Welcome to the Department!

UC Berkeley’s Department of History is one of the top-ranked history departments in the nation. Our faculty’s research covers almost the entirety of recorded history and spans most of the globe. Across the world, the Department is known for its expertise in cultural history, but our faculty also specialize in political history, the history of science, economic history, religious history, the history of sexuality, intellectual history, urban history, imperial and world history, and many other fields. Members of this department have won the most prestigious awards our profession has to offer, from the MacArthur “genius award” to Berkeley’s own Distinguished Teaching Award. We have a well-deserved reputation on campus not only for the quality of our courses but for the quality of our major. The department’s alumni have gone on to a variety of successful careers in research, education, law, business, public affairs, and other professions.

“History at Berkeley is a highly flexible major that allows undergraduate students to follow their interests... [and that] places a strong value on original student research.”

History at Berkeley is a highly flexible major that allows students to follow their interests. It is also a major that places strong value on original student research, with all our students completing capstone projects on topics they choose in consultation with members of the faculty. The major consists of twelve courses, four in the lower division and eight in the upper division, including at least two small seminars with less than fifteen students. Lower division classes generally introduce large topics or long periods of history, providing sweeping narratives that emphasize breadth. Equipped with this context, students then move on to more specialized upper-division classes that emphasize depth. Students may declare the major after completing three courses in the Department of History, including at least two courses in the lower division.

We live in a world shaped by history. We cannot understand the world or hope to improve it without serious attention to the historical process that created it. So welcome to the Department of History at Berkeley: education for the world.
Contact Information

Department Office
3229 Dwinelle Hall (Level C)
University of California, Berkeley
510-642-1971

Mailing Address:
Undergraduate Advising
Department of History
3229 Dwinelle Hall, #2550
Berkeley, CA 94720-2550

Web Address:
http://history.berkeley.edu/

Facebook Page:
HistoryAdvisingatCal

Undergraduate Advising
Leah Flanagan
Undergraduate Major Advisor
3226 Dwinelle Hall (Level C)
510-642-0356
leahf@berkeley.edu
Drop-in Advising 9-12 and 1-4, Monday - Friday

Undergraduate Minor & Graduate School Admissions Advisor
Erin Leigh Inama
3312 Dwinelle Hall (Level C)
510-642-2378
history-recruitment@berkeley.edu

TBA
Student Services Coordinator
3313 Dwinelle Hall (Level C)
510-643-8995
history-ssc@berkeley.edu

Peer Advisors
Main Office, 3228 Dwinelle
Names, fields and drop-in hours will be posted in early Fall.

Faculty
To find our faculty, please see office hours and emails posted on our website or on the wall by the main office door (3229 Dwinelle Hall).
History Undergraduate Program Requirements
For Students entering in the 2015/2016 Year

Students may declare the major after completing three letter-graded courses in the Department of History with a 2.0 grade point average or better. This must include at least two courses in the lower division.

Lower Division Requirements

Four courses at UC Berkeley (or their equivalents in a history department elsewhere), to include:

- one survey course in the history of the United States (7A or 7B)
- one survey course in the history of Europe (4A, 4B or 5)
- one survey course in the history of another world area (3, 6, 6A, 6B, 8A, 8B, 10, 11, 12, 14)
- one elective (any of additional course listed above, or History 2, 30 or 39)

Note that History R1B, 24, 84 and 98 do not fulfill any major requirements.

Students may substitute one “survey-like” upper-division course for any one of the first three requirements, in consultation with the undergraduate advisor.

Upper Division Requirements

Eight courses, to include:

- at least one proseminar (History 103)
- one senior thesis research seminar (History 101)
- at least four of the eight upper-division courses, including the 101, must constitute a Field of Concentration.

Field of Concentration Requirement

Each Student is required to define a “Field of Concentration” within the discipline which links together four courses, including their History 101. The three additional courses in the Field may include History 103. They may also include one appropriate upper-division course (of at least three units) from another department (to have this course approved please bring a syllabus to the undergraduate advisor).

Students must submit the Field of Concentration form (online) two semesters prior to graduation (thus, for example, during the spring of the junior year for majors expecting to graduate the following spring) in order to secure approval for their Field of Concentration from the Committee on the History Undergraduate Major.

Premodern Requirement

At least one course (as one of the twelve required courses) devoted entirely to premodern history to be selected from courses focused on one or more of the following eras: Antiquity, the Classical Period, and the Medieval Period. Courses dealing solely with the Early Modern Period do not satisfy this requirement. This may be either an upper or lower division course. A current list of courses that satisfy the premodern requirement is maintained on the departmental website.

Note that to be used for the major, courses must be taken for a letter grade. Additionally, a minimum grade point average of 2.0 must be maintained in courses used for the major overall and at the upper division.
**History Major Planning Sheet**

This worksheet is a planning aid, not a commitment. Use it as a guide. Think about what you want to get out of your major and what courses will fulfill that purpose. Use the Major Handbook and the course archives on the History Department website as references.

Students may declare the major after completing three lower division history courses **OR** two lower division survey courses plus one upper division lecture course.

**Prerequisites:** With approval, one of the first three may be an upper division lecture, but it cannot then appear in the Upper Division list as well.

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<td>(4) Elective</td>
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Students may take one upper division course outside the History Department, but it must be a “history” class, in the field of concentration, and approved by the Undergraduate Advisor.

**Upper Division:** Eight courses from 100-199, including at least one History 103, and one History 101.

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<td>(8) <strong>101</strong></td>
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**Field of Concentration Title:**

_Courses in field, selected from the upper division list above (may include History 103):_  
(1) ____________ (2) ____________ (3) ____________ (4) __History 101_____

- **Pre-Modern Requirement Completed.** One course is required, can be lower or upper division.
- **History 103 Completed.** One is required, but more than one is recommended. 103s fulfill the same requirements as upper division lectures, except they cannot be used to satisfy the pre-modern requirement.
Check DARS to verify that your College and University requirements have been successfully completed and to see what you have left. Meet with a College advisor if you have any questions about these requirements.

**College of Letters and Science and University Requirement Checklist**

- 6 Upper Division Units (in a minimum of two courses) Outside of the Major Completed. Note that courses crosslisted with history will not count.
- Seven Course Breadth Completed.
- American Cultures Requirement Completed.
- American History And Institutions Requirement Satisfied.
- Foreign Language Requirement Completed (must be for a letter grade).
- Quantitative Reasoning Requirement Completed (must be for a letter grade).
- Writing and Composition Requirement Completed.
- Unit Requirement Met.
- Residency Requirement Met.

For details on the College and University requirements and how to fulfill them go to: http://ls-advise.berkeley.edu/requirement/summary.html or meet with a college advisor.

**Contact Information for L&S Advising**

For Same-Day or Pre-Scheduled Appointments, visit 206 Evans Hall, call 510-642-1483 or visitbhive.berkeley.edu. 15 minute Same-Day appointments may be scheduled beginning at 9am for the same day. Summer advising hours will vary.

