Admission 101 — First-year basics

September 2025

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Agenda

- Introductions
- Definition of a first-year student
- A-G requirements
- UC GPA
- Comprehensive Review
- UC application timeline
- Resources

<u>Defining "first-year"</u>

Who IS a first-year applicant?

- A first-year applicant is a student who has graduated from (or is still in) high school and not enrolled in a regular (non-summer) term at any college or university following graduation.

- A student who attends a college or university the summer term immediately after high school graduation is a first-year applicant.

- A student who completes college/university courses while in high school (ex. dual enrollment or online college courses) is a first-year applicant.

Who is NOT a first-year applicant?

- A student who graduates high school and enrolls in a regular term (fall or spring) in a college or university.

General admission requirements

Complete 15 A-G courses
- 11 of them by the end of junior year

Earn a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or better
- No grade lower than a C
- 3.4 GPA for nonresidents

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A-G requirements

A - History/Social Science

Requirement: 2 years

What it includes:

- One year of **world history**, cultures, or historical geography
- One year of **U.S. history** or one semester of U.S. history and one semester of American government or civics
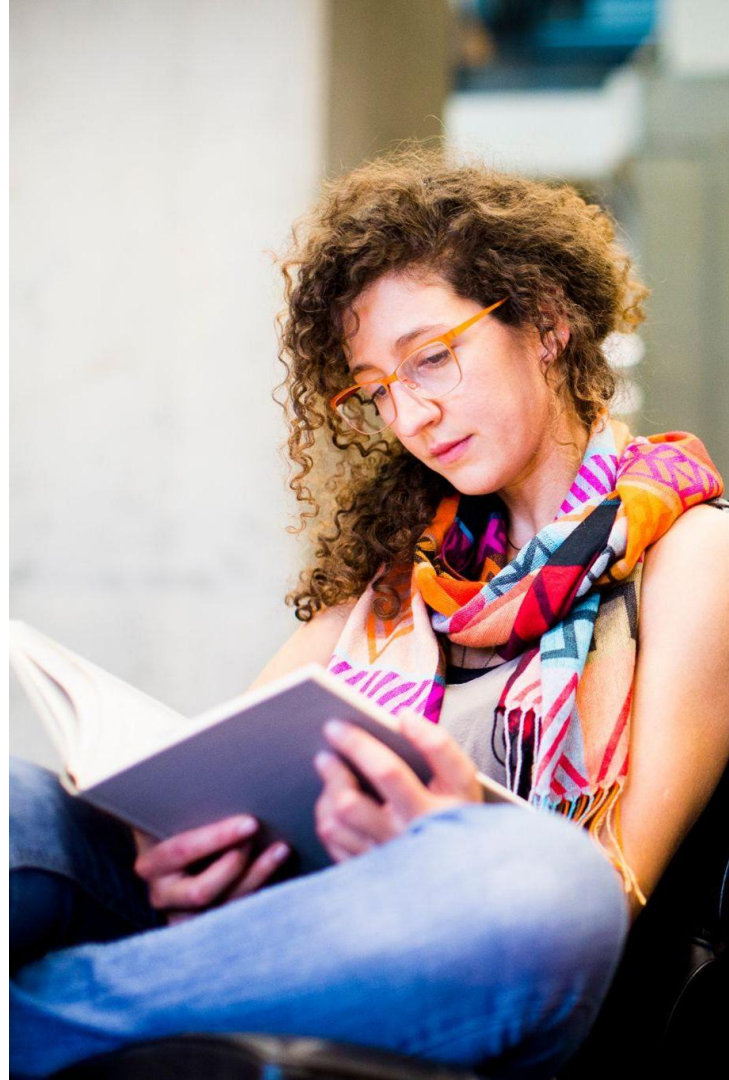
Refer to QRG on page 11

B - English

Requirement: 4 years

What it includes:

- College-preparatory composition and literature courses in English
- Courses should emphasize **reading, writing, listening, and speaking** in English.

