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# First-year admissions 101: Admissions basics

September 2024

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
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## Agenda

### **Introductions**

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

## Definition of first-year student

### 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.



Let's start by defining what a first-year applicant means. A first-year applicant is a student who has graduated from (or is still in) high school and who has **not** enrolled in a regular non-summer term at any college or university follow graduation.

Let's go over some examples:

1. A student who attends a college or university the summer term immediately after high school graduation? Do we think this is a first-year applicant? Yes!
2. A student who completes college or university courses while in high school such as a dual enrollment student? First-year applicant? Yes!
3. Lastly, a student who graduates high school and enrolls in a college or university during the fall term? No, this student would be considered a transfer student.

# A-G requirements

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## A-G requirements

	Subject	Required	Notes
<b>A</b>	History	2 years	One year of world history and one year of U.S. history
<b>B</b>	English	4 years	College-prep English composition and literature
<b>C</b>	Mathematics*	3 years (4 years recommended)	A geometry course or an integrated math course with sufficient geometry content <b>MUST</b> be completed. *7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grade HS level courses can be used to meet this area.
<b>D</b>	Science	2 years (3 years recommended)	At least one from biology, chemistry, or physics, the second year can be earth science or interdisciplinary.



- Area A – History: 2 years are required, one year of world history and one year of US history. One-half year of U.S. history and one-half year of civics or American government can also be used to meet the US history component of this requirement.
- Area B – English: 4 years required.
- Area C – Mathematics: 3 years are required and 4 years are recommended. As noted before, applicants often exceed the minimum requirements.
  - Please note a geometry course or an IM course with sufficient amount of geometry must be completed as part of the 3 year minimum requirement. Another note on Mathematics is that 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade HS level courses can be used to fulfill this requirement.
- Area D – Science: 2 years are required and 3 years recommended. Two years of college-preparatory science, including or integrating topics that provide fundamental knowledge in two of these three subjects: biology, chemistry, or physics. One year of approved interdisciplinary or earth and space sciences coursework can meet one year of the requirement. Computer Science, Engineering, Applied Science courses can be used in area D as an additional science (i.e., third year and beyond).

## A-G requirements continued

	Subject	Required	Notes
<b>E</b>	Language other than English*	2 years	Two years of the same language, or course work equivalent to the 2nd level of HS instruction. *7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> grade HS level courses can be used to meet this area.
<b>F</b>	Visual and Performing Arts	1 year	One yearlong course or 2 one-semester courses from the same discipline.
<b>G</b>	College Prep Elective	1 year	Can be courses beyond A-F subjects

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- Area E - Language other than English: 2 years (or through the 2nd level of HS instruction) is required. This means that completion of Spanish 2 meets this requirement even if Spanish 1 was not completed. Language is also an area where HS level from 7th and 8th grade can be used.
- Area F – Visual and performing arts: 1 yearlong course is required or 2 one semester courses from the same discipline (dance, music, theater, visual arts or interdisciplinary arts ). For example, ceramics and art are the same discipline (visual art) and can be combined to meet the full requirement.
- Area G - College-preparatory elective: Any course beyond the minimum can be used for this requirement or any approved elective course that is offered such as psychology or sociology.

## Additional ways to meet A-G

### **AP or IB Examinations**

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

### **College Coursework**

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



### **ACT English Language Arts (ELA)**

Score of 24 meets the first three years; score of 30 meets the entire four-year requirement.

### **SAT Writing and Language Test**

Score of 31 meets the first three years; score of 36 meets the entire four-year requirement.

### **Digital SAT**

No score meets the requirement.

## Repeat A-G courses

### When can grades be repeated?

- Students can repeat each A-G course in which a D or F grade was earned. A repeat can be taking multiple times until a passing grade is earned. The repeat course must have a similar curriculum to the original course.
- The passing grade will replace the original grade in the GPA, if the repeat is completed by the summer following 11<sup>th</sup> 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.



