

University of California, Berkeley
Advanced Standing Selection Criteria
College of Letters and Science
(Junior-level) Transfer Guidelines
Effective for the Incoming Class of Fall 2024

Background

The selection criteria for advanced standing applicants to UC Berkeley were developed by the Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education (AEPE) Committee of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate. Given the wide regard for the first-year admission selection criteria developed by the Committee in 1998, and the successful evolution of the first-year selection process, which uses a holistic scoring process, it was a logical step for the Committee to implement similar policy and criteria for advanced standing admissions. This step was taken and the policy was first implemented in the fall 2003 admissions cycle.

As of the fall 2021 admissions cycle, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions (OUA) oversees the selection of transfer applicants from all Colleges, based on the priorities and guidelines presented by each College and the admission recommendations made by readers. Colleges are asked to provide input during selection and to review final selection before OUA makes confirmed admissions decisions.

This policy is based on the same general principles that govern the first-year policy. Each applicant who meets minimum criteria for review receives a score on the basis of a comprehensive review of their application. The elements that are evaluated to determine a minimum level of admissibility include UC-transferable GPA, number of UC-transferable units, completion of UC 7 course pattern, and appropriate course coverage for the major.

Guiding Principles

1. The admissions process honors academic achievement and accords priority to students of exceptional academic accomplishment. At the same time, the decision-making process employs a broad and multifaceted definition of merit, including an assessment of contributions that a student will make to other aspects of campus life and the intellectual, cultural, economic, and political life of society.
2. Each applicant should be judged individually and comprehensively. All achievements should be evaluated in the context in which the student learned and lived, as well as in the context of the opportunities available to the student and how they responded to challenges. In keeping with Berkeley's status as a public institution, ability to pay fees and expenses is never a criterion in the admission decision.
3. The admissions process should further the Regents' Policy that each campus should enroll a "...student body ... that encompasses the broad diversity of ... backgrounds characteristic of California." The process must also comply with state law, including Proposition 209.
4. The admissions process should select only those students whose academic preparation indicates that they are very likely to persist to graduation.
5. The process should consider each applicant fairly, given the information available to the campus, and should seek to be perceived as fair by the various campus stakeholders

As described above, the purpose of the admissions process is to identify those applicants who, based on a comprehensive review of all of the information—both academic and personal—presented in their applications, most highly merit admission to Berkeley and will make the greatest contribution to Berkeley's intellectual and cultural community. These criteria also take into consideration guidelines established by the respective colleges. All applications meeting the minimum criteria for review will be read in their entirety. The admissions evaluation will reflect the reader's thoughtful consideration of the full spectrum of the applicant's qualifications, based on all evidence provided in the application, and viewed in the context of the applicant's academic and personal circumstances and the overall strength of the Berkeley applicant pool. The criteria on which this evaluation will be based are as follows:

1. The applicant's full record of achievement in UC transferable college courses, including the completion of the UC 7 course pattern; prerequisite courses for the intended major; a substantiated desire to pursue a specific and/or unusual major; the grade point average, including the pattern of achievement reflected in grades over time and level of achievement; and the number of UC transferable units completed per term within the context of the applicant's personal circumstances.
2. Personal qualities of the applicant, including leadership ability, character, motivation, tenacity, initiative, originality, intellectual independence, responsibility, insight, maturity, and demonstrated concern for others and for the community.
3. Evidence of achievement. This criterion will recognize exemplary, sustained achievement in any field of intellectual or creative endeavor; accomplishments in the performing arts and athletics; employment; leadership in school or community organizations or activities; community service; and local, national, military, or international service.
4. Achievement in academic enrichment including but not limited to those sponsored by the University of California. This criterion will be measured by time and depth of participation, by the academic progress made by the applicant during that participation, and by the intellectual rigor of the particular program.

All achievements, both academic and non-academic, will be considered in the context of the opportunities an applicant has had, any hardships or unusual circumstances the applicant has faced, and the ways in which he or she has responded to them. In evaluating the context in which academic accomplishments have taken place, readers will consider whether the applicant comes from an educationally disadvantaged background, or enrollment at a California community college with a low transfer rate to UC (and/or UCB) and the resources and opportunities available to the student. Where appropriate and feasible, they would look comparatively at the achievements of applicants in the same divisional or major pool. They will also consider other contextual factors that bear directly on the applicant's achievement, including linguistic background, parental education level, support available in the home, number of hours of employment including the level of responsibility achieved, parenthood, and/or status as a student returning after a prolonged absence from higher education.

