

## CSU Systemwide Student Exchange Application Instructions (For International Exchange Students)

### How to Save and Sign Your Application Correctly

To avoid technical issues and to ensure your digital