Overview
The California State University International Programs, or CSU IP, is offered throughout the CSU system and is affiliated with over 50 universities in the 18 countries offered. Students take courses in their major or minor and earn resident credit, thus giving them the opportunity to stay on track with their CSUN degree while allowing them to experience a new culture. What is so unique about the CSU IP program is that students study away from CSUN for a full academic year, allowing them the time needed to fully immerse themselves in the host country’s culture.

Eligibility Requirements
Certain eligibility requirements may vary depending on the program you choose, but overall, students are required to have a minimum GPA of 2.75 to apply—though keep in mind, some countries will require a 3.0.

CSU IP offers programs to students with sophomore, junior, senior and graduate standing. While sophomores, seniors and graduate students may be eligible to participate, the best time to study abroad is during the junior year. For this reason, we highly encourage students to apply during their sophomore year to go their junior year. Programs that are open to sophomores will require students to apply during their freshman year. Seniors should be aware that depending on when they plan to graduate there is a chance that they will delay their graduation. Graduate students will need to check with their department to see if study abroad is an option for them. It is important to know that some of the programs available to graduate students will offer undergraduate credit only. Transfer students are able to apply before starting at CSUN. In order to remain eligible after acceptance, they will need to provide proof that they have been accepted to CSUN.

Students should also be aware that they must have a major declared before departing. While they aren’t required to have one at the time of application, they will no longer be eligible if they do not show that they have declared a major after being accepted.

There may be language and course pre-requisites that are needed, check the program brochure found on the IP website to see what is required.

Language Requirements
Most of our programs are offered in English. However, some programs do require that you speak, read and write the host country language as the courses will be conducted in the foreign language. For this reason, it is important that you review the program links to see if the program that you are interested in requires any language pre-requisites. You may also participate in one of
our Learn Language programs, which allow students with little to no previous knowledge of the language to start at the very beginning.

Credit Earned While Abroad
A common question is whether you will earn credits while abroad. We are happy to say that yes, you will! CSU IP students are required to take a minimum of 15 units per semester, for a total of 30 units for the academic year. These units are transferred back to your CSUN transcript as residential credit, meaning that while your courses were taken at another university, they show up on your transcript as having been taken at CSUN. All grades that students get abroad will count toward the total GPA on the CSUN transcript. Before you go abroad you will be required to complete a course approval form with your academic advisor that shows the courses that you intend to take abroad and how they will fulfill units at CSUN. You will receive the course approval forms after you are accepted into the program. However, it is recommended that students see their advisors during the application process to allow for more time to plan out courses needed and get questions answered early! Remember that your academic advisor specializes in helping you with the CSUN DPR so they may not be as familiar with the host university courses, which is why it is helpful to provide the courses offered through the program along with the course description to share with your academic advisor. Many programs provide an “IP Academic Bulletin” or have links to the university website, both of which will allow you to look into courses that may be offered the year you go abroad. It is very important that you meet with your academic advisor so that there aren’t any surprises when you get back!

Finances
One of the top questions we hear is “How much will it cost?” We are happy to say that CSU IP is one of the most affordable programs out there. In fact, students pay roughly what they would be paying to be at CSUN for an academic year. How is this possible? First, the CSU IP program does not have an application fee, meaning it is 100% free to apply. Also, students pay ONLY their CSUN tuition. You will not be charged for another school’s tuition or have to pay international fees. Lastly, and for many, most importantly: those who are eligible to receive financial aid will continue to receive aid while abroad. However, don’t forget to factor in a few extra elements such as living accommodations, travel, food and personal expenses! When everything is added up, you will reach a similar number to the average CSUN cost. For those of you still concerned that you may not be able to afford study abroad, you will be happy to know that there are many scholarships available!
Scholarships

There are many scholarships out there and it is free money, so why not apply! Some students get discouraged because they believe that they won’t be selected, but you don’t know until you try. We have many students who receive scholarships every year. There are a variety of scholarships available specifically for study abroad. Students who receive a Pell Grant may be eligible to apply for the Gilman Scholarship—which awards study abroad students up to $5,000. It is also a good idea to ask your department if there are any scholarship opportunities available and to check out the CSUN Financial Aid and Scholarship website. Once on the Financial Aid and Scholarship page, hover over “scholarships” on the top banner and then click to review. While on the scholarships page, we strongly encourage students to sign up for Stars Online to research scholarship opportunities. We have also provided some helpful links to scholarships on the IESC website under the “Study Abroad” tab, so be sure to check them out.

Housing

Housing options vary depending on which program you go through. Most students end up living in dorms, apartments or with a host family. The program you decide on may give you all of these options, or they may only offer one or two of them. The important thing to remember is that regardless of which housing option you go with, you will be provided with information, and oftentimes assistance, regarding the process.

