CENG IEP Frequently Asked Questions

1. What programs are offered?
   Answer: The College of Engineering has established exchange agreements with 7 Engineering Universities around the world. These countries include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner School</th>
<th>Country</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Chalmers University of Technology</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
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<td>2. Karlsruhe University of Applied Sciences</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. KTH Royal Institute of Technology</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
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<td>4. Munich University of Applied Sciences</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Swinburne University of Technology</td>
<td>Australia</td>
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<td>6. TECNUN University of Navarra</td>
<td>Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (this school is university-wide exchange)</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
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2. What are the best colleges that fit my major?
   Answer: On our website you can find a spreadsheet with majors offered by each partner school. It is possible for you to study at a partner school that does not offer your major, as long as the courses that are offered are relevant to your major, and can apply for your degree (for example, most students that are non-ME may also have to take ME courses that can potentially be taken abroad). **There are a few schools who have restrictions:** Chalmers only accepts students who have completed three years at Cal Poly and are in the following majors: Civil Engineering (CE), Electrical Engineering (EE), Mechanical Engineering (ME), or Manufacturing Engineering (MFGE). Similarly, KTH only accepts students who have completed three years at Cal Poly, but any major can apply for exchange.

3. Which classes can I take abroad that would give me credit here at Cal Poly?
   Answer: This may depend on the school that you want to apply to for exchange. You need to research which schools offer the most classes for your major. If you find a program that offers courses for your major, you are welcome to apply for exchange at that partner school. Please note that there are some schools that have restrictions (see FAQ #2).
Once you have identified the school you want to apply for and have researched the courses you want to take, you can then submit course substitution petitions for each course you want to take abroad (see the next paragraph to learn how transfer credit is applied).

Things to take into account when researching our partner schools are: 1) eligibility requirements for the school you want to apply for (see FAQ #2 for restrictions), 2) what courses are available in the semester you want to be abroad and the language you want the courses to be taught. It is important to research which courses are available in English for your major (you may not be ready to take an upper-division engineering course in German or Spanish for example), so you may be limited to taking courses in English.

Each partner school has a website for international/exchange students in which they list the courses taught in English. Please go to our website and select the school you want to research, then select the “Courses offered in English” link under the links heading. In addition, you are welcome to see our “List of Previously Approved Courses” for each partner school to help you plan your course selection. You are not restricted to selecting courses on this list. It is possible that more courses for your major are offered at that school, but have not been taken in the past by former students. **Note that this list is provided as a reference and course approvals are not guaranteed.** All participants are expected to submit course substitution petitions for each class you want to take abroad even if the course appears on the list and has been approved in the past.

To receive transfer credit for courses you want to take abroad, you will need to submit major/support substitution petitions (available at the CENG Advising Center 40-111) for each course you want to take abroad. We highly recommend that you submit these petitions immediately after being accepted to go on exchange or at the time you are applying for exchange, this way you will know in advance that you will receive transfer credit for the courses you want to take before the classes are taken. If you need guidance as to whether the courses you want to take match up with your major, we recommend that you meet with your faculty advisor for assistance. An approved course substitution petition means that you can take the class abroad and earn transfer credit for your degree once Cal Poly receives your transcripts and applies the transfer credit in your degree progress report (DPR). Please note that this process takes time.

4. **What types of services are provided by CENG’s International Exchange Programs?**

Answer: CENG’s International Exchange Programs (IEP) provides general advising to help you select a partner school that may benefit you based on courses available for your major. We offer general information sessions throughout the year and highly encourage you to attend one of these before you see an advisor during our scheduled walk-ins. Visit the Advising Center’s Events link to find out about our scheduled IEP information sessions.

Our office works with our CENG department faculty advisors, our partner schools abroad and the International Center to processes all exchange incoming and outgoing applications. We also assist students with general questions about the exchange and often keep correspondence with our partner school exchange coordinators for questions we cannot answer about the exchange. In addition, our office can provide you with contact information from former student participants to help answer your questions.

Once students have been accepted to the exchange program, we arrange a pre-departure session with former exchange students to help prepare you for your study abroad experience. Our office provides academic assistance with any course substitutions you need to submit for your degree. We highly encourage you to submit these course substitution petitions for major/support or GE before you depart to ensure you will receive transfer credit for the course taken. In addition, our office provides academic assistance once you have completed your study abroad to help you determine how your courses taken abroad will satisfy your degree requirements.