In order to complete A-G, a student must complete all courses with a C or better. In the event that they do not, students are able to repeat the courses they received a D or F grade in as many times as necessary as long as the curriculum is the same. If the repeated course is taken in 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade, the new grade will replace the old grade on the UC GPA. It is important to note that your student must report the original and the repeat on their UC application. Non-honors courses cannot replace an honors course grade and college level course may repeat UC approved honors, AP and IB.



## 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.

## Subject omission validation

### Subject omission

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

#### Example:

Spanish II is completed with a C or better; Spanish II validates Spanish I.

Algebra II is completed with a C or better; Algebra II validates Algebra I

\*The omission of a yearlong geometry course cannot be validated by advanced-level math courses. For more details on math, attend the **“Validate that! Upcoming changes to Area C (math) validation”** session!

## **Grade deficiency validation**

Validation of **deficient grades** in math or LOTE is allowed when a higher-level course is completed with a C or better.

### **Example:**

- First semester Spanish I (D grade). Second semester Spanish I (C grade). The second semester validates the first semester. The student is given credit for 1 year of Spanish.
- First semester Algebra II (D grade). Second semester Algebra II (C grade). The second semester of Algebra II validates the first semester. The subject of Algebra II is validated.

**Validation does not replace grades. The original D grades remain in the GPA if received in 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade.**

**UC A-G course list**

**A-G COURSE LIST**

Brought to you by  
 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA | 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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A-G Course List allows you and your students to find UC A-G approved coursework at any CA high school for every school year they are enrolled.  
 Course discipline section includes helpful things like LOTE level, disciplines such as biological sciences for science coursework

View CA high school course lists at <https://hs-articulation.ucop.edu/agcourselist>.

# UC GPA

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## UC GPA requirement



The UC GPA is calculated for all A-G subjects completed with letter grades in 10th and 11th grade, including summer terms following 9th, 10th and 11th.



The UC GPA is a bit unique in that it only utilizes grades from A-G subjects in courses taken the summer before 10th grade through the summer after 11th grade. The minimum GPA requirements for CA residents is 3.0 (weighted and capped) and the minimum GPA requirement for non-residents is 3.4 (Weighted and capped GPA)

## Unweighted vs weighted UC GPA

### Unweighted GPA

- GPA based on all A-G course work completed with letter grades in 10th and 11th grade, including summer terms following 9th, 10th and 11th.

### Weighted capped GPA

- GPA includes a maximum of 8 semester points, based on 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> grades in UC-approved honors\*, AP, IB, or UC transferable CL courses.

### Weighted uncapped GPA

- GPA includes all UC-approved honors, AP, IB, or UC Transferable CL courses, and is not capped at 8 semester points.

\*UC recognizes honors coursework approved by UC in CA high schools only. Out of state honors classes are not given an extra grade point. Students outside of CA can mark coursework HL to demonstrate rigor, but it will not be given an extra grade point in the UC GPA.



Students attending an out-of-state school will not have UC-approved honors to include in this GPA, but may have AP, IB and/or CL courses.

- When filling out the application, students from outside of California can still mark their courses as 'HL/Honors' if the school considers them to be at the honors level, but the GPA to determine if the student has met the minimum 3.4 needed for a non-resident, the GPA will not include those school-created honors.
- All campuses receive multiple GPAs for selection purposes, and some campuses may choose to focus on the fully-weighted GPA, which will include the school-created honors from non-California high schools.