Each housing option has its own benefits that should be considered. Students who decide, or are required, to live in dorms have the advantage of being connected to other students often from all over the world including the host country. This is great in developing your network and you may have more opportunities to participate in university life.

Apartments may offer a little more independence and privacy. If you are exchanging to learn another language, this provides you the perfect opportunity to seek out roommates that speak the language-instant conversation partner!

Living with a host family can be very rewarding. For the time that you are abroad, you will have the opportunity to become a part of someone’s household and learn about their lifestyle, daily patterns and culture. Experiences with host families can be varied, some have been great, but others have felt more removed from the family and have also been less connected to the university environment.

Navigating the Website

Let’s take a look at the California State University International Programs website to see how you can find a program that works best for you. From our website, you can just click on one of the links provided to be directed to the IP homepage. Once here, you will find a banner at the top. Click on “Programs” and you will find all 18 countries listed. You can click on any of these to access the program brochure, but the quickest way to find out if your major or minor is offered
in one of these countries is to select “Advanced Search.” Chances are, not every country will offer your major or minor. Many students get discouraged when they have a country in mind, but find out that their major is not offered in their country of choice. This is not a reason to give up! It helps to be flexible when it comes to deciding where you will go. Many students decide to take up a minor in order to get to their desired destination, others get adventurous and go where their major takes them. Do not let the destination hold you back.

Getting back to the program search, in the “Advanced Search” section, you will be able to search by a number of criteria. The most direct way is to go to the “Area of Study” section and find your major or minor. Let’s say we were looking for “Psychology.” Scroll through the list until you find “Psychology,” select it, then go to the bottom of the page and click “search.” The list of programs has been narrowed down to only those that offer courses for Psychology. As you can see, you have the option of looking at Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Ghana, Israel, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

Say you wanted to learn more about the program in Kingston, UK. You would click on the link to access the program brochure. You will find vital information here that will help you understand what the eligibility requirements are, what majors are offered, program costs, living arrangements, location and general information about the program. As you can see, the UK is one of the programs that requires a 3.0 GPA and you are only able to go as a Junior or a Senior.Scrolling down, you will find the eligibility requirements in regard to classes required and your enrollment status as a CSU student prior to departure. The following section is the Program Overview, which will give you a little more information about the university and how the program works for CSU students attending. In this case, they have provided the link to Kingston University’s website, which will allow you to look into classes that are offered as well as give you an idea of what the university is like. There is also an Academic Bulletin linked in the Program Overview, which will give you more information on how courses are structured at the host university and how credits transfer back to CSUN. Some programs may even have the course listings available as well in this document. Next, you will find a section on location which will tell you where the university is situated and resources that are in close proximity. The final section focuses on living accommodations. As previously mentioned, where you live will depend on which program you go through. In this case, students are able to apply to live in halls located near the campuses, but may have other options as well.

**Application Requirements and Deadlines**

The application itself is all online. When you go to your program brochure, at the top of the page, you will have the option (if the application is open) to “Apply Now.” This will then allow you to create an account which you will need to use throughout the application process. Your portal will list all of the documents you need in order to have a complete application. These items include:
• 1 faculty recommendation,
• Official transcripts for courses taken at ANY university other than CSUN
• Complete online application.

Your IP advisor will request your CSUN official transcript for you. If you are applying to a program that requires you to know the host country language, you will also need a Foreign Language Recommendation.

Applications for academic year programs generally open in October, but check with your IP advisor or the IP website to find the exact date. There are some deadlines to keep in mind ahead of time. For programs running during the academic year (August/September-May/June), the FINAL deadline is February 1st. A priority deadline is set for November 30th. This deadline is a way for you to help us help you. For those who submit their application by the priority deadline, your IP advisor will be able to go over your application and review with you any issues to be addressed. This will allow you to edit your application before submitting it by the final deadline. For students who apply to the calendar year programs in Australia and South Africa (February-November), applications open in April/May with the priority deadline of June 30th and the FINAL deadline of September 1st.

Contact your CSU IP Advisor
You can find me in the International and Exchange Student Center, which is located in the USU across from the Computer Lab. I am happy to meet with students from 9am-1pm and from 2pm-4pm, though please keep in mind that pre-scheduled appointments, meetings and classroom presentations may render me unavailable at certain times.

If you would like to set up an appointment to go over your options, please send me an email at eleanor.wolgast@csun.edu. In your email, please include:

• Your first and last name
• Your CSUN ID
• Your GPA
• Your major
• When you expect to graduate
• When you would like to study abroad
• Country you are interested in

Please don’t hesitate to reach out to me, but remember to include this listed information in your email in order to receive a timely response. I look forward to working with you and congratulate you on taking your first step towards making study abroad your reality! Happy Travels!