
What's the 411 with first-year admissions?

September 2026

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Agenda

- Definition of a first-year student
- A-G requirements
- UC GPA
- Comprehensive review
- First-year admissions timeline
- Resources



Defining “first-year”

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 still 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.

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General admissions 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

- 3.4 GPA for nonresidents
- All coursework must be completed with a grade of C- or better

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Middle school coursework

- **Only** math and LOTE coursework can be met with 7th and 8th grade coursework
- These courses are expected to be high-school level, but we don't require them to be included on the high school transcript
- Reported separately in UC application

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A-G requirements



A- History/Social Science

Requirement: 2 years (4 semesters)

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



B - English

Requirement: 4 years (8 semesters)

What it includes:

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

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C - Mathematics

Requirement: 3 years required (6 semesters);
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 grade math coursework is accepted

Beginning fall 2026:

- Statistics will no longer validate Algebra II/Math 3
- No higher-level course will validate the Geometry requirement

Check out “**Catch the wave, avoid the wipeout: Navigating UC validation**” for more info!

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D - Science

Requirement: 2 years (4 semesters) required, 3 years recommended

What it includes:

- Must include two of the three foundational subjects: Biology, Chemistry, and Physics
- One year of approved interdisciplinary or earth and space science coursework can meet one year of the requirement

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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
- 7th and 8th grade coursework is accepted

Students are expected to reach the second level of instruction.

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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 for credit

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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 (e.g., Psychology, Business, Sociology)

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UC A-G course lists

A-G COURSE LIST

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CSU The California
State University

What can we help you find?

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 **Biology Honors**

A gold star indicates the course is UC Honors approved

Biology / Life Sciences

Course discipline

 Classroom-based

Learning environment the course is offered in

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

- Grade of C or better in a UC-transferable course of 3 or more semester units
 - Some non-transferable courses can be used to meet Areas B and C

Want to know more about how college courses can be used to meet A-G requirements?

Check out “**What to know about dual enrollment and UC**” for more info!

Repeat A-G courses

Repeated courses

- 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.

Which courses can be used as repeats?

- 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.

Mathematics (Area C) and **languages other than English (Area E)** are considered sequential and students can validate lower-level coursework by the successful completion of a higher-level course.

Two types of validation

- **Subject omission:** Higher-level course validates a lower-level course even if the lower-level course was not completed.
- **Deficient grade:** Higher-level course validates a course where a D or F grade was originally earned.
 - Note: Validating a course is not the same as repeating it and won't replace a D or F grade.

UC GPA



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 (CA only), 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

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Comprehensive review



Minimum requirements vs. selection

Minimum requirements

- A-G coursework
- UC GPA minimum
- Consistent for all campuses

Selection

- Comprehensive review (13 factors)
- Varies by campus
- Done independently by the campuses

See **page 30** in the [Quick Reference Guide](#) for detailed charts and campus-specific policies for reviewing applicants.

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

Related sections in the UC application include:

- Academic History
- Test scores (*AP, IB, international, or English Language Proficiency exams only*)

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 include:

- About you
- Activities & awards
- Personal Insight Questions
- Additional comments

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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 transcript submissions when applying; submit transcripts after admitted

UC Berkeley

UC DAVIS

UC Irvine

UCLA

UC MERCED



RIVERSIDE

UC SANTA BARBARA

UC SANTA CRUZ

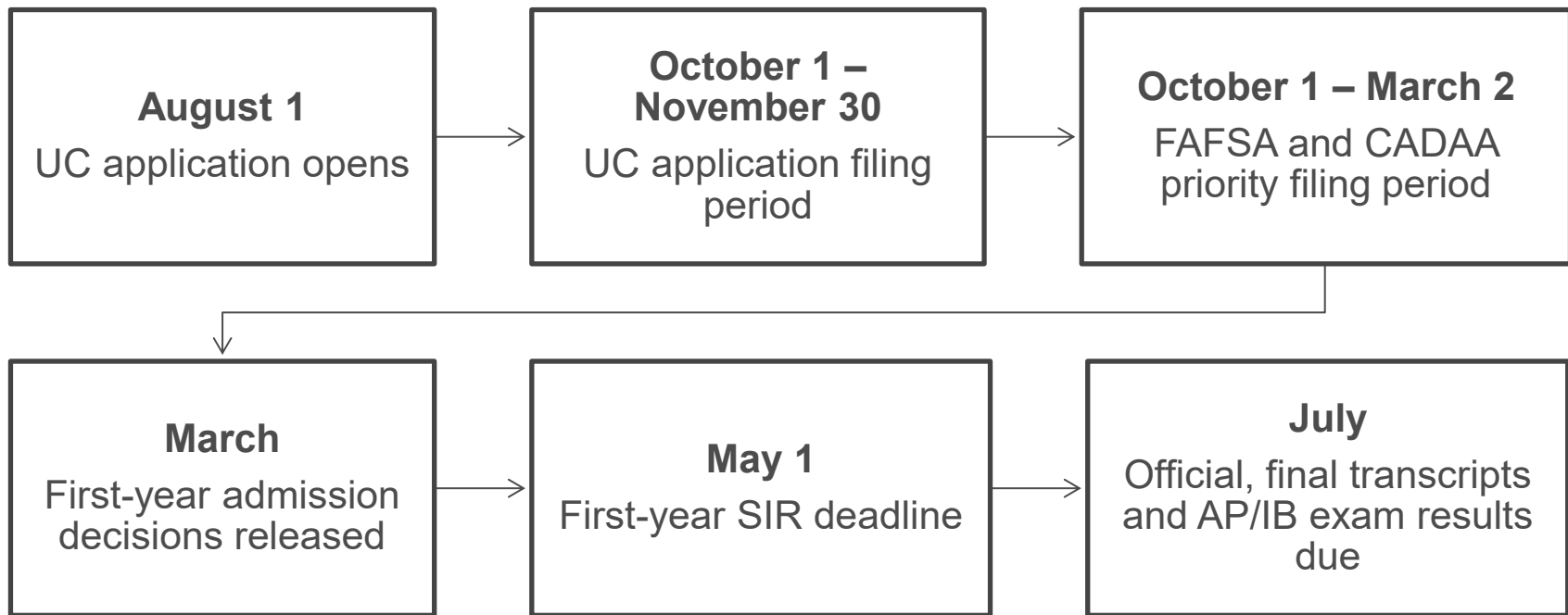
UC San Diego

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Resources



Counselor resources

Quick Reference Guide to UC Admissions



UC Counselors website & Resource Library



A-G course lists



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Thank You