

International Applicant Frequently Asked Questions

- ***Can applicants from outside the US apply to the MPP program?***

Yes! We encourage anyone interested in the program to apply, and more than welcome international applicants. We have had students and scholars from China, Japan, Southeast Asia, Mexico, Central and South America, Europe, the Middle East, and the Pacific Islands.

- ***Are international applicants evaluated differently than domestic ones?***

No. International applicants are evaluated under the same criteria as our domestic ones, although they have to submit additional language and academic documentation with their application. However, since international students do not have the same advantages as native students in understanding the American political system and the role of public policy in our society, it is important that international students demonstrate an understanding of the world and how this program will benefit their long-term professional development.

- ***What resources are available for international students at UCLA?***

The Dashew Center for International Students & Scholars provides specialized services to international students attending UCLA, including issuance of visa documents (I-20 or D-2019 forms), personal counseling on visa and immigration issues, financial and tax matters, academic adjustment, insurance, release of international funds and questions of person adjustment. The Dashew Center also offers services which assist students to adjust to the community, including housing assistance, community services, friendship families, and English Conversation groups. International students will also attend a mandatory orientation to help them adjust to life at UCLA.

For more information please visit <http://www.internationalcenter.ucla.edu/>

- ***What are UCLA's language requirements? Are TOEFL or IELTS scores required?***

International applicants whose first language is not English must certify their proficiency in English when applying to UCLA. Such applicants must submit scores received on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), unless you have attended a US, British, Canadian, Australian, or New Zealand university for at least two years. We expect a minimum TOEFL score of 600/250 (paper/computer). For the internet based TOEFL, the following are the minimum scores for each section: Writing: 25 Speaking: 24 Reading: 21 Listening: 17. A total minimum passing score of 87 on the TOEFL or an IELTS overall band score of at least 7.0 is required. That being said, the MPP program strongly prefers a TOEFL score of at least 105. Additionally, we recommend that all applicants have at least two years of professional work experience (or its equivalent) to be competitive.

Admitted applicants will be required to take the English as a Second Language Placement Examination (ESLPE) upon arrival at UCLA. The ESLPE is an English diagnostic test. Depending on your results, you may be required to complete English as a Second Language courses beginning in your first term at UCLA. If English courses are required, you should enroll in them right away, and you should anticipate spending a longer period of time at the university. Admission is cancelled for those who do not pass the ESLPE. Applicants with a score of 100 or higher on the TOEFL IBT, or a 7.5 or higher on the IELTS, do not need to take the ESLPE. International students whose undergraduate institution was in an English-speaking country and whose language of instruction was English likewise do not need to take the test.

Please visit <https://grad.ucla.edu/admissions/english-requirements/> for in-depth information regarding language requirements for international applicants.

- ***I want to improve my English language ability, what options are available to me at UCLA?***

Beyond English language classes taken alongside your academic studies (as needed), UCLA Extension offers a variety of intensive language courses to help prospective and admitted students improve their language abilities. More information can be found at <http://international.uclaextension.edu/alc/>.

- ***Is financial aid available to international students?***

Unfortunately, UCLA has only a limited number of fellowships and assistantships for which non-U.S. graduate students are eligible. These are awarded to students who have demonstrated high academic achievement in their studies on this campus. International students are not eligible for support based solely on need. Therefore, international students are strongly advised to secure funds from their own sources.

The Department of Public Policy does provide funding to the top applicants. As UCLA is a state-funded university with limited merit-based fellowship funds, it is difficult for us to provide international students with full funding. If your application is ranked among the top of our applicants, we may award you partial funding. Unfortunately, if you are not able to find the balance of your funds from other sources, it is unlikely that you would be issued a visa. Teaching Assistantships and Graduate Student Research appointments are also available to students selected on the basis of scholastic achievement. Again, students who are awarded these positions are competitively evaluated. Please note that these positions are not guaranteed.

It is best to plan to have additional funding well beyond the minimum currently required and to indicate this on the Confidential Financial Statement.

Although international students cannot qualify for US government financial aid, there are many funding opportunities available. The following links provide links to fellowship and financial aid resources for international students:

- **eduPASS:** A comprehensive resource of financial aid for international students.
- **NAFSA:** Association of International Educators has resources for International Students Seeking to Study in the United States, (Click on “For Students” in the upper right corner of the NAFSA home page.)
- **Institute of International Education:** IIE manages many scholarships and fellowships for both international students studying in the US and for US students studying overseas.

The estimated budget for entering international students to the Public Policy program for I-20 eligibility is \$54,356. We advise applicants to pad it to at least \$57,000 this year. Though these are the most updated figures, they are subject to change at any time. This information will be updated once our department is notified of any changes, so please check back for the upcoming academic year, and make sure this minimum amount is stated on your CFS. The following is an explanation of the current breakdown.

If you have a sponsor who intends to provide monthly living expenses, that amount must be at least \$2,247.33 per month (i.e., \$2,247.33 multiplied by nine months equals \$20,226.00) to cover the current estimate.

If you plan to bring your family, you should add the following costs: US \$4,500.00 for your spouse, plus US \$2,000.00 for each child. Health insurance is mandatory and is included in the above figure for tuition and fees.

It is best to plan to have additional funding well beyond the minimum currently required, so please be ready to provide documentation when requested from the Dashew Center for International Students if you are admitted.

Please note that you should not expect any financial support from UCLA unless you have been officially notified, in writing, of such an award by the department or by the Graduate Division. Teaching Assistantships, Graduate Student Researcher appointments, fellowships, and stipends, as well as tuition fellowships, are not guaranteed for the full academic year or for subsequent years of study, unless stated in writing.

It is extremely difficult for non-immigrant visa holders to find off-campus employment and to obtain permission for such employment. Spouses of F-1 visa holders, who hold F-2 visas, are not permitted to work under any circumstances.

At certain times of the year, you must have large sums of money available to cover payment of required expenses: Upon arrival, plan to spend US \$13,000.00 — 15,000.00 on initial rental deposits, your first month’s living expenses and the first term’s tuition and fees. Tuition and fees

for each term must be paid during the registration period prior to the beginning of the term, so you should plan your budget accordingly.

- ***Does UCLA accept WES reports or transcripts from similar services?***

No. Applicants must have their undergraduate institution(s) send official copies of their transcripts directly to the department. UCLA does not request or review WES transcript copies and evaluations.

- ***Are there different application requirements for international applicants?***

Yes. Because different countries use different means of evaluating students, UCLA requires additional materials from applicants for many countries before an offer of admission can be extended. Please contact the department's admissions representative for information about what additional materials you may need to send. Common examples include:

China: Chinese applicants must send official transcripts directly from their undergraduate institution(s) in both the original language and in English. We do not accept WES reports. Additionally, applicants must send copies of their degree certificate and their diploma in both the original language and in English. UCLA evaluates applicants from China based on their overall GPA on the 100 point scale.

Japan: Japanese applicants must send official English translations of their transcripts directly from their undergraduate institution(s), as well as a translated copy of their diploma. UCLA evaluates applicants from Japan based on their overall GPA.

- ***Am I required to submit a Jr./Sr. Grade Point Average Worksheet?***

No, international applicants are not required to submit a GPA worksheet.