Undocumented Graduate and Professional Students Handbook

In partnership with

UCLA Advisory Council on Immigration Policy

JULY 2019
Contents

Preface .................................................................................................................................................. 4

University of California Diversity Statement ....................................................................................... 4

University of California Nondiscrimination Statement ......................................................................... 5

University of California Office of General Counsel Admission Process ............................................. 5

Frequently Asked Questions ....................................................................................................................... 6

Step 1: Know Your Immigration Status, Rights, and Laws that Protect You ........................................... 8

   AB 540: California Nonresident Tuition Exemption ............................................................................ 8
   Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) ............................................................................... 9
   Non-immigrant/Student Visa .............................................................................................................. 10
   Temporary Protected Status (TPS) ..................................................................................................... 10
   Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) .................................................................................................. 10
   SB 1159 Professional Licenses ......................................................................................................... 11
   AB 60 Driver’s Licenses ..................................................................................................................... 11
   Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ......................................................................... 11
   AB 21 Public Postsecondary Education: Access to Higher Education for Every Student .................. 11
   SB 183 Equity in Higher Education Act ............................................................................................ 11

Step 2: Connect with UCLA Graduate Education .................................................................................. 12

   Resources within Your Graduate Program ......................................................................................... 12
   Departmental Faculty or Graduate Advisor ....................................................................................... 12
   Graduate Program Staff .................................................................................................................... 12
   Departmental Website Resources for Undocumented Graduate Students ........................................ 12
   Resources outside Your Graduate Program: Graduate Division ......................................................... 12

Step 3: Work with Legal Services ........................................................................................................ 13

   On Campus ......................................................................................................................................... 13
       Undocumented Student Program Legal Services ........................................................................... 13
       Student Legal Services .................................................................................................................. 13
   Off Campus ........................................................................................................................................ 14
       Asian Americans Advancing Justice LA (AAAAJ-Los Angeles) .................................................... 14
       Central American Resource Center (CARECEN) ......................................................................... 14
       Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA) ..................................................................... 14
       Public Council’s Immigrants’ Rights Project ............................................................................... 15
       Los Angeles County Bar Association Immigration Legal Assistance Project .................................. 15
       California Immigrant Policy Center (CIPC) .................................................................................. 15
       National Immigration Law Center (NILC) ..................................................................................... 15
Step 4: Finance Your Graduate Education ................................................................. 16
  Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Dream Act Application .................. 16
  Scholarships, Fellowships, and Assistantships .......................................................... 17
  Funding Eligibility for UC Graduate Students Who Meet AB 540 and/or DACA Criteria .......................................................... 17
  Other Financial Aid Options for Undocumented Graduate Students in California .......................................................... 17
  UCLA Financial Resources for Special Circumstances ............................................. 19
    Economic Crisis Response Team (ECR TEAM) ..................................................... 19
    Short-Term and Emergency Loans through the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office ..................................................... 19
    Childcare Funding Program for Graduate Student Parents .................................. 20
    Breastfeeding Resources ....................................................................................... 20
  The Essentials: Food and Necessities ....................................................................... 21
    Economic Response Team Meal Vouchers Program ............................................ 21
    Community Programs Office Food Closet .......................................................... 22
    S80 Café ................................................................................................................ 22
    Undocumented Student Program Mariposa Achievement Project (MAP) ............... 22
    Textbook Lending Program .................................................................................... 22
    Transportation Scholarship .................................................................................. 22
    Financial Wellness Program ................................................................................ 22

Step 5: Achieve Academic Success ......................................................................... 23
  Know Your Program Requirements ......................................................................... 23
  Courses, Grades, and Credits .................................................................................. 23
    Courses .................................................................................................................. 23
    Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Graded Courses .............................................. 24
    Transfer of Credit .................................................................................................. 24
    Incomplete ............................................................................................................ 24
  Warnings, Probation, and Disqualification: Academic Probation ............................ 24
  Concurrent Degree Program .................................................................................... 25
    Graduate Leave of Absence ................................................................................ 25
    Graduate Student Continuous Registration Policy ............................................. 27
    In Absentia Registration ..................................................................................... 27
    Graduate Student Readmission .......................................................................... 27
  Degrees ................................................................................................................... 28
  Graduation ............................................................................................................... 28
  Forms ....................................................................................................................... 28

Step 6: Engage with UCLA Campus Resources ...................................................... 29
  Key People to Contact ........................................................................................... 29
  Academic Resources ............................................................................................. 29
  Health and Wellness ............................................................................................... 30
  Student Services .................................................................................................... 31
  Student Organizations ............................................................................................ 31
Crisis Resources ................................................................................................................................. 31
Sexual Violence Prevention and Response .......................................................................................... 31
Report Hostile Climate Incident ......................................................................................................... 32
Counseling and Psychological Services ............................................................................................ 33

Step 7: Develop Networking and Professional Opportunities ........................................................................ 34
Disclosing Status ................................................................................................................................... 35
Starting Your Own Business .................................................................................................................. 36
Startup UCLA ....................................................................................................................................... 36
Employers Interested in Hiring DACA Students .................................................................................. 36
UCLA Undocumented Alumni Association .......................................................................................... 36
UCLA ONE ........................................................................................................................................... 37
GRADD (Gradiates Reaching a Dream Deferred) .............................................................................. 37
Resources ........................................................................................................................................... 37

Step 8: Balance Life outside of School .................................................................................................... 38
Commuter and Transportation ............................................................................................................. 38
Safe Ride ............................................................................................................................................... 38
Commuter Options .............................................................................................................................. 38
BruinGo! Transit Program .................................................................................................................... 39
Out-of-State Students with DACA or AB 540 .................................................................................... 39
Out-of-State Students without DACA or AB 540 ............................................................................... 39
TPS Travel Authorization ...................................................................................................................... 39
Undocumented Youth-Led Organizations .......................................................................................... 39
California Immigrant Youth Justice Alliance (CIYJA) ........................................................................ 39
Immigration Youth Coalition (IYC) ..................................................................................................... 40
Orange County Immigrant Youth United (OCIYU) .......................................................................... 40
UPLIFT Los Angeles ........................................................................................................................... 40
UndocuBlack Network (UBN) ............................................................................................................ 41
United We Dream (UWD) .................................................................................................................. 41
Korean Resource Center (KRC) .......................................................................................................... 41
Community Resource: Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) ................................................... 41
Preface

In early 2017, UCLA Chancellor Gene Block created the Advisory Council on Immigration Policy to study the impact of the Trump administration’s new immigration policies, recommend strategies to mitigate negative consequences, and advise on the relevant needs and concerns of the UCLA community. The council is composed of a wide array of campus leaders that includes faculty, students, and administrators. UCLA is strongly committed to remaining an open, welcoming and genuinely global community for students and scholars of all backgrounds. The Advisory Council has been tasked with preserving these commitments and protecting the individuals and academic activities of our campus community from the adverse effects of rapidly shifting immigration policies.

This project was supported by the Chancellor’s Advisory Council on Immigration Policy in collaboration with the UCLA Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment; the Graduate Division; the Graduate Student Resource Center; and the Undocumented Student Program. This resource guide is a result of the dedicated efforts of the UndocuGrad Committee—lead author and graduate student Annie Kao, Valeria Garcia, Lisa Hasegawa, Jennifer Tom, Armando Flores, Cherie Francis, Estevan Hernandez, Paavo Monkkonen, Amada Armenta, Sarah Valdivinos, and Erin Brown—and graduate students Trisha Mazumder, Caroline Chou, Marisol Granillo Arce, Yatta Kiazolu, and Gabriela Peraza. This handbook is dedicated to the legacy of Tam Tran and Cinthia Felix, nationally known leaders of the immigrant youth movement who were tragically killed in a car crash in May 2010. A filmmaker and leader of IDEAS at UCLA, Tam, and her best friend, Cinthya, graduated from UCLA and were enrolled in graduate school at Brown and Columbia Universities respectively. The handbook is also dedicated to the many others who have worked tirelessly to make the university a refuge for undocumented students who seek to learn, thrive, contribute to society, and fight for their rightful place at UCLA, Los Angeles, and beyond.

Jerry Kang, Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
Abel Valenzuela Jr., Special Advisor to the Chancellor on Immigration Policy

University of California Diversity Statement

Adopted September 20, 2007
Amended September 16, 2010

RECOMMENDED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BY THE ACADEMIC SENATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Adopted by the Assembly of the Academic Senate May 10, 2006
Endorsed by the President of the University of California June 30, 2006
Adopted as Amended by the Assembly of the Academic Senate April 22, 2009
Endorsed as Amended by the President of the University of California August 17, 2010

The diversity of the people of California has been the source of innovative ideas and creative accomplishments throughout the state’s history into the present. Diversity—a defining feature of California’s past, present, and future—refers to the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance. Such differences include race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, language, abilities/disabilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and geographic region, and more.