**Front Desk Hours:**

Weekdays 9am-4pm (closed noon-1pm); Wednesdays 1-4pm

**Address:** 206 Evans Hall, Berkeley, CA 94720-2924

**Final Degree Check**

The semester you intend to graduate be certain to request a degree audit from the college by submitting the “Graduation Check Form” (http://ls-advise.berkeley.edu/fp/12Add_Deg_List.pdf) to L&S. This needs to be submitted before the end of the first week of classes so that if there is a problem, they can alert you while you can still add a class. They will send you an email confirming that you have met all of your requirements or letting you know what you have left to do.

**Notes:**
Thinking About Your Field of Concentration

The purpose of the field is to create as much context as you can for your eventual thesis topic, to learn which faculty members will have the best answers to your questions, and to think about how and when and where your classes might connect. Keep in mind you’re not bound to this plan forever; if you have a better idea later, you can change your mind.

The concept of developing a field of Concentration in the history major is covered on our website here: http://history.berkeley.edu/undergraduate/fields-concentration. On that page you will also find the link to the online field declaration form.

You are expected to be able to declare your field by the end of your junior year. Transfer students, and others who are having trouble coming to a conclusion, may wait until they see the 103 list in the summer. Please take advantage of faculty office hours during the Fall and Spring terms to ask questions about your potential field and potential thesis topics. One may lead to the other.

If you are still having trouble deciding on a field you might try thinking about your favorite classes and what themes they have in common. Perhaps go back through your notes, and see what jumps out. Or work backwards: think about what you’ve been tossing around as potential thesis topics. How are they connected? How did you first think about those topics? There’s no need to be an expert at the inception of your project.

Transfer Coursework, Independent Study & AP Credit

There are a variety of ways that you can satisfy the course requirements for the major aside from taking courses in our department. Below are the department’s policies pertaining to alternative forms of course credit.

Transfer Credit and Credit for EAP Coursework. To find equivalent courses at California Community Colleges, see assist.org. Please be aware that not every possible course is articulated on assist.org. You are welcome to ask the undergraduate advisor about any non-articulated history courses taught at a CCC. Note that community college courses can only be used to satisfy lower division requirements.

For courses that are not articulated, including all courses taken at institutions other than California Community colleges, please bring a syllabus (or at least a course description) along with a copy of the transcript on which the course appears (unofficial is fine) and the Course Approval Form (available on the Department of History website) when you come in to declare the major.

All of the lower division requirements may be satisfied through transfer credit if the courses are articulated or approved. A maximum of four upper division courses taken at other institutions (including those of the Education Abroad Program of the University of California) may be applied to the major. Please be aware that you cannot substitute non-Berkeley courses for the 101 or 103 requirement.
**Declaring and Being a History Major: Things Every History Major Needs to Know**

You are not officially a history major until you “declare.” Declaring requires turning in, to the Undergraduate Major Advisor, a copy (unofficial is fine) of all transcripts upon which non-Berkeley history courses appear, and filling out the Major Declaration Form. Once you have completed that process, you are a declared major, and there are a few things you should know:

- **Advisor Codes.** You will now need an advisor code each semester in order to use Tele-BEARS. Advisor codes are generated a couple of weeks before Telebears begins, and are given out by the Major Advisor in person only, unless you are studying abroad or off campus for another reason. At the advisor code meeting, your file will be updated, and you will have the opportunity to discuss your plans for the following term.

- **Listserve.** All declared majors are subscribed to the History undergraduate e-mail listserv. You’ll receive timely, important information via the listserv (how to get your adviser code, important deadlines, research opportunities, changes to the schedule, department events, etc.). This is the official way the Department communicates important information to undergraduate majors, and only items of interest to history majors are included. Please take the time to read the e-mails.

- **Facebook Page.** The History advising staff maintains a Facebook page. You can like this page to get up to the moment updates on office hour changes, reminders about departmental events and the occasional interesting History in the news item. If you are not a Facebook user you can view our feed on our website at the bottom of our major page at: http://history.berkeley.edu/undergraduate/major.

- **Language Preparation.** There is no language requirement for the history major. However, if you are considering doing your thesis research or applying to graduate school in History in a field other than US or Britain, you will have a great advantage if you have appropriate language skills. We highly recommend that all history majors consider taking language courses that relate to their intellectual interests beyond the minimum required by the university. Please note that undergraduates can apply for the foreign language Area Studies Fellowship pay for this training. See: http://grad.berkeley.edu/financial/pdf/flas_academic_year_announcement.pdf

- **Advising availability.** Advising office hours are Monday-Friday from 9-12 and 1-4 on a drop-in basis (phone, e-mail or in-person.) The Major Advisor does not make appointments, unless you are coming from far away. The Facebook page will always announce major changes to the regular drop-in schedule.
Credit for Courses Outside of History. Of the twelve courses that make up the History major, at least eleven must be completed within a Department of History. You may, with permission, include one upper division course from another department in constructing your Field of Concentration. You will need to submit a syllabus, and see the undergraduate advisor to discuss how your outside class fits into your field.

Independent Study in History. Students may create an independent study project in consultation with a supervising professor in the History Department under the number History 199. (Lecturers and GSIs may not supervise History 199.) With the professor’s approval, History 199 may be taken for 1, 2, 3 or 4 units. A four-unit History 199 may count once as an upper division course requirement. History 199 may only be taken P/NP and will not be counted in the major GPA.

AP Credit and On-Line Courses. The Department of History does not accept Advanced Placement credit or on-line courses in lieu of any major requirements.

The Seminar Requirement

History 101s and 103s

The department of history offers classes on a wide range of topics, regions, and periods, and it divides classes into different levels. Lower division classes generally introduce major topics or long periods of history, providing sweeping narratives that emphasize breadth over depth. Equipped with this context, students are prepared to move onto more specialized, demanding, and focused upper division-classes on particular topics. And at least twice during the major, students will take seminars – intimate, discussion-based classes where history can be explored in unmatched depth. Graduating seniors often report that seminars were the most challenging and rewarding classroom experiences they had in college. History majors are required to take at least one 103 (a proseminar), and one 101 (a senior thesis seminar).

HISTORY 103

What is History 103? History 103 is a proseminar, and as such exposes you to the way that graduate students study history. The course takes place once a week for two hours, and is limited to 15 students. You will meet in a seminar room around a table with the instructor, who may be a faculty member, visiting lecturer, or advanced graduate student. History 103 is worth 4 units, and is very intensive both in and outside of class. Each seminar is unique, but generally there will be one book (usually a monograph) assigned per week, and about 25 pages of writing assigned over the course of the semester. Class participation will usually account for a significant percentage of your final grade. Unlike other history courses at Berkeley, History 103 has no exams.

