Information for Incoming Exchange Students to the University of Alberta

Each year, the University of Alberta welcomes more than 200 exchange students from around the world.

Our formal exchange agreements allow students to take undergraduate or graduate courses at the University of Alberta, which can then often be transferred back to their degrees at their home institutions.

1. When can I study at the University of Alberta on exchange?

You can study at the University of Alberta on exchange during our Fall Term, Winter Term or Academic Year (Fall Term + Winter Term).

Our Fall Term starts in September and lasts until the beginning of December with an exam period in the rest of December.

Our Winter Term starts in January and lasts until the beginning of April with an exam period in the rest of April.

Our University Calendar has exact dates.

Exchange students are strongly encouraged to participate in the Transitions Orientation provided by the University of Alberta’s International Student Services which takes place at the beginning of our Fall and Winter Terms.

2. What can I study?

Students accepted for exchange to the University of Alberta can take any courses they wish with the following exceptions:

1) Undergraduate students cannot take graduate-level courses.
2) Any courses or programs described in Bear Tracks as being closed to exchange students (see the section entitled, “Where can I find information about University of Alberta courses, course registration and transcripts?” for more information about Bear Tracks).
3) Art and Design courses with the exception of art history (i.e., ART H) courses
4) Faculty of Extension courses (i.e., with course codes starting with “EX”)
5) Unless your exchange is specifically to the University of Alberta’s Augustana Campus, you should not plan to take courses there (i.e., avoid courses with course codes starting with “AU”)
6) Medicine courses
7) Dentistry courses
8) Pharmacy courses
9) Criminology courses
10) Nursing courses
11) The following courses in the Alberta School of Business: ACCTG 480, BUS 201, BUS 301, FIN 436, FIN 480, MGTSC 312, MIS 441, SMO 310, SMO 441, SMO 470 and SMO 471. In addition, independent research, internship, study tour, competition, work
experience and Special Topic (numbered 488) courses are not open to exchange students.

Please also note these other restrictions:
1) Courses in our Department of Computing Science (in our Faculty of Science) are in extremely high demand and often fill up quickly. Exchange students should not plan to come to the University of Alberta hoping to take only computing science courses or even a majority of courses in that department.
2) Courses in our Department of Economics (in our Faculty of Arts) are in extremely high demand and often fill up quickly. Exchange students should not plan to come to the University of Alberta hoping to take only economics courses or even a majority of courses in that department.
3) With one exception (see below), incoming students need a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.7 (on a 4 point scale) to be considered for exchange at the University of Alberta.
4) For the most part, students can only take courses in our Alberta School of Business if they are enrolled in the Alberta School of Business. Exceptions might be possible if, at their home institutions, the students are enrolled in a program that straddles business and another subject area. Students need to make a note in specific places in their exchange application if this is the case (see the section entitled, “How do I apply for an exchange?” for more details).
5) Students can only take courses in the Faculty of Engineering if they are enrolled in the Faculty of Engineering.
6) Students applying for the Faculty of Engineering are required to have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 (on a 4 point scale) and have completed 4 semesters in an Engineering program by the time the exchange program starts.

3. Where can I find information about University of Alberta courses, course registration and transcripts?

The University of Alberta uses an interactive web-based service for students called Bear Tracks. Students MUST register in courses by themselves using Bear Tracks. Students can use Bear Tracks to do the following:
- register in courses
- view their class timetable
- update their address and telephone number
- search U of A course listings
- search for a specific class
- view their financial holds
- check their exam schedule
- order their official academic transcripts

Students will be emailed a log-in ID (called a “CCID”) and password once they submit their exchange applications and they can search the course listings and the course schedules for the upcoming year (which are updated in March or April). Prior to receiving their CCID and password, they can access course information and schedules on Bear Tracks and by signing in as a “guest”. The specific process to follow is:
1. Go to www.ualberta.ca
2. Click on “Bear Tracks” (look at top of screen for link)
3. Click on “Guest Sign In”
4. Click on "Browse Course Catalog". This particular screen may be slow to load.
5. Select your desired "Term" from its drop down menu.
6. Select your desired "Course Subject" from its drop down menu.
7. Click on "SEARCH".