We can also submit course substitution petitions on your behalf in the event that you make changes to your study plan while you are abroad. You must email us at intlengr@calpoly.edu and provide your name,EMPL ID#, major, the course you want to take abroad and the course (or area) you are trying to receive credit for. Please also attach a course description or a link to acquire this information.

Our exchange programs allow you the flexibility to plan your study abroad trips at your convenience. Once you have been accepted into the program, you are responsible to arrange all travel details, including your passport, visa and abroad excursions. These experiences allow you to be self-directed, gain self-awareness, independence and learn problem solving skills.
5. **How do I approach working with the new language, will courses be in English?**
   Answer: It is important to have some knowledge of the language where you will be studying at. We recommend students to take language courses in German, Spanish, Swedish, or Chinese if they want to study at these countries. If you are fluent in the language, you can probably take courses in that language. However, if you are not fluent in that language, you will be limited to taking coursework in English. We strongly encourage you to learn some of the basic language necessary to help you get around in the country. Luckily, a lot of people in many foreign countries know English so, you can ask for help when needed. Our former exchange students have agreed that this was not a big problem especially in countries with a lot of tourists.

6. **How are ECTS units converted to Cal Poly quarter units?**
   Answer: This only applies to European schools that use ECTS credits (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System). Take the ECTS credits and divide by 2 to calculate US semester units (this is done because ECTS system is based on 60 units/year whereas US semester schools are 30 units/year). Lastly, take the US semester units and multiply by 1.5 (semesters are longer then quarters) to equal Cal Poly quarter units.

   Example: $\frac{4}{2} = 2$, $2 \times 1.5 = 3$
   - 4 (ECTS) = 2 (US Semester) = 3 (US Quarter)
   - 2 (ECTS) = 1 (US Semester) = 1.5 (US Quarter)

   If you need further clarification, please contact the Evaluations office (building 1 room 222) evaluations@calpoly.edu.

7. **How are fees determined?**
   Answer: Our partner schools run on semesters. Some semester overlap with our Cal Poly quarters. Student Fees will be paid to Cal Poly for each quarter the participant studies abroad. A student who participates in a fall semester exchange which concludes before the beginning of the University’s winter term will pay Cal Poly fees for the fall quarter only. A student who participates in a fall semester exchange which includes Cal Poly’s fall and winter quarters will pay Cal Poly fees for both the fall and winter quarters. A student who participates in a spring semester exchange which includes Cal Poly’s winter and spring quarters will pay Cal Poly fees for both the winter and spring quarters. Semester programs that overlap with our summer term do not have to pay fees for the summer.

8. **What are the costs for studying abroad? Does Financial Aid cover any expenses?**
   Answer: We have budget estimates for all of our partner schools. The estimate can be found on our website (select the partner school then select the budget estimate for that particular school). The cost of studying in another country will depend on its location and your lifestyle. In general you will pay for housing, books/supplies, meals, public transportation and miscellaneous/personal expenses (traveling). Other fees include roundtrip airfare, passport, student visa, health insurance (see FAQ # 14 for more on health insurance), and your Cal Poly tuition. Since this is an exchange program, you are at liberty to make your own travel plans (when to depart and return from abroad), so your traveling expenses may vary. You must pay a $400 administrative fee, but there are no other program fees.

   In addition, students who receive financial aid may have their financial aid adjusted to cover for the expenses abroad. Please contact the financial aid office if you have more questions about financing your study abroad: http://financialaid.calpoly.edu/. You should discuss the “Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)” policy with your Financial Aid Counselor to make sure that you are meeting eligibility requirements. Students on financial aid are highly encouraged to complete the *Authorization to Release Student Account and/or Financial Aid Information* form to provide permission to your parents to discuss financial issues at Cal Poly: http://afd.calpoly.edu/student_accounts/forms/FERPAForm.pdf. Financial Aid is disbursed the first day of the Cal Poly quarter, not the first day of the exchange program. The aid will be disbursed direct deposit into your bank account.

9. **I am only a freshman, but I would like to get some information on how I should set my goals for studying abroad?**
   Answer: It is great that you are interested in our exchange programs this early in your academic career. Although you are a freshman it is the best time for you to look into the various types of exchange programs that the College of Engineering offers as well as looking into other study abroad opportunities through our International Center, building 38, room 145.
For most of our partner schools (except Chalmers and KTH) to soonest you may apply for exchange is during your sophomore year applying for your junior year (fall quarter of 3rd year) or as a junior. This is the case because you will most likely have most of your lower division (prerequisites) coursework completed (calculus, physics, chemistry) and are able to take more advanced engineering courses abroad. As a freshman or sophomore, we recommend that you continue to take all lower division courses at Cal Poly (try to follow your flow-chart as best as you can) since this will prepare you for more advanced coursework abroad. Please meet with the IEP advisor as soon as possible or during your second year to discuss your progress, potential exchange programs and courses that will benefit you.