History 103 also differs from our regular lectures in terms of focus. The goal is to read deeply in a particular topic or field, focusing on its historiography. 103 will likely also include a small research project that you will ideally use to springboard to a 101 topic (however, it is not required that you keep the same topic). What form this project takes depends on the instructor.
The Path to Your Senior Thesis

The senior thesis in History, which you will write in the History 101 seminar, is the capstone experience of the history major, and the first time you will be asked to “be the historian” from beginning to end. There are many ways to develop your thinking about your eventual thesis topic, to go about learning the skills you’ll need, and to increase your understanding of just what it is that historians do. Some of it will just happen through paying attention in class, attending office hours and asking questions like “Would this make a good topic for my thesis? What kinds of primary sources might I want to think about, and where should I look for them?” etc. Reading secondary material with an eye to learning the craft is also critical (hint: read the footnotes!). There are also good suggestions within the Resources for Academic Success listings. But we also highly suggest taking the following two classes - Berkeley Connect and History 104—and thinking carefully about your Field of Concentration.

Berkeley Connect (History 98 or History 198, pay attention to the CCNs):
Berkeley Connect in History links undergraduate students with experienced graduate student or recent PhD mentors in History. These mentors lead small groups of 10-20 students in regular meetings is a one credit, pass-fail course that is designed to create a community of students with similar intellectual interests. There is no homework associated with Berkeley Connect: no exams, no papers, no quizzes. Instead, small group meetings focus on sharing ideas and learning new skills as a way to foster friendships and provide a supportive intellectual community for Berkeley undergraduates. It also involves food, alumni and faculty panels. It’s a great way to meet people and get to know more about the field of history, and our department. More information is available at: http://www.berkeleyconnect.berkeley.edu/departments.

History 104 – The Craft of History:
This 4-unit upper division course is a hands-on methodology course that is designed to prepare you for the advanced research and writing expected in History 101. This new course was offered for the first time in Spring 2014, and it will be offered for the second time in Spring 2015. It counts as a full upper division course towards the major requirements and will make the thesis easier. If you are a sophomore or a junior, don’t forget to look for History 104 in Spring 2015!

How do I register for a 103? The first part of signups for History 103 take place through the History website. For fall 103s, signups take place through the website for about two weeks during the summer. For spring 103s, signups take place through the website for a few days before Telebears begins in October. After you are placed in a section, you must enroll in the course through Telebears. Please see the History 103 web page for further logistics of signing up for History 103: http://history.berkeley.edu/courses/undergraduate/103

Generally there is more of a selection of 103s in Fall, but there is somewhat less competition for seats in the spring. If students miss the online signups, or decide they would like to take a 103 at the last minute, simply add the course through Telebears. History 103 students must attend the first day of class or inform the instructor in advance that they will not be there or they may be dropped from the class.

History majors are required to take at least one 103, but taking more than one is highly recommended. Taking more than one 103 per term is not recommended.

HISTORY 101

What Is History 101? The History 101 seminar is a 15-person seminar that will guide and support you through the capstone experience of your undergraduate history education: the researching and writing of a senior thesis. History 101 is challenging and also intensely rewarding. You will write a 30-40 page final paper that articulates and defends a historical argument rooted in primary source research, and is informed by thorough secondary source reading. This project is the beginning of your work as a historian.
How Can I Best Prepare For The 101? The best way to prepare for the 101 (along with following the “path” outlined above), and thereby minimize stress and maximize your chances of writing a successful senior thesis, is to search for potential topics well in advance of enrolling in the seminar. A viable thesis topic requires more than a good question; it requires a good and answerable question. Sometimes one must do weeks of research to determine whether or not a potential topic is viable as a senior thesis. Therefore it is imperative that you work hard to identify and explore potential topics long before you begin a 101, and that you avail yourself of faculty expertise along the way. Take advantage of faculty office hours to ask questions about potential topics that you are curious about. This is a great way to break the ice with your professors and get a head start on your eventual thesis. You are quite welcome to visit office hours even if you are not in a professor’s class that term. It is critical to have a workable topic in hand before the first 101 class meeting, and only the faculty in that particular field will be able to help you figure out whether your topic is really workable. (It is especially important to consider whether you can read the primary sources in the language they are written in. It’s fine to use translations, but they are not always available.) Ideally, students will have identified an interesting and doable topic and will have done preliminary work on that topic in an upper-division lecture class or History 103 and/or 104 before they begin their 101 seminar.

How Can I Register For The 101? History 101 signups follow the same procedures as the 103s, above. See the web page for further information: http://history.berkeley.edu/courses/undergraduate/101

How Can I find Out More About the 101 Process and Requirements? See the FAQ for History 101 as well as the student manual here: http://history.berkeley.edu/undergraduate/history-101-faq. You can also talk to your history professors in office hours or visit the peer advisor or our undergraduate advisors.

Some One & Two Unit Course Options

Most Berkeley classes are four units, but students are required to take at least 13 units to be considered a full-time student. New transfers and those working on their theses are advised to take a maximum of two 4-unit courses and a 5-unit course (such as a language course) or three four-unit courses and a one or two unit course. You can find current two unit options by searching the schedule of classes by unit value (1, 2). Listed below are classes that have historically been popular with History majors and that are consistently offered every term.

**Political Science 179: Colloquium in Political Science (One Unit Pass/Not Pass)**

This one-unit course will feature a guest speaker each week discussing an issue currently in the news. The class is open to all students, and there are no prerequisites. The class is offered Pass/Not Pass, based on a final examination. May be repeated for credit. Note that this counts towards the six units of upper division credit that you are required to take outside of the major.

**Education 197 (variable unit)**

Enroll in ED 97/197 Field Studies and make a difference in a person’s life through teaching, mentoring, tutoring, or advising. The course is designed to provide UC Berkeley students with the opportunity to gain experience in the education field while providing a free service to the community. If taken as 197 these count towards the six units of upper division credit that you are required to take outside of the major. For details about volunteer opportunities, units/grading restrictions and more please see: http://gse.berkeley.edu/research/eco/ap/ed97/all_sections.html#1

**Undergraduate Research Apprenticeship Program**

The Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program (URAP) is designed to involve Berkeley undergraduates more deeply in the research life of the University. The Program provides opportunities for you to work with faculty on the cutting edge research projects for which Berkeley is world-renowned. Working closely with faculty, you will deepen
your knowledge and skills in areas of special interest, while experiencing what it means to be part of an intellectual community engaged in research. Students can receive 1 unit for every 45 hours of work (3 hours of work per week) on a faculty project. Students who participate in the Fall and Spring can apply for special URAP funding for a summer research project. New research opportunities are open at the start of each semester. Student applications and supporting materials are due in the Program Office in 301 Campbell Hall in the second week of classes each term. See: http://research.berkeley.edu/urap/projects/index.lasso for the list of current projects. Note that even if taken with a History professor these units count towards the six units of upper division credit that you are required to take outside of the major.