Refer to QRG on page 11

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C - Mathematics

Requirement: 3 years required, *4 years recommended*

What it includes:

- Must cover topics in elementary and advanced algebra and two- and three-dimensional geometry

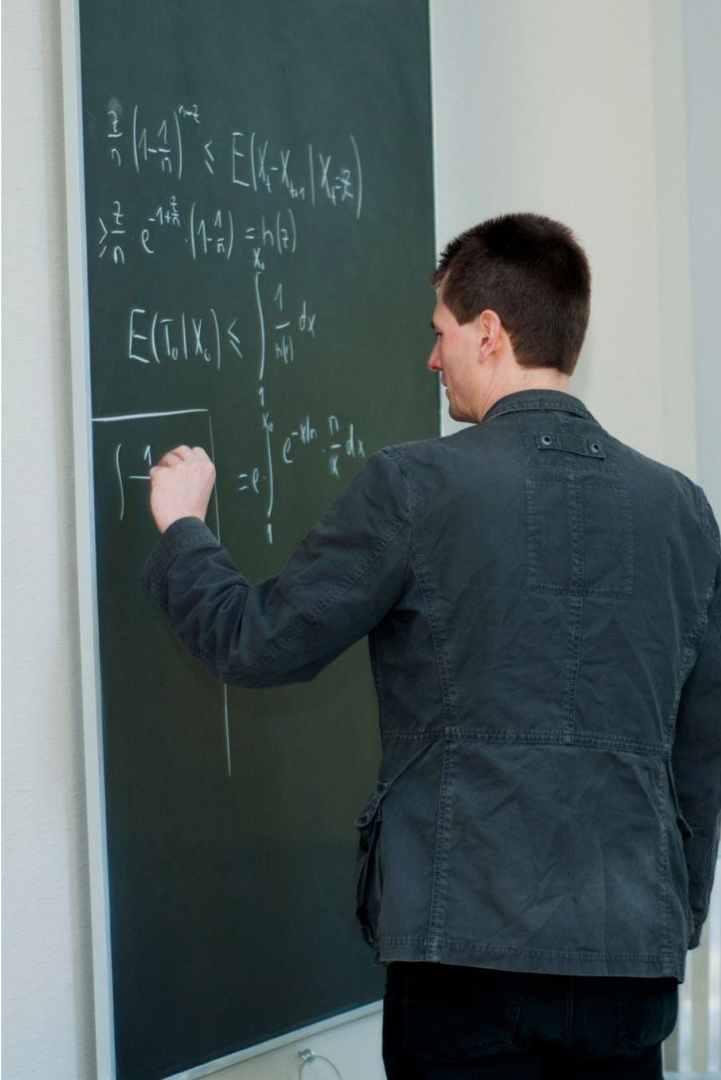 - Algebra I-Geometry-Algebra II OR

  - Math 1-Math 2-Math 3

*7th and 8th math coursework is accepted

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Refer to QRG on page 12

D - Science

Requirement: 2 years required, *3 years recommended*

What it includes:

- Must include two of the three foundational subjects: **Biology**, **Chemistry**, and **Physics**

Refer to QRG on page 12

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E- Language Other than English (LOTE)

Requirement: 2 years (4 semesters) of the same language required, *3 years recommended*

What it includes:

- Emphasis on speaking, understanding, reading, and writing

Students are expected to reach the second level of instruction.

*7th and 8th LOTE coursework is accepted

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Refer to QRG on page 13

F - Visual and Performing Arts

Requirement: 1 year (2 semesters in the same discipline)

What it includes:

- Must be a year-long course (or two semesters) in dance, music, theater, or visual arts

- Courses may be repeated as necessary for credit

Refer to QRG on page 13

G - College-preparatory elective

Requirement: 1 year (2 semesters)

What it includes:

- Additional course from any A-F category or other approved college-preparatory electives

Refer to QRG on page 14

UC A-G course list

A-G COURSE LIST

Brought to you by

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CSU The California State University

What can we help you find?

✓ Institutions   ✓ Courses

School Name or College Board Code

Filters ›

⭐ Biology Honors   Biology / Life Sciences   🏫 Classroom-based

A gold star indicates the course is UC Honors approved

Course discipline

Learning environment the course is offered in.

