised that the finals period at HKU stretches from the beginning to the end of May. Returning to Berkeley to walk in a commencement ceremony is an unrealistic expectation for HKU Spring participants. HKU does not release a final exam schedule until mid-semester of the current academic term, so it's not possible to choose courses based on the final exam date in order to make it back for graduation. If walking in graduation is very important to you, we recommend that you apply to NUS in Singapore; the Spring term at NUS has historically always ended before UCB final exams/graduation ceremonies. As an alternative to walking in a Spring ceremony, there is also a UCB "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 on the **HKU Spring** program can add to the Spring degree list via TeleBEARS or petition with their UCB college. However, HKU does not report grades to UCEAP until mid-August, or even September some years, 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 degree list, which is processed in October. The College of L&S has an agreement with the UCB Registrar to back date the degree to Spring if a student was originally eligible for the Spring degree list (so once your degree is finalized in October, the date on your diploma will indicate a May graduation). *This policy is subject to change.* Students in other colleges should consult with a college adviser regarding the possibility of backdating a degree. For all students, after your EAP 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.

Considerations for LGBT Students

Hong Kong is included as part of China on UCEAP's list of destinations where extra caution is advised for LGBT students. This list includes locations where (1) the rights of LGBTIQ persons are less definitive or (2) there are restrictions on the freedom of expression and association of LGBTIQ individuals. As in many countries, tolerance levels vary by region; major cities may be more accepting of the LGBTIQ community than rural areas. You can review the [Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2014](#) from the U.S. Department of State for more information.

No laws criminalize consensual same-sex sexual activity in Hong Kong. While the SAR has laws that ban discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, disability, and family status, no law prohibits companies from discriminating on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. The government claimed public education and existing civil and criminal laws were sufficient to protect the rights of the LGBT community and that legislation was not necessary. No additional legislative mechanisms existed to aid in the prosecution of bias-motivated crimes against members of the LGBT community.