**Navigating Campus**

To succeed at CAL, you will need to navigate the campus in order to access academic resources, build community and stay healthy. Berkeley International Office (BIO) offers the following advice.

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| **The Basics** |
| **Course Enrollment:** Classes start 1/16. Enrollment must be 12 units for visa purposes; colleges may require more. Go to internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/new and view “Choosing Course” for tips. Make sure courses are transferable to your home university. |
| **Waitlist and Class Shopping:** Waitlisted classes do not count towards the 12-unit minimum required for your visa. To find open courses: registrar.berkeley.edu/registration/suggested-classes. Add/drop deadlines are in Week 3 (for high demand courses) and Week 5 (for all other courses). If you add a class, don’t forget to drop another. Attend both classes and do the work for both until your schedule is finalized. It’s difficult to catch up if you start a class after the first week or two of school – and very hard if you start in week 5. Meet with the professor and discuss what to do about missed work and how to succeed despite having missed classes. |
| **Syllabus:** The syllabus will tell you everything you need to know, including what you need to buy for the course, deadlines, exam dates and evaluation method. Check out **BIO’s Be Your Best Bear (BYBB)** Syllabus tip sheet (on our website) to help you understand your syllabus. |
| **Assignments and Exams:** Take note of assignments and what percentage of the grade they account for. Make a semester-long calendar with midterm and final dates and due dates for big assignments and projects. Evaluation is ongoing throughout the semester. You can expect midterms to start in Week 3 and not end until finals. |
| **Holistic Learning** |
| **Use Resources:** Academic success is interconnected with joining in the campus community, using wellness resources, and utilizing academic support like the Student Learning Center. |
| **This is a BIG University:** You are joining almost 42,000 other amazing students at Cal. Start getting to know your peers by joining BIO’s Coffee Break, every Wednesday at Julie’s Cafe. Check our Facebook page for more information. |
| **Build Community:** If you intentionally develop social networks, you will be happier and more likely to succeed. You can find community by joining student organizations, attending office hours, finding an on campus job, or connecting with classmates. |
| **Talk to Professors:** Just because a professor may go by their first name, does not mean you can use casual English to address them. Use polite, professional English when writing or in email. Definitely attend office hours in the first three weeks of the semester. See BIOs BYBB tip sheet on talking to professors. |
| **Find Balance:** Most students enroll in 4 courses. Generally, this is 2 core courses towards a degree, an exploratory course, and a lighter class. Technical classes take a lot of time, so limit yourself to two per semester. Humanities classes can also take up a lot of time and will depend on your ability to write long papers and manage a large amount of reading. In your first semester, we recommend not choosing more than one high commitment extracurricular (~3 hours or more each week). |
| **Decentralized Campus** |
| **Resources are spread out:** To get something you need, you may need to coordinate with multiple people or offices (e.g., BIO, Cal Student Central, UC EAP, your college/department, your professor, and your home university). Allow time for administrative processes. BIO can help. |
| **Explore Your Interests:** When you are able to overcome decentralization, you can take advantage of the wide array of courses and research opportunities offered in a variety of departments and fields. Explore your interests while working with your home university to ensure that the courses will meet their requirements. |
| **Research** |
| **URAP (**[**http://research.berkeley.edu/urap**](http://research.berkeley.edu/urap)**)** offers formal research opportunities. Info sessions start on Jan. 16th and the application deadline is Jan. 23. Peer advisors can review your application and give you guidance. |
| **Other research opportunities:** You can approach professors and GSIs directly to find out about additional opportunities. If any opportunity is paid or extends beyond your academic program, you will need to apply for work authorization. Please come to BIO to discuss this. |
| **Challenges** |
| **You will be challenged:** As you’re busy exploring all that CAL has to offer, sometimes challenges arise. This is normal. Expect some failure. Seek support. Learn resilience |
| **Be Persistent:** In addition to friends and family, you can seek support from faculty, academic advisors, BIO advisors and Tang Center counselors. You’re not alone. |
| **Be an Active Learner:** In addition to seeking support, it is your responsibility to show up fully in the classroom. Raise your hand, ask questions, express your opinion, and join the discussion. Learning comes from the instructor, but is also social and multidirectional. See BIO’s BYBB “Participate” tip sheet. |
| **Academic Resources** |
| * Handout on Academic Integrity (in your folder) * Student Learning Center (slc.berkeley.edu/) * College Tutoring * Libraries (lib.berkeley.edu) * BIO’s Be Your Best Bear tips (internationaloffice.berkeley.edu/students/current/academics) * ***Want more tips? Read your email from BIO. Follow BIO on FB and Instagram. Meet us for advising (M/T/Th/F, 10am-12pm and 1pm-4pm).*** |