

College of Letters & Science

Introduction to the College

The College of Letters & Science is the great, big heart of UC Berkeley: great because our international stature is the core of the university's intellectual preeminence, and big because we are by far the largest of Berkeley's colleges, comprising 38 departments and offering more than 80 majors across an extraordinary range of disciplines.

Our rigorous academic programs are second to none and our capacity for impact far exceeds that of our private peers — every year 6,000 talented people graduate from our college, ready to lead change for the greater good.

L&S is for all of us and we are committed to making our community as welcoming and respectful as it is intellectually stimulating.

Explore majors and minors (http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/undergraduate/degree-programs/?filter_4=true) available through the College of Letters & Science.

For more information, visit the College of Letters and Sciences website (<https://ls.berkeley.edu/>).

University of California Requirements

Entry Level Writing (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/undergraduate/education/#earningyourdegreertext>)

All students who will enter the University of California as freshmen must demonstrate their command of the English language by satisfying the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR). The UC Entry Level Writing Requirement website (<https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/elwr/>) provides information on how to satisfy the requirement.

American History and American Institutions (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/undergraduate/education/#earningyourdegreertext>)

The American History and Institutions (AH&I) requirements are based on the principle that a US resident graduated from an American university should have an understanding of the history and governmental institutions of the United States.

Campus Requirement

American Cultures (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/undergraduate/education/#earningyourdegreertext>)

The American Cultures requirement is a Berkeley campus requirement, one that all undergraduate students at Berkeley need to pass in order to graduate. You satisfy the requirement by passing, with a grade not lower than C- or P, an American Cultures course. You may take an American Cultures course any time during your undergraduate career at Berkeley. The requirement was instituted in 1991 to introduce students to the diverse cultures of the United States through a comparative framework. Courses are offered in more than fifty departments in many different disciplines at both the lower and upper division level.

Undergraduate students must fulfill the following requirements in addition to those required by their major program.

For detailed lists of courses that fulfill college requirements, please review the College of Letters & Sciences (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/>) page in this Guide. For College advising appointments, please visit the L&S Advising (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/home/>) Pages.

University of California Requirements

Entry Level Writing (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/entry-level-writing-requirement/>)

All students who will enter the University of California as freshmen must demonstrate their command of the English language by fulfilling the Entry Level Writing requirement. Fulfillment of this requirement is also a prerequisite to enrollment in all reading and composition courses at UC Berkeley.

American History and American Institutions (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/american-history-institutions-requirement/>)

The American History and Institutions requirements are based on the principle that a US resident graduated from an American university, should have an understanding of the history and governmental institutions of the United States.

Berkeley Campus Requirement

American Cultures (<http://americancultures.berkeley.edu/students/courses/>)

All undergraduate students at Cal need to take and pass this course in order to graduate. The requirement offers an exciting intellectual environment centered on the study of race, ethnicity and culture of the United States. AC courses offer students opportunities to be part of research-led, highly accomplished teaching environments, grappling with the complexity of American Culture.

College of Letters & Science Essential Skills Requirements

Quantitative Reasoning (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/quantitative-reasoning-requirement/>)

The Quantitative Reasoning requirement is designed to ensure that students graduate with basic understanding and competency in math, statistics, or computer science. The requirement may be satisfied by exam or by taking an approved course.

Foreign Language (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/foreign-language-requirement/>)

The Foreign Language requirement may be satisfied by demonstrating proficiency in reading comprehension, writing, and conversation in a foreign language equivalent to the second semester college level, either by passing an exam or by completing approved course work.

Reading and Composition (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/reading-composition-requirement/>)

In order to provide a solid foundation in reading, writing, and critical thinking the College requires two semesters of lower division work in composition in sequence. Students must complete parts A & B reading

and composition courses in sequential order by the end of their fourth semester.

College of Letters & Science 7 Course Breadth Requirements

Breadth Requirements (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/#breadthrequirementstext>)

The undergraduate breadth requirements provide Berkeley students with a rich and varied educational experience outside of their major program. As the foundation of a liberal arts education, breadth courses give students a view into the intellectual life of the University while introducing them to a multitude of perspectives and approaches to research and scholarship. Engaging students in new disciplines and with peers from other majors, the breadth experience strengthens interdisciplinary connections and context that prepares Berkeley graduates to understand and solve the complex issues of their day.