Because the core mission of the University of California is to serve the interests of the State of California, it must seek to achieve diversity among its student bodies and among its employees. The State of California has a compelling interest
in making sure that people from all backgrounds perceive that access to the University is possible for talented students, staff, and faculty from all groups. The knowledge that the University of California is open to qualified students from all groups, and thus serves all parts of the community equitably, helps sustain the social fabric of the State.

Diversity should also be integral to the University’s achievement of excellence. Diversity can enhance the ability of the University to accomplish its academic mission. Diversity aims to broaden and deepen both the educational experience and the scholarly environment, as students and faculty learn to interact effectively with each other, preparing them to participate in an increasingly complex and pluralistic society. Ideas, and practices based on those ideas, can be made richer by the process of being born and nurtured in a diverse community. The pluralistic university can model a process of proposing and testing ideas through respectful, civil communication. Educational excellence that truly incorporates diversity thus can promote mutual respect and make possible the full, effective use of the talents and abilities of all to foster innovation and train future leadership.

Therefore, the University of California renews its commitment to the full realization of its historic promise to recognize and nurture merit, talent, and achievement by supporting diversity and equal opportunity in its education, services, and administration, as well as research and creative activity. The University particularly acknowledges the acute need to remove barriers to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of talented students, faculty, and staff from historically excluded populations who are currently underrepresented.

**University of California Nondiscrimination Statement**

The University of California, in accordance with applicable Federal and State law and University policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy*, immigration status**, disability, age, medical condition (cancer-related), ancestry, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran. The University also prohibits sexual harassment. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities.

Inquiries regarding the University's student-related nondiscrimination policies may be directed to Eric Heng, Student Affairs Immediate Office at (510) 987-0239.

*Pregnancy includes pregnancy, childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth

**In September 2018, SB 183, the Equity in Higher Education Act authored by Ricardo Lara, became law. The purpose of the bill was to prohibit discrimination based on immigration status in admissions or employment. Prior to the passage of AB 183, the policy of the state of California is to afford all persons, regardless of their disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other specified characteristic, equal rights and opportunities in postsecondary educational institutions of the state. With the passage of the bill, these characteristics now expressly include immigration status. The bill also specifies that nothing in the Equity in Higher Education Act shall be construed to require a postsecondary educational institution to offer admission or student financial aid to a nonimmigrant alien, and that nothing in the act shall be construed to change a student’s eligibility for state financial aid.

**University of California Office of General Counsel Admission Process**

Academic decisions regarding individuals from countries affected by Presidential Executive Order 13769 of January 27, 2017 (Iraq, Syria, Sudan, Iran, Somalia, Libya, Yemen), [https://ucla.box.com/v/UCOfficeGC-AdmissionsProcess](https://ucla.box.com/v/UCOfficeGC-AdmissionsProcess)
Frequently Asked Questions

I am undocumented. Can I attend graduate school at UCLA?
The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) welcomes all students regardless of immigration status, including undocumented, DACAmented, and AB 540 students. There are many graduate and undergraduate students with unauthorized immigration status enrolled at UCLA. Students interested in graduate education at UCLA are strongly encouraged to apply.

Does applying for graduate school put me at risk for legal action (deportation)?
Applying to graduate school at UCLA with unauthorized immigration status should not place applicants at risk for legal action. UCLA is committed to the safety of all undocumented, DACAmented, and AB 540 students. Students’ immigration status is not shared with outside agencies, such as Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student records at educational institutions, including elementary and secondary schools and colleges/universities.

Will I be eligible for financial aid (e.g., scholarships, fellowships, assistantships)?
Graduate scholarships, fellowships, and assistantships are available for AB 540 students. These opportunities are department specific; check with the department you are applying to. Funding for other undocumented students may be available from external resources. DACA recipients are eligible for work opportunities.

Will my application or admissions process be different because I am undocumented?
Your immigration status will impact the graduate application process specifically as it relates to financial aid. Undocumented, DACAmented, and AB 540 students do not have access to federal financial aid. Students are encouraged to seek extramural support, such as those sources listed elsewhere in this handbook.

Who can I talk to about being undocumented and applying for graduate school?
The UCLA Bruin Resource Center (Undocumented Student Program) has staff members who are prepared to guide students through the graduate application process. Students can also seek counsel with the faculty and staff members in the department they are applying to.

What resources/support are available to me as a graduate student at UCLA?
There are a number of resources available to students with unauthorized status. Students are advised to connect with the Undocumented Student Program.

As a graduate student, are there any services that will be available to my family members?
The Undocumented Student Program provides services to some family members of graduate students. For additional details, contact the Undocumented Student Program.

Are undocumented graduate students allowed to transfer into programs at UCLA?
UCLA welcomes transfer student from all institutional types, public or private. Students may contact the Graduate Education office to obtain program requirements.

Can out-of-state undocumented students attend graduate school at UCLA?
In-state and out-of-state students are welcome to apply to graduate school at UCLA. Specific support is offered to students through the Undocumented Student Program and the Graduate Education office.
Is there a difference between funding for undocumented master’s degree and PhD students?
There is more funding available in general for PhD students, but this is not affected by immigration status.

Is the hiring and appointing process for DACAmented students different?
Students with DACA are hired and appointed using the same process as other graduate students.

Can I continue to work if my Employment Authorization Document (EAD) expires?
Students are not eligible to work without a valid EAD. Students cannot obtain a new graduate student researcher (GSR) or teaching assistant (TA) appointment without a valid EAD.

When should I apply to renew DACA to keep my Employment Authorization Document (EAD) current?
Contact Student Legal Services for advice.

What happens if my Employment Authorization Document (EAD) expires in the middle of my TA and GSR appointment?
Students are not eligible to work without a valid EAD. If your EAD expires in the middle of the quarter/semester, an email notification will be sent to the human resources manager in your program, and your appointment may be terminated. If your GSR or TA position is terminated in the middle of the semester, there are significant financial repercussions, including rescindment of the tuition remission, discontinuation of salary payments, and cancellation of your health insurance.

How can I travel out of the country for research (if applicable)?
Graduate students with TPS can apply for travel authorization. Check with individual graduate programs on whether they provide support for travel authorization. There may be issues returning to the United States. You can check with an attorney through the Undocumented Student Program (USP) Legal Services.

If I have DACA or TPS, can I be sponsored by an employer?
If you would like to find out about your individual case, we encourage you to schedule a consultation with an immigration attorney who specializes in employment petitions.


What if I don’t have DACA, AB540, TPS, or DED status?
UCLA is committed to welcoming and supporting students as members of the university community, regardless of status. Though you do not have access to all the opportunities and resources in this handbook, there are still resources available to you. Please seek support from the Undocumented Student Program, https://www.usp.ucla.edu/About/Connect-with-Us.
STEP 1

Know Your Immigration Status, Rights, and Laws that Protect You

Knowing the specifics about your immigration status and the policies related to it gives you agency to leverage academic and professional opportunities at UCLA.

**AB 540: California Nonresident Tuition Exemption**

Assembly Bill 540 (AB 540) is a California state law that allows students who meet the requirements listed below to pay in-state tuition fees at the University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), or California community college system:

- You attended a California high school for three years.
- You graduated from a California high school or attained the equivalent of a high school diploma (GED or California High School Proficiency Exam).
- You are registered or enrolled at an accredited institution of public higher education.
- You signed an affidavit with the college or university.
- You do not hold a valid nonimmigrant visa, such as visas F, J, H, or L.

[UCLA California Nonresident Supplemental Tuition Exemption Request (AB 540),](https://www.registrar.ucla.edu/Portals/50/forms/ucnrtexemption.pdf)

AB 540 has recently been expanded through Senate Bill 68, which allows students to count full-time attendance at a California community college, adult school, Department of Rehabilitation and Correction school, high school, or...
a combination of these, toward the three-year high school attendance requirement. Completion of an associate’s degree or minimum transfer units will also meet the requirement.


AB 540 California Dream Act Application Form, https://www.csac.ca.gov/california-dream-act

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)

On June 15, 2012, the Secretary of Homeland Security announced that people who came to the United States as children and met several guidelines could request deferred action for a two-year renewable period and work authorization. The National Immigration Law Center’s website provides details on how to apply for DACA.