DeCal Classes
DeCal stands for Democratic Education at Cal. It is a student-run organization on the UC Berkeley campus. It is a registered student group through OSL (Office of Student Life) and is sponsored in part by the ASUC (Associated Students of the University of California). DeCal’s mission is to provide support for student facilitators. Each semester they support over 150 courses facilitated by students, for students, on topics ranging from Taiwanese Language to Simpsons and Philosophy. These are accredited Pass/No Pass courses on our campus. For a full listing of courses, go to decal.org

Transfer Center Courses for New Transfer Students

The transfer center at Berkeley offers a variety of 1-2 unit courses to help you acclimate to campus. These are highly recommended. For enrollment info, go to: http://trsp.berkeley.edu/courses.htm

Education 198: Strategies for Success at Cal for Transfer Students (One Unit Pass/Not Pass)
The goal of this course is to assist transfer students in making an effective transition to university life. It will introduce you to the numerous resources on campus and help you hone your academic skills. Classroom discussions and exercises emphasize collaborative learning and focus on study strategy topics such as managing time and procrastination, reading and learning actively, writing and communicating effectively, and improving test preparation and performance. Guest speakers will present information on resources, services, and opportunities. Note that this counts towards the six units of upper division credit that you are required to take outside of the major.

Education 198: Adult Learners in Higher Education (One unit Pass/Not Pass)
This course addresses specific issues relevant to re-entry (25 and older) adult learners during the transitional first semester at Cal. Course discussions and assignments are designed to refine study skills such as managing the heavy reading load, refining writing skills to Berkeley standards, and balancing academics with personal and work environments. Due to its adult learning emphasis, this class affords the opportunity to connect with other re-entry learners who deal with concerns that are often different from traditional-age students. In addition to weekly meetings, there are workshops and other opportunities in our TRSP Center to work on skills, to network and build community. Many re-entry students have said that this course was essential to their success at Cal. Note that this counts towards the six units of upper division credit that you are required to take outside of the major.

Education 98/198: Education 98/198: It Takes a Village: Building Support Systems for Student Parents (Two Units Pass/Not Pass)
This two-unit course is specifically designed for students who are combining school and parenting. Our goal is to provide information, build skills, and develop support systems that promote the success of student parents. We focus on strategies to enhance academic success and share ways for student parents to develop a healthy balance between your family, your GPA and your sense of self. If taken as 198 these count towards the six units of upper division credit that you are required to take outside of the major.

Education 198: Veterans in Higher Education (One Unit Pass/Not Pass)
This course is designed to acclimate veterans to the opportunities and expectations of student life at UC Berkeley. Learn to maximize benefits and make the best transition to the Cal academic experience. This class affords the opportunity to connect
with other new and experienced Cal veterans who often share differences from the traditional student experience. Note that this counts towards the six units of upper division credit that you are required to take outside of the major.

Other Transfer Center Courses
In addition to classes for new students, the transfer center at Berkeley also offers a several one to two unit courses capstone courses to help students think through what they want to do after graduation and offers units to students for mentoring or recruiting incoming transfer students. To see what opportunities are available in any particular term go to http://trsp.berkeley.edu/courses.htm

Minors and Second Majors

Many History majors, including transfer students, choose to double major or minor in another field. The list below includes all of the departments in the college of Letters and Sciences that offer both a major and a minor. For a full list of Majors at Berkeley see: http://ls-advise.berkeley.edu/major/majorlist.html. Please note that minoring and double majoring require some extra planning, so be sure to discuss your plans with the Major Advisor as early as possible.

African American Studies
Anthropology
Applied Language Studies
Art, History of
Art, Practice of
Asian Studies
Chinese Studies
Japanese Studies
Korean Studies
Astrophysics
Celtic Studies
Classics

  Classical Civilization
  Greek
  Latin
Creative Writing
Demography
Disability Studies
Earth and Planetary Science
East Asian Languages and Cultures
  Buddhism
  Chinese
  Japanese

Your First Semester: Tips for Transfers

- If you still need to complete any of the lower division courses, you should finish those as soon as possible.

- You will want to take two history courses your first semester. You are required to take six upper division units outside of your major, and completing some of those your first semester would probably be wise as well. You should take no more than 14 units total, and 13 units would be ideal.

- It’s a good idea to focus on your strengths and interests. You will have the best chance at success if you enroll in courses that you are really excited about.

- Consider taking at least one smaller (45 students or fewer) class. The Online Schedule of Classes indicates class size. Students who have at least one smaller course their first semester tend to report an easier transition.

- If you are interested in a large number of courses, and you can’t decide what to take, sign up for as many as the enrollment system allows. For the first few days or so attend all the classes you can get to, even including courses you might be interested in but are not signed up for (this is called “shopping”). Then take some time to look over all the syllabi. Think about your daily schedule, the exam schedules, and any other logistics that are important to you. Then carefully review the requirements of each class, and perhaps spend some time with the books in the bookstore. After you have organized the best schedule possible, please be certain to drop all the courses you decide not to take by the end of the first weekend if at all possible. Finally, print your schedule after all adds and drops.
Academic Success: Resources

There are numerous resources to help you with reading, writing and researching. Professor Mark Brilliant has compiled a useful list of guides for studying and test-taking, library links and other research resources. You can find this list on our website under “Resources – Reading and Writing History” here: http://history.berkeley.edu/content/resources-reading-and-writing-history.

Some of the most useful items to begin with are:

Reading, Writing, and Researching for History - A comprehensive guide
http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/
Created by Patrick Rael of Bowdoin College, this guide clearly lays out the most sensible ways to go about doing the work of a history student.

Elements of an Effective Exam Essay
http://history.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/Keys%20to%20a%20Good%20Essay.pdf
A four-page document Professor Brilliant developed that details a number of essential elements of writing an effective exam essay.

Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations
A handy, affordable, and simplified version of the Chicago Manual of Style.
Research, Travel and Publication

The Library and History Librarian
UC Berkeley’s Library is one of the highest-ranked in the country and includes a strong research collection in History. The librarian for History can assist you with navigating the vast collection of print and electronic materials, locating resources beyond UC Berkeley, and using tools to manage your research. The History Librarian also holds regular office hours in the History Department in 3228 Dwinelle. Per Semester office hours are posted online and on the door. For more resources and formation see: http://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/history/

Research Funding
The department strongly encourages you to seek funding for your thesis and other research during your time at Cal. A small History Department Grant of $750 is available to assist with travel and research expenses for History majors writing their 101 thesis. For more information and the online application see: http://history.berkeley.edu/undergraduate/research-and-travel-opportunities. The department also participates in the Berkeley SMART (Student Mentoring and Research Teams) program, which pairs undergraduates and graduates on research projects and provides summer funding for both. See: http://grad.berkeley.edu/smart/

Beyond the department, the Office of Undergraduate Research maintains a website (http://research.berkeley.edu) that has many links to programs on campus supporting research and offers proposal writing workshops to help students navigate the application process. Every student should look this website over. The most likely or popular programs for History majors on this site are: GROUP, URAP, SURF, HAAS, McNair Scholars, Miller Scholars (for transfers), as well as topic-specific grants through various UC Berkeley centers (e.g., the Center for British Studies, the Center for the Comparative Study of Right-Wing Movements, etc.). For a full list of programs, see http://research.berkeley.edu/opportunities.php.

