

Pathways to the University of California

Class of 2012 and beyond

What You Need to Know About UC Admissions

The University of California welcomes applications from all qualified students. The key to UC admission is preparation—take as many rigorous courses as you can and do well in them. Then apply to the University. All campuses to which you apply will thoroughly review your application to assess your achievements in light of opportunities that are available to you.



Be a competitive applicant!

To be a “competitive” applicant, and therefore more likely to be accepted to the University or selected by the campus of your choice:

Take as many rigorous courses as you can.

Take community college courses or summer school.

Earn good grades in challenging coursework.

Try studying 15 more minutes a day and see what happens.

Earn high scores on college entrance exams.

Take exams in 11th grade and again in 12th to improve your score.

Take the exams in November instead of December to ensure you can take again if needed.

Participate in extra-curricular activities.

Be a leader. Show in-depth participation in a few activities rather than low-level participation in many activities.

Write a compelling personal statement.

The personal statement is more important than ever, so take time to write strong essays.

Make sure your personal statement relates to the rest of your application.

Apply broadly.

Research all the UC campuses you may be interested in attending. Be open-minded.

Apply to “safety,” “realistic,” and “reach” campuses.

Fee waivers

UC will waive application fees for up to four campuses for qualified students. You can apply for a fee waiver within the online application and be notified immediately whether you have qualified.

Submit by the November 30 deadline.

Submit the UC application in its entirety by the November 30 deadline. Apply online at <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/apply>

How UC will evaluate applications

UC uses a method called comprehensive review to evaluate applications to the University. With comprehensive review, UC looks beyond grades and test scores. The University evaluates applicants’ achievements in light of opportunities available to them. UC considers the capacity each student demonstrates to contribute to the intellectual life of the campus.

With comprehensive review, students are evaluated for admission and selection using multiple measures of achievement and promise—including academic and personal accomplishments, and other special circumstances—to make better decisions about each applicant. UC has been using this approach to applicant review since 2002.

What courses should I take?

To be considered for UC admission, at a minimum you need to complete any 11 UC-approved “a-g” courses by the end of the junior year*, each with a grade of “C” or better. In all, you need to complete 15 courses by the end of the senior year. 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

To be considered for Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC)—the top 9% of students in the high school class—at a minimum you need to complete a specific pattern of 11 UC-approved “a-g” courses by the end of the junior year*, each with a “C” or better. In all, you need to complete 15 courses by the end of the senior year. (See the pattern above.)

- 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
- A-G. 4 years of any “a-g” courses

*Includes courses taken in the summer between the junior and senior year.

To be admitted to the University and selected at the campus of your choice, go beyond the minimum requirements!

The Importance of Academic Rigor

The key to UC admission is taking a rigorous course load and doing well. Below are examples of two students.

Student A took 15 courses by the end of the senior year, the minimum number of courses needed to be considered for admission.

Student A

A-G. Subject category	9 th Grade	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th 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 (advanced) from A-G				Journalism

Student B took 23 courses, including one community college course.

Student B

A-G. Subject category	9 th Grade	10 th Grade	11 th Grade	12 th 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	Advanced Acting 1 & 2 (concurrent enrollment community college)	
G. College Preparatory Electives (advanced) from A-G	Physical Science		Psychology	Journalism

Students admitted to UC in the fall 2010 term took an average of 23 courses! Looking here only at the academic record—one important component of comprehensive review—Student B is more likely to be accepted to the University and selected by the campuses of choice. By taking honors and Advanced Placement courses—and going well beyond the minimum—this student is demonstrating that he or she can do well in college.

Exam requirements

ACT/SAT

Take the ACT with writing OR SAT Reasoning Test by December of the senior year—earlier is better.

Retake if needed 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.
- Plan to apply for a competitive major for which your preferred campus recommends certain Subject Tests.
- Want to use Subject Tests to satisfy “a-g” subject requirements.

Paying for college

Don't let the cost of UC dissuade you from applying. UC remains affordable despite fee increases. Undergraduate California residents who apply for financial aid on time and demonstrate financial need will not pay UC systemwide 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. Read more at <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/paying.html>

Want more detailed information?

Learn more about UC admissions, including how to select the right college, campus descriptions, campus admissions profiles, the admissions index, and more at <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions>