



## Incoming Student Exchange Information 2020/21

The University of Alberta welcomes exchange students from around the world every year. Our formal exchange agreements allow students from exchange partner universities to take courses which can often be transferred back to their degrees at their home institutions. This document will guide you through the exchange application process.

### There are 11 sections in this document:

- [1. When can my exchange take place?](#)
- [2. What can I study?](#)
- [3. What deadlines do I have to meet?](#)
- [4. How do I apply?](#)
- [5. How will I find out if my exchange application has been accepted and how long will I have to wait for the decision?](#)
- [6. Where can I find information about course registration and transcripts?](#)
- [7. Where can I live?](#)
- [8. What do I need to know about health insurance requirements for my exchange?](#)
- [9. What will it cost and are scholarships available?](#)
- [10. What should I do if I will arrive late after the start of classes or decide to cancel my exchange?](#)
- [11. Who can I contact for help?](#)

### 1. When can my exchange take place?

Unless the student exchange agreement with your home institution specifies otherwise, you can study at the University of Alberta on exchange during our **Fall Term** (September – December), **Winter Term** (January – April) or **Academic Year** (Fall + Winter Terms).

You are strongly encouraged to participate in [Transitions Orientation](#) and any other orientation offered before the start of your exchange. Transitions Orientation usually happens in late August (for students with September start dates) and early January (for students with January start dates).

Also, you'll have access to a series of [Online Orientation modules](#) to help you prepare for your journey to and time at the University of Alberta. Module completion is voluntary and is meant to supplement - not replace - the in-person orientation we offer shortly before the start of classes each term (mentioned above). The Online Orientation modules are only accessible once you've been assigned a Campus Computing ID ("CCID") and you'll find an entry point to the modules in your Bear Tracks account. (Please note that although you are welcome to view all modules, you might not find the module entitled, "Thinking of My Future" immediately relevant or helpful for your exchange experience at the University of Alberta.)

## 2. What can I study?

Unless the student exchange agreement with your home institution specifies otherwise, you can take any courses you wish with the following exceptions:

- 1) Undergraduate students cannot take courses at the graduate / postgraduate level (usually numbered 500 or higher)
- 2) Graduate / Postgraduate students cannot take courses at the undergraduate level.
- 3) Any courses described in [Bear Tracks](#) as being closed to exchange students (see below for more information about Bear Tracks).
- 4) [Cost-recovery courses and courses in cost-recovery programs](#)
- 5) [Alternate delivery sections of any UAlberta courses.](#)
- 6) Courses from the Faculties of Extension, Medicine & Dentistry (with the exception of courses in the Department of Biochemistry), Nursing, Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Rehabilitation Medicine.
- 7) Courses at the School of Library and Information Studies, Yukon College or the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre.
- 8) SOC 399 (Field Placement in Criminology) and SOC 499 (Advanced Field Placement in Criminology).
- 9) 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 in the Alberta School of Business are not open to exchange students.
- 10) Many courses (if any at all) in our Departments of **Computing Science**, **Drama**, **Economics**, and (with the exception of History of Art, Design and Visual Culture - HADVC – courses and ART 134 and DES 135) **Art and Design**. Courses in these departments are in extremely high demand and often fill up quickly.

Please note these other restrictions:

- 1) **There is no guarantee of registration in the courses you may want or need.** Some courses might not be offered even though they have been in the past, 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 the event that some of your initial selections are unavailable.
- 2) If your home institution has a student exchange agreement with only one faculty at the University of Alberta you can expect to take courses only in that faculty.
- 3) Unless your exchange is to our Augustana Campus you should not plan to take courses there (i.e., avoid courses having course codes starting with "AU"). Augustana Campus is located in the town of Camrose, which is about 100 km south of Edmonton.
- 4) You can only take courses in our Faculties of Engineering and Law and in our Alberta School of Business if you are enrolled in those faculties while on exchange.
- 5) Undergraduate students can't take more than 15 credits worth of courses (typically 5 courses) per term while for graduate / postgraduate students the maximum is 9 credits worth of courses (typically 3 courses) per term.
- 6) The majority of courses you take should be in the same faculty (for undergraduate students) or department (for graduate / postgraduate students).
- 7) Exchange students cannot audit courses.
- 8) Undergraduate students cannot conduct research.
- 9) Graduate / Postgraduate students can take courses or conduct research, but not both. Graduate / Postgraduate students wanting to conduct research will need to find a host supervisor at the University of Alberta **before** they submit their exchange application.

You can access course information and schedules on the University of Alberta's [Bear Tracks](#) system at any time. The process to do so is as follows:

1. Go to [www.ualberta.ca](http://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. Depending on when you are applying for an exchange you may not see the term when you will actually be here. Use the information from the closest term viewable instead.
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 offered** during your time at the University of Alberta. To see if any courses that interest you are actually offered 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. Depending on when you are applying for an exchange you may not see the term when you will actually be here. Course listings and schedules for the upcoming school year are typically updated in March or April. If course listings have not yet been updated, please use the information from the closest term viewable instead.
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".

[Go back to start of document](#)

### 3. What deadlines do I have to meet?

If you want to be on exchange during our **Fall Term** or for our entire **Academic Year**, then we should receive your **nomination sometime between January 15 and February 1** and **your application by March 1** of the same year.

If you want to be on exchange during our **Winter Term**, then we should receive your **nomination sometime between July 15 and August 1** and **your application by September 1** of the previous year.

**Please note:** We usually accept exchange applications past the deadlines indicated above; however, the later we receive your application the less likely you'll be able to meet the April 30 deadline for guaranteed [on-campus housing](#) (for exchange students with September start dates), that you'll be able to satisfy any [Government of Canada immigration requirements](#), or that you'll be able to register in the courses you'd like to take before they fill up.

[Go back to start of document](#)

## 4. How do I apply?

**Step #1:** Find out if your home institution has a student exchange agreement with the University of Alberta, which is a requirement for all exchanges to our institution.

**Please note:** A memorandum of understanding between the University of Alberta and your home institution is not sufficient. In order for you to be considered for an exchange at the University of Alberta there would also need to be a student exchange agreement in place between both institutions.

**Step #2:** Get nominated for exchange by your home institution **and** get confirmation from your home institution that you've been nominated. Your nomination must include:

- 1) Your full name as it appears on your passport
- 2) Your level of studies (i.e., undergraduate or graduate / postgraduate)
- 3) A brief description of what you study at your home institution
- 4) Your intended area(s) of study while on exchange at the University of Alberta
- 5) The requested duration of your exchange (i.e., Fall Term, Winter Term or Academic Year)
- 6) An email address at which you can be contacted

If your nomination is accepted and you have a **documented disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning and/or physical or mental health**, then you will need to [register with our Accessibility Resources office](#) as soon possible. As part of your registration be sure to identify yourself as an international student who is currently applying for an exchange experience at the University of Alberta. Personnel from Accessibility Resources will arrange an online Skype conversation with you to assess the functional impact of your disability. You may be asked to provide a description, in English, of the disability from any disability services office at your institution or a medical professional who may currently be assisting you. We encourage exchange students to utilize the accommodations for success that the University of Alberta recommends and can offer once your assessment is complete.

**Please note:** Acceptance of your nomination does not guarantee that you will be accepted for an exchange. Although it doesn't happen often, your nomination could be accepted but your exchange application may later be rejected by the University of Alberta faculty or department in which you wish to take all or the majority of your courses.

**Step #3:** Put together your application:

**Undergraduate students** must:

1. Refer to the "University of Alberta UNDERGRADUATE Incoming Exchange Application Guide 2020-2021" document for application instructions.
2. Also check below, in the part entitled, "Other information about exchange applications", for other considerations that might be relevant for your application.

**Graduate / Postgraduate 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 transcripts of ALL post-secondary work completed **and** presently being taken by the student. Official transcripts must contain an official seal or signature **and** must be in English.

5. A demonstration, as required, of the [minimum required English language proficiency](#)
6. Please check below, in the part entitled, “Other information about exchange applications”, for other considerations that might be relevant for your application.

**Other information about exchange applications:**

- 1) Whenever you are asked to provide your name please be sure to provide your full name exactly as it appears in your passport.
- 2) You need to be registered as a full-time student at your home institution at the time of your application and while you are on exchange at the University of Alberta.
- 3) You cannot apply for a graduate / postgraduate-level exchange while you are still an undergraduate student.
- 4) With two exceptions (see below), you need a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 (on a 4 point scale) to be considered for an exchange at the University of Alberta.
- 5) You need a cumulative GPA of 3.0 (on a 4 point scale) and had to have completed 4 semesters in an engineering program by the time the exchange program starts if you wish to be considered for an exchange to our Faculty of Engineering.
- 6) You need a cumulative GPA of 2.8 (on a 4 point scale) and had to have completed 4 semesters in a business program by the time the exchange program starts if you wish to be considered for an exchange to our Alberta School of Business. In addition, all students must demonstrate having completed micro- and macroeconomics coursework.
- 7) You need to be enrolled in a law program at your home institution if you wish to be considered for an exchange to our Faculty of Law.
- 8) [Undergraduate students](#) and [graduate / postgraduate students](#) from certain countries or international universities do not have to demonstrate the minimum required English language proficiency.
- 9) If you are an **undergraduate student** and are required to demonstrate the minimum required English language proficiency, there are some options for doing so that are not explicitly listed in the University of Alberta’s Academic Calendar. You can:
  - a. Send a copy of official English language test results from a test taken at your home institution.
  - b. Send a letter from the exchange office at your home institution (using a template provided by the Exchange Programs Coordinator at the University of Alberta) that attests that you have the minimum required English language proficiency.
- 10) Some departments and faculties may have higher [English language proficiency requirements](#) for **graduate / postgraduate students** than those shown through the link just provided. It is your responsibility to find out, before applying for an exchange, about the minimum English language proficiency requirement that you will need to demonstrate.
- 11) Exchange students choosing to demonstrate the required English language proficiency with test results from an approved external testing organization (like TOEFL, IELTS, etc.) need to have the results sent directly to their home institution’s exchange office. Your exchange office would have to stamp the results with an official university seal before they are provided to the University of Alberta. **Please do not have test results mailed directly to the University of Alberta from the approved external testing organization.**
- 12) Test results used to demonstrate English language proficiency must not be more than 2 years old at the time of application.
- 13) **Undergraduate students** will need to be assigned to a “home faculty” at the University of Alberta. Therefore, the majority of courses you list in your application should be

selected from one faculty only and the first course you list should be in the faculty where you intend to take the majority of your courses.

- 14) **Graduate / postgraduate students** 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. 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. 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.
- 15) **Graduate / postgraduate students** wanting to conduct research while on exchange will need to indicate that they wish to enrol in "RSCH 900" on their "Application for Visiting Graduate Student" forms and "Permission to Participate Forms" along with writing the names of their University of Alberta host supervisors.
- 16) Additional application materials may be required for certain programs and/or courses and will be requested upon receipt of your application.
- 17) Please only submit what you are asked to submit and nothing more.
- 18) Once you submit exchange application documentation it becomes the property of the University of Alberta and the original documents will not be returned to you.

**Step #4: FOR GRADUATE / POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY:** Have your home institution **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 together at one time only.** In other words, please wait until you have all required documents before you send us your exchange application.

[Go back to start of document](#)

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

After you submit a complete and error-free application, it can take up to **8 to 10 weeks** for it to be processed and for an official letter of admission to be released. **Some faculties and departments 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, a computing ID (called a "CCID") and a password, often before official letters of admission are released. The CCID and password will give you access to a ualberta.ca email account and a [Bear Tracks](#) account. Official letters of admission may be available through one or both of these accounts or, if you are an undergraduate student, through your UAlberta Launchpad Status Page, and you are advised to check all of these accounts 2 – 3 times per week for your letter of admission. Official letters of admission may also be mailed as hard copies directly to you or to the Exchange Officer at your home institution or emailed to your Exchange Officer. Notices of Rejection would be issued in one of the ways mentioned above as well.

**Please note:** You should **NOT** make financial or other commitments for an exchange (like purchasing airline tickets) until you have your official letter of admission from the University of Alberta and you have satisfied any [Government of Canada immigration requirements](#).