To be eligible for deferred action under the DACA program, you must:

- Have come to the United States before your sixteenth birthday.
- Have lived continuously in the U.S. since June 15, 2007.
- Have been present in the U.S. on June 15, 2012, and on every day since August 15, 2012.
- Not have a lawful immigration status on June 15, 2012. To meet this requirement, (1) you must have entered the U.S. without papers before June 15, 2012, or, if you entered lawfully, your lawful immigration status must have expired before June 15, 2012; and (2) you must not have a lawful immigration status at the time you apply for DACA.
- Be at least 15 years old at the time you apply for DACA. If you are currently in deportation proceedings, have a voluntary departure order, or have a deportation order, and are not in immigration detention, you may apply for DACA even if you are not yet 15 years old.
- Have graduated or obtained a certificate of completion from high school, have obtained a General Education Development (GED) certificate, be an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or U.S. armed forces, or “be in school” on the date you submit your DACA application. See below for more information about meeting the “be in school” requirement.
- Have not been convicted of a felony offense. A felony is a federal, state, or local criminal offense punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year.
- Have not been convicted of a significant misdemeanor offense or three or more misdemeanor offenses. See below for more information about offenses that may disqualify you.
- Not pose a threat to national security or public safety. DHS has not defined precisely what these terms mean but has indicated that they include gang membership, participation in criminal activities, or participation in activities that threaten the U.S.

Source: https://www.nilc.org/issues/daca/faqdeferredactionyouth/

Deferred action is a use of prosecutorial discretion to defer removal action for a certain period; deferred action does not provide lawful status.

There have been multiple court cases and injunctions related to DACA, so it can be hard to track the current rules. DACA was rescinded on September 5, 2017, and the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is no longer accepting new applications; however, a federal court order requires USCIS to accept DACA renewal requests. If your DACA expired on or after September 5, 2016, you may still file a renewal request. If you want to apply to renew your DACA under the latest policy (based on USCIS’s January 13, 2018, announcement), you should make an appointment with UCLA Immigrant Legal Services or an off-campus legal services organization. If you decide to proceed with an application, we urge you to seek representation by an attorney or accredited representative. A Form G-28 (https://www.uscis.gov/g-28) should be filed with your application. Up-to-date information can be found on the National Immigration Law Center’s website, https://www.nilc.org/issues/daca/faqdeferredactionyouth/.
Non-immigrant/Student Visa

With this visa, the USCIS grants individuals the right to reside temporarily in the United States. Non-immigrants admitted into the United States receive a visa that includes the purpose for entering; for example, a foreign student may enter the United States on an F-1 student visa.

Some on non-immigrant status are allowed to be employed in the United States, and others are not. Some non-immigrant statuses have rigid time limits for the stay in the United States, while others do not.

Each non-immigrant status has rules and guidelines, which must be followed in order for the non-immigrant to remain “in status.” A non-immigrant who violates one of these rules or guidelines falls “out of status.” A non-immigrant who remains out of status for at least 180 days is deportable and will not be allowed to reenter the United States for three years. A non-immigrant who remains out of status for at least 365 days is deportable and will not be allowed to reenter the United States for 10 years.

Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

TPS was established by Congress in 1990 to provide immigration benefits to eligible individuals in the United States who are nationals of a country (or persons without nationality who last habitually resided in such country) that has been designated for protected status. When a country loses the TPS designation, nationals revert back to their previous status.

The Secretary of Homeland Security may designate a country for TPS because of ongoing armed conflict (such as civil war), an environmental disaster (such as earthquake or hurricane), epidemic, or other extraordinary temporary conditions.

During a designated period, individuals who are TPS beneficiaries or who are found preliminarily eligible for TPS upon initial review of their cases (prima facie eligible) 1) are not removable from the United States, 2) can obtain an employment authorization document (EAD), and 3) may be granted travel authorization.

Once granted TPS, individuals cannot be detained by the DHS based on their immigration status in the United States.

TPS is a temporary benefit that does not lead to lawful permanent resident status nor provide any other immigration status. Registration for TPS does not prevent you from 1) applying for non-immigrant status, 2) filing for adjustment of status based on an immigrant petition, or 3) applying for any other immigration benefit or protection for which you may be eligible.

Deferred Enforced Departure (DED)

Although DED is not a specific immigration status, individuals covered by DED are not subject to removal from the United States, usually for a designated period of time. Currently, only Liberians are covered by DED, though that will end on March 31, 2020. DED provides employment authorization and allows for travel outside of the United States with Advance Parole, an immigration document (Form I-512) issued by USCIS.

**SB 1159 Professional Licenses**

SB 1159 (January 2016), authored by Ricardo Lara, is a California law that allows undocumented immigrants to apply for professional licenses, https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140SB1159

**AB 60 Driver’s Licenses**

AB 60 (January 2015), authored by Luis Alejo, allows qualifying undocumented individuals to apply for California driver’s licenses.

State of California Department of Motor Vehicles, https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/ab60/index

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

FERPA is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the US Department of Education. Generally, schools must have written permission from a parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student’s education records.


**AB 21 Public Postsecondary Education: Access to Higher Education for Every Student**

AB 21, authored by Ash Kalra, is a state law requiring the CSUs and California community colleges, and asks the UC, to establish various policies and procedures to foster a campus environment that is safe and welcoming for all members of the community, regardless of immigration status.

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180AB21

University of California, “Frequently Asked Questions for University Employees about Possible Federal Immigration Enforcement Actions on University Property,” https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/content/frequently-asked-questions-federal-immigration-enforcement-actions


**SB 183 Equity in Higher Education Act**

SB 183, authored by Ricardo Lara, is a California law that explicitly states that discrimination based on immigration status is prohibited. According to the California Legislative Information website, the Equity in Higher Education Act states that it is “the policy of the State of California to afford all persons, regardless of their disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other specified characteristic, equal rights and opportunities in postsecondary educational institutions of the state.” This bill expressly references immigration status as a protected characteristic. However, the bill also specifies that postsecondary educational institutions are not required to offer admission or student financial aid to non-immigrant aliens, and the bill does not affect student eligibility for state financial aid.

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB183
STEP 2

Connect with UCLA Graduate Education

There are individuals on campus who are knowledgeable about Graduate Division resources for undocumented graduate students and are trained to support students and address their various needs.

Resources within Your Graduate Program

Departmental Faculty or Graduate Advisor
For students experiencing an academic problem, the departmental faculty and graduate advisor are the first resources. They can be important advocates even if the problem is with another faculty member.

Graduate Program Staff
Graduate program staff are good resources because they know the programs and may have valuable insight into the issue at hand. They also know how students should proceed with an issue and can put students in touch with the appropriate people.

Departmental Website Resources for Undocumented Graduate Students
- Department of Public Policy, Undocumented/DACAmented FAQ, https://luskin.ucla.edu/public-policy-2/apply-now/#DACA
- David Geffen School of Medicine, We Welcome DACA Applicants, https://medschool.ucla.edu/daca-applicants

Resources outside Your Graduate Program: Graduate Division
Dean and Staff Directory, https://grad.ucla.edu/asis/infoserv/roster.pdf
STEP 3

Work with Legal Services

There are robust legal services offered at UCLA. These services are free of cost and can support a variety of cases.

On Campus

Undocumented Student Program Legal Services

At UCLA, the USP office provides immigration legal services to students and their family members through a partnership with the UC Immigrant Legal Services Center. The center provides free, direct immigration legal services to undocumented UC students, their family members, and undocumented family members of students with legal status. These services include workshops, clinics, and presentations on current immigration laws and policies and know-your-rights trainings.

http://www.usp.ucla.edu/legalservices

Student Legal Services

Student Legal Services provides confidential legal counseling and assistance on a wide range of issues to all currently registered and enrolled UCLA students. The staff are able to help students with a variety of problems, including: landlord/tenant relations; accident and injury problems; domestic violence and harassment; criminal matters;
divorces and other family law matters; automobile purchases; credit, collections, and financial issues; employment matters; health care; and consumer problems.