There may be other programs offered through the International Center that may not require you to be a junior for admission. For this reason it is recommended that you research other programs that may apply to you. To learn about the College of Engineering’s Exchange Programs please visit our website: http://eadvise.calpoly.edu/iep/.

Depending on the program you choose, some programs may offer more courses that can potentially meet your major curriculum requirements and/or offer more courses in English. You may also want to look into the time of the year you want to be abroad (summer vs. winter) and also keep holidays into account. You should research as much as you can about the school you want to participate in and especially get in contact with our former exchange students to get a better idea of what the program is about. Please contact the IEP Advisor at the Advising Center for their contact information.

Most of our partner schools are on a semester system and can overlap with Cal Poly’s quarter system. If this is the case you will have to pick which quarters you prefer to be abroad. Some schools like Swinburne in Australia, Chalmers in Sweden, KTH in Sweden or Tecnun in Spain, have semesters that begin earlier, allowing you to only miss one quarter at Cal Poly (fall quarter). Please visit our website or see the brochure for this type of information. In a sense, you want to do as much research as possible about our schools and apply to the program that benefits you.

10. I am interested in a specific program or country, but I cannot find it on the website?
Answer: If you cannot find a school or the country that you are interested in studying at, this means that unfortunately, the College of Engineering does not have an established exchange agreement with a school in this particular region at this time. You can also check with the International Center (38-145) to find out if they know of any programs that may interest you: http://international.calpoly.edu/index.html. It may also be possible for you to plan an independent study abroad experience. Please talk to the study abroad advisor for more information about this option.

11. I am interested in the Munich Summer Program – where do I get more information?
Answer: Please go to the following link for more information about the Munich Summer Program. Also, please contact Professor Jim Meagher at jmeagher@calpoly.edu for more details.

12. How much does studying abroad delay my graduation?
Answer: Studying Abroad may not delay your graduation at all as long as you plan carefully which courses you want to take abroad. Remember with our exchange programs you will be taking Engineering courses and rarely any GE’s. For example, a former exchange student who studied at Chalmers in Sweden for the Fall quarter took four courses and was able to apply all of them to his major. Since most of our programs are on a semester system most programs overlap with our Cal Poly quarters. This may cause you to lose a quarter at Cal Poly and therefore may delay your graduation; it all depends on how ambitious you are in completing your degree requirements.

13. What type of housing is available?
Answer: Most of our programs offer on campus housing. This information is normally provided by the abroad school. If housing is available for you, it is important to apply for accommodation as soon as you can in order to secure housing. If students want to live off-campus, students must make their own arrangements or inquire about this option to the exchange coordinator at the school of interest. Some programs do not offer housing accommodations. It is important to use the resources provided by the partner school on how to find housing in the area.

14. Is there a form for writers of letters of recommendation for international exchange programs?
Answer: Unfortunately, we do not have a template for faculty to follow when writing you a letter of recommendation. The format is open for your instructors to be creative and indicate their support for your studying abroad application. They should discuss your performance and potential as a student. We recommend for you to provide them with your up-to-date resume to assist them in writing your letter. You can have the instructor make the letter out to the “College of Engineering, International Exchange Program” (note: this letter will also be read by the partner institution abroad as well). You can either have the instructor send the letter to the Advising Center (40-117) or you can ask if it would be okay for you can pick up the letter and submit it with the rest of your application (this way nothing gets lost). Whichever you prefer would be okay. For courtesy, we recommend that you provide faculty at least one month notice when asking for a letter of recommendation.

15. What type of health insurance is needed to participate on an exchange?
Answer: You must have health coverage for the time you will be abroad. If you have health insurance, you can call your insurance provider and ask if you will be insured for the amount of time you will be abroad. If you don’t have health insurance or your health insurance does not cover the entire time you will be abroad, you may purchase health insurance though Cal Poly’s affiliate HTH Study Abroad Student Accident and Sickness Insurance policy. If you are already covered under a medical plan, this plan would provide secondary medical coverage. Cal Poly requires students purchasing the HTH plan to also purchase the “Political Security and Natural Disaster Evacuation Services Plan” as well for an additional cost of $1.50 per week or $5.00 per month.

