



Pathways to the University of California

Welcome, prospective University of California student! By exploring UC admissions, you are taking first steps on the path to a college education. This brochure will outline what you need to do to qualify for admission to one or more of UC's campuses.

UC ADMISSIONS

The University of California accepts students with widely diverse backgrounds, interests and goals. All qualified students are encouraged to apply. UC uses a method called comprehensive review to evaluate applications. Students are assessed using criteria beyond coursework, grades and test scores. Apart from those academic components, the campuses consider personal accomplishments, life experience, and other special circumstances in making decisions about each applicant. In addition to a required personal essay, the UC application provides space for a full account of the student's personal history and achievements.

BEING QUALIFIED, BECOMING COMPETITIVE

UC has established a set of *minimum requirements* to make sure students are prepared for college-level work. However, when there are more applicants meeting those minimum requirements than there are spaces available at a given campus, students whose work exceeds the minimum have a better chance of being admitted. Therefore, all prospective students are urged to become "competitive applicants."

HOW TO BECOME A COMPETITIVE APPLICANT

- **Take advanced courses**, including community college and summer school offerings.
- **Aim for a higher GPA** by studying more, especially for AP and honors classes, which offer bonus GPA points.
- **Improve your college entrance exam scores** by taking them in 11th grade, so you have a second chance to take them in 12th grade if necessary.
- **Participate deeply in academic enrichment and extracurricular activities** that are meaningful to you and reflect your interests.
- **Devote time and careful work to writing your personal statement**; make it clear, compelling and relevant to the rest of your application. Seek input on drafts from a few trusted readers before you complete the statement.
- **Apply to a wide range of UC campuses**, keeping an open mind about their suitability. You can use the same application for all nine campuses; UC will waive application fees for up to four campuses for students who apply for a fee waiver within the online application, and you'll be notified immediately as to whether you qualify for this waiver.
- **Apply on time!** Meet the November 30 deadline. For the online application, see Online Resources on the back panel.

4 Steps to UC Admission

Step 1: Coursework

To qualify for UC admission, students have to complete 15 courses, 11 of them prior to senior year, all with a grade of “C” or better. **These are minimum requirements.**

Freshmen who were admitted to UC for fall 2011 had completed an average of 23 courses.

Here’s the specific 15-course pattern you will need:

- a. 2 years of history/social studies
- b. 4 years of English
- c. 3 years of math
- d. 2 years of lab science
- e. 2 years of a language other than English
- f. 1 year of visual and performing arts
- g. 1 year of college preparatory elective from “a–g”

ELIGIBILITY IN THE LOCAL CONTEXT (ELC)

ELC students must take a minimum of 15 courses (see the list, above), 11 specific courses must be completed before senior year:

- a. 1 year of history/social studies
- b. 2 years of English
- c. 2 years of math
- d. 1 year of lab science
- e. 1 year of a language other than English
- f. 4 years of any “a–g” courses

As with all applicants, qualifying students must have a GPA of 3.0 or better (weighted by a maximum of eight honors/AP bonus points in these courses, selected from among the “a–g” subject requirements.)

Step 2: Entrance Exams

ACT/SAT

Take the ACT With Writing OR SAT Reasoning Test by December of the senior year — the earlier, the better.

Sign up to take the exam in spring of your junior year or early fall of senior year, so you have time to retake it if you need to improve your score.

SAT SUBJECT TESTS

Effective for fall 2012 freshman applicants, the SAT Subject Test will no longer be required for admission. However, you are welcome to submit scores if you want to:

- Show your mastery of a particular subject.
- Apply for a competitive major for which your preferred campus recommends certain Subject Tests.
- Use Subject Tests to satisfy “a–g” subject requirements.

EXAM SCORES, GPA & THE ADMISSIONS INDEX

If you’re in the top 9 percent of California high school graduates and aren’t admitted to any of the UC campuses you apply to, you’ll be offered a spot at another campus if space is available. UC uses a formula — the admissions index — to determine if you fall within that group. They will convert your ACT or SAT scores to a UC score, which is matched to your GPA. If your UC score is equal to or greater than the score required for your GPA, then you’re in the top 9 percent of California high school graduates.