Berkeley Programs for Study Abroad
While study abroad programs are not research-specific, travel abroad could tie in to research or historical interests and certainly is good for broadening one’s historical awareness. See the Berkeley Study Abroad Programs and other UC study-abroad programs for the range of options available at https://studyabroad-prod.berkeley.edu/. If you are considering study abroad be sure to be aware of History Department’s policies, and see the department undergraduate advisor well in advance of making final plans.

UC Berkeley Washington Program
Each Fall and Spring, the UCB Washington Program sends 25-30 undergraduates to Washington, D.C. to complete academic research projects of their own design, and to participate in internships related to their research. The Program is open to juniors and seniors in any major, and graduating seniors may participate during their final semester at UCB.

To apply, you must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher, and have junior or senior standing in the semester you plan to attend. You must also have taken at least two upper-division courses on the UC Berkeley campus, which provide background for the topic you intend to research. Internships are available in a wide variety of DC-based government agencies, nonprofit organizations, policy think-tanks, media outlets, and businesses. Students live in the new UC Washington Center a half-mile from the White House. UCB financial aid is transferrable to DC. Students earn a full semester of UCB academic credit.
Study Abroad Advice for History Majors

The History Department will allow a maximum of 4 upper-division, letter-graded courses taken at other institutions to be used toward major requirements.

Before you go:
- We can’t guarantee before your return that a particular course abroad will fulfill a major requirement. However, EAP requires you to fill out an Academic Program Plan with your advisor before you leave. If you bring course descriptions and unit calculations with you to that advising session, you will have a much better idea of whether your chosen classes will eventually be approved for the History major. For non-EAP programs, there is a checklist and review available through the Admissions Office, and you should go over the possible courses with your major advisor as well.

- If you are participating in a non-UC-sponsored study abroad program, you will need to submit an application for readmission to return to Cal. Be sure you submit it well before the posted deadline. (See http://ls-advise.berkeley.edu/registration/readmission.html)

- If you plan to conduct research for your senior thesis while studying abroad, talk with a faculty member in your field before you leave, and take detailed notes on your research while you’re away.

While you’re away:
- When you receive your Tele-BEARS appointment to register for your returning semester, send Leah an email with a list of the classes you plan to register for, and she will respond in email with your advisor code. (If you anticipate that you’ll have difficulties with internet access while abroad, leave written permission with Leah to release your advisor code to an “agent” who can do Tele-BEARS for you if you are unable to do so yourself.)

- Keep a personal journal, and take plenty of pictures! You’ll need them when you’re back in Berkeley trying to recreate the experience, and you’ll enjoy having them long after you graduate.

- If your course syllabus does not specify required reading, you should create a reading diary (“para-syllabus”) of books and articles you are actually reading each week. Please make sure to include page numbers for all reading.

When you return:
- Faculty reviewers need evidence that the courses you took elsewhere were taught at the academic level of Cal’s History classes. To make that determination they need to know what and how much you read, what was covered in the course, and how you were evaluated. Thus, it is imperative that you bring back your course descriptions, syllabi, reading lists and all the work you did for your courses (papers, projects, exams, etc.).

- For non-UC-Sponsored programs, you will need to request a transcript to be sent to Cal. Request one for yourself, as well, and make a copy of it for your department file.

- Submit a Course Approval form for each class you want evaluated for use as a major requirement. The form is available on our website: http://history.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/pictures/HistoryCourse.ApprovalForm.pdf. Please attach a course syllabus and reading list (if separate) and a transcript (for non-UC programs) to each form. Submit the forms and attachments to the undergraduate advisor, Leah Flanagan, in 3327 Dwinelle. Forms are evaluated by faculty in batches; please allow up to 30 days for review. (Note: evaluations rarely happen during summer months.)
Online applications, more information about orientations and deadlines, as well as UC DC program information is online: http://ucdc.berkeley.edu/

**Publication**

History majors are encouraged to publish their research results, either in one of Berkeley’s undergraduate journals (especially Clio’s Scroll, the Berkeley History Department’s own award-winning undergraduate journal), or in other undergraduate journals beyond Berkeley.

For information on Clio’s scroll go to: https://studyabroad-prod.berkeley.edu/

To see a list of other campus publication opportunities see: http://research.berkeley.edu/publish.php.

**Student Organizations**

**Phi Alpha Theta**  
UC Berkeley’s Undergraduate History Honor Society. See: http://phatberkeley.com/

**Cleo’s Scroll**  
The Berkeley History Department’s undergraduate journal. See: http://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~clios/

**Support Services**

**The Career Center**  
The Career Center assists students and alumni with career exploration, internship and job searching, and provides guidance on the graduate or professional school application process. They also have a letter of recommendation mailing service. See: https://career.berkeley.edu/

**The Disabled Students Program (DSP)**  
Services include accommodations, academic and financial advising, assistive technology, access services, and the TRIO program. See: http://dsp.berkeley.edu/

**The Gender Equity Resource Center**  
Resources regarding sexual assault, relationship violence, hate crimes, and bias-related incidents for women and the LGBT community. See: http://geneq.berkeley.edu/

**The Office of the Dean of Students**  
Student advocacy, support, and resources referrals. Start here when you’re not sure where to go. See: http://sa.berkeley.edu/dean.

**The Office of Undergraduate Research**  
Office of Undergraduate Research maintains a website with funding opportunities for research and also offers a series of workshops on getting started with research. See http://research.berkeley.edu.

**The Student Learning Center**  
The Student Learning Center (SLC) provides programs and services in support of the academic life of students at Berkeley. The services they provide include tutoring in a variety of subject areas, writing assistance, workshops and classes and a variety of 1-2 unit courses on strategies for success at Cal. See: http://slc.berkeley.edu/
Departmental Events

The History Department hosts a variety of annual advising events for undergraduates that you should look for.

Fall:
*Milk and Cookies* New and Continuing Student Welcome. This event provides a welcome and orientation for current and new students in which faculty address the question of why one might want to become a history major, student group leaders are introduced, and staff and peer advisors outline the requirements of the majors and address questions. Held in September.

History 101 Preparation Panel. The 101 Information panel provides advice and suggestions from faculty staff and students who have successfully completed the 101 on the process of researching and writing a thesis, when and how you should start, and critical things you need to know before the start of your History 101 semester. Held October to November.

101 Jamboree. This is a half day event in which students completing their 101 thesis in the Fall present their research to the department. Participation is optional but strongly recommended. Held during RRR week of the Fall semester.

Spring:
Everything You Need to Know About Applying to Grad School in History. An informational event to explain the graduate school application process, the difference between MA and PhD programs and why one might or might not want to continue on to graduate school. Two members of U.C. Berkeley’s History admissions committee will also discuss what top tier graduate schools are looking for. Held March to April.