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Guidelines for middle school coursework used to satisfy A-G requirements

1. Only **math** and **LOTE** coursework can be met with 7th and 8th grade coursework

2. No coursework prior to 7th grade is accepted (regardless of the level)

3. These courses are expected to be high-school level, but we don't require them to be included on the high school transcript

Refer to QRG on page 17

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Additional ways to meet A-G

AP or IB Examinations

- 3, 4 or 5 on select AP exams
- 5, 6, or 7 on select IB HL exams

College coursework

- C or better in a UC-transferable course of 3 or more semester units

Refer to QRG on pages 11-14

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Repeat A-G courses

When can courses be repeated?

- Students can repeat each A-G course in which a D or F grade was earned as many times as needed until a passing grade is earned.

- The passing grade will replace the original grade in the GPA if the repeat is completed by the summer following 11th grade. Grades are not averaged.

- Non-honors courses cannot be used to repeat UC-approved honors, AP, or IB courses.

- College-level courses that are UC transferable can be used to repeat UC-approved honors, AP and IB courses.

Validation

What is validation?

- Students successfully completes advance work in a sequential area of knowledge, demonstrating competency of lower-level coursework. **Math** (Area C) and **LOTE** (Area E) are the only areas where validation is allowed.

Two types of validation:

- Validation of a **subject** omission validates a lower-level course even if the lower-level course was not completed.

- Validation of a **deficient** grade: validation of a D or F grade in a lower-level course after completion of a higher-level course with a C grade or better.

Refer to QRG on pages 20-23

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Honors-level high school courses

To encourage students to undertake more challenging work at the advanced secondary level, UC has assigned extra weight to grades received in honors-level high school courses.

The following are designated Honors courses:
- AP (Advanced Placement)
- IB (International Baccalaureate)
- Transferable college courses
- UC-approved Honors courses (California only)

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Refer to QRG on page 17

UC GPA

UC GPA requirement

UC GPA minimum requirement

- California residents: **3.0**

- Nonresidents: **3.4**

Students should aim to exceed this minimum requirement to be a competitive applicant.

The minimum UC GPA is a **weighted and capped GPA:**

- Up to 8 semesters of extra points are added for passed AP, IB, college-level or UC-approved honors courses, with no more than 4 points for 10th grade coursework

Campuses may choose to use a **weighted and uncapped GPA** and/or **unweighted GPA** for selection purposes.

Calculating the UC GPA

1. Convert grades to grade points

A= 4 points | B= 3 points | C= 2 points | D= 1 point | F= 0 points

- +/- are not used in high school coursework but they are used in college courses if the university awards them.
- Give an extra point for each semester of UC-approved honors, AP, IB or CL course. Maximum of 8 semester points, between 10th and 11th grades only.

2. Add up all the points

3. Divide total points by the number of letter grades counted

Refer to QRG on pages 19-20

Comprehensive review

What is comprehensive review…Context is key

Academics	Activities & accomplishments	Context
• GPA • Rigor of curriculum (including senior year) • ELC status • AP/IB exam credit	• Awards & honors • Leadership ability • Intellectual curiosity • Consistent and sustained involvement in EC & community service • Special program participation (EOP, MESA, Upward Bound, etc.)	• Consideration of family income, education level, and socio-economic • School environment, including availability of academic opportunities and resources

Academic factors

- Grade-point average (GPA)
- Courses completed/planned beyond minimum A-G requirements
- Approved honors, AP, IB, university courses
- Eligibility in the local context (ELC)
- Quality of senior-year program of study
- Academic opportunities in secondary schools
- Outstanding performance in academic subject areas

No SAT/ACT considered!

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Non-academic factors

- Achievements in special projects

- Special talents, achievements, and awards

- Participation in educational preparation programs

- Academic accomplishment within life experiences

- Geographic location

Related sections in the UC application….
- About you
- Activities & awards
- Personal Insight Questions
- Additional comments

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Consistent for all UC campuses

Applications are given multiple reads and are not read by committee.

Every applicant will receive an individualized review of their application.

Readers are thoroughly trained.

Selection of students will vary from campus to campus.

Each campus uses comprehensive review differently.