The overwhelming majority of advanced standing students admitted are at the junior level, and these policies and procedures are designed primarily to evaluate these applicants. The campus does admit small numbers of advanced standing lower-division students and senior level students. The files of such applicants are generally evaluated using the criteria described here, but there must be compelling and/or special circumstances to warrant admission of students at levels other than the junior level.

Advanced Standing (e.g. Junior Transfer) Admission Scoring Guidelines

The purpose of the application scoring process is to rate applicants according to the Advanced Standing Selection Criteria. The score assigned to each applicant should reflect the reader's thoughtful consideration of the applicant's qualifications, based on all evidence provided in the application, and viewed in context of the applicant's educational and personal circumstances.

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions (OUA) will review Advanced Standing applications to the College of Letters and Sciences. All other Colleges will review their applications within their Colleges. Colleges will identify, by a date specified by OUA, who the readers of transfer applications will be. In selecting these readers, they will follow conflict of interest guidelines developed by OUA. OUA will train lead readers/transfer coordinators on comprehensive review. Experienced readers from the colleges will norm readers using applications from prior years on the scoring guidelines and particular academic requirements of the various colleges and their programs to prepare readers for the comprehensive review process.

Readers are asked to estimate the relative academic strength of each applicant, as well as that individual's relative level of achievement in non-academic areas and to thoughtfully consider the type of contribution that student would make to the overall intellectual, social, and cultural community at Berkeley. In assessing academic achievement, readers should focus on the full record, including both the level of achievement reached and, if appropriate, any particularly challenging obstacles or hardships the applicant overcame. Quantitative indicators provided in the application, such as the GPA (self-reported and/or UC-transferable), grades earned, and courses completed or in-progress, should be considered in the context of the student's individual experience, as well as the overall applicant pool. Readers should also consider the broader educational context of each applicant, including information about the family educational background, academic support resources, available both within and outside the school environment, and barriers to academic success, such as family linguistic background or the need to work. Personal contextual factors include a broad range of factors concerning the applicant's life experience and exceptional circumstances within that experience.

Major Preparation

UC Berkeley does not typically admit L&S transfer students directly to the major, but does consider the applicant's preparation for and interest in their intended major. Newly enrolled upper division L&S transfer students must declare a major by the end of their first term on campus. For High-Demand, Selective and Impacted majors in L&S, an applicant's preparation for their intended major will take on greater value in the evaluation and selection stages. For applicants to these majors, readers are asked to rate major preparation along values, i.e., best prepared, poorly prepared, not prepared, as defined by the major department.

Department representatives from High-Demand, Selective and Impacted majors in L&S should provide documentation to OUA of what is considered to be appropriate levels of preparation to those majors. Readers should take into account whether the applicant has access to articulated courses (as defined on ASSIST.org) at the community college(s) they have attended.

UC Berkeley typically admits transfer students directly to majors in the other colleges. Readers will take into account the appropriate levels of preparation to those majors and whether the applicant has access to articulated courses (as defined on ASSIST.org) at the community college(s) they have attended.

Scoring Guide

Applicants will be given a single score that represents the reader's assessment of their relative level of achievement in both academic and non-academic areas. While applicants may exhibit differing patterns of achievement within their individual applications, they may nonetheless receive the same overall score

if, in the professional assessment of the reader, these differing patterns indicate a similar overall level of achievement when compared to all other applicants to the college and/or major, and when viewed in the context of opportunities and challenges the applicant has faced.

However, the final admission decisions will be based on a linear ranking of students by score. If the applicant pool is particularly large or strong, some applicants with scores of 3 are likely to be denied. Admit decisions based on these scores will also depend on the division or major to which the applicant has applied.

1 Strongly Recommend

Only the very best applicants should receive a score of 1. In arriving at the assessment that an applicant merits a score of 1, the reader should assess the applicant on the basis of all of the selection criteria, viewed in the context of the educational and personal circumstance of the student, and balance all elements of the application. **In general, such applicants would demonstrate levels of academic achievement that, when viewed in the context of educational and personal circumstances, are assessed to be outstanding and place them toward the high end of all applicants.** Students whose level of academic achievement, viewed in context, falls in a broader range could nonetheless receive a score of 1 if the level of their achievement in other areas, the strength of their personal qualities, or their likely contributions to the intellectual and cultural vitality of the campus were assessed to be sufficiently extraordinary.