Unit Requirements

- 120 total units
- Of the 120 units, 36 must be upper division units
- Of the 36 upper division units, 6 must be taken in courses offered outside your major department

Residence Requirements

For units to be considered in "residence," you must be registered in courses on the Berkeley campus as a student in the College of Letters & Science. Most students automatically fulfill the residence requirement by attending classes here for four years, or two years for transfer students. In general, there is no need to be concerned about this requirement, unless you go abroad for a semester or year or want to take courses at another institution or through UC Extension during your senior year. In these cases, you should make an appointment to meet an adviser to determine how you can meet the Senior Residence Requirement.

Note: Courses taken through UC Extension do not count toward residence.

Senior Residence Requirement

After you become a senior (with 90 semester units earned toward your BA degree), you must complete at least 24 of the remaining 30 units in residence in at least two semesters. To count as residence, a semester must consist of at least 6 passed units. Intercampus Visitor, EAP, and UC Berkeley-Washington Program (UCDC) units are excluded.

You may use a Berkeley Summer Session to satisfy one semester of the Senior Residence requirement, provided that you successfully complete 6 units of course work in the Summer Session and that you have been enrolled previously in the college.

Modified Senior Residence Requirement

Participants in the UC Education Abroad Program (EAP), Berkeley Summer Abroad, or the UC Berkeley Washington Program (UCDC) may meet a Modified Senior Residence requirement by completing 24 (excluding EAP) of their final 60 semester units in residence. At least 12 of these 24 units must be completed after you have completed 90 units.

Upper Division Residence Requirement

You must complete in residence a minimum of 18 units of upper division courses (excluding UCEAP units), 12 of which must satisfy the requirements for your major.

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The requirement consists of seven distribution areas: **Arts and Literature, Biological Science, Historical Studies, International Studies, Philosophy and Values, Physical Science, and Social and Behavioral Sciences.**

For descriptions of these distribution areas, as well as a more information on options to complete breadth, visit the L&S Seven-Course Breadth (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/seven-course-breadth/>) webpage.

Guidelines for Seven-Course Breadth

Complete one approved course for each of the seven areas with a minimum grade of C- or P. To find course options for breadth, go to the Class Schedule (<http://classes.berkeley.edu/>), select the term of interest, and use the "Breadth Requirements" filter to select the breadth area(s) of interest. When selecting a course, keep the following in mind:

- Some courses may list multiple breadth areas. These are *options* for which breadth areas the course can satisfy. A course may only be used for *one* of the approved breadth areas. To satisfy the breadth requirement, complete seven distinct courses, one for each breadth area.
- Students may use up to two courses from any one academic department to satisfy the Seven-Course Breadth. This includes all subject areas offered by the department (https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/depts_multiple_subjects_02_02_22.pdf) and—if a course is cross-listed (indicated by a 'C' prefix)—all other departments offering the course as well. Letters and Science ("LS") (http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/courses/l_s/) courses are an exception to this restriction. Students may complete as many LS courses as they wish for the Seven-Course Breadth. This includes LS courses offered through the Discovery (<http://lsdiscovery.berkeley.edu/>) and Big Ideas (<http://bigideascourses.berkeley.edu/>) programs.
- Courses fulfilling American History & Institutions (<http://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2023-24/undergraduate/colleges-schools/letters-science/american-history-institutions-requirement/>), American Cultures (<http://americancultures.berkeley.edu/>) or requirements in the major program may also be applied to the Seven-Course Breadth requirement.
- Exams, such as Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate exams, cannot be used to fulfill breadth requirements.

Satisfying the Seven Course Breadth Requirement with Transfer Work

- Students admitted with IGETC Certification or UC Reciprocity have satisfied Quantitative Reasoning. No additional course work is required.
- All transfer courses must be completed with a grade of C- or better, or the equivalent of a Passed grade on the host campus, in order to be considered for Seven-Course Breadth.
- To be eligible for consideration, the minimum unit requirement for a course offered from a campus on the semester system is 3.0 units, and for courses offered from campuses on the quarter system, 4.0 units.
- Students can complete pre-approved breadth courses at a California Community College. Pre-approved courses can be found on ASSIST (<http://www.assist.org/web-assist/welcome.html>). Refer to the L&S Transfer Credit page (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/progress-planning/transfer-credit/>) for instructions on how to take transfer credit as an L&S student before enrolling at a California Community College.
- Successful completion of transferable courses from other higher education institutions (i.e. 2-year or 4-year campus in the U.S. or non-UCEAP courses from abroad) may also be considered. Course descriptions and syllabi will be required to make a breadth determination. For more information on pursuing transfer courses for Seven-Course Breadth at another higher education institution, review L&S's Transfer Credit: Other Higher Education Institutions (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/progress-planning/transfer-credit/other-higher-education-institution/>) webpage.