Law School Panel. The Law School Panel is an opportunity to meet and engage with a panel of alumni that will discuss why history is useful for Law school and what Law school is like for those studying history. Held in April or May.

Field of Concentration Info Event. Hosted by faculty and advising staff, this event will provide advice and suggestions regarding choosing your field of concentration. Feel free to come with ideas but don’t be nervous about showing up unsure of your preferred field of concentration. Held in April or May.

CalDay. We present both an advising panel, staffed by advising staff and peer advisors, and a faculty talk for prospective students, newly admitted freshmen, current students, and the public.

101 Circus. The 101 circus allows students completing their 101 thesis in the Spring to present their research to the department. Participation is optional but strongly recommended. Held during RRR week of the Spring Semester.
The Student Ombuds Office

Confidential sounding board to help identify possible next steps regarding campus-related conflicts or concerns. Coaching, referrals and mediation also available. See: http://sa.berkeley.edu/ombuds

The Tang Center (University Health Services)
The Tang Center provides health services for the campus. In addition to medical services, the Tang Center also offers a limited amount of free individual and group counseling, as well as social service referrals and after hour urgent care. For more information see: http://uhs.berkeley.edu/ or call the numbers below to make an appointment.
Counseling and Psychological Services: 510-642-9494
Urgent Care Medical Services: 510-642-3188

The Transfer, Re-entry, and Student Parent Center (TRSP)
The Transfer, Re-entry, and Student Parent Center (TRSP) is provides programs and services in support of the academic and personal success of transfer, re-entry, student parents and student veterans. The Center also promotes campus and community engagement and leadership development that enrich and support students’ academic and professional goals. TRSP offers very good one-unit P/NP courses for transfer and re-entry students and veterans. See: http://trsp.berkeley.edu/

The Backup Childcare Program
U.C. Berkeley offers back-up childcare for both undergraduate and graduate student-parents. You must preregister and should do so at the start of term. Fees are $4 an hour with a four-hour minimum. Care can either be in house (including if your child is ill; care can include up to three of your children for the same fee) or through a program affiliated childcare center (fee is per child). Four hours’ notice is recommended, and there is a 60-hour a year limit. See: http://backupchildcare.berkeley.edu/

UCPD
Emergencies: 510-642-3333 (Put this number in your cell phone, and dial it rather than 911 in the event of an emergency on campus. 911 from your cell will go to the CHP and it will take much longer to get a response.)

Non-emergencies: 510-642-6760 (includes lost & found.)

Degree List, Commencement, Graduation, and Honors

The Degree List vs. the Commencement and Graduation Ceremonies

The degree list tells University officials that you are ready to graduate and are in the process of completing your final courses, and triggers the printing of your diploma. When registering for your last semester on Tele-BEARS, you must add yourself to the term (Spring, Summer, or Fall) in which you expect to complete all of your degree requirements. This will generate a review of your records and, assuming your records indicate you are ready to graduate, the printing of your diploma. You should only put yourself on the degree list the semester you are ready to complete the coursework for your BA (whether here or elsewhere).

The commencement and graduation ceremonies on campus are the ceremonies that celebrate the achievement of completing your degree studies at Berkeley. You do not have to be on the degree list to attend or register for either the commencement convocation or the History graduation ceremony. Signing up for either ceremony

What is the difference between the general commencement convocation and the History graduation ceremony?

The History ceremony is limited to History Majors. Your name and thesis title are read as you cross the stage (by History faculty), and it is followed by a reception. It is held at Zellerbach Auditorium and is very intimate.

The general commencement is open to all students and is consequently a much larger ceremony. The chancellor and a keynote speaker give a commencement address.
likewise will not add you to the degree list. The History Department has one graduation ceremony each year, held in the Spring. History students graduating in Spring, Summer or either the preceeding or following Fall terms are welcome. Our ceremony is typically held the Tuesday morning after finals week, though we will not know for certain until they have been set in September or October. Sign up starts in late February. See history.berkeley.edu/graduation for details on the History event. There is also central campus commencement convocation in both the Spring and the Fall. It is generally held the Saturday after finals week. See commencement.berkeley.edu for actual dates and details on the campuswide ceremony.

**Honors**

There are four kind of honors that it is possible to achieve as a History Major at Berkeley: students can be placed on the “Dean's Honor List,” they can have “Honors to Date,” they can be recognized for “Distinction in General Scholarship” and they can receive “Departmental Honors.” Each of these honors marks different kinds of achievement, as detailed below.

**Dean’s Honor List**
The Dean’s Honor List is posted each Fall and Spring semester, acknowledging the academic achievement of the top 4% of Letters and Science students for that semester. For inclusion on the list, 13 letter-graded units are required, with no Incomplete or Not Passed grades permitted.

**Honors to Date**
After each term an "Honors to Date" notation will appear on the transcripts of qualifying students. To qualify:

- At least 12 units completed at Berkeley for a letter grade

- Overall GPA equal to or higher than the GPA established for Distinction in General Scholarship (average GPAs of top 20% of L&S graduates for the previous four years)

**Distinction in General Scholarship**
Distinction in general scholarship is awarded at graduation for overall scholarship in your work at Berkeley. The level of honors you can receive are Distinction, High Distinction, or Highest Distinction. These are equivalent to cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude. To achieve Distinction in General Scholarship you must meet the following requirements:

- At least 50 units must have been completed in residence at Berkeley (including UCB Extension XB courses).

- A maximum of 20 units may be counted toward the required 50 units from either the UC Berkeley Washington Program (UCDC) or the Education Abroad Program (EAP).

- Of these, at least 43 must have been taken for a letter grade, not including physical education.

- Your GPA in all letter-graded courses taken in residence at Berkeley must be equal to or higher than the GPA established for each of the categories of Honors in the year in which you graduate. Highest Distinction marks the top 3% of the graduating class within the college, High Distinction marks the top 7%, and Distinction marks the top 10%. See [http://ls.berkeley.edu/?q=undergraduate/honors-program](http://ls.berkeley.edu/?q=undergraduate/honors-program) for a sense of what the current honors GPA cutoffs are.

**Departmental Honors**
There are three levels of departmental honors in the History Department: Honors in History, High Honors in History, and Highest Honors in History. The level of honors received is based on a combination of your GPA, your History 101 grade and the quality of your thesis. The requirements below are for students declaring the major after 6/1/09. If
you declared before 6/1/09 please see http://history.berkeley.edu/undergraduate/honors-program for your requirements.

- To graduate with Honors in History, a major must achieve a general GPA of 3.5, a departmental GPA of 3.7, and a minimum grade of “A-” in History 101.

- To be eligible for graduation with High Honors in History, a major must achieve a general GPA of 3.5, a departmental GPA of 3.7, and a grade of "A" in History 101. The student must also receive a nomination for High Honors from the 101 instructor. The decision to award High Honors, made in consultation with a second reader of the thesis, rests with the Honors Committee.

