PRIOR TO APPLYING

Discuss your plans with a Study Abroad Advisor available in the Cal Poly International Center (52-E32), or call 756-1477.

Study Abroad Advising Hours are listed on the Study Abroad website:
http://studyabroad.calpoly.edu/contact/index.html.

Review the program tracks listed on the USAC website http://usac.unr.edu/ in order to find the most ideal location and university to help you achieve your academic and personal goals. Please note that the Haifa, Israel and the Summer Chiang Mai, Thailand programs are not included in our affiliation agreement with USAC.

Attend a USAC informational meeting at Cal Poly if one is offered this term.

Students are highly encouraged to get their Major, Minor and GE courses pre-approved prior to applying to the USAC program.

- **Major Courses**: Provide course descriptions to your Academic Advising Center to determine the course equivalencies and how credits will transfer back. Students are highly encouraged to complete the Substitution for Major form with their Academic Advisor.

- **Minor Courses**: Consult with the Minor Department to discuss the best way to seek course pre-approvals.

- **GE Courses**: Students can pick up the GE Course Substitution for Study Abroad form with the Study Abroad Office (52-E32).

Tips for completing the GE form can be found on the following GE website:
http://ge.calpoly.edu/studentsandadvisors/studyabroad.html.

You should allow at least four weeks to hear back about substitution approvals. Students will hear back on their GE petitions with an email notification from evaluations@calpoly.edu.

(Note: Language courses offered in the USAC Specialty Programs have been pre-approved for GE areas C1, C2 and C elective. Please see the following CPIC website for the full list of the USAC pre-approved GE courses: http://studyabroad.calpoly.edu/programs/partner/usac.html).

Contact a former USAC student to find out more details of the daily academic and social experience in the host country. For alumni names, visit:
http://studyabroad.calpoly.edu/getting-started/returnees.html.
Students have the option of sending their unofficial transcript via your MyPolyProfile in order to speed up the acceptance notification.

Students who are on Academic Probation (AP) at the time of application or the term prior to going abroad must notify the Study Abroad Office. Normally you will be considered ineligible to participate in the program unless extenuating circumstances exist and the Study Abroad Office gives its approval. **Please note that there is a April 15th Cal Poly mandatory application deadline for Summer Term, Fall Semester, or Academic Year programs.**

You will receive notification of your acceptance directly from USAC in Nevada within 3-4 weeks after completing the application. After you are accepted, USAC will send you an acceptance packet containing additional forms and instructions. Cal Poly students are admitted and enrolled to receive transfer credit through University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). Students should complete the UNR application that will be included in the acceptance packet. Students will send the completed

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**TO APPLY**

**ORDERING OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS**

1. Sign in to your my.calpoly.edu portal.
2. Go to the “Academics” tab and then to the “Degree Information” channel and choose “Official Transcript.”
3. Click “Register with Parchment Exchange” and request your transcripts. This will be the only time you will need to register with Parchment Exchange if accessing through your secure my.calpoly.edu portal.
4. You can either have an official copy of your transcript mailed directly to USAC, or delivered electronically to Adela Smith (adelas@unr.edu).

**ORDERING UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS**

1. Access your Unofficial Transcripts (PolyProfile) through your my.calpoly.edu portal and the “Academics” tab. You will find your Poly Profile under the “General Degree Resources” in the “Degree Information” channel. Please direct questions regarding transcripts to transcripts@calpoly.edu

- Students have the option of sending their unofficial transcript via your MyPolyProfile in order to speed up the acceptance notification.
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A mandatory online orientation offered through PolyLearn and an in-person Globa Links pre-departure orientation meeting must be completed prior to going abroad. Please see the following International Center website link for pre-departure orientation resources: http://studyabroad.calpoly.edu/.

Financial Aid is disbursed the first day of the Cal Poly quarter, not the first day of the USAC program. The aid will be disbursed direct deposit into your bank account and it is your responsibility to pay USAC any remaining balance due on your USAC account.

ACADEMIC / FINANCIAL PREPARATION FOR ACCEPTED STUDENTS:

- Since you will be participating in a Cal Poly affiliated program and considered a continuing student during the term(s) you are enrolled abroad, you do not need to complete the Planned Educational Leave form with the Office of Academic Records. During the term(s) you are abroad you will be enrolling in a place-holder class to ensure that you maintain matriculation at Cal Poly. We recommend that students enrolling in semester programs be enrolled in a minimum of 12 units for each quarter that you are gone (i.e. Spring Semester), or 6 units for summer programs. This will allow students on financial aid to best meet financial aid eligibility requirements. Students must take care of any “holds” on their account before the placeholder course can be added.

