

Academic Bulletin for Ghana

2023-24

Introduction

The Academic Bulletin is the CSU International Programs (IP) “catalog” and provides academic information about the program in Ghana. This bulletin supersedes any previous bulletin(s) published.

CSU IP participants must read this publication in conjunction with the *Academic Guide for CSU IP Participants* (also known as the “*Academic Guide*”). The Academic Guide contains academic policies which will be applied to all CSU IP participants while abroad. Topics include but are not limited to CSU Registration, Enrollment Requirements, Minimum/Maximum Unit Load in a Semester, Attendance, Examinations, Assignment of Grades, Grading Symbols, Credit/No Credit Option, Course Withdrawals, and other policies. The *Academic Guide* also contains information on academic planning, how courses get credited to your degree, and the academic reporting process including when to expect your academic report at the end of your studies abroad.

To access the *Academic Guide*, go to our [website](#) and click the year which pertains to your study abroad period. For general information about the Ghana Program, refer to the CSU IP website under “[Programs](#)”.

Academic Program Information

CSU IP in Ghana is affiliated with the University of Ghana-Legon.

The University of Ghana is similar to the British university model in that undergraduate students enroll in a program of study that is relatively fixed and highly focused within the particular subject.

Programs at the University of Ghana integrate students into regular university courses in a wide range of disciplines. Students arrive before the actual semester begins to start the three-week mandatory intensive orientation course, Ghana Society and Culture.

Course work is recommended in African studies, anthropology, archaeology, development studies, dramatic arts, geography, history, linguistics, political science, religious studies, and sociology. Some courses in the Faculty of Agriculture are appropriate for CSU students. Many departments require fieldwork. Outstanding field research is conducted by the departments of sociology and archaeology and in many of the field sciences. Except for biology, students should be careful about planning to take laboratory science courses as modern laboratory equipment is not always available. Also, courses in business administration tend to be extremely competitive. Courses in public health are also focused on experienced health practitioners.

At the University of Ghana, short-term (study abroad) students are expected to take courses at the level in which they were admitted. Students admitted at the undergraduate level must take undergraduate courses. Students admitted at the graduate level must take courses in the graduate school.

Graduate candidates may get permission to take an undergraduate course with approval from their home campus; however, undergraduate students are not permitted to take graduate courses with one exception:

- Undergraduate students may apply to take one course in the Law School if they are a junior or senior and have an interest in studying law in the future. A 3.0 GPA (normal University of Ghana admission criteria) is required.

CSU IP students have non-degree status and are allowed to select courses which are appropriate to their level and academic study plan with the approval of the Liaison Officer. Courses are available in a wide variety of disciplines.

Most courses are worth three semester units, but some courses are only one or two units, and a few are more than three. Therefore, students must calculate the total number of units for which they are registered, not the number of courses to ensure that they meet the 15-semester unit minimum load.

At the beginning of their program in Ghana, all students, regardless of the curriculum they are following, are required to take:

- Ghana Society and Culture (an intensive three-week course which starts before the actual semester begins), (3 units).
- Asante Twi language course (3 units).
- Any other courses to reach the equivalent of 15 CSU units per semester.

For students studying for one academic year: In the spring, students are required to take:

- A second semester of Asante Twi language (3 units); and
- Service Learning (3 units).

The Service Learning course for academic credit is only available to students who study for one academic year.

Course Coding and Levels

All degree programs have letter and number codes beginning with four letters signifying a department or subject, followed by a three-digit number as shown in the following table.

Course Numbers and Levels at the University of Ghana
Level 100 (first year) courses (100-199)
Level 200 (second year) courses (200-299)
Level 300 (third year) courses (300-399)
Level 400 (fourth year) courses (400-499)

The third digit in the number code represents the semester in which the course is offered as follows:

- zero (0) is assigned to courses that are offered in both semesters (and year-long courses),
- odd numbers (1,3,5,7,9) are assigned to courses offered in the fall semester, and
- even numbers are assigned to courses offered in the spring semester.

For example, SOCI 301 (Foundations of Social Thought) is a first semester course, and SOCI 302 (Perspective in Social Theory) is a second semester course.

Generally, first-year courses that are numbered 100-199 are introductory courses taken by University of Ghana students in their first year of university study and are not open to CSU IP students except for some dance and language courses. Second-year courses numbered 200-299 are also lower division although some exceptions may apply, depending on course content. Most third-year courses numbered 300-399 are equivalent to upper division courses with some exceptions depending on course content, e.g., some courses in studio art, language, dance, music, and other study areas may be lower division. Fourth-year courses numbered 400-499 are considered equivalent to upper division courses.

Academic Culture

Flexibility, Independence, and Motivation

Students in Ghana must be prepared for the challenges of life in a developing country and demonstrate respect for its people. It helps to be flexible, culturally open, and ready for the conditions of a far less affluent environment than that found in California.

Students must have serious academic motivation and be willing to pursue studies with a significant degree of independence. Students should be flexible with their academic plans and capable of doing independent work and directed research.

Note that the oral communication characteristic of Ghanaian society applies to the university and classroom as well. This means that there is less concern with providing consistent, explicit written announcements and more reliance on person-to-person communication. Students should cultivate relations with their Ghanaian classmates, professors and teacher's assistants and be contact with other students and the Study Center for current information.

In case of disruption or strikes at the university, which are possible, the International Programs Office at the University of Ghana will attempt to organize substitute classes, lectures and other activities designed to keep students' academic progress on track as much as possible. The Study Center also designs programs, activities and may make service learning opportunities available. CSU IP students should be prepared to cope with delays, substitute classes, and other departures from normal academic calendars and processes. Instead of giving way to frustration, students should exercise patience and ingenuity in adapting to the changes and making the most of the experience. Furthermore, students might consider the interruptions a learning opportunity and ask who is striking and why; what organizations or groups are involved; and what is the larger political and cultural context of the disruption.

Instructors and Courses

The University of Ghana operates on a semester system and is more British in its structure and methods. This system requires a higher level of independence and self-motivation in seeking out information and resources. This may mean having more patience in seeking internet and other resources. Instructors are called lecturers. Students should be prepared to listen carefully to lecturers who have Ghanaian, West African, British, and other accents and to cope with the sound systems that are used. There is a schedule of classes and students register online at the International Programs Office, but students may

have to go to some departments to complete a department registration form for some courses as well. Most instructors provide a course outline and bibliography during the first two weeks of the class, but not beforehand.

In general, there are three types of courses: lectures, seminars, and studio courses in the arts and performance. Lecture courses are large and different from CSU lecture courses in their objectives. Classroom time is often used for the transmission of information. Students attend lectures primarily to take notes and listen, not to discuss the subject matter, although in some cases, lecturers allow time for questions or pose questions to the students or assign group activities and projects.

Some lectures are supplemented by a separate "tutorial" in which students have more opportunity for questions and discussion and for exchanging opinions with Ghanaian students. Graduate teaching assistants often run tutorials. Seminar courses allow for more discussion and debate. CSU IP students are responsible for obtaining the reading materials for their classes. In large classes the instructor may give the readings to a class leader who makes them available for photocopying, because books are expensive and difficult to obtain, and because libraries do not have the resources necessary to support all the course work, lecturers may not be able to assign readings to be done ahead of time for class discussion. Some lecturers email readings to students or post them on social media platforms like what's app. Even though not all readings are discussed in class, students are expected to read the items in the bibliography and be able to discuss or cite them on their exams. Students should be prepared to invest time and effort into searching for resources and opportunities to enhance their academic experience.

Most lecturers are quite interested in helping international students. If there is no time to answer questions after class, students can visit instructors during their office hours. Instructors usually are available for discussions during office hours or by appointment; however, sometimes a lecturer may have to attend to other commitments, in which case students should understand that this is a necessity of life in Ghana and be gracious in scheduling or rescheduling an appointment. Students should especially take care to be cooperative and respectful.

Registration Process

Since University of Ghana students take few courses outside their majors (as students do at universities in the US) academic activity is more compartmentalized. International students, however, are permitted to take courses in a variety of disciplines. The university publishes a schedule of courses and a student handbook that lists all department courses, but the timetables are not posted until shortly before classes begin. CSU IP students must go to each department in which they are taking courses and get the class time and location. If there are time conflicts, students will need to adjust their schedules by adding or dropping courses.

Library Facilities

Library facilities at the University of Ghana are good by African standards but poor by US standards. The Balme Library, the main library, has multiple copies of a limited number of textbooks, reading rooms for study, and a catalog organized differently from CSU libraries. Many of the materials are dated and access to materials is limited. An online library (<http://library.ug.edu.gh>) helps as well as the new 24 hour reading room at the Balme Library. The University Bookstore and Accra Bookstores are great resources for additional Academic resources.

Many academic departments have their own reading rooms or libraries with basic texts for the courses taught by the department. Furthermore, all the halls of residences have libraries and reading rooms where students can study. There is also a small collection of books at the Study Center, and it may be possible for students to use the library of the Institute of African Studies (Kwame Nkrumah Complex), which has a good collection of books on Africa. Students are urged to bring current books in the field in which they plan to study.

Ghanaian University Students

About thirteen percent of the country's students gain access to one of Ghana's ten public universities. University education is important in Ghana since most professional jobs require a college degree and enrollment in the university is crucial to professional advancement. Many more Ghanaian students would like to attend than can be accepted by the small number of universities. International students should understand that because they have obtained places that might have gone to local students, they must take their studies seriously and act responsibly so as not to be viewed as misusing rare educational opportunities and the university's scarce resources.

Ghanaian university students are about the same age as CSU IP students but because they come from a more traditional society and have attended boarding schools for their secondary education, they are generally more conservative and more respectful of authority. They tend to form friendships with those who come from the same area of the country or who went to the same schools as they did and thus may sometimes be reserved in making new international friends, despite their genuine friendliness and interest in Americans.

Grading and Units

There is usually one Continuous Assessment requirement, such as a midterm exam, paper, project and/or group assignment that counts for 30 percent of your grade and there is always a final exam, which usually is in essay format, lasts about three hours, and counts for 70 percent of the grade. Some lecturers tend to emphasize memorization of facts over critical thinking and expect students to repeat the lecture material on exams. Most expect more independent work from students and expect them to give evidence of having mastered the readings listed on the bibliographies. Instructors generally look for writing that displays a strong grasp of the subject matter, which offers logical argument, and that demonstrates proficient writing ability.

Class attendance is very important; absences may result in lower grades. If a student misses more than three classes, they can be denied the right to take the final exam.

In the Ghanaian university, the importance of course grades are not immediately apparent because Ghanaian students focus on comprehensive exam results that come later in their university studies or on the grades that are officially recorded at the end of the year; nevertheless, Ghanaian students are quite competitive. This means that students must take responsibility for investing time and effort to expand their study outside the classroom to make the most of their courses and academic experience.

The grading system used at the University of Ghana (UG) is comparable to the grading scale used at the CSU as follows:

UG Grade	CSU Grade
A (Outstanding)	A
B+ (Good)	B+
B (Good)	B
C+ (Fairly good)	C+
C (Average)	C
D+ (Below average)	D+
D (Marginal pass)	D
E (Unsatisfactory)	D-
F (Fail)	F
I (Incomplete)	WU

Note that the grades of A+, A-, B-, and C- are not given. The CSU grade of WU (Withdrawal Unauthorized) may be given in some circumstances, e.g., for uncompleted courses. Refer to the *Academic Guide* for additional grade information.

Unit Conversion Guidelines

For every credit earned at UG, a CSU IP student earns one CSU semester unit with some exceptions. Some variances in units may apply.

To convert the value of CSU semester units into CSU quarter units, multiply the CSU semester units by 1.5.

Courses

Required Courses

AFST 001 Asante Twi Language I (3)

This is a basic course in Asante Twi for beginners covering the Twi alphabet and sounds; verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, postpositions, and interrogatives; and simple expressions such as greetings, numbers, days of the week, etc. Taken in the fall semester. Lower division.

AFST 002 Asante Twi Language II (3)

This course continues the basic study of the language, reading and writing, and everyday conversational skills with practical study in marketplaces, restaurants, etc. Taken in the spring semester. Lower division.

AFST 301 Ghana Society and Culture (3)

This is a three-week intensive experiential course consisting of concentrated study, lectures, roundtables, field trips and interactions with the people of Ghana. The course also includes language instruction; language practice situations in

the field; dance lessons; drumming lessons and field excursions to culturally and historically significant sites in Kumasi, Cape Coast, and other areas. It introduces the student to a host of practical skills and information to help with adjustment to and living in Ghana. Topics covered include the history of Ghana; the city of Accra and its people, language, communication; cultural symbols; and the role gender and family in Ghanaian society. Texts are selected readings and books on Ghanaian culture and social systems. These books are provided to you and copies are also in the library of the Study Center. Assessment can be based on class participation, writing assignments, group activities or a final exam or paper. The course starts before the regular semester and ends prior to week two of the semester. Upper division.

SVLN 302 Service Learning (3)

The course provides students with the opportunity to acquire experiential knowledge and practical involvement on

the respective issues in an area of interest to the student. The student has a range of agencies and organizations which work on topical issues in Africa to choose from. The students work with the organization for a specific number of hours per week to gain first-hand insights into the issues at stake. The broad areas of interest include creative arts, development, education, environment, health, and culture. This course

also has a seminar class that allows students to process their work and how the problems are rooted in general societal issues. Only offered in the spring semester. Required course in the second semester for students who study for one academic year. Only available to students who study for one academic year and begin in the fall semester.

University Courses

Students are advised to consult the university's websites for specific course offerings.

Admission to courses is subject to availability, approval of the host university and the particular department's prerequisites. Just as is the case with any CSU catalog, not all of the courses are offered every semester so students should be flexible with their selection of courses.

Students who wish to study music at the University of Ghana should note that their Music Department offers courses primarily in African music and offers few courses, if any, in western music. Therefore, music students should be prepared to study in a department which has a range of African traditional music instruments.

To find course offerings, visit the University of Ghana website, <https://www.ug.edu.gh/aad/Students-Handbook>. You will find four different handbooks for the various programs of study. These are:

- [Handbook for College of Humanities;](#)
- [Handbook for College of Education;](#)
- [Handbook for College of Health Sciences;](#) and
- [Handbook for College of Basic and Applied Science.](#)

Click on the appropriate handbook to download all the departments in a particular college, the courses they offer and the course descriptions for the various classes.

For questions about CSU IP academic policies or academic program requirements, email IPacademics@calstate.edu.