2 Recommend

In arriving at the assessment that an applicant merits a score of 2, the readers should assess the applicant on the basis of all of the selection criteria viewed in the context of the educational and personal circumstances of the student, and balance all elements of the application. **In general, such applicants would demonstrate levels of academic achievement that, when viewed in the context of education and personal circumstances, are assessed to be very high.** Students whose level of academic achievement, viewed in context, falls in a broader range could nonetheless be given a score of 2 if the level of their achievement in other areas, the strength of their personal qualities, or their likely contributions to the intellectual and cultural vitality of the campus were assessed to be sufficiently outstanding to strongly warrant admission.

2.5 Possibly Recommend

In arriving at the assessment that an applicant merits a score of 2.5, the readers should assess the applicant on the basis of all of the selection criteria viewed in the context of the educational and personal circumstances of the student, and balance all elements of the application. **In general, such applicants would demonstrate levels of academic achievement that, when viewed in the context of education and personal circumstances, are assessed to be high.** Students whose level of academic achievement, viewed in context, falls in a broader range could nonetheless be given a score of 2.5 if the level of their achievement in other areas, the strength of their personal qualities, or their likely contributions to the intellectual and cultural vitality of the campus were assessed to be sufficiently outstanding to strongly warrant admission.

3 Recommend with Reservations

In arriving at the assessment that an applicant merits a score of 3, the reader should assess the applicant on the basis of all of the selection criteria viewed in the context of the educational and personal circumstances of the student, and balance all elements of the application. **In general, such applicants would demonstrate levels of academic achievement that, when viewed in the context of educational and personal circumstances, are assessed to be strong.** Students whose level of academic achievement, viewed in context, falls in a broader range could nonetheless be given a score of 3 if the level of their achievement in other areas, the strength of their personal qualities, or their likely

contributions to the intellectual and cultural vitality of the campus were assessed to be sufficiently high to warrant admission.

4 Do not recommend

Applicants meriting a score of 4 are those who, in the assessment of the reader, may be qualified and could succeed and contribute to the campus community, but whose overall level of achievement, when assessed in context on the basis of all criteria, is not sufficiently high relative to the rest of the applicant pool to warrant admission. These applicants are likely to be denied.

N Not Eligible for Selection

Applicants receiving a score of N are those who appear not to meet the minimum selection criteria, based on the information available at the time of the review. Exceptions in the case of insufficient units may be considered upon further review.

Transfer Quality Control Reviews

Transfer students who meet minimum criteria for review receive a score based on a comprehensive review of their application. Both for consistency and to ensure that the admission process affords all qualified applicants an equal opportunity for admission, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions (OUA) conducts a quality control review after the initial comprehensive review phase for all applicants to the College of Letters and Science.

Score Review

Transfer reading procedures ensure a full review of eligibility by requiring that the assigned admission officer will conduct a final review of the applicants' eligibility for admission before completing the final conditions of admission.

As a concurrent quality review process, called a Quality Control (QC) Review, senior admission staff will also review the scores of applicants with a high grade point average and a low read score to ensure that all factors involved in arriving at a final read score are fully considered.

The following are parameters of situations that may trigger quality control reviews:

- GPA of \Rightarrow 3.80 with a score of 3 or 4
- GPA of \Leftarrow 3.30 with a score of 1 or 2

Transfer Lead Readers will conduct these reviews and make final recommendations before the final transfer selection of transfer admits is completed.

By-School Review

To make certain all applicants receive every consideration, By-School Review allows for an additional review of an applicant's achievement by considering applicants together who attend the same school. For reviewed community colleges in California, senior readers view an array of data beginning with the preliminary admit and deny decisions and preparation for the intended major. Senior readers may either validate decisions or identify apparent anomalies, such as applicants with a high transfer GPA being denied admission when other students from the same college ranking significantly lower transfer GPA have been admitted. The data also allow senior readers to identify schools where, based on preliminary admit and deny decisions, the admit rate appears anomalous or to identify community colleges with little to no admits for the academic cycle.

APPROVED

Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate
AEPE

Revised 6/9/2023 to remove gendered language, in accordance with the Presidential Policy on Gender Recognition and Lived Name (<https://policy.ucop.edu/doc/2700693/GRLN>), which "acknowledges that binary options are not sufficient to recognize gender diversity."