Student Legal Services also frequently assists students with issues with other UCLA departments in areas such as housing, financial aid, harassment, discrimination, ADA compliance, student discipline, and faculty misconduct. The staff give students the information they need to assess their options and in appropriate cases, will negotiate on behalf of the student and draft letters and legal documents. Students may make appointments by telephone or in person. There is a $10 fee for the initial one-hour consultation with an experienced attorney. The office is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

https://www.studentlegal.ucla.edu/index.php

Off Campus

Asian Americans Advancing Justice LA (AAAJ-Los Angeles)
The Immigration Project at AAAJ-Los Angeles assists immigrants nationally and locally who are seeking help with immigration relief, such as adjustment of status, representation in immigration court, and other forms of family-based immigration assistance. The Immigration Project hosts free or low-cost in-house and off-site workshops and information sessions in Los Angeles and Orange Counties to assist undocumented immigrants. Immigration consultations are also available in person or over the phone by appointment only. The Asian Language Legal Intake Project (ALLIP) provides toll-free hotlines in Cambodian (Khmer), Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Filipino (Tagalog), Korean, Thai, and Vietnamese. The intake staff also provide help in English and other languages. Callers receive resources, counseling, or referral to an AAAJ-LA attorney or another legal aid organization on issues such as housing, domestic violence, family law, immigration, citizenship, consumer fraud, employment, and discrimination. Their hotlines prioritize assistance to low-income people in the following areas of law: family, immigration, consumer, public benefits, employment, housing, and civil rights.

https://advancingjustice-la.org/
DACA Resources, https://advancingjustice-la.org/daca#Flyer

Central American Resource Center (CARECEN)
CARECEN is committed to providing high-quality, affordable immigration legal services. They do not charge for consultations for most cases and do not charge any fees for DACA and naturalization consultations.

DACA Resources, https://carecenla.nationbuilder.com/tags/daca
Legal Services, http://www.carecen-la.org/legal_services

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
For legal immigration services consultation, visit CHIRLA Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday, at 8 a.m. The consultation fee is $40 per person.

Community Resources, https://www.chirla.org/resources
Legal Services, http://www.chirla.org/legal-immigration-services
Public Council’s Immigrants’ Rights Project

The Immigrants’ Rights Project represents individuals seeking asylum based on past persecution or a well-founded fear of future persecution due to political opinion, race, religion, nationality, or membership in a particular social group. The organization also assists immigrants who have been abused by a US citizen or permanent resident as well as victims of trafficking and other crimes.

Call 213-385-2977 x600 or visit http://www.publiccounsel.org/practice_areas/immigrant_rights

Los Angeles County Bar Association Immigration Legal Assistance Project

The Immigration Legal Assistance Project provides, for a nominal fee, legal assistance and consultation on immigration law and can help prepare various immigration forms, including but not limited to the following:

- Adjustment of status
- Family petitions
- Conditional residency
- Naturalizations

https://www.lacba.org/give-back/immigration-legal-assistance-project/information-and-help

California Immigrant Policy Center (CIPC)

CIPC advances inclusive policies that build a prosperous future for all Californians, using policy analysis, advocacy, and capacity building.

634 S Spring St Ste 600A
Los Angeles CA 90014
213-250-0880
https://caimmigrant.org/

National Immigration Law Center (NILC)

Established in 1979, NILC is one of the leading organizations in the United States exclusively dedicated to defending and advancing the rights of low-income immigrants.

3450 Wilshire Blvd #108–62
Los Angeles CA 90010
213-639-3900
https://www.nilc.org/
**STEP 4**

**Finance Your Graduate Education**

Obtaining graduate student financial support can be a complicated process. The amount and type of financial support available may vary from year to year depending on what specific graduate programs can offer and which sources students apply for. This section details sources of student financial support, funding research procedures, guidelines for anticipating the tough times, and resources to help in a financial emergency.

**Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Dream Act Application**

Eligible graduate students are encouraged to file a FAFSA or Dream Act Application annually. Although the applications can be filed at any time, it is strongly suggested that students file online each year between January 1 and March 2, to meet UCLA’s priority deadline. These forms are used to determine your eligibility for loans and work-study, though students have the option of declining either. Application information may be found on the Financial Aid and Scholarships website, https://www.financialaid.ucla.edu/, and on the Graduate Work-Study website,
The Graduate Division’s work-study program is much more robust than the undergraduate program, so be sure to read the details.

The FAFSA or Dream Act Application may also be used by academic departments and the Graduate Division to determine eligibility for fellowships, training grants, stipends, loans, and work-study funds that pay some graduate student researcher salaries. The Financial Aid and Scholarships Office determines who is eligible for work-study funding, but it does not create work-study positions. The latter are determined by the student and the hiring academic department. Certain off-campus jobs are eligible for work-study funding if the position is a paid one and the company is a nonprofit, as determined by the Internal Revenue Service.

Graduate students who have been granted DACA and have obtained a work permit are encouraged to seek financial support through work appointments and fellowship opportunities off campus.

Graduate Financial Aid and Scholarships, http://www.financialaid.ucla.edu/Graduate/Overview

Scholarships, Fellowships, and Assistantships

There are many scholarships available to undocumented graduate students. Students can search for scholarships and fellowships on Immigrants Rising’s website, a nonprofit in San Francisco that holistically supports undocumented students, https://immigrantsrising.org/resources/. The list is organized by scholarships/fellowships for all graduate students (including those in professional schools) and then by field of study.

Students classified as AB 540 are eligible to receive UC state or private funds.


Below are some great scholarships and fellowships open to DACA recipients:

**UCLA Graduate Fellowships Database** (Filter by citizenship status), https://grad.ucla.edu/funding/

**Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship**, http://www.pdsoros.org
Open to students pursuing any graduate degree and will finance two years of graduate study; usually due November 1.

**Ford Foundation Diversity Fellowship Programs**, http://sites.nationalacademies.org/pga/fordfellowships
Deadlines vary, frequently mid-November.

Funding Eligibility for UC Graduate Students Who Meet AB 540 and/or DACA Criteria


Other Financial Aid Options for Undocumented Graduate Students in California

**Private Loans**: Students have been able to obtain private loans; however, most banks will require a citizen or permanent resident to cosign the loan and assume full responsibility for it if the student defaults. Sallie Mae and Discover Bank have given loans to undocumented students.

**Individual Fundraising**: A popular crowdfunding website is https://www.gofundme.com/.

**Loan Repayment Program**: The Health Professions Education Foundation, a statewide foundation, has loan repayment programs for health professionals and is open to DACA recipients. The program repays your commercial or government loans (from $4,000 to $105,000) in exchange for services in a medically underserved area in California.
Eligible professions include various allied health professions, licensed vocational nurses, those requiring a bachelor's degree in nursing, nurse practitioners, dentists, dental hygienists, certified nurse midwives, physician assistants, and physicians.

**California DREAM Loan Program:** The California DREAM Loan Program, authored by Senator Ricardo Lara, allows UC and CSU campuses to administer nonfederal loans to undocumented students who meet the California Dream Act application requirements. Students who demonstrate financial need can borrow up to $2,000. Interest rates are fixed at the same rates as Federal Direct loans, with no fees. You must submit your DREAM application by the March 2 deadline at [https://dream.csac.ca.gov/](https://dream.csac.ca.gov/).

UC Financial Aid and Scholarships, “What Aid is Available,” [https://www.financialaid.ucla.edu/Graduate/What-Aid-is-Available](https://www.financialaid.ucla.edu/Graduate/What-Aid-is-Available)


**Loan Programs for Physicians:** The Steven M. Thompson Physician Corps Loan Repayment is open to DACA recipients. This program will repay up to $105,000 in educational loans (commercial or governmental) in exchange for three years of service in a medically underserved area in California. This program is open to osteopathic and allopathic physicians.

[https://oshpd.ca.gov/loans-scholarships-grants/loan-repayment/stlp/](https://oshpd.ca.gov/loans-scholarships-grants/loan-repayment/stlp/)

**Institutional Loans:** Some schools have institutional loans for students. For example, UC San Francisco has created a small loan for their first undocumented medical student and has indicated that this is an option for other UC medical schools.

UCLA Student Loan Services and Collections, [https://www.loans.ucla.edu/](https://www.loans.ucla.edu/)
**Institutional Scholarships and Fellowships:** Some UC schools have generous scholarships and fellowships open to undocumented students. For school-specific scholarships and fellowships, refer to the list in the Immigrants Rising Graduate Guide, [https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/list-of-graduate-scholarships/](https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/list-of-graduate-scholarships/).

**Jewish Free Loan Association (JFLA):** JFLA offers interest-free loans to students of all faiths in the greater Los Angeles area. Loans are available for technical, vocational, and trade school undergraduate or graduate education. Loan amounts average $3,000, with reduced payments while students are in school and increasing payments beginning three months after graduation. Students must be enrolled full-time with a GPA over 2.5 and have two California guarantors over 25 years old with steady incomes and good credit.