The College of Letters and Science (L&S (<https://ls.berkeley.edu/>)) is looking for students who are excited to engage in a wide range of intellectual inquiry. Success in the College is achieved by adventurous, self-motivated, and self-aware students who thrive in an environment of broad-ranging exploration. To find out more about undergraduate admissions, please review the Admissions (<http://admissions.berkeley.edu/>) website.

Already a student and want to change colleges to L&S?

Students in other UC Berkeley colleges who feel their educational goals are best met with a degree in L&S are welcome to petition for a Change of College.

Visit the Change of College page (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/majors-minors/change-colleges-letters-and-science/>) for more information.

The application period for the Fall semester is the first day of Fall instruction through November 1. The application period for the Spring semester is the first day of Spring instruction through June 1.

High-Demand Majors in L&S

In L&S, most of the 80+ majors are "open"—to declare these majors, students must successfully complete all of the major prerequisite courses, and maintain good academic standing in the College. However, there is a small subset of majors that are designated as high-demand. Because the student demand for these majors exceeds the teaching capacity, admission into high-demand majors is limited.

In the 2023-2024 academic year, 12 L&S majors are designated as high-demand majors:

- Art Practice
- Computer Science
- Data Science
- Economics
- Global Studies
- Media Studies
- Operations Research & Management Science
- Political Economy
- Psychology
- Public Health
- Social Welfare

For first-year students applying to Berkeley Letters & Science (L&S), admission into an L&S high-demand major will be guaranteed to those who selected a high-demand major as their *primary* major on their UC Berkeley admissions application. Students are guaranteed a spot in the high-demand major they selected, subject to completing the major prerequisite courses, maintaining good academic standing in L&S, and filing a declaration form.

The opportunities for being admitted into a high-demand major after enrollment will be extremely limited, and applying to a high-demand major via comprehensive review does not guarantee a spot in the major. If you have an interest in an L&S high-demand major, we strongly encourage you to select a high-demand major as your primary major during the UC application process. If you opt to change to a high-demand major in the College of Letters and Science after being admitted to Berkeley, you will be required to have an alternate plan to declare a non-high-demand major as a backup.

Fall 2023/2024 Pilot Program: Direct Admission to Major for Transfer Students

Traditionally, Berkeley Letters & Science (L&S) transfer students select their intended major on the UC application. After students are offered admission to L&S, they officially declare their major (following department application procedures, policies and requirements) during their first semester on campus. The declaration process can be complex and time-demanding, resulting in a stressful introduction to the L&S student experience.

For transfer students admitted for academic year 2023-2024, L&S is piloting a program that offers direct admission into a selection of majors. This pilot is designed to improve the transfer student experience.

This pilot program enables the College to shift the student's advising conversations from focusing on declaration to focusing on graduation. This process, which aligns with how transfer students are currently admitted to other colleges and schools on campus, is also expected to foster a more diverse and sustainable student enrollment.

Transfer students who are offered admission to L&S for 2023-2024, and have selected one of the majors below as their *primary* major on their application, will be directly admitted into the major. These students will not have to go through the process of applying to or officially declaring their major because they will have already been admitted (or declared) into their major.

- Ancient Greek & Roman Studies
- Applied Mathematics
- Art Practice
- Atmospheric Science
- Cognitive Science
- Computer Science
- Dance and Performance Studies
- Data Science
- Environmental Earth Science
- Gender & Women's Studies
- Geography
- Geology
- Geophysics
- History
- History of Art
- Interdisciplinary Studies Field (ISF)
- Mathematics with Teaching Concentration
- Marine Science
- Music
- Planetary Science
- Physics
- Social Welfare
- Sociology
- South and Southeast Asian Studies
- Theater and Performance Studies

The Office of Undergraduate Advising (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/>), with a staff (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/meet-ls-college-advisers/>) of highly skilled and experienced College Advisers, is here to help students make the best choices for their academic career and get the most out of their time at Berkeley.

