

NSE Information Session

Overview

The National Student Exchange allows students to study within the United States, its territories and Canada for a semester or a year. The NSE has nearly 200 schools to choose from and students are able to take courses in their major or minor as well as fulfill GE and elective requirements.

Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible to apply for the NSE, you must have at least a 2.5 GPA. Some schools may require a higher GPA, so keep that in mind when going through your options. You must also have completed at least one semester at CSUN and be in good standing with the university.

Navigating the Website

To access the NSE website, you can click on one of the links provided on the IESC website. From the NSE homepage, select the “Students” tab on the right hand side. The page will allow you to research where you would like to study on exchange. The right hand column lists all of the locations that participate in the NSE. By selecting on a state or territory, you will find a drop down menu with the schools offered in that location. By clicking on a school, you are then directed to the campus profile. The profile page has valuable information that will help you in making your final decision. The first section has a little background highlighting the campus. Campus location and helpful information may also be located on the profile to give students extra information that can help with selecting a school. Below this you will find five tabs: Programs, Conditions, Tuition/Fees, Financial Aid, and Room/Meals. Each of these tabs will have useful information on the respective topic. Pay close attention to these tabs because it may be noted that certain majors aren’t offered in the “Programs” section or there may be a GPA requirement in the “Conditions” section.

Students can also search for schools by their major. Scrolling to the top of the page, go to the right hand side and select “Click to Search by Major!” Here you will be given a drop-down menu where you can search for your major or minor. By clicking “search” you will be given the list of schools that offer courses in that field. You can then proceed to select whichever school catches your interest.

Plan A and Plan B

Something that you will notice when looking at the campus profiles is a section on the left-hand side that says “Plan A” and “Plan B.” This refers to the payment plan options that are available to you. The great thing about the National Student Exchange is that students have the option of paying either CSUN tuition-Plan B or the host campus tuition-Plan A. Some of you may be wondering what the advantage of paying an out-of-state school’s tuition would be. Well, if you decide to pay with Plan A, the first thing to understand is you would be paying their in-state tuition, not non-resident tuition. Secondly, you may find that another school’s tuition is less than

what you pay at CSUN. To see what the tuition is for a school, go to the left-hand panel, just below “Plan A” and “Plan B” and you will see “Estimated Per Semester Costs For Plan A Tuition & Fees.” This figure is subject to change, but it will give you a rough idea of what to expect. On the other hand, you may find that a host school’s tuition is vastly more expensive than CSUN’s.

Another great aspect of the Plan A and Plan B system is that you can use financial aid for both. If you decide to pay CSUN tuition and you receive financial aid, your financial aid will work as though you were attending CSUN. If you decide to pay the host campus tuition and you receive financial aid, you will be receiving your financial aid through your host campus, which can be a bit different. If you are a Cal-grant recipient, we usually encourage our students to stick to Plan B, or CSUN tuition, as you will remain eligible to receive your Cal-grant, whereas if you receive financial aid through an out-of-state school, you will not be eligible for some of the same aid, Cal-grants as an example. You can see which aid you may be eligible for through Plan A by clicking on the “Financial Aid” tab on the campus profile. It is also important that when you are applying for FAFSA, you enter both the CSUN FAFSA code as well as the host-campus code on your application if selecting a school on Plan A.

Scholarships

While many students may feel that they are set to pay for their exchange, often they forget that there are additional costs to have in mind such as housing, food, transportation and personal costs. Before you get discouraged, I have one word for you: Scholarships! Students applying to the NSE are highly encouraged to apply for scholarships. There is plenty of free money out there, it is just a matter of finding it and going for it! We have provided some helpful links on our website that can help you with your search. One link to definitely check out is to the CSUN Financial Aid and Scholarships website. You would be surprised how much money is at the fingertips of CSUN students! Be sure to sign up for Stars Online so that you can have access to all sorts of scholarships offered to CSUN students. You are also encouraged to check with your academic department to see if there are any scholarships available specifically within your area of study. See? Lots of options!

Exchange Terms

Now that we have explained how Plan A and Plan B work, let’s go over the terms next to each. Depending on the school you are looking at, you might find one of the following next to the Plan A and Plan B sections: Even, Uneven, 1:1 and Open. These terms are important for you to get a better understanding of your chances at being placed at that school. Many schools that participate in the National Student Exchange are not able to accept every student that selects their campus for exchange. For schools that have “Even” next to one or both of their plans, this means that they can only accept however many students they send out. For schools that say “Uneven,” they may be able to accept a few more students than they send out, allowing a slightly better chance, but no guarantee. For schools that say “1:1” this means that they will first accept students from schools that have accepted their students, basically making a direct exchange between schools. There are also schools that will say “Open.” When filling out your application, we HIGHLY

recommend having at least one Open school listed. Open schools, while not a guarantee, are about the closest thing to a guarantee. This means that ideally the school will accept all eligible applicants. This may all seem a bit daunting, but we do our very best to get you to your top choice schools.

Due to the fact that placements are not guaranteed, you are allowed to choose up to five schools that you are interested in attending on your application. If your first choice school is 1:1 Uneven on Plan B, put it as your first choice and we will try to get you there! Just know that if we are unable to place you, have back-ups in mind so that you do go somewhere. We will then try to place you at your second choice, and if that doesn't work, we go down your list of choices until we get you placed! This is why it is a good idea to have at least one open school somewhere on your list, so that you have a *near* guarantee of being placed!

Application Requirements and Deadlines

Let's go over what is required for a complete application. The application itself is a paper copy that you can pick up from your NSE coordinator when you set up an appointment. We strongly encourage you to meet with your NSE advisor, as students often get confused with the payment plans and placement process. We understand that this is a lot of information to absorb, and we are here to help!

Once you have gone over the paper application with your NSE advisor, you will need to get a Faculty or Staff recommendation form filled out. This can be found on the last page of the application. It is a fairly easy form to fill out, but it is best to approach your recommender early on so that you can give them the appropriate amount of time to fill it out for you. Your recommender can either return the form directly to our office or it can be given to you to deliver to us. You will also need to print out a copy of your unofficial transcript, which can be printed off your SOLAR account- make sure that your current GPA is listed on it as we will need this to verify your eligibility. The final document required for your NSE application to be complete is a check or money order payable to "CSUN NSE" for \$250. This is a non-refundable application fee-which is why we encourage you to have "Open" options on your application so that you don't spend \$250 to stay at CSUN!

All of these documents must be turned in together to the NSE advisor in order for it to be considered "complete." It is mandatory to set up an appointment with your NSE advisor when you are turning in your application and ALL necessary materials so that she can go over it with you.

There are two deadlines to remember: the priority deadline is usually the 2nd Friday in February and the FINAL deadline is the last Friday in February. Turning in your application for the priority deadline is a good way to review your application with the NSE advisor and make any necessary changes before the final deadline.

Contact your NSE 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 eleonor.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 through NSE
- The state or schools 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 toward making NSE your reality. Happy Travels!