[https://www.jfla.org/](https://www.jfla.org/)

**UCLA Financial Resources for Special Circumstances**

**Economic Crisis Response Team (ECR TEAM)**

The ECR TEAM provides support and guidance to students who have self-identified, or are identified by UCLA faculty or staff, as experiencing a financial crisis that impacts their academic success at UCLA. The team aims to efficiently, compassionately, and discreetly provide seamless and individualized responses to UCLA students in extraordinary financial crisis. They also develop proposals for actions to examine (and revise when appropriate) university policies and office protocols in order to improve students’ ability to manage their financial situations and avoid economic crisis.

Economic Crisis Response, [https://www.studentincrisis.ucla.edu/Economic-Crisis-Response](https://www.studentincrisis.ucla.edu/Economic-Crisis-Response)

ECRT Self-Assessment Form, [https://sa.ucla.edu/DOS/ECR/Intake](https://sa.ucla.edu/DOS/ECR/Intake) (UCLA Login required)

Contact: ecr@saonet.ucla.edu or 310-206-1189

**Short-Term and Emergency Loans through the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office**

Interest-free, short-term loans are available to students only through Student Loan Services and Collections (A227 Murphy Hall), [https://www.loans.ucla.edu/About-Us](https://www.loans.ucla.edu/About-Us).

Short-term loans are always due on the 20th day of the month following the month borrowed. To qualify for a short-term loan, you must be a UCLA student enrolled in the current quarter, have paid your student services fees, and have no outstanding short-term loans. You must present one of the following picture IDs:

- Bruincard
- Driver’s license
- State ID card
- Military ID
- Passport

Short-term loan service is available weekdays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., [https://www.loans.ucla.edu/Short-Term-Loan/](https://www.loans.ucla.edu/Short-Term-Loan/).
There are three types of short-term loans:

- **Emergency Loan**: Up to $200.
- **Living Expense Loan**: Up to $350 for those who are employed. Written employment verification on company letterhead must be provided from your employer.
- **Financial Aid Advance**: To help when there is a delay in current quarter/semester financial aid disbursement. This particular type of loan or advance is generally made against yet-to-be-disbursed current quarter/semester Federal Direct, Direct Grad PLUS, Perkins, University/Regents, Dream Loans, and electronically disbursed Federal Parent PLUS Loans.

**Childcare Funding Program for Graduate Student Parents**

The UCLA Childbirth Accommodation Fund was established to provide expectant mothers who work as GSRs, or who hold extramural fellowships that do not fund maternity leave, with paid leave for up to six weeks. A student may choose to continue to work in some modified capacity during the six weeks but is not required to do so. A longer period of leave may be granted, without pay, in the case of exceptional medical circumstances experienced by the mother or child before or after birth.

Six weeks of maternity leave funding is automatically granted for expectant mothers holding fellowships from UCLA, Graduate Division, or academic departments and centers at UCLA. Also, a student holding a teaching assistantship is eligible to receive up to six weeks of paid leave for pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions for the period prior to, during, and after childbirth. You do not need to apply for Childbirth Accommodation Funding if you have an appointment as a TA or any of these types of fellowships.

Most extramural fellowships will defer to university policy and fund up to six weeks of maternity leave. You may apply for Childbirth Accommodation Funding for multiple fellowships concurrently. If you have a GSR appointment and extramural fellowships, you may apply for funding for all of them.

Childbirth Accommodation Funding Petition, [https://grad.ucla.edu/funding/working-at-ucla/childbirth-accommodation-funding/](https://grad.ucla.edu/funding/working-at-ucla/childbirth-accommodation-funding/)

University of California and UAW Contract, Article 17 Leaves, [https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/labor/bargaining-units/bx/docs/bx_2010-2013_17_leaves_ta.pdf](https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/labor/bargaining-units/bx/docs/bx_2010-2013_17_leaves_ta.pdf)

**Breastfeeding Resources**

The Students with Dependents Program offers emergency lactation and infant supplies, such as microwave sanitation kits, milk storage bags, breast pads, diapers, wipes and other resources to UCLA students. Breastfeeding supplies are also available for over-the-counter purchase at the Bruin Pharmacy, including manual breast pumps, lanolin cream, milk storage bags, and breast pads.

Although a normal pregnancy doesn’t qualify as a disability under ADA, the Center for Accessible Education provides academic accommodations for pregnant, parenting, and lactating students.

UCLA has three full-time Certified Lactation Educator Counselors who are trained to aid breastfeeding as it applies to the average mother experiencing normal challenges.

[https://www.chr.ucla.edu/benefits/ucla-campus-resources](https://www.chr.ucla.edu/benefits/ucla-campus-resources)


The Essentials: Food and Necessities

Economic Response Team Meal Vouchers Program

The meal voucher program is available to help undergraduate and graduate students in financial need. Go to the BRC (SAC B44) front desk or any of the other locations listed to fill out an application form and meet with a staff member to find out if you are eligible for the program.

If you have utilized the meal vouchers at least once, go to the BRC (SAC B44) front desk to pick up a second form and get it signed by financial aid before meeting with a staff member. You will need to return to the BRC or another of the listed locations with the signed form to receive vouchers.

Undocumented students are eligible for up to 20 vouchers per quarter; there is no limit to the number of quarters. To be eligible for this program, you must live off campus, not have a meal plan, and have utilized all financial aid options, including loans.

Meal Vouchers Program Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.–12:00 noon</td>
<td>Bruin Resource Center - SAC B44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>2:00–3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Bradley International Hall Rm. 106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>1:00–3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Community Programs Office - SAC 105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>1:00–3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>BRC Transfer Center - Kerckhoff Rm. 128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>2:00–4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>LGBT - SAC Rm. B36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Community Programs Office - SAC Rm. 105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community Programs Office Food Closet
For UCLA students who may be experiencing hunger or are struggling to attain food due to financial hardship, the food closet provides fresh produce, canned goods, and toiletries. The food closet is open from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and located at Student Activities Center Rm. 111.
https://www.basicneeds.ucla.edu/Hungry/Food-Closet

580 Café
580 Café is a space for students to break bread and build relationships through food, conversation, study, and art. Located within walking distance of campus at St. Alban’s Church, all are welcome. 580 Café is an immigrant welcoming and reconciling community. Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
http://www.wfsucla.org/

Undocumented Student Program Mariposa Achievement Project (MAP)
MAP is the USP’s commitment to enhancing the academic performance, retention, and continual success of undocumented students at UCLA. MAP is divided into three components: textbooks, transportation, and meal vouchers.
https://sites.google.com/site/mariposaachievementproject/

Textbook Lending Program
Students can borrow textbooks available in USP’s lending library. Books need to be returned at the end of the quarter.

Transportation Scholarship
Students can receive a small scholarship to subsidize their transportation costs. NOTE: You must be eligible for the California Dream Act to apply.
Contact: Undocumented Student Program at usp@saonet.ucla.edu

Financial Wellness Program
The mission of UCLA’s Financial Wellness Program is to empower all Bruins to confidently navigate their finances in a way that supports their overall well-being. This program fosters financial literacy skills through workshops, coaching, and online educational efforts. Additionally, the program aims to encourage students to know who, when, and why to ask for help and centralizes and advocates for student economic support services on campus.
http://www.financialwellness.ucla.edu/
STEP 5

Achieve Academic Success

Know Your Program Requirements

Check with your department on their program requirements. These should be available on their website or through their student affairs officer (SAO).

Graduate Student Academic Rights and Responsibilities, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/graduate-student-academic-rights-and-responsibilities/

Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/standards-and-procedures-for-graduate-study/

Academic FAQs, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/faqs/

Courses, Grades, and Credits

Courses

The university’s minimum program of study requires at least 9 graduate and upper division courses (36 units) completed while in graduate status. At least 5 of those courses (20 units) must be graduate level. For the MA, MS, and MAT, the 5 graduate courses must be in the 200 series (graduate courses and seminars) and, in limited number,
the 500 series (directed individual study or research). For other master’s degrees, courses must be in the 400 series (graduate professional courses) as well as the 200 and 500 series. Many master’s programs, especially professional programs, require more courses/units than the university minimum.

**Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Graded Courses**

Courses taken on an S/U basis outside the major, courses offered on an S/U basis within the major, and 500-series courses within the major may be applied toward the degree and/or academic residency requirements, if approved by the program. Students in interdepartmental majors may apply only 500-series S/U courses to degree requirements. A course that is listed in more than one department (one with an M prefix) and that is taken on an S/U basis may not be applied toward a master’s degree without a petition if one of the departments is the student’s major.