L&S College Advisers

We can help you understand college requirements and academic policies and procedures. We also help students explore their interests, discover opportunities, and connect with the campus (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/discover-connect/>). L&S College Advisers can support you in finding a major, navigating unexpected hurdles, and enhancing your undergraduate experience.

Below are common topics you would discuss with an L&S College Adviser:

- Satisfying College requirements, including Essential Skills and the Seven-Course Breadth
- Choosing a major or minor
- Exploring transfer work options for college requirements
- Clarifying academic options if you are struggling with a class
- Incorporating college requirements and enrichment opportunities to a 4-year plan
- Connecting with campus resources for support and enrichment opportunities

Our Advising Neighborhood model will help you connect with L&S College Advisers who are more familiar with your intended/declared major. It will also help you more easily find Undergraduate Major Advisers for your major-specific questions. Advisers in these neighborhoods will

work closely together to give you a more consistent and holistic academic advising experience during your time at Cal. When you schedule an advising appointment (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/appointments-advice/>), you will identify your major interest or select "undecided." This will direct you to advising in your neighborhood. Your neighborhood may change as you explore major options.

If you are among our many students still exploring major options, check out our Explore Majors & Minors (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/majors-minors/explore-majors-minors/>) page.

Contact Information for L&S College Advising

Front Desk / Virtual Front Desk Hours: See website

Main Office: 156 Dwinelle Hall, Berkeley, CA 94720-2924

Email: asklins@berkeley.edu

Website: <https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu> (<https://lsadvising.berkeley.edu/>)

Remote and in-person services available. See website for more details.

Undergraduate Major Advisers (UMAs)

UMAs specialize in advising for a particular major and/or minor. You are welcome to meet with advising staff for departments you are considering, even if you are not declared. They can support you in planning major coursework, learning about departmental opportunities, and with declaring your major.

Below are common topics you'd discuss with an Undergraduate Major Adviser:

- Satisfying major prerequisites and upper division requirements
- Declaring or applying to the major; likelihood of admission
- Exploring transfer work options for major requirements
- Discussing how struggling in a major course may impact major progress
- Developing your 4-year major plan and graduating on time
- Learning about research and other departmental opportunities

Contact Information for UMAs

The best place to find advising information for UMAs is through the major department websites, which you can find in this Academic Guide under Degree Programs: Majors and Minors (<https://guide.berkeley.edu/undergraduate/degree-programs/>).

Big Ideas Courses (<https://curricularconnections.berkeley.edu/big-ideas-courses/>) bring together two or more faculty members from different disciplines to co-teach innovative breadth courses. Big Ideas Courses take up key intellectual and societal challenges that cannot be adequately addressed by the perspective or methodology of one discipline alone.

Cal Teach (<http://calteach.berkeley.edu/>) is a program for undergraduate majors interested in developing a deep understanding of STEM teaching & learning. Our coursework focuses on STEM pedagogy, educational theory and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, with concurrent field work in local classrooms and tutoring centers. Cal Teach offers a minor in Science and Math Education, as well as a unique opportunity to complete a California K-12 science or math teaching credential as an undergraduate simultaneously with their undergraduate degree.

Freshman and Sophomore Seminars (<https://curricularconnections.berkeley.edu/freshman-and-sophomore-seminars/>) arose from the conviction that early intellectual contact with

faculty members would greatly enhance the undergraduate experience at Berkeley. Professors from nearly every campus department join together each semester to offer an impressive array of seminars. The courses numbered 24 bear one unit of credit; they are limited to 15 students and first-year admits are given priority for enrollment. The courses numbered 84 bear one or two units of credit; they are limited to 15 sophomores. The courses numbered 39A-39Z are limited to 30 first-year admits and sophomores. Seminars, which emphasize interaction and discussion, provide a counterpoint to the learning experience in Berkeley's large lecture halls. These seminars also offer lower-division students an unprecedented opportunity to explore a wide range of majors and even fields of study usually reserved for graduate students. As you browse through this Guide, you will find lower-division seminars sponsored by Letters and Science departments, as well as by the professional schools and colleges. Descriptions of all the seminars scheduled for the upcoming semester can be found on the program's website, which also contains other useful information and features for undergraduates.