- To be eligible for graduation with Highest Honors in History, a major must achieve a general GPA of 3.5, a departmental GPA of 3.7, and a grade of "A" in History 101. The student must also receive a nomination for High or Highest Honors from the 101 instructor. The decision to award Highest Honors, made in consultation with a second reader of the thesis, rests with the Honors Committee.

Note: A major who is eligible for honors after completing History 101 and interested in continued research may pursue a second thesis project under the rubric H195. The second project may substitute for the 101 thesis in determining eligibility for High or Highest Honors if the student meets the GPA standards and receives a nomination from the H195 instructor.

**Finishing Up**

**Getting Your Diploma**

Diplomas are mailed 3-4 months after the end of the term in which you graduate to the “Diploma Address” on file in Bearfacts. For Bearfacts to have that address you have to add it before you graduate (and lose bearfacts access). If no diploma address has been added the diploma will be sent to your “Permanent Address.” It is therefore very important that you update your bearfacts diploma address before you graduate to an address where you can receive mail a few months later. If you need proof of graduation before your diploma has been finalized you may request a certificate of completion from the Registrars office. See: http://registrar.berkeley.edu/Records/certcomp.html.

**Alumni Access to Services**

There are two Alumni membership plans that you should be aware of that are often confused: Cal Alumni Association Membership (http://alumni.berkeley.edu) and the Career Center’s Alumni Advantage Membership. Membership in the Cal Alumni Association costs about $30 a year (or $500 for a lifetime membership) and gives graduates free library access at any of the UC campuses for most libraries (normally a $50 a year), access to alumni networking events and services, and a variety of discounts (including on UC extension courses, private career counseling, and insurance). The Career Center’s Alumni Advantage Membership is approximately $120 a year and allows you full access to the Career Center’s services including career counseling and resume assistance, access to Calisto job listings and UC Berkeley career fairs.

**Keeping Your Berkeley Email Address**

Alums have nine months after graduation to “convert” their berkeley.edu email account. If the account is not converted, it will be released back into the pool for incoming students. If you are enrolled in graduate school at Berkeley, or work on campus, you won’t be able to convert your berkeley.edu account until you graduate or are no longer employed on campus. For details on how to convert your address go to: https://cal.berkeley.edu/help/faq/email_forwarding/
No matter what you want to do after graduation, the department strongly urges you to start looking into options early in your academic career here at Berkeley. The Career Center (career.berkeley.edu) on campus provides an abundance of services and opportunities including internship listings, career fairs, a winter break externship program, assistance with resume and cover letter preparation, and mock interview opportunities. They can also set you up with an appointment to meet our diplomat in residence if you are considering a career in the Foreign Service. They even provide guidance for applying to graduate, law and medical school. Don’t wait until your last term on campus to visit them.

If you are unsure about what you might want to do upon graduation, the Tang Center offers career testing and counseling to help you identify your values, interests and strengths. They also maintain a large career library with many useful resources. See http://www.uhs.berkeley.edu/students/careerlibrary/ for details and hours. We strongly urge you to take advantage of these resources as early as possible. Please note that while these services are free to current Berkeley students, they are only available for a substantial fee after graduation.

**Campus Opportunities**

There are three campus supported programs for teaching, research and service the year after you graduate that all students should be aware of and keep in mind as they plan for life after Berkeley.

**The John Gardner Fellowship for Public Service**
The John Gardner Fellowship selects six Fellows during the spring semester from among the graduating classes at UC Berkeley and Stanford University and provides each a $27,500 stipend to work in the governmental or nonprofit organization that most closely fits their public sector interests. Past fellows have been placed at the Department of State, the Council of Economic Advisers, and the Louisiana Capital Assistance Center. Fellows are matched with a senior-level mentor during their 10-month fellowship. The goal of the John Gardner Fellowship is to encourage UC Berkeley’s and Stanford’s best students to pursue a career in public service. **Applications are due in February to early March of your senior year.** See: [http://igs.berkeley.edu/research/csr/gardner](http://igs.berkeley.edu/research/csr/gardner)

**Fulbright U.S. Student Program**
The Fulbright U.S. Student Program provides grants for individually designed study/research projects or for English Teaching Assistantships for recent graduates. A candidate will submit a **Statement of Grant Purpose** defining activities to take place during one academic year in a participating country outside the U.S. Grant lengths and dates vary by country. Please consult the specific country summary for details. Grant benefits for all Fulbright U.S. Student grants include: round-trip transportation to the host country for grantee, funding to cover room, board, and incidental costs, based on the cost of living in the host country (and may include a supplement for spouse and dependents), accident and sickness health benefits and may include research allowances, tuition and language study. The U.C. Berkeley deadline is generally in August or early September of your senior year. For full details the review the program information page at [http://us.fulbrightonline.org/fulbright-us-student-program](http://us.fulbrightonline.org/fulbright-us-student-program) and then go talk to the program officer (Gina Farrales) in the Fellowships office of Sproul Hall. **Applications are typically due to the Berkeley Fellowships Office in the late August of your senior year.**

**The Judith Lee Stronach Baccalaureate Prize**
The Judith Lee Stronach Baccalaureate Prize supports intellectual and creative pursuits that heighten awareness of issues of social consciousness and the public good. The award gives bright, ambitious students the opportunity to extend and reflect upon their undergraduate work at Berkeley by undertaking a special project after their graduation. Prize recipients may be awarded as much as $25,000. The Prize is intended to cover project costs, materials, and living expenses for a period of up to one year. **Applications are Due March 1st of your senior year and information sessions to help you put together a strong proposal begin in January.** See: [http://research.berkeley.edu/stronach/](http://research.berkeley.edu/stronach/)
Embassy Programs for Teaching English Abroad

Finally, for those wanting to improve their language skills while earning a living upon graduation, there are a variety of great programs out there that can help you achieve those ends. Of particular note, the French, Japanese and Spanish embassies all run programs in which thousands of recent U.S. graduates are paid to teach English in their respective countries.

Teaching Assistant Program in France
Application due October of your senior year. See: http://highereducation.frenchculture.org/teach-in-france

Japan Exchange and Teaching Program;
Application due October/November of your senior year. See: http://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/JET/

Cultural Ambassadors: North American Language and Culture Assistants in Spain
Applications are accepted on a rolling basis from January through April your senior year. See: http://www.mecd.gob.es/eeuu/convocatorias-programas/convocatorias-eeuu/auxiliares-conversacion-eeuu.html

Appendix I: Timeline for Applying to Graduate Programs

If you are thinking about graduate school, review the graduate diversity office’s Step by Step guide to getting prepared for graduate school at http://stepbystep.berkeley.edu/. It includes things you can do as early as your freshman year. The timeline below is for the actual application process. If you intend to go to graduate school directly after you finish your BA with no break, you need to begin the process before the end of your junior year. If you want to take some time off you need to begin the process approximately a year before you intend to start graduate school. Please see Erin Leigh Inama in 3312 Dwinelle for advising on the process, if you would like to discuss the kinds of programs you are considering or for feedback on your application materials.