It is possible to purchase this insurance on-line, go to http://www.renstudent.com/ click on Students on the left, then Select Cal Poly San Luis Obispo from the drop-down menu. Enroll Online with a credit card by clicking on the online enrollment link. NOTE: If your program spans two calendar years, you can enroll now for coverage until December 31, then renew your coverage online in December to continue into the next year. Be sure to enroll at least two days before the end of the year to account for processing time so there is no lapse in your coverage. If you choose to use other insurance, the plan you use must meet or exceed the provisions of the HTH plan.

Some programs require you to purchase their medical health insurance (Swinburne Univ. of Technology), or programs in Germany recommend that you purchase health insurance by their affiliates, you may purchase their insurance if meets the school’s health insurance requirements. This option may be more expensive, but you may receive a more extensive health care coverage. It is important that you research all options before you make a decision.

16. Would it be possible to sublet my room to an incoming exchange student for a quarter or two?
Answer: Here are some Options to post a room/place to sublet for local SLO students or incoming exchange students:

1. San Luis Obispo Craig's List: http://slo.craigslist.org/apa/
2. College Huts: http://www.collegehuts.com/
3. ZZ Star: (click on Central Coast of California, then Real Estate Rentals): http://www.zzstar.com/realstatedisplay.php
4. ASI Classifieds: http://www.asi.calpoly.edu/classifieds/
5. Cal Poly International Club (I-Club) Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/groups/132930852688/

In addition, you can also email Susan Tripp at stripp@calpoly.edu. Susan is aware of all exchange and international students coming to Cal Poly so, please provide all relevant information to her (if the room/apartment is furnished, dates it is available, distance to campus, rent & utilities amounts, if you prefer a male/female, try to highlight the nice qualities of your place). Susan can post your information to send an email with your contact to the incoming students.

17. I want to apply for exchange – what are the next steps I need to take?
Answer: Please see our checklist online for instructions and the next steps to take in order to apply to our International Exchange Programs. If you have more questions about our international exchange programs please feel free contact us at intlengr@calpoly.edu or call the advising center (805) 756-1461 for our IEP walk-in advising hours or to make and appointment with the IEP advisor.
18. **How do grades from abroad transfer to Cal Poly? Can I choose which classes will appear on my transcript?**

Answer: Any course you register or sign-up for at the abroad school will appear on your official study abroad transcript. All grades will affect your Higher Education GPA not your Cal Poly SLO cumulative or your term GPA’s. Your Higher Education GPA includes courses taken at Cal Poly and courses taken at other institutions such as Cuesta, Munich, Tecnun etc. Your Cal Poly SLO Cumulative GPA only includes courses taken at Cal Poly. If you take any courses to satisfy your major requirements (only those courses listed under the major column in your curriculum sheet), these grades will affect your major GPA (note: your major GPA does not appear on your DPR or Poly Profile, this GPA needs to be hand calculated). Please check with the exchange school to ask if it is possible to select certain classes to appear on your transcript. This has not been an option for students in previous years. It is not required for you to apply transfer credit for all the courses you choose to take abroad. You may take classes for electives (non-degree applicable).

19. **How does registration work while you are abroad?**

Once admitted into the exchange program, the International Center will email you during registration for the quarter you plan to be on exchange and ask you how many Cal Poly quarter units you plan to bring back to Cal Poly. Depending on the number of units you indicate you plan to bring back, you will be issued a permission number in which you must enroll yourself that will represent the amount of units you will be returning. **It is your responsibility to register for the placeholder that will be given to you by the International Center and to notify them if there are any changes to the number of units you plan to bring back.** For students who will be participating in semesters that overlap with our quarters, the total number of Cal Poly quarter units you plan to earn while abroad will be divided by the two quarters you will be on exchange. To accurately inform the International Center with the number of quarter units you plan to bring back, you will need to know the unit conversion from the credits units at the abroad school and how many quarter units this equates to. See FAQ #6 for ECTS conversion to quarter units or refer to the partner school’s general information link to determine the unit conversion for the school you will be participating in.

20. **Once I am done completing coursework abroad how will my transfer credit be applied?**

Answer: Please have your transcripts sent to the Cal Poly for processing. The Evaluations unit will enter your transfer credit as time permits (you should eventually be able to view this on your Poly Profile under the View Higher Education Credits Detail link). Here is the address to send your transcripts to:

Cal Poly State University  
Admissions Office (01-206)  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

You can also have your transcripts sent to the CENG IEP directly, this way we can make copies for your student file and walk the originals to Evaluations for processing. Here is our address:

Attn: Maria Sklar  
Engineering Advising (40-111)  
Cal Poly State University  
1 Grand Avenue  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407