- A mandatory online orientation offered through PolyLearn and an in-person Globa Links pre-departure orientation meeting must be completed prior to going abroad. Please see the following International Center website link for pre-departure orientation resources: http://studyabroad.calpoly.edu/.

- International Center Fee: Students pay a non-refundable $400 International Center fee that will be charged to the student’s account. USAC offers a $200 discount to make up for a portion of the fee.

- Financial Aid & Scholarships: Students who receive federal aid through Cal Poly should complete the Study Abroad Contractual Agreement available in the Study Abroad Office (38-106). Meet with a Financial Aid Counselor to discuss potential aid that is available to assist with covering your study abroad expenses. You can request to have your financial aid budget increased to reflect the additional costs associated with your study abroad program (including fees, airfare, etc.). Be sure to complete the FAFSA renewal forms by the March 1 priority date. You should discuss the “Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)” policy with your Financial Aid Counselor to make sure that you are meeting eligibility requirements. Students on financial aid are highly encouraged to complete the Authorization to Release Student Account and/or Financial Aid Information form to provide permission to your parents to discuss financial issues at Cal Poly: http://afd.calpoly.edu/student_accounts/forms/FERPAForm.pdf.

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Students who are participating in the Cal Poly affiliate partner programs do not add the courses for the terms they are abroad into the Poly Planner, since they involve transfer credit. You will simply validate the quarters you are abroad, but do not enter specific courses. Please enter your courses into the Poly Planner for the quarters you will be at Cal Poly.

Notify your Major Department to let them know you will be participating in a study abroad program.

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Remember to register for your next Cal Poly term coursework.

**VISA & PASSPORT**

You can learn more about passports and country specific visas at travel.state.gov.

Be sure to read the visa update on your USAC Student Gateway and take advantage of the free visa group submission process if offered for your country.

Verification of Enrollment may be needed for your visa. You can request the Verification of Enrollment letter from the Registrar’s office (1-222). Make sure that you are enrolled in the placeholder units prior to requesting the letter.

For more information regarding visas, passports, and additional pre-departure information resources please visit the International Center website at: http://studyabroad.calpoly.edu/resources/index.html.

**DURING PROGRAM**

If you find that there has been an unexpected change in course offerings (i.e. canceled course/schedule conflict), you should seek informal advice about any new General Education course choices by emailing or phoning the Cal Poly Evaluations Office (Evaluations@calpoly.edu 805-756-2396). For Major courses please contact your Advisor or Advising Center.

Students who have financial need can apply for the USAC scholarships that are awarded by a Cal Poly scholarship committee. The Cal Poly USAC Scholarship application forms are available on the International Center website at: http://studyabroad.calpoly.edu/programs/partner/usac.html. The scholarship application deadline for Fall/Summer programs is May 1st and the deadline for Spring Semester programs is October 15th. Preference will be given to students who have financial need and have completed the FAFSA form.

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**FINANCIAL AID / SAP**

- The federal government mandates that every financial aid student be subject to Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) guidelines in order to continue to receive financial aid. Cal Poly students are required to complete a minimum of 75% of units attempted for the preceding academic year, maintain a cumulative 2.0 GPA and to complete degree requirements in 18 terms or less. SAP is reviewed annually at the end of spring term for the proceeding summer, fall, winter and spring. Students who fail to meet SAP requirements are not eligible for financial aid for the subsequent award year. Students who study abroad and are receiving transfer credit have until the end of the following summer to have transcripts sent to and evaluated by Cal Poly. If transcripts have not been received, or have been received but not yet reviewed at the end of summer, students will be SAP disqualified for fall. Students may appeal their SAP disqualification status by turning in an SAP Appeal Form, completing the requirements in Section A, and explaining their mitigating circumstance.

- Given the timing of the transcripts, and the required processing time noted above, students who receive financial aid may not meet SAP for the Fall term and possibly Winter. You will be notified that you do not meet SAP by financial aid and you will need to appeal for Fall and possibly Winter. Be prepared to complete this process.

- For more information, see the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy: http://financialaid.calpoly.edu/_finaid/policies/sap.htm.