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Step 3: Academic Enrichment

Part of planning for college admission is building a strong set of academic activities outside of high school. In addition to improving tests scores and class performance, these pursuits will demonstrate that you are motivated to become a competitive applicant. And you can explore your special interests with classes and internships before declaring a college major.

These activities can include:

- SAT/ACT preparatory classes
- Summer session courses at a college
- Concurrent enrollment at community college
- Summer internships

For more information on academic enrichment, see Online Resources on the back panel.

Step 4: College Knowledge

Part of your path to UC is becoming familiar with the various campuses. Each UC campus shares the university's high academic standards, with distinguished faculties and excellent research facilities, yet each has its own distinctive characteristics. Researching the campuses that best suit your needs and academic strengths should begin early. Your high school counselor can help you decide which UC locations are the best fit.

Activities to deepen your college knowledge include:

- Researching colleges online
- Visiting UC campuses in person
- Attending financial aid and college application workshops

For links to UC campuses, see Online Resources on the back panel.

COURSEWORK: CHOOSE WELL AND DO WELL — TWO CASE STUDIES

Below are examples of two students' high school coursework. Student A took 15 courses by the end of his senior year, the minimum number to qualify for admission. Student B took 23 courses, including one community college course. Taking into account only the academic records below, Student B is more likely to be accepted to the university and selected by her top-choice campuses. By taking honors and Advanced Placement courses and going well beyond the minimum requirement, this student shows that she can do well in college.

STUDENT A

"a-g" SUBJECT CATEGORY	9TH GRADE	10TH GRADE	11TH GRADE	12TH GRADE
a. History		World History	U.S. History	
b. English	English 1	English 2	English 3	English 4
c. Math	Algebra 1	Geometry	Algebra 2	
d. Lab Science		Biology	Chemistry	
e. Language Other Than English		Spanish 1	Spanish 2	
f. Visual and Performing Arts		Band 1		
g. College Preparatory Electives (AP) from "a-g"				Journalism

STUDENT B

"a-g" SUBJECT CATEGORY	9TH GRADE	10TH GRADE	11TH GRADE	12TH GRADE
a. History		World History	AP U.S. History	
b. English	English 1	English 2	Honors English 3	AP English Literature
c. Math	Geometry	Algebra 2	Honors Pre-Calculus	AP Calculus
d. Lab Science		Biology	AP Chemistry	AP Physics
e. Language Other Than English	Spanish 1	Spanish 2	Spanish 3	AP Spanish
f. Visual and Performing Arts	Theater 1	Theater 2	Adv. Acting 1 & 2*	
g. College Preparatory Electives (AP) from "a-g"	Physical Science		Psychology	Journalism

*concurrent enrollment community college

Paying for College

Don't let the cost of UC dissuade you from applying. UC remains affordable, despite fee increases. Undergraduate California residents with annual family incomes below \$80,000, who apply for financial aid on time and demonstrate financial need, will not pay UC system-wide fees out of their own pockets. They will get grants to cover at least their fees.

Make your final decision about where to attend college after you review all acceptance letters and weigh all choices. For more information about paying for college, see Online Resources, below.

Online Resources

Admissions

For more detailed information about all aspects of UC admissions, including how to select the right college, campus descriptions, campus admissions profiles and statistics, and more, go to:

www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions

Online Application

You can apply online at: www.universityofcalifornia.edu/apply

Academic Enrichment

For information on academic enrichment programs, go to: www.eaop.org/resources

UC Campuses

Links to the various campuses, with information about their specific policies, requirements, and admissions statistics can be found at: www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/campuses/index.html

Financial Aid

Read more about paying for college at: www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/paying.html

Education Partnerships helps the University of California and the state produce high-quality teachers and strengthen the academic pipeline to bachelor's degrees and the work force.

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