[Go back to start of document](#)

## 6. Where can I find information about course registration and transcripts?

The University of Alberta uses an interactive web-based service for students called [Bear Tracks](#). You can use Bear Tracks to do the following:

- search U of A course listings
- register in courses
- view your class timetable
- pay most fees that you have been assessed
- view your financial holds
- check your exam schedule
- order your official academic transcript

After submitting your exchange application you will be emailed the computing ID (called a “CCID”) and password that you will need for course registration. **You are responsible for registering in courses on [Bear Tracks](#) after you have been officially admitted to the University of Alberta** (however, we will provide some assistance and advice if you encounter difficulties). You can access the “User Guide” (from a link near the top right corner of the screen in [Bear Tracks](#)) for an explanation regarding how to build a schedule of classes.

**You can only register for courses once you have been officially admitted to the University of Alberta and you are advised to register in courses as soon as you are admitted** since some UAlberta courses can fill up quickly!

Course listings and schedules for the upcoming school year are typically updated in March or April.

Generally, a 3-credit course = 39 hours total lecture time and 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:

Description	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value
Excellent	A+	4.0
	A	4.0
	A-	3.7
Good	B+	3.3
	B	3.0
	B-	2.7
Satisfactory	C+	2.3
	C	2.0
	C-	1.7
Poor	D+	1.3
Minimal Pass	D	1.0
Failure	F	0.0

Official grades are usually ready by early February for Fall Term courses and in the middle of June for Winter Term and Academic Year courses.

University of Alberta transcripts are **NOT** automatically mailed after the completion of a student’s exchange. You must [order transcripts](#) on [Bear Tracks](#) before you return home.

[Go back to start of document](#)

## 7. Where can I live?

You can [apply online](#) for **on-campus housing** once you have been issued a student ID number, a CCID and a password and before receiving an official letter of admission from the University of Alberta.

You must submit an application fee when applying for housing (which **will not be reimbursed** if you later discover that your application for exchange has been rejected).

On-campus accommodation is guaranteed to all exchange students who start in September and apply 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 that time.

There are also **off-campus housing** opportunities available throughout Edmonton. If you wish to set up your own accommodations, one service you may choose to use to help you do so could be the [Students' Union housing registry](#).

[Go back to start of document](#)

## 8. What do I need to know about health insurance requirements for my exchange?

The University of Alberta requires all incoming exchange students to enroll in the [University of Alberta Health Insurance Plan \(UAHIP\)](#). UAHIP is a mandatory health insurance that is similar to the [Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan \(AHCIP\)](#) provided by the Government of Alberta. AHCIP provides coverage for students residing in Alberta for longer than 12 months and UAHIP is for students who will stay in Alberta for 12 months or less.

The details of the UAHIP plan can change from year to year and might not yet be known for the period during which you plan to be here on exchange (coverage details are usually finalized sometime in August every year). When the details are known, you'll be able to find out about them through the UAHIP brochure we provide [on our webpage describing UAHIP](#). In the meantime, please note the following potential limitations about UAHIP so that you can ensure that you have appropriate health insurance coverage prior to arriving in Alberta:

- 1) Prescription medication has a certain maximum coverage per calendar year. In the past, it has only been covered up to \$500.
- 2) Regular dental care services (e.g., check ups, cleanings, fillings, x-rays, etc.), eyeglasses, and frames or contact lenses are not covered. In addition, we recommend that you are up to date with any immunizations / vaccinations that you may need prior to your arrival as some are not covered by the plan.
- 3) UAHIP might not provide you with sufficient coverage for any existing medical conditions (e.g., diabetes, cancer, etc.) that you might have.
- 4) It will not provide you with coverage while you are in transit on your way to and from your exchange at the University of Alberta. The purchase of traveler's health insurance is recommended.

5) It might not cover all of your medical needs for travel outside of Alberta during your exchange.

You are encouraged to acquire supplementary coverage for your exchange before you leave home, as options for purchase in Canada will be limited.

As soon as possible after your arrival to the University of Alberta we encourage you **to set up a Canadian bank account**. Any reimbursements for UAHIP claims will need to be deposited electronically into a Canadian bank account.