The process described above will give you access to a list of courses, and their descriptions, that you can quickly scan. These courses may or may not be available during your time at the University of Alberta on exchange. To see if any courses that interest you are actually available please use the following procedure:
1. Instead of clicking on "Browse Course Catalog" as listed above, click on "Search for Classes" instead.
2. Select your desired “Term” from its drop down menu.
3. Make sure the “Show Open Classes Only” box is checked.
4. Select your desired “Subject” from its drop down menu.
5. Click on “SEARCH”.
6. Courses will be available if their “Status” is listed as “Open” (which will be shown by a green circle towards the right side of the page).

Students are responsible for registering in their courses on Bear Tracks once they have been officially admitted to the U of A. However, our office will provide some assistance and advice to those students who encounter difficulties. International exchange students compete with other U of A students for course space and thus need to be prepared to take alternate courses. There is no guarantee of registration in the courses they may want or need.

Students can access the “User Guide” (from a link near the top right corner of the screen when in Bear Tracks) for an explanation regarding how to build a schedule of classes.

For undergraduate students, a full-time course is typically considered to be 9 - 15 credits per semester / 18 – 30 credits per academic year. International students must remain registered in AT LEAST three courses (9 credits) per term to maintain full-time status for immigration purposes if they wish to work on-campus. Undergraduate exchange students may take a maximum of five courses (15 credits) per term. For graduate students, 9 credits per semester is the maximum course load allowed.

Generally, a 3-credit course = 39 hours total lecture time. 3- credit courses are offered at 3 hours / week over a 13 week term.

The University of Alberta Grading System is described in the following chart:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>B+</td>
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<td>2.0</td>
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<td></td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minimal Pass</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Official grades are ready usually in early February for Fall Term courses and in the middle of June for Winter Term courses.

University of Alberta transcripts are NOT automatically mailed after the completion of a student’s exchange. Students must order transcripts on Bear Tracks before they return home.

4. How do I apply for an exchange?

Step #1: Find out if your home university has a student exchange agreement in place with the University of Alberta. In order to be considered for an exchange, your home university needs to have a student exchange agreement in place with the University of Alberta.

Step #2: Read ALL of the information on this webpage.

Step #3: Get nominated for exchange by your home university. You must be nominated for an exchange by your home university AND your nomination must be accepted by the University of Alberta.

Your nomination must include:
1) your full name as it appears on your passport,
2) your level of studies (i.e., undergraduate or graduate)
3) your field of studies and
4) the requested duration of your exchange (i.e., Fall Term, Winter Term or Academic Year)

Be sure to find out, from your home institution, if your nomination was accepted by the University of Alberta. If it wasn’t then stop here and do not proceed with your application for exchange.

Step #4: Have your home university courier hard copies of all of your application documents to the relevant Exchange Programs Coordinator at the University of Alberta. Please send all required documents (see below) together at one time only. In other words, please wait until you have all required documents before you send us your exchange application. Please note that undergraduate students must send application documents that are different from graduate students (see below for more details).

Undergraduate students must submit the “Undergraduate Application for Exchange” form AND all other documentation it describes.

Other information for undergraduate applicants:
1) Whenever you are asked to provide your name on any exchange application documents, please be sure to provide your full name as it appears on your passport.
2) Additional application materials may be required for certain programs and will be requested upon initial receipt of your application.
3) Students wishing to take music courses may be asked to provide an audition recording.
4) You need to view the University of Alberta’s Academic Calendar for an explanation of the minimum required English language proficiency you will need to demonstrate as part of your application. Please note that students from certain countries or international
universities do not have to demonstrate the minimum required English language proficiency.

5) If you are required to demonstrate the minimum required English language proficiency, you have some options for doing so that are not explicitly listed in the University of Alberta’s Academic Calendar. You can:
   a. Order a copy of official English language test results from an external organization to be sent directly to your home university’s exchange office. Your exchange office would have to stamp the results with an official university seal. The resulting document would then be mailed to the relevant Exchange Programs Coordinator at the University of Alberta along with all other required exchange application documents. (Please note that if TOEFL results are used to demonstrate English language proficiency, “Test Taker” copies of the score report are not acceptable.)
   b. Mail a copy of official English language test results from a test taken at your home university along with all other required exchange application documents.
   c. Use a template letter that attests that you have the minimum required English language proficiency to be successful both inside and outside of the classroom while on exchange at the University of Alberta. The Exchange Programs Coordinator at University of Alberta International can provide the required template.

6) You will need to be assigned to a “home faculty” at the University of Alberta. Therefore, the majority of courses you list on your “Undergraduate Application for Exchange” form should be selected from one faculty only.