## Calculating the UC GPA

### 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.

Add up all the points

Divide total points by the number of letter grades counted



- Although the application will automatically calculate students UC GPA, we did want to go through a brief example.
- First, convert the grades to grade points - A=4 points, B=3 points etc. - we do not use +/- in HS coursework
- In terms of weighted grades, you will give an extra point for each semester of UC-approved honors, AP, IB or CL courses with a **maximum of 8 semester points** between 10th and 11th grades
- Then, you'll add all the points together and divide by the number of letter grades



## How to calculate the UC GPA unweighted & weighted

### Example:

$$15 \text{ A's} - 15 \times 4 = 60$$

$$6 \text{ B's} - 6 \times 3 = 18$$

$$1 \text{ C} - 1 \times 2 = 2$$

$$1 \text{ D} - 1 \times 1 = 1$$

$$1 \text{ F} - 1 \times 0 = 0$$

$$= 81 \text{ total grade points}$$

81/24 (total grade points divided by number of grades). **Unweighted GPA: 3.37**

### Example:

If the student takes 4 semesters of honors and 4 semesters of AP, they will receive 8 weighted GPA points.

$$81 \text{ grade points} + 8 \text{ honors} = 89$$

$$89/24 = \text{Weighted Capped GPA: } \underline{\underline{3.70}}$$



You'll calculate the grade points for each grade by multiplying by the grade point received. Then adding all the grade points together - This student received 81 total grade points. Now we'll divide the total grade points by the number of grades. This student has an unweighted 3.37 GPA.

Note: the extra honors points are simply added to the total grade points; it doesn't matter which 'grades' they are associated with.

Now, let's say that the student took 4 semesters of honors courses and passed each course - the student would have 8 honors points. As a reminder, one grade point is awarded as long as it is an A, B or C regardless of the course. It doesn't matter which 'grade' the points are associated with.

The new total grade points is 89 after adding the 8 honors points, dividing by 24 the student's weighted and capped GPA is 3.70.

It is important to know that it is at the UC campuses' discretion to only look at weighted & capped GPA or to consider weighted & uncapped GPA (meaning more than 8 semesters of honors credit) as a part of selection.

# Comprehensive review

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## What is Comprehensive Review...Context is key

Academics	Activities & accomplishments	Context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GPA</li><li>• Rigor of curriculum (including senior year)</li><li>• ELC Status</li><li>• AP/IB exam credit</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Awards &amp; honors</li><li>• Leadership ability</li><li>• Intellectual curiosity</li><li>• Consistent and sustained involvement in EC &amp; community service</li><li>• Special program participation (EOP, MESA, Upward Bound, etc.)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consideration of family income, education level, and socio-economic</li><li>• School environment, including availability of academic opportunities and resources</li></ul>

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Multiple measures of achievement and promise:

- Strong grades, AP scores and rigorous coursework
- Achievement in academic subject areas or academic programs
- Awards, recognition, achievement

Context in which each student has demonstrated accomplishment:

- Family and/or educational environment
- Available resources or opportunities
- Challenges students may have faced

### 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  
required!**

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**Note: How are SAT and ACT scores used in admissions?**

SAT and ACT scores are not used in admissions decisions. If scores are submitted, they can be used to meet select A-G requirements or, after matriculation, to satisfy GE areas or for course placement. SAT/ACT are not seen in the UC application at the time of review.

## 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

Now that we went over the Comprehensive Review factors, let's talk about the different sections of the UC application students can showcase some of the non-academic factors.

- About You - This section covers important information about the student. Students have the option to include information such as first-gen or dependent of a U.S. military veteran
- Activities & Awards - This section students can include activities or awards that they have achieved at their school, in their community
- Personal Insight Questions - This section allows students to share their story in their own words
- Additional Comments - Another section on the UC application where students can share any other information they wish for us to know.

To learn more on how to leverage the Activities & Awards section, be sure to attend or watch the recordings from some of the other sessions today to learn more about these sections.

**Note:** In compliance with prop 209, UC does not use race, ethnicity, and gender in the admissions review. In light of the Supreme Court decision regarding affirmative action, we wish to remind everyone that each PIQ answer will continue to be reviewed in the same manner as before. Students should continue to share their experiences, set context to their accomplishments and provide insight into their individual circumstances. Writing in their own voice about their cultural identity, values, and/or beliefs continues to be encouraged in the PIQs.