**Transfer of Credit**

Through petition, courses completed in graduate status on other UC campuses may apply to master’s programs at UCLA, provided they were not used toward a previous degree. Such courses may fulfill up to one-half of the total course requirement, one-half of the graduate course requirement, and one-third of the academic residence requirement. A maximum of two courses completed with a minimum grade of B in graduate status at institutions other than the UC may apply to UCLA master’s programs. Two courses would be the equivalent of eight quarter units or five semester units. These units do not apply toward the minimum requirement of five graduate courses or the academic residence requirement. The approval of the Graduate Division and the student’s major department is required on a petition for transfer of credit. Courses taken for any other degree previously awarded at UCLA or another institution and courses taken before the award of the bachelor’s degree may not be applied toward a graduate degree at UCLA. Correspondence courses are not applicable to graduate degrees.

**Incomplete**

If you have been doing work of passing quality in a course but are unable to complete a small portion of the requirements (e.g., a lab assignment or term paper) because of an illness or other serious problem, you have the option of requesting an incomplete in the course. It is your responsibility to speak to the instructor in order to request the incomplete, and it is entirely up to the instructor whether to grant your request. If your professor agrees to give you an incomplete, you must finish the remaining coursework during your next completed regular quarter (fall, winter, or spring).

Grading and Repeats, [https://cac.ucla.edu/academic-policies/grading-repeats/](https://cac.ucla.edu/academic-policies/grading-repeats/)

**Warnings, Probation, and Disqualification: Academic Probation**

UCLA requires at least a B (3.0) average in all courses taken in graduate status at the university and in all courses applied toward advanced degrees. This standard applies to all graduate students, including candidates in graduate-level certificate programs. In courses graded on an S/U basis, a grade of S (satisfactory) shall be awarded only for work which would otherwise receive a grade of B or better. A student is considered on probationary status and subject to dismissal if the cumulative scholarship in all work completed in graduate status falls below a B or if the student’s work in any two consecutive terms falls below a B average. The dean of the Graduate Division determines a student’s eligibility to continue graduate study. If allowed to continue on probationary status, the student is required to make expeditious progress toward improvement in scholarship. If a student is allowed to continue as a graduate student, this action does not constitute an exception to policies governing any other situation in which a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 is required (e.g., an apprentice personnel appointment).
Concurrent Degree Program

Many students discover at some point during graduate study that their interests have changed. When this happens, there are procedures in place to help you change your program to fit your new objectives. Graduate students may complete a Petition for Change of Graduate Major, Degree Objective, or Double Graduate Major form and secure the required approvals.

Forms and Applications Used by UCLA Graduate Education, [https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/forms/](https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/forms/)

Before filing a petition, students should seek advice from the graduate advisors for the programs involved. For more information regarding a change of graduate major, degree objective, or double-major declaration, contact graduate program staff or a student affairs officer in the Graduate Division.

Absence and Readmission

Graduate Leave of Absence

Continuing graduate students in good standing (3.0 GPA or above) who have completed at least one term of UCLA graduate work may, with the support of their department and approval of the Graduate Division, be eligible for leaves of absence. Graduate students are allowed three quarters of official leave of absence.

Federal policy governing students on F-1 and J-1 visas restricts leaves of absence to certain conditions. The Dashew Center for International Students and Scholars, in consultation with the Graduate Division, individually evaluates each international graduate student request to determine if it meets federal and university eligibility criteria.
Students on approved leave of absence are not permitted to use faculty time or make use of university facilities for more than 12 hours since their last registration and are not eligible for apprentice personnel employment or other services normally available to registered students. There is no need to apply for readmission as the approved leave agreement includes a readmission term. The Registrar’s Office notifies students about registration for the returning term. See the Registrar’s Office calendar for the request filing deadline.

Leave of Absence Request, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/leave-of-absence-request/

Research doctoral students who are new parents or are confronted with extraordinary parenting demands should consult the Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA for the Graduate Council policy requiring program accommodations for them.

https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/standards-and-procedures-for-graduate-study

**What is leave of absence?**

A leave of absence is a period of time when a student is not enrolled in classes but intends to reenroll.

**When should I consider a leave of absence?**

- Your mental health is disrupting your ability to participate in academic and campus life, even with support and accommodations.
- You feel you are in crisis or that your level of distress is becoming intolerable.
- You believe the stress and pressure of college is seriously disrupting your ability to focus on recovery.
- You feel you need an increased level of care.
- You are not able to access the services you need at your college or university.
- You feel that time away from classes would be beneficial for your long-term well-being.
How will taking a leave of absence affect me?

A leave of absence may allow you to focus your energy and efforts on recovery and self-care so that you will be better able to participate and enjoy campus life when you return. Many who take leaves report that the time was useful and helped them in the long run.

It is helpful to find out the processes required before, during, and after your leave, as there may be important paperwork, deadlines, and conditions you must satisfy before you may return. If you receive financial aid or fellowship packages, you should ask how a leave would impact your awards package. For example, some financial aid packages may require you to be enrolled full-time or provide specific documentation explaining your change in enrollment.

What are my rights?

Students with disabilities, including those related to mental health, have a right to reasonable accommodations relative to their disability. Accommodations include extra time on exams or assignments, the ability to withdraw from specific classes, and leaves of absence. You can find more information at the UCLA Center for Accessible Education, [https://www.cae.ucla.edu/](https://www.cae.ucla.edu/).

Apply for Accommodations, [https://www.cae.ucla.edu/apply-for-accommodations](https://www.cae.ucla.edu/apply-for-accommodations)

Graduate Student Continuous Registration Policy

Graduate students must be registered and enrolled or on an official leave of absence every term until their degrees are awarded. Failure to meet one of these requirements for any term constitutes withdrawal from UCLA.

In Absentia Registration

Academic and professional graduate students conducting research related to their degree program outside California may be eligible for in absentia registration. Students registered in absentia pay 15 percent of the combined tuition and student services fees but pay the full amount of other mandatory fees, such as health insurance and nonresident supplemental tuition (if applicable). In absentia registration and fee reductions may be used for a maximum of six quarters or four semesters for academic doctoral students and up to three quarters or two semesters for master’s and professional graduate students.

In Absentia Registration Petition for Graduate Students, [https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/in-absentia-registration-petition-for-graduate-students/](https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/in-absentia-registration-petition-for-graduate-students/)

Graduate Student Readmission

Graduate students not on a leave of absence who fail to register for any regular session or to complete a term through cancellation or withdrawal must apply for readmission.

Students who have registered at any time as a graduate student at UCLA and are returning after an absence other than a formal leave of absence must file an Application for Graduate Admission. Payment of the nonrefundable application fee may be made by credit card only. Transcripts of all academic work completed since registration at UCLA as a graduate student must also be submitted.

Application for Graduate Admission, [https://grad.ucla.edu/admissions/admission-application-for-graduate-admission/](https://grad.ucla.edu/admissions/admission-application-for-graduate-admission/)
Degrees
In addition to coursework, there are various means of evaluating academic achievement, including qualifying and comprehensive examinations and various kinds of laboratory work and fieldwork. Achievement in research is primarily assessed through evaluation of the master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation.

Professional master’s and doctoral degree programs require field-specific training. The demonstration of achievement in these fields takes various forms, including fieldwork, project completion, and training that involves professional licensure.

Program Requirements for UCLA Graduate Degrees, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/program-requirements-for-ucla-graduate-degrees/

Graduation
Candidates for both master’s and doctoral degrees must have advanced to candidacy and completed all degree requirements—including the master’s thesis, capstone, or doctoral dissertation—before the degree is conferred.

