

SUMMER START EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2017

SUMMER START BACKGROUND

Summer Start was established in 2013 as an elective academic and cultural immersion program for incoming matriculated international freshmen. The program provides a strong foundation in U.S. academic culture, UC Davis history and values, advanced English language skills, and a broader cultural awareness that gives students the best start to their degree program at UC Davis.

PROGRAM ENROLLMENT

In this fifth year, Summer Start at UC Davis has emerged as the largest credit-bearing international freshman preparation program in the UC system.

Summer Start has continued to grow from a small initial cohort to an established program that captures approximately 10% of the incoming international freshmen. Summer Start enrolled 34 participants in 2013 and 124 participants in 2015; the program enrolled 87 students in 2016, reflecting the trend of decreased international student enrollments at a campus-wide level. This year, there was the largest enrollment to date with 128 participants.

With the increase of participants, the number of majors increased from 35 in 2016 to 41 in 2017.

The program included students from Azerbaijan, Brazil, Cameroon, China, India, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, the United States, and Vietnam.

Campus	Program Title	2016 International Enrollments
UC Davis	Summer Start	128
UC Berkeley	Freshman Edge	64
UC Irvine	Freshman International Edge	73
UC Santa Cruz	International Summer Academy	25

CONFIDENCE AND CONNECTION TO CAMPUS

Students completed an anonymous electronic survey at the end of the program, at which point they were asked to reflect on their experience in the program.

According to the results of this survey, students experienced a significant growth in their self-confidence and sense of connection to campus through the Summer Start program.

In just 6 weeks the number of participants who reported feeling prepared or very prepared for their UC Davis experience jumped from 28.5% to 81%, a remarkable increase of 52.5%. Similarly, students reported a 52.5% increase in their reported sense of connection to campus, the community, students, and friends.



Lake Tahoe Group 2017

SUMMER START HIGHLIGHTS

94% of students who responded to our 2017 survey said they would recommend Summer Start to a friend.

WHY SUMMER START?

Once they knew about the program, students elected to participate for a variety of reasons. By far, the most important reason for students was the desire to acclimate to UC Davis life and join the campus community before the start of the academic year.

When surveyed, students indicated the following motivations:

85% Adjust to UC Davis

73% Earn academic credit

62% Improve English skills

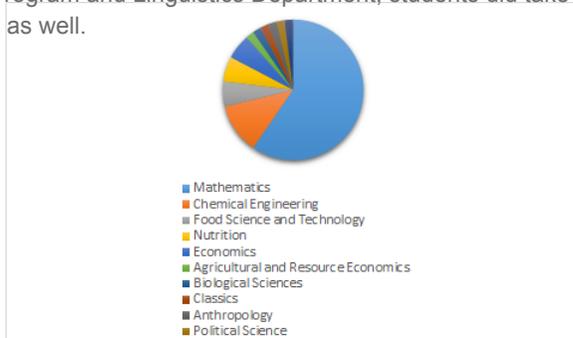
63% Make new friends

50% Explore U.S. culture

SUMMER COURSES AND PERFORMANCE

Summer Start continues to expand course options, which are organized around two tracks: English as a Second Language (ESL) and General Education (GE). This year, in addition to the mandatory one-unit course, EDU 98, “How to Succeed as a U.S. College Student,” students were able to enroll in the following courses:

- Fifty-eight students, over 45% of the cohort, achieved a remarkable GPA of 3.7 or higher. The average GPA for Summer Start in summer 2017 was 3.27.
- The majority of students, 96% enrolled in ESL courses. Students who had not yet fulfilled the Entry Level Writing Requirement took the new English Language Placement Exam before selecting UWP 21, 22, 23 or Workload 57S.
- Students Enrolled in 13 departments. While the vast majority of enrollments were in the University Writing Program and Linguistics Department, students did take courses in several other areas as well.



SUMMER START PROGRAMMING

The Summer Start program was designed with these factors in mind and included a range of components to enable students to meet their goals. In addition to trips to Lake Tahoe, Sacramento, and San Francisco, opportunities for involvement expanded in 2017 continued to include two ways to experience Aggie Life.

- **Volunteer Support:** Leveraging the program’s growing alumni community, 11 students (8%) from the 2015 cohort and 8 students (9%) from the 2016 cohort returned as volunteers, citing a desire to give back. They supported new freshmen before their arrival and ensured the smooth running of major events.
- **Campus Connection Workshops:** Every Monday, students received presentations about American university culture, tours of campus facilities, and information on university resources from various campus departments.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

When ranking the usefulness of pre-program preparation and advising services, 96% reported that email updates were “Useful” or “Very Useful.” At least 83% of students found all other services “Useful” or “Very Useful,” including orientation and pre-arrival welcome packets.

MARKETING

When asked how students heard about the Summer Start program, 63% of students identified the UC Davis Admissions website as the primary method, of which 44% of students cited the MyUCDavis Admissions Checklist. 53% cited direct email outreach from Summer Start and 34% noted the Summer Start website as other methods for learning about the program.



Summer Start students at the Davis Farmer’s Market.

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SUMMER START

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