## 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.

While the Comprehensive Review points are the same for the whole system, the review process varies slightly from campus to campus. However, at each campus, these factors remain the same:

- Each submitted application is not read by a committee, but rather given multiple reads
- Every application will have an individual review of their application - meaning that we are not comparing students and applicants are read in the context of their environment
- The readers are thoroughly trained by each respective UC campus
- As we talked about previously, selection of students will vary from campus to campus due to things such as enrollment goals and campus size
- All campuses utilize the 13 different Comprehensive Review factors, however they use them differently - Some campuses use holistic review approaches where no factor is weighed more than others, while other campuses may weight certain factors. It is important to check with each respective campus if you are interested to learn more.

## ELC and Statewide guarantee

**Eligibility in the local context (ELC):** CA resident students in the top 9% of their California high school class.

- ELC status adds value to the application and is considered during the review process. ELC students who are not admitted to any of their campus choices will be offered a spot at a UC campus with enough space (if minimum requirements are met).

**Statewide guarantee:** California resident students in the top 9% of California high school graduates.

- These students will be offered a guaranteed spot at a UC campus, space allowing.



- If a student is a California resident and ranks in the top 9 percent of students in their California high school class — and the high school participates in our ELC program — they may be eligible for ELC designation.
- We will identify the top 9 percent of students based on GPA in UC-approved coursework completed in the 10th and 11th grades. To be considered for ELC, students must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 and complete the following A-G courses prior to senior year: 1 year of history, 2 years of English, 2 years of math, 1 year of science, 1 year of LOTE, and 4 years of other A-G courses in any area.
- A benchmark GPA is calculated for each participating high school, and students who meet or exceed that benchmark GPA for their particular school are designated as ELC.
- We use a formula called the Statewide Index to determine which students are in the top 9% of California high school graduates. The updated Statewide Index considers the A-G course totals and the UC GPA. We count the total number of UC-approved A-G courses completed and in progress/planned in 9th-12th grade and calculate the UC GPA using the A-G courses completed between the summer following 9th grade and the summer following 11th grade. If the total number of A-G courses is equal to or greater than the number of A-G courses listed in the index for that GPA, the student is in the top 9%.

Learn more about both ELC and the statewide guarantee at <https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/admission-requirements/freshman-requirements/california-residents/>

# First-year admissions timeline

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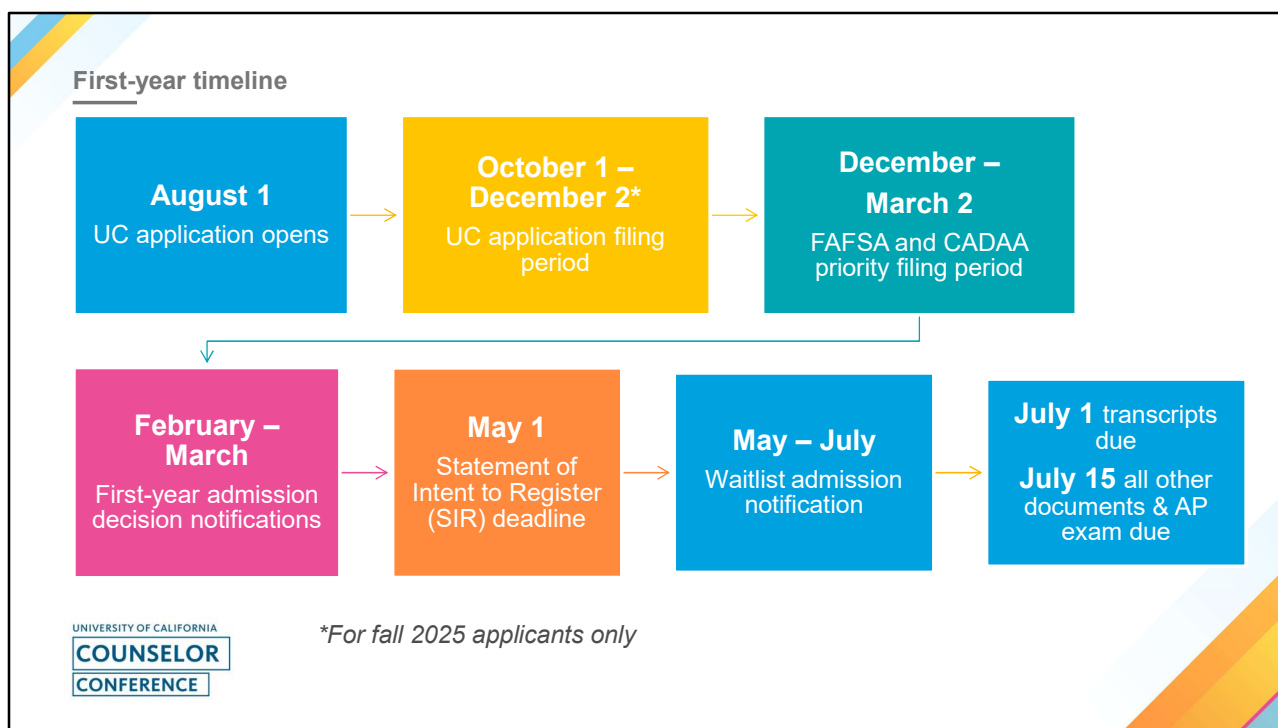
## UC application