7) The first course you list on your “Undergraduate Application for Exchange” form should be in the faculty where you intend to take the majority of your courses.

8) If you would like to take courses in both our Alberta School of Business and a different faculty this may be possible, but only if you are enrolled in a program at your home institution that straddles business and a different subject area. If this is the case, please indicate so immediately UNDER the course selection charts on the third page of the “Undergraduate Application for Exchange” form.

9) Please understand that you may eventually have to change some of the course selections you indicate on your exchange application documents. Some courses might not be offered even though they have been in the past, some courses might be cancelled, some courses may fill up even before you have a chance to register in them and/or University of Alberta officials may determine that you don’t have the necessary prerequisites for some courses. It’s best to prepare a list of alternative courses in which you could register should any of your original course selections not be available.

10) Once you submit exchange application materials they become the property of the University of Alberta and the original materials will not be returned to you.

**Graduate students** must submit:

1) “Application for Visiting Graduate Student” form
2) “Permission to Participate Form”
3) A photocopy of the photograph / personal information page(s) of your passport
4) Official records of all post-secondary work completed and presently being taken by the student. Official records must contain an official seal or signature AND must be in English.
5) A demonstration of the minimum required English language proficiency. Please note:
   a. Some departments and faculties may have higher English language proficiency requirements than those shown through the link provided immediately above. It is the responsibility of all exchange students to find out, before applying for
exchange, the minimum English language proficiency requirements that they will 
need to demonstrate.
b. Students from certain countries or international universities do not have to 
demonstrate the minimum required English language proficiency.

Other information for graduate applicants:

1) Whenever you are asked to provide your name on any exchange application documents,
please be sure to provide your full name as it appears on your passport.

2) Additional application materials may be required for certain programs and will be 
requested upon initial receipt of your application.

3) Students wishing to take music courses may be asked to provide an audition recording.

4) You will need to be assigned to a “home department” at the University of Alberta.
Therefore, the majority of courses you list in your application documents should be 
selected from one department only.

5) The courses listed on your “Application for Visiting Graduate Student” form and 
“Permission to Participate Form” need to be the same and in the same order.

6) The first course listed on your “Application for Visiting Graduate Student” form and 
“Permission to Participate Form” needs to be a course from the department where you 
intend to take the majority of your courses.

7) If you would like to take courses in both our Alberta School of Business and a different 
faculty this may be possible, but only if you are enrolled in a program at your home 
institution that straddles business and a different subject area. If this is the case, please 
describe in the area entitled, “Proposed Program of Study” on the first page of the 
“Permission to Participate” form.

8) Please understand that you may eventually have to change some of the course 
selections you indicate on your exchange application documents. Some courses might 
not be offered even though they have been in the past, some courses might be 
cancelled, some courses may fill up even before you have a chance to register in them 
and/or University of Alberta officials may determine that you don’t have the necessary 
prerequisites for some courses. It’s best to prepare a list of alternative courses in which 
you could register should any of your original course selections not be available.

9) Once you submit exchange application materials they become the property of the 
University of Alberta and the original materials will not be returned to you.

5. What deadlines do I have to meet for my exchange application?

If you want to be on exchange only during our Fall Term (i.e., September – December) or for our 
entire Academic Year (i.e., September – April), then we will need to receive all of your 
application documents by March 1 of the same year.

If you want to be on exchange only during our Winter Term (i.e., January – April), then we will 
need to receive all of your application documents by September 1 of the previous year.

6. How will I find out if my application for exchange has been accepted and how long will 
I have to wait for the decision?

After you submit your complete and error-free application, it generally takes 6 to 8 weeks for it 
to be processed and for an admission letter to be released. Some faculties are slower in 
making admission decisions.
Students admitted or tentatively admitted to the University of Alberta for exchange will be issued a student ID number and a computing ID called a CCID. The CCID will give them access to ualberta.ca email account and a Bear Tracks account. Letters of Admission may be available through one or both of these accounts and students are advised to check both accounts daily for their letters of admission. Letters of Admission may also be mailed as hard copies directly to the students or to their Exchange Liaison Officers at their home universities or emailed to their Exchange Liaison Officers. Notices of Rejection would be issued in one of the ways mentioned above as well.

7. Where can I live?

Once students have been issued a student ID number, a computing ID called a CCID and a password they can apply for on-campus housing. This information will be sent to the students in an email once their exchange applications have been received and processed. Students can apply for housing before receiving an admission decision from the University of Alberta. Students must submit an application fee when applying for housing. This fee will not be reimbursed if a student pays it and later discovers that their application for exchange has been rejected.