Letters and Science Discovery Courses (<https://curricularconnections.berkeley.edu/lc-discovery-courses/>) are exemplary breadth courses, designed to engage and broaden the minds of non-experts. Taught by some of the most distinguished faculty members on campus, the L&S Discovery Courses are guaranteed to deliver a high-quality educational experience.

On the Same Page (<http://onthesamepage.berkeley.edu/>) is a campus-wide program designed to welcome new freshmen and transfer students into the intellectual dialogue that characterizes the Berkeley campus. Each year all of the faculty and all new students receive a book (or film or other study object) that provides the focus for discussions, courses, events, and activities in the fall term.

L&S 1: Exploring the Liberal Arts is a course that provides entering students an introduction to the intellectual landscape of the College of Letters & Science, the campus's liberal arts college. Guest speakers, primarily the faculty and recent graduates of L&S, shed light on the nature and attractions of their disciplines. The goal of the course is to transform students into informed participants in their own educational experiences at UC Berkeley.

The Office of Undergraduate Research and Scholarships (OURS) helps students pursue various research opportunities while at Cal. OURS works to connect students with faculty and mentors, help students obtain funding to support their research, and facilitate the integration of research with students' other academic goals. Programs run directly by OURS include the following:

Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program (<http://urap.berkeley.edu>) (URAP) provides opportunities for students to receive course credit by working with faculty and staff researchers on cutting-edge research projects during the academic year. Approximately 1,700 students and over 350 faculty members and researchers participate each semester.

Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Programs (SURF) L&S, SURF Rose Hills) provide over 100 students each summer with \$5000 stipends to carry out their proposed research projects.

Haas Scholars Program (<http://hsp.berkeley.edu/>) sponsors the capstone research of twenty high-achieving, low-income students every year, providing recipients with \$13,800 stipends. This program is primarily intended for juniors undertaking research over the summer to support work on their honors thesis.

Stronach Baccalaureate Prize (<http://stronach.berkeley.edu/>) provides funding up to \$25,000 to graduating seniors who will carry out social engagement projects of their own design in the year following graduation.

UC Washington Program (UCDC) sends approximately 30 juniors and seniors to Washington, D.C. to intern, research, and take classes every fall and spring semester. Cal students from all majors can apply and remain eligible for financial aid. While interning three to four days a week, students live and take classes at the UC Washington Center, in the heart of DC. During their UCDC semester, students develop professional skills, clarify their future direction, and build important professional networks.

OURS National Scholarships Office administers the application process for several prestigious external scholarships (such as the Rhodes, Marshall, Truman, and Goldwater scholarships). The office provides individualized advising for applicants to these and other nationally competitive scholarships. Please note that the National Scholarships Office is not associated with the Office of Financial Aid.

Underrepresented Researchers of Color (UROC) serves as a pipeline to increase the representation of marginalized students in research programs at Cal. Through its community-building initiatives, UROC seeks to expand the visibility, participation, engagement, and presence of students of color in research programs across campus and in research-focused graduate programs. UROC provides important tools and resources to students, including workshops, panels, peer-to-peer and faculty mentoring, as well as less formal opportunities to network with fellow student researchers.

Additionally, the Office of Undergraduate Research promotes undergraduate research by providing the following:

Workshops and Peer Advising: OURS regularly offers workshops and peer-advising services, not only to orient students to the research landscape at UC Berkeley, but also to help students acquire the skills needed to undertake research. Past workshops have been devoted to topics such as "Getting Started," "Professional Communication," "Finding a Faculty Mentor," and "Writing a Research Proposal." Upcoming workshops are listed on our events calendar (<https://events.berkeley.edu/index.php/calendar/sn/OURS.html>). Visit our main website to find out about OURS Peer-Adviser drop-in office hours; speaking with a Peer Adviser is a great way to explore your options.

OURS Mailing List and Social Media: Sign up for OURS' popular announcement mailing list on our homepage (<http://research.berkeley.edu/>) and be sure to follow OURS on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/OURSUCBerkeley/>), Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/berkeleyours/>), and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/BerkeleyOURS/>).

For information on the great variety of undergraduate research opportunities at Berkeley, visit research.berkeley.edu (<http://research.berkeley.edu/>).