Program Requirements for UCLA Graduate Degrees, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/program-requirements-for-ucla-graduate-degrees/
Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/standards-and-procedures-for-graduate-study/

Forms
Forms and Applications Used by UCLA Graduate Education, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/forms/

Your specific program may require additional forms. Here are some of the most common:

- Language Petition, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/language-petition/
- Graduate Degree Petition, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/graduate-degree-petition/
- Master’s Advancement to Candidacy Petition, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/masters-studies/masters-advancement-to-candidacy-petition/
- Leave of Absence Request, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/leave-of-absence-request/
- In Absentia Registration Petition for Graduate Students, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/in-absentia-registration-petition-for-graduate-students/
- Filing Fee, https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/filing-fee-application/
STEP 6

Engage with UCLA Campus Resources

Key People to Contact

- Faculty and Allies, https://ucla.box.com/v/UCLAFacultyStaffAllies
- Graduate Division Dean and Staff Directory, https://grad.ucla.edu/asis infoserv/roster.pdf

Academic Resources

- Undocumented Student Program at UCLA, Academic, https://www.usp.ucla.edu/Resources#183251009 -academic
- UCLA Departmental Advisors
- Community Programs Office (CPO), http://www.uclacommunityprograms.org/
- Libraries
• Graduate Education, [https://grad.ucla.edu/contact-us/](https://grad.ucla.edu/contact-us/)
• Graduate Writing Center, [https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/](https://gwc.gsrc.ucla.edu/)
• Graduate Student Resource Center (GSRC), [https://www.gsrc.ucla.edu/](https://www.gsrc.ucla.edu/)
• Center for Accessible Education (CAE), [https://www.cae.ucla.edu/](https://www.cae.ucla.edu/) (facilitates academic accommodations for regularly enrolled, matriculating students with disabilities)

**Health and Wellness**

• Undocumented Student Program at UCLA, Health and Wellness, [https://www.usp.ucla.edu/Resources#183251020-health--wellness](https://www.usp.ucla.edu/Resources#183251020-health--wellness)
• Arthur Ashe Student Health and Wellness Center, [http://www.studenthealth.ucla.edu/default.aspx](http://www.studenthealth.ucla.edu/default.aspx)
• Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), [https://www.counseling.ucla.edu/](https://www.counseling.ucla.edu/)
• Counseling and Psychological Services, “Are You in a Crisis?,” [https://www.counseling.ucla.edu/services/are-you-in-a-crisis](https://www.counseling.ucla.edu/services/are-you-in-a-crisis)
• The Mindful Awareness Research Center (MARC), [https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/](https://www.uclahealth.org/marc/)
• UCLA Recreation, [https://www.recreation.ucla.edu/](https://www.recreation.ucla.edu/)
  • Facility Hours, [https://www.recreation.ucla.edu/facilityhours](https://www.recreation.ucla.edu/facilityhours)
  • Facilities, Kinross Recreation Center, [https://www.recreation.ucla.edu/facilities/all-facilities#kinross-recreation-center](https://www.recreation.ucla.edu/facilities/all-facilities#kinross-recreation-center)
Student Services

- Undocumented Student Program (USP), https://www.usp.ucla.edu/
- Bruin Resource Center, https://www.brc.ucla.edu/
- Campus Library Instructional Computing Commons (CLICC), http://www.library.ucla.edu/clicc
- Financial Wellness Program, https://www.financialwellness.ucla.edu/
- Career Center, Graduate and Professional School Services, https://www.career.ucla.edu/Students/Graduate-Student-Services/Graduate-Professional-School-Counseling
- Dean of Students, https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/
- Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Campus Resource Center, https://www.lgbt.ucla.edu/
- Center for Accessible Education, https://www.cae.ucla.edu/
- Office of Ombuds Services, http://www.ombuds.ucla.edu/
- Volunteer Center, https://volunteer.ucla.edu/
- Free Technology Resources
  - Sophos Antivirus, https://www.it.ucla.edu/bol/software-downloads/sophos-antivirus
  - Virtual Private Network (VPN) Clients (remote access to UCLA library and other campus resources), https://www.it.ucla.edu/bol/services/virtual-private-network-vpn-clients
- Breastfeeding Resources, https://www.chr.ucla.edu/benefits/ucla-campus-resources

Student Organizations

- IDEAS at UCLA, https://www.facebook.com/ideasatucla/
- Graduate Students Association, http://gsa.asucla.ucla.edu/
- UC Student-Workers Union, UAW 2865, http://www.uaw2865.org/

Crisis Resources

Sexual Violence Prevention and Response

Preventing and responding to sexual violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating/domestic violence, and stalking are priorities for UCLA. This website provides the UCLA community with key information about university support services, your responsibilities as a member of the UCLA community, and steps UCLA is taking to address sexual violence.

Title IX Office/Sexual Harassment Prevention, http://www.sexualharassment.ucla.edu/
Report Hostile Climate Incident

UCLA is committed to maintaining a campus community that provides the strongest possible support for the intellectual and personal growth of all its members—students, faculty, and staff. Each must feel valued, welcomed, and included. Acts intended to create a hostile climate that are directed at any member are unacceptable and have no place in the community. The True Bruin Respect program has been put in place to aid in responding to such acts.

**What is a hostile climate incident?**

Any demeaning, derogatory, or otherwise offensive behavior directed toward any individual on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, or other group characteristics.

**What should I do if I experience or witness a hostile climate incident?**

Incident of BIAS Reporting Form, [https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Report-an-Incident-of-BIAS](https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Report-an-Incident-of-BIAS)

Additional information on reporting discrimination is available at the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, [http://www.equity.ucla.edu/report-an-incident](http://www.equity.ucla.edu/report-an-incident).
Counseling and Psychological Services

IF YOU HAVE A LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCY, CALL 911 OR GO TO YOUR NEAREST HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM.

If you are having thoughts about suicide:

- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (24 hours): 310-825-0768, https://www.counseling.ucla.edu/
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline (24 hours): 800-273-TALK (8255) or chat online, http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/

If you are a UCLA student experiencing a mental health crisis, call 310-825-0768 or visit CAPS during Brief Screen hours: Monday–Friday, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Examples of crises include the following:

- Thoughts about harming yourself or others
- Serious concern about another student’s safety or well-being
- The inability to function (e.g., get out of bed, eat, shower)
- A recent traumatic event

If you have experienced sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking, the following resources are available:

- CAPS: 310-825-0768 (24 hours) or visit during Brief Screen hours, Monday–Friday, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., https://www.counseling.ucla.edu/
- CARE Advocates: https://www.careprogram.ucla.edu/advocacy
- Rape Treatment Center at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical Center: 310-319-4000, https://www.uclahealth.org/santa-monica/rape-treatment
- National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800-656-HOPE (4673)
- RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) for help in your local area, https://rainn.org/about-rainn

If you are concerned about a UCLA Bruin or community member, consult with appropriate professionals:

- Emergencies: Dial 911
- UCPD Nonemergencies: 310-825-1491 (24 hours)
- UCPD Anonymous Message/Tip Line: 310-794-5824 (24 hours)
- CAPS: 310-825-0768 (24 hours)
- Consultation and Response, Student in Crisis: CRTeam@ucla.edu, http://www.studentincrisis.ucla.edu/
- Staff and Faculty Counseling Center: 310-794-0245, https://www.chr.ucla.edu/employee-counseling
STEP 7

Develop Networking and Professional Opportunities

Finding employment during school and after graduation can be particularly challenging for undocumented students, especially if you do not have DACA status. The following tips have been adapted from the UC Santa Barbara “Undocumented Students Career Guide.”

What counts as experience?
Experience can include any skill set (customer service, communication, problem-solving, etc.). It can also include the following:

- Internships
- Research
- Volunteering
- Academic Projects
- Personal Projects
- Part-Time Positions
- Leadership Roles
How do I gain experience?

Graduate Career Services counselors can help you find information for local, national, and international experiential opportunities that you may take advantage of, regardless of your work authorization status.

Make an appointment with a career counselor by logging in to Handshake, https://www.career.ucla.edu/handshake.

Career counselors are trained to discuss your interests, skills, values, personality, and challenges to help you narrow down what types of experiential opportunities you are interested in. Talking with a counselor will help you solidify your career goals and navigate any changes in those goals.

You will need to set up your profile when you first log on. Your citizenship status should show as blank. DO NOT CHANGE THAT STATUS. No one will be able to see your citizenship status.

If you have any questions, call the Career Center (310-206-1915) and ask to be connected to one of the Graduate Career Services staff.

If you have a work permit, search for opportunities on Handshake, https://www.career.ucla.edu/handshake.

Also remember to utilize your own networks:

- Friends
- Family
- Family friends
- Faculty at UCLA and other institutions
- Mentors
- Alumni
- Current and previous coworkers and supervisors

Connect with people who have gone through similar experiences and navigated hiring processes with and without DACA by contacting the Undocumented Student Services Coordinator, attending UCLA undocumented student alumni panels and events, and going to population-specific conferences (e.g., UC National Summit on Undocumented Students or the UndocuGrad Conference). These conferences often provide student discounts, and you may be able to reduce registration costs by volunteering.

Disclosing Status

Do I have to disclose my status?

You are never required to disclose your status. To discuss strategies around disclosing status to employers and get support during this process, talk with a graduate career services counselor and the undocumented student services coordinator. Both are committed to supporting students during stressful and uncomfortable conversations.

If you currently have DACA status, you are legally authorized to work in the United States and can move through the traditional hiring process without needing to discuss your immigration status.

When do I disclose my status?