**On-campus accommodation** is guaranteed to all exchange students who start in September and apply online by the April 30 deadline.

For students starting their exchanges in January, guaranteed housing is not available; however, there are usually less applications for housing at this time and students can expect to learn of their room offers in late November.

**If applications are received late there is no guaranteed housing. The Education Abroad Office has no involvement in housing placements. To answer all of your housing-related questions please contact the University of Alberta’s Residence Services directly at housing@ualberta.ca**

There are also off-campus housing opportunities available. If students wish to set up their own accommodations, they can use our Students’ Union housing registry to find rental accommodations available around Edmonton.

8. What will it cost?

You will not have to pay tuition to the University of Alberta while on exchange here but you will have to pay two mandatory fees:

1) UAHIP
2) U-Pass

Exchange students who will study at the University of Alberta for 12 months or less are REQUIRED to enroll in the University of Alberta Health Insurance Plan (UAHIP). UAHIP has been designed to provide equivalent coverage to Alberta Health Care Insurance as well as some additional coverage for prescription medication, ambulance service, and repatriation in the event of illness or death. Coverage by any insurance plan other than Alberta Health Care will not allow you to be exempted from UAHIP. Please go to https://www.ualberta.ca/international-
student-services/money-insurance-permits-guide/health-insurance and open the tab for “University of Alberta Health Insurance Plan (for those studying less than 12 months)” under “Basic Health Care Plans” for more information including information about costs. There are many ways to pay the fee for UAHIP, including through your Bear Tracks account or at the University of Alberta’s Financial Services Cashier’s Office upon arrival.

U-Pass is a group discount program which lowers the cost of transit for University of Alberta students. All students pay a low mandatory U-Pass fee each fall and winter term, which is much lower than the cost of purchasing monthly passes for the same period of time because costs are spread over a large participant base. The U-Pass is valid anytime, anywhere on regular ETS, St. Albert Transit and Strathcona County transit systems. For more information on the U-Pass, see https://www.ualberta.ca/upass. There are many ways to pay the fee for U-Pass, including through your Bear Tracks account or at the University of Alberta’s Financial Services Cashier’s Office upon arrival.

You will, of course, have other costs while on exchange at the University of Alberta. Depending on your standard of living, living costs in Edmonton for a single student may vary. Below is what it might cost a single student to live in Edmonton for 4 - 8 months. Please note that this is an estimate, in Canadian dollars, is subject to change and does not include the UAHIP and U-Pass expenses mentioned above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense Categories</th>
<th>4 months</th>
<th>8 months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation (Shared)</td>
<td>$2000-$2420</td>
<td>$4000-$4840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation (Not Shared)</td>
<td>$3152-5332</td>
<td>$6304-10664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>$2000</td>
<td>$4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>$400</td>
<td>$800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books and Other Supplies</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td>$2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous*</td>
<td>$1260</td>
<td>$2520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL (Shared Accommodation)</td>
<td>$6660-$7080</td>
<td>$13320-$14160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL (Accommodation Not Shared)</td>
<td>$7872-$10052</td>
<td>$15744-$20104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The miscellaneous category includes phone ($50/month), laundry ($30/month), pharmacy ($15/month), Recreation & Entertainment ($200/month) and Dental ($20/month)

9. Who can I contact for help?

When contacting anyone at the University of Alberta for assistance please be sure to:
1) Do so from your ualberta.ca email account once it has been assigned to you,
2) Provide your full name as it appears in your passport,
3) Identify yourself as an incoming exchange student,
4) State your U of A student ID number if it has been assigned to you and
5) Then state your request.

If you have questions about courses and course registration then please contact a student advisor in the faculty or department that is home to the course in question. Each faculty and
department is responsible for a section of the University of Alberta website on which you can find names and contact information for student advisors.

If you have questions about **Canadian immigration issues** (like study permits, work permits, visas) then please contact one of our International Student Advisors at advising@international.ualberta.ca

If you have questions about **on-campus housing** then please contact Residence Services at housing@ualberta.ca

For all other matters, please contact Mr Michal Guzowski, the University of Alberta’s Exchange Programs Coordinator, at michal.guzowski@ualberta.ca

10. Take an online tour of the University of Alberta!

You can view all campuses of the University of Alberta through our online tours.