Statewide guarantee

- Recognizes top 9% of **California high school graduates**
- Determined by the total number of A-G courses completed in high school and the calculated UC GPA

Local guarantee (ELC)

- Recognizes top 9% of high school graduates from **participating high schools**
- ELC-eligible students are those that have earned a calculated GPA that exceeds the school's benchmark GPA

- Both programs provide guaranteed admission to the UC *system*
- Eligibility is determined automatically upon application to UC

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First-year admissions timeline

UC application

One application. Nine UC campuses

- Apply to multiple UC campuses

- $80 application fee per campus ($95 for international applicants)

- Application fee waiver for up to 4 campuses available

- No letters of recommendation

- No interviews

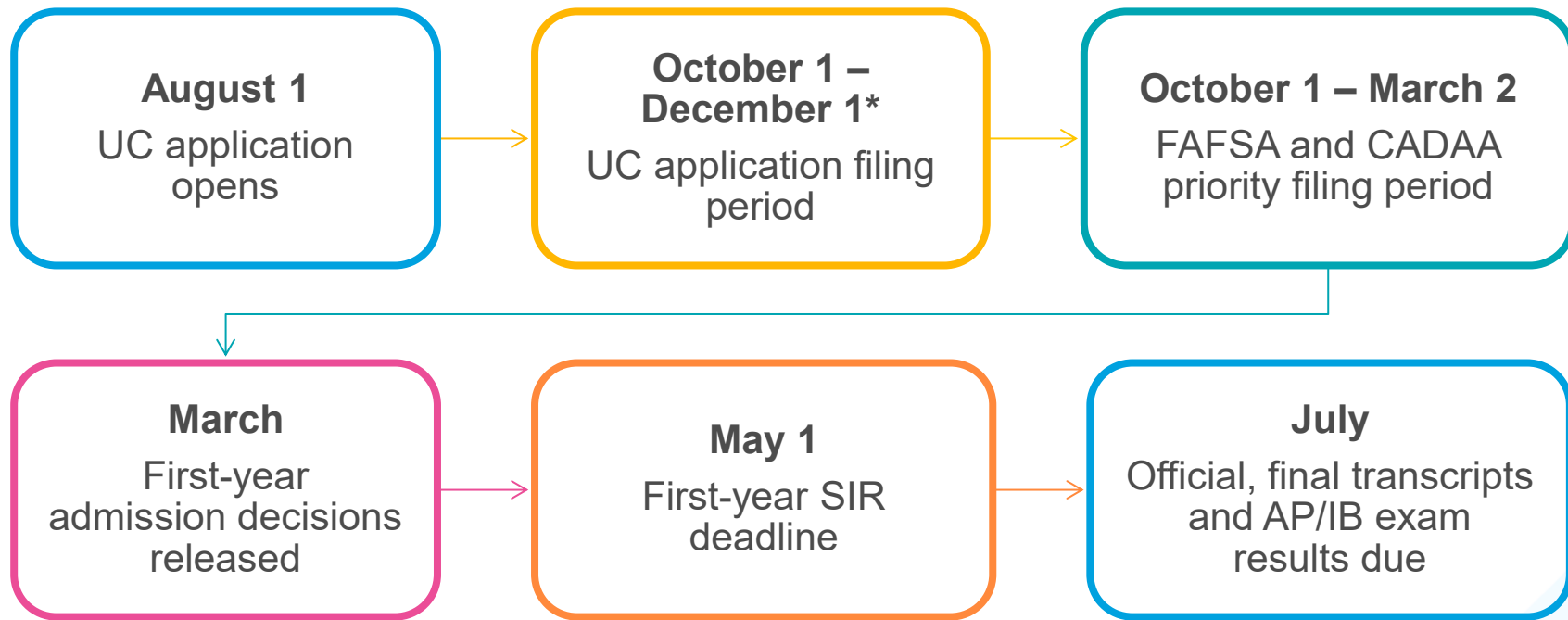- No transcripts submissions when applying, submit transcripts after admitted

UC Berkeley   UC Irvine   UC RIVERSIDE   UCMERCED   UC San Diego

UCDAVIS   UCLA   UC SANTA BARBARA   UC SANTA CRUZ

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First-year admission timeline

August 1
UC application opens

October 1 – December 1*
UC application filing period

October 1 – March 2
FAFSA and CADAA priority filing period

March
First-year admission decisions released

May 1
First-year SIR deadline

July
Official, final transcripts and AP/IB exam results due

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The UC application filing deadline has been extended for fall 2026 applicants only.

Resources

Counselor resources

UC Counselors website

2025 Quick Reference Guide

A-G course lists

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Thank you