### **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



- There is one application for all nine UC campuses.
- Students can apply to as many of the nine (9) UC campuses they want to.
- The application fee is \$80 (\$95 for international applicants)
- There is a possible application fee waiver for up to four (4) free campuses. The application fee waiver is integrated into the application and determined by family economic factors asked for in the UC application
- Letters of recommendation are not required in the UC application. Campuses may give students the opportunity to submit letters of recommended. This will be requested directly by the campus to students for supplemental materials.
- The UC application does not ask for transcripts to be submitted when applying. Students are asked to submit transcripts after they are accepted into a UC.



- Aug 1: the UC Application opens for editing
- Oct 1: Student can start to submit their application
- Dec. 2: The UC application submission deadline
  - NOTE: The Dec. 2 deadline *only* applies to the Fall 2025 application cycle. Normally, the UC application closes on November 30.
- Dec-Feb: UC campuses are reviewing submitted applications
- Late March: All UC Campuses release admission decisions by this point
- May 1: Deadline for students to accept their admission offer and submit their Statement of Intent to Register (SIR)
- July 1: Transcript Deadline
- July 15: All other documents and AP exam scores

**Important notes:**

- Official documents and transcripts are submitted *after* a student SIRs to a campus
- Student should regularly check their application portals and emails for any updates from campuses.
- Waitlist decisions maybe shared after May 1<sup>st</sup> and typically wrap up by the end of July.
- Waitlist admits receive a specific timeline to accept their waitlist offer, typically this one week after notification of being admitted off the waitlist
- Each campus approaches the waitlist differently, if you have more questions about specific campuses waitlist processes it is best to check with them.
- Students can only accept an admission offer to one (1) campus.
- May 1st is a hard deadline to accept an admission offer.
- Once an admission offer is accepted by the student, the acceptance of the offer is final.
- Acceptance of an admission offer cannot be transferred from one campus to another.

# Resources

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## Counselor resources

### UC Counselors website



### A-G course list



### Counselors and Advisers Bulletin (CAB)



### Campuses and majors



### 2024 Quick Reference Guide



### UC Info Center



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- UC Counselors website: <https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/counselors/>
- Subscribe to the CAB: <https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/counselors/connect-to-resources/counselors-and-advisers-bulletin.html>
- 2024 Quick Reference Guide: [https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/counselors/\\_files/documents/quick-reference-guide-to-uc-admissions.pdf](https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/counselors/_files/documents/quick-reference-guide-to-uc-admissions.pdf)
- A-G course list: <https://hs-articulation.ucop.edu/agcourselist>
- Campus and majors: <https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/campuses-majors/>
- UC Info Center: <https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center>

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**Thank you**

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