[Go back to start of document](#)

## 9. What will it cost and are scholarships available?

You will have to pay up to three types of fees while at the University of Alberta:

- 1) [University of Alberta Health Insurance Plan \(UAHIP\)](#). (Coverage by an insurance plan (other than the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan) will **NOT** allow you to be exempted from UAHIP).
- 2) [U-Pass](#) is for public transit for University of Alberta students.
- 3) If you choose to take courses for which there are [mandatory instructional support fees](#) then you will be required to pay such fees.

There are [different ways to pay your fees](#) including through your [Bear Tracks](#) account.

The University of Alberta provides cost estimates for [undergraduate](#) and [graduate / postgraduate](#) students showing **other expenses** that you can expect to have.

**Please note:** Your University of Alberta transcript will not be released until you've paid all of your University of Alberta fees. Also, late payments will accrue interest charges.

The [University of Alberta administers some scholarships on behalf of the Government of Canada](#) for exchange students that are citizens of certain countries. You need to apply for any for which you might be eligible by the University of Alberta (not Government of Canada) deadlines indicated.

[Go back to start of document](#)

## 10. What should I do if I will arrive late after the start of classes or decide to cancel my exchange?

Should it become apparent that you will **arrive late** after the start of classes then immediately:

- 1) Send the relevant University of Alberta Exchange Programs Coordinator an email that explains the situation and includes notice of your expected arrival date.
- 2) Contact all of your University of Alberta professors/instructors directly to advise them of the situation and find out if there's any way you can mitigate the impact of your late arrival by, for example, gaining access to course resources, journal articles, etc. so that you can start your academic work before you arrive.
- 3) Contact Residence Services directly at [housing@ualberta.ca](mailto:housing@ualberta.ca) to inform them and ask what they would have you do to secure any on-campus housing arrangements you may have made.

Depending on how late your arrival turns out to be you may want to consider either cancelling your exchange or trying to defer it. To be clear, a deferral might not be possible but it's definitely something we can explore.

Should you decide to **cancel your exchange** you will need to inform:

- 1) The relevant University of Alberta Exchange Programs Coordinator
- 2) Your home institution exchange officer
- 3) Any other individual or group at the University of Alberta (e.g., Residence Services if you've made on-campus housing arrangements) or at your home institution with whom you've made financial or other types of exchange-related commitments.

**Please note:** Failure to inform the people and groups listed above about your exchange cancellation could result in a situation in which you are still charged fees (and any related interest) for the exchange. Unpaid fees could negatively impact your credit rating and give you unwanted attention from collection agencies.

[Go back to start of document](#)

## 11. Who can I contact for help?

When contacting anyone at the University of Alberta for help 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) State your University of Alberta student ID number once it has been assigned to you
- 4) Identify yourself as an incoming exchange student applicant (before you are accepted for the exchange) or as an incoming exchange student (after you are accepted for the exchange)
- 5) Mention the name of your home institution

For questions about or assistance with:

- 1) **Courses and course registration** please contact a student advisor or academic advisor in the [faculty or department](#) that is home to the course in question.
- 2) **On-campus housing** please contact Residence Services at [housing@ualberta.ca](mailto:housing@ualberta.ca).
- 3) **Canadian immigration issues (like study permits, work permits, visas, etc.)** please contact one of our International Student Advisors at [advising@international.ualberta.ca](mailto:advising@international.ualberta.ca).
- 4) **UAHIP and health insurance** please contact one of our Visiting Programs Advisors at [uahip@ualberta.ca](mailto:uahip@ualberta.ca).
- 5) **Setting up a Canadian bank account** please contact one of our International Student Advisors at [advising@international.ualberta.ca](mailto:advising@international.ualberta.ca)
- 6) **All other matters**, please contact the relevant University of Alberta Exchange Programs Coordinator. If you don't know who that person is then please contact Mr Michal Guzowski, the University of Alberta Exchange Programs Coordinator for university-wide exchange agreements, at [michal.guzowski@ualberta.ca](mailto:michal.guzowski@ualberta.ca).

[Go back to start of document](#)

Last updated on November 21, 2019