When answering questions on an application, UCLA Graduate Career Services advises all students to provide information that is true and honest. Forging documents or committing document fraud could have lasting effects. If you have questions about an application, meet with a career counselor to discuss different strategies to speak with employers. If you feel comfortable, you could disclose early to an employer and ask for advice about how to fill out an application.
Once you have an offer for an internship or for a postgraduate position, you could raise the possibility of working as an independent contractor. As some employers may be unfamiliar with the process of hiring independent contractors, be sure to do your own research and consult with an employment lawyer if necessary.

**What is independent contracting?**

According to the IRS, an independent contractor is self-employed and produces a specific type of work product in a determined amount of time. The employer has the right to determine the work product but not how it will be produced. Independent contractors typically do the same type of work for different clients, rather than working continually for a single employer.

When applying for employment, an independent contractor can use a Social Security Number or an Independent Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), which can be obtained regardless of immigration status. Some typical independent contractor jobs are tutoring, childcare, and construction.


**Starting Your Own Business**

You can start your own Limited Liability Company (LLC) as a worker cooperative of people who are both workers and owners of the business. There are additional fees and taxes associated with an LLC.


**Startup UCLA**

Startup UCLA is an on-campus program that provides free advice and programming to help UCLA students, faculty, staff, and alumni develop their own startups. You can meet one-on-one with a venture consultant to help develop your idea, attend networking events to meet other entrepreneurs and venture capitalists, attend workshops to develop your ideas, and participate in longer programs—the summer accelerator and the Blackstone Launchpad—to build your concept into an active organization.

[https://startupucla.com/](https://startupucla.com/)

**Employers Interested in Hiring DACA Students**

University of Pennsylvania Career Services, [https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/DACAemployers.php](https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/DACAemployers.php)

**UCLA Undocumented Alumni Association**

The UCLA Undocumented Alumni Association is officially recognized by the university and provides the following benefits:

- Assistance to current students through fundraising, public outreach, and other activities in support of the university’s mission
- The ability to use the name of the university either expressly or by implication in connection with alumni activities
- The use of space, equipment, and staff resources in the performance of recognized support activities

[https://alumni.ucla.edu/alumni-networks/uclauaa/](https://alumni.ucla.edu/alumni-networks/uclauaa/)
**UCLA ONE**

UCLA ONE is an interactive, online gateway for mentorship, professional networking, peer-driven career advice, and exclusive job leads.

https://uclaone.com/

**GRADD (Gradients Reaching a Dream Deferred)**

GRADD is an organization founded by undocumented graduate students to address the needs of immigrant students interested in pursuing graduate education. GRADD works to establish a national network of students, faculty members, and community leaders dedicated to bringing resources and attention to this underserved student population. Through the creation of an inclusive and safe environment, GRADD intends to reassure students that their academic and professional goals are achievable.

https://www.facebook.com/GRADD.org/

**Resources**

- UCLA PhD and Master’s Career Services, [https://www.career.ucla.edu/PhD-Masters-Career-Services](https://www.career.ucla.edu/PhD-Masters-Career-Services)
- Handshake, [https://www.career.ucla.edu/handshake](https://www.career.ucla.edu/handshake)
- UCLA Graduate Career Preparation Toolkit (PDF), [https://career.ucla.edu/Portals/14/Documents/PDF/Graduate_Services_Toolkit/Career_Preparation_Toolkit.pdf](https://career.ucla.edu/Portals/14/Documents/PDF/Graduate_Services_Toolkit/Career_Preparation_Toolkit.pdf)
- Immigrants Rising, [https://immigrantsrising.org/](https://immigrantsrising.org/)
- Startup UCLA, [https://startupucla.com/](https://startupucla.com/)
- UCLA ONE, [https://uclaone.com/](https://uclaone.com/)
- GRADD, [https://www.facebook.com/GRADD.org/](https://www.facebook.com/GRADD.org/)
- UCLA Undocumented Alumni Association, [https://alumni.ucla.edu/alumni-networks/uclauaa/](https://alumni.ucla.edu/alumni-networks/uclauaa/)
STEP 8

Balance Life outside of School

Commuter and Transportation

Safe Ride

UCLA Safe Ride is a complimentary service that provides free, safe, and reliable evening campus transportation.

https://transportation.ucla.edu/getting-around-campus/nighttime-safety-mobility

Commuter Options

- UCLA Transfer Students Facebook Group, https://www.facebook.com/groups/uclatransfers/
- Bruin Commuter Club, https://main.transportation.ucla.edu/getting-to-ucla/bruin-commuter-club
- UCLA Vanpool, https://main.transportation.ucla.edu/getting-to-ucla/vanpool
• Metro, https://www.metro.net/
• UCLA Carpool Matching Service, https://main.transportation.ucla.edu/getting-to-ucla/carpool
• Bicycling at UCLA, https://main.transportation.ucla.edu/getting-to-ucla/bike
• Bike Shop, http://www.recreation.ucla.edu/bikeshop

BruinGo! Transit Program
Currently enrolled UCLA students can receive one free quarterly transit pass when they sign up for the first time.

Out-of-State Students with DACA or AB 540
• California Residency Requirement for New Driver License (DL) and Identification Card (ID) Applicants, https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/dl/residency_requirement
• Identification Cards in California (to establish residency), https://www.dmv.org/ca-california/id-cards.php

Out-of-State Students without DACA or AB 540
Individual PhD programs may supply transportation funding for students without DACA or AB 540. Speak with your department for more information.

TPS Travel Authorization
Graduate students with TPS can apply for travel authorization. Check with individual graduate programs on whether they provide support for travel authorization. There may be issues returning to the states; check in with an attorney through the USP Legal Services Program.

Below are the documents required to travel for research:
• Travel authorization
• Letter of support from faculty
• Passport

Undocumented Youth-Led Organizations

California Immigrant Youth Justice Alliance (CIYJA)
The CIYJA is a statewide alliance led by immigrant youth that focuses on placing immigrant youth in advocacy and policy delegations to ensure that pro-immigrant policies go beyond legalization to shed light on how the criminalization of immigrants varies based on identity.
https://www.ciyja.org/
Immigration Youth Coalition (IYC)
The IYC is led by undocumented and queer/trans youth and is based in California. Its mission is to mobilize youth, families, and the incarcerated to end the criminalization of immigrants and people of color.

http://theiyc.org/

Orange County Immigrant Youth United (OCIYU)
OCIYU, formerly known as the Orange County Dream Team (OCDT), is led by undocumented immigrant youth and based in Orange County, California. OCIYU advocates for the rights of undocumented immigrants to live free from exploitation and persecution.

http://www.ociyu.org/about/

UPLIFT Los Angeles
UPLIFT is led by undocumented Asian and Pacific Islander (API) youth and based in Los Angeles. They provide a safe and progressive space for API immigrant youth. They raise awareness about various immigrant and civil right issues in the API community, advocate for equality, and uplift the narratives of API undocumented youth in the immigrant rights movement. They build lasting relationships to empower and strengthen the next generation of leaders.

http://www.upliftlosangeles.org/
**UndocuBlack Network (UBN)**

The UBN is a multigenerational network of currently and formerly undocumented people that fosters community, facilitates access to resources, and contributes to transforming the realities of black people, so they can thrive and live their fullest lives.

[http://undocublack.org/](http://undocublack.org/)

**United We Dream (UWD)**

UWD is one of the largest youth-led communities in the country. UWD empowers people to develop their leadership, hone their organizing skills, and create campaigns to fight for justice and dignity for all people.

[https://unitedwedream.org/](https://unitedwedream.org/)

**Korean Resource Center (KRC)**

The KRC was founded in 1983 to empower low-income, immigrant, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and other communities of color in Southern California. Using a holistic approach, the KRC strives to empower the community by integrating services, education, culture, organizing, and coalition building to improve the life of the individual and the community.

[https://krcla.org/en](https://krcla.org/en)

KRC’s Leaders of the New School (LNS) program gathers college-age youth across Orange County to develop them into effective leaders. LNS is a six-month paid internship program that connects students to various community organizations and civic engagement coordinators in order to develop and expand their understanding and skills in navigating local political spaces.

[https://krcla.org/en/a/leaders-new-school](https://krcla.org/en/a/leaders-new-school)

**Community Resource: Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC)**

The ILRC seeks to improve immigration law and policy, expand the capacity of legal service providers, and advance immigrant rights. The ILRC trains attorneys, paralegals, and community-based advocates who work with immigrants around the country and work with the media, elected officials, and the public to shape effective and just immigration policy. The staff works with grassroots immigrant organizations to promote civic engagement and social change.


For any questions, please contact acip@equity.ucla.edu
Resources on Immigration Policy Changes, https://equity.ucla.edu/immigration