Summer 13-16 months before you want to begin your program
- Think about what you want to do in graduate school.
- If you have not already obtained faculty supervised research experience relevant to your intended grad program, look into this now (URAP, independent study etc.; see research.berkeley.edu or see the undergraduate advisor).
- Start looking for programs
  - AHA Guide to Programs
  - Google your favorite (relevant) authors and see if/where they teach
- Study for the GRE Exams.
- Schedule your GRE Exam.
  - For PhD programs the GRE should be scheduled for no later than October; if applying for fellowships (see below) no later than August so that the scores are reported in time for the earlier deadlines.
  - If eligible ask Berkeley’s Financial Aid office for a “GRE Fee Reduction Certificate” before scheduling.
- Begin drafting a “statement of purpose” that explains your reasons for going to grad school.
  - Should focus on:
    - Your research interests
    - Your qualifications
    - How faculty interests and your interest intersect.
  - Keep the tone professional
The August – October before you apply

- Take a reasonable course load
- Clear up any Incompletes
- Talk to relevant faculty and grad students here about your grad school plans
  - Ask for suggestions on good programs for your interests
  - See if they will look over your draft statement of purpose
  - Approach about letters of recommendation
    - Assemble and distribute recommender packets (see handout on letters of recommendation)
- Contact faculty and grad students at the programs to which you are thinking of applying
  - Ask about the general culture of the department
    - Happiness with/availability of the faculty for advising
    - Resources that grad students use to shape interests
    - Diversity and inclusion
  - Funding
- If applying to PhD programs
  - Apply to NSF Fellowships, Ford Foundation Fellowships and Soros Fellowships for New Americans
    - Due early October
    - Be sure to read the directions fully
    - Be sure to read the mission statement
- Request transcripts now if a transfer student
  - Order more than you need

November to December

- Finalize your PhD applications
- Check to see that all materials have been received

December through March

- Finalize your MA applications
- Check to see that all materials have been received

Appendix II: Advice for Requesting Letters of Recommendation

While these comments are primarily directed towards undergraduates hoping for letters for graduate work, the general ideas are very relevant for undergraduate students seeking all sorts of support letters: That is, provide information on the job/grant/project; bring the professor up-to-date on your activities/status/research/intentions; and allow plenty of time!

For many graduate and professional programs, letters of recommendation are one of the most important parts of your application. They can highlight your strengths, explain your weaknesses, and give a sense of you as a living, breathing human being.

In order to get the most from a letter of recommendation, experience has shown the following hints to be useful.

1) Chose faculty whom you know and who know you. What does this mean? This means someone whom you have had more than one class with, or with whom you have had a small class or URAP; alternately it can be someone with whom you had a large class, but who you have chatted with in office hours or done an intensive project with.

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1 The letter of recommendation suggestions were initially drafted by Prof. Margaret Conkey in Anthropology and have been updated by the undergraduate research office and Kira Blaisdell-Sloan since then.
Ideally your request to get a letter of reference should not be their first inkling that you are headed to grad school/the peace core/an internship or whatever else you need the letter for. Before making the decision to build on your degree talk to them! They may have very helpful suggestions about the application process, school selection or the career trajectory of former students who have gone in the direction you are considering.

Selecting a faculty member who knows you is critical because if a faculty member doesn’t know you, it is hard for them to write anything other than a lukewarm letter. In these competitive times a lukewarm letter is taken to mean that the professor wasn’t impressed by you rather than what is really the case, namely that she didn’t know you. If they suggest that you find someone else, please do not take this personally. It is their attempt to help you get access to the kind of strong letter that will get you admitted to the program of your choice.

2) **Give faculty the tools they need to write a strong letter.** Especially at Berkeley where classes can be large, it never hurts to give the professor ammunition for a detailed, thoughtful letter.

Such ammunition includes (but is not limited to):

- your vita or resume
- your overall GPA
- your GPA in your major
- your personal statement
- the grade in the class or classes you took with that faculty member
- any particular glowing comments they may have written on your exams or papers
- copies of the papers you wrote for that faculty member

**NEVER PROVIDE ORIGINALS.** Always assume that these items will be tossed after the letter is written. (Faculty, like other people, are also dealing with the paper glut.)

3) **Most graduate and professional schools prefer letters addressed to them directly.** On occasion, a "generic" letter ("to whom it may concern"). put on file in the Career Counseling office is seen as a lack of interest and/or commitment on the faculty person's part. In order to make these letters most effective, it is also necessary to supply the names, titles and specific addresses of the person at your top choices. This provides the faculty the opportunity to use what they know about that specific department or program to highlight things they know about you which would make you a particularly good match for them.

4) **Organize the materials in a way that makes it easy to pull the letter together.** Needless to say, a packet that contains this information and which is readable, neatly-typed and well organized maximizes the chances that a faculty member can write you a good letter. To do this you should include the following

__a) A sheet that includes the schools and programs you are applying to, the dates the letters are due and whether the letter should be snail mailed or submitted online. You might also include something about why the program appeals to you. Be certain you list the exact name of the program you are applying to so they can reference it in your letter. You should also include a line stating that they can disclose your grades in the letter, otherwise, even though you may have gotten an A+ in their class they cannot disclose that information under FERPA.
b) Include any forms that need to go with the letter. Signing the waiver that allows the faculty to write a confidential letter is strongly recommended. Schools may not take a letter seriously unless you have waived your right to see it. If you are worried that the letter might not be positive then you should select a different letter writer.

c) Addressed, stamped envelopes.

**DO put all of your information together in a file folder clearly labeled with your name on it.** Some faculty may prefer your packet digitally so be certain to ask how they would prefer to receive it. If they prefer to have it e-mailed to them make sure all of the attachments are reasonably sized, in PDF format, clearly labeled and all attached to a single e-mail with a clear subject line. Most faculty still prefer paper though, so only send the information digitally if requested that way.

**DO allow for plenty of time to get these letters out.** You may not believe it, but it’s "normal" for the faculty to have several hundred letters to get out in just a few weeks! December through February first is peak letter season, so if requesting a letter at this time try and allow a month to six weeks notice. Ideally your request for a letter should be part of a larger discussion with that faculty member about the prospect of graduate school.

**DO send a gentle reminder of your due date about 10 days in advance.** This can be in the form of a brief e-mail, or just stopping into the faculty member’s office hours to chat and check in. Most faculty have a system for tracking due dates, but it is always good to check in. If the letters are to be submitted electronically, you can oftentimes also send them the letter request again close to the date it is due instead of sending them a personal email. You should be aware however that the links that the faculty get generally DO NOT contain the due date for letters, so unless you tell them they will not know.

A final note: strange as it may sound, professors who write you letters of recommendation care about what happens to you. In the vast majority of cases, writing a letter of recommendation is like dropping letters in a bottle into the ocean: you never know who picks them up. Give your faculty a break, and drop them (us) a postcard, telling them what happened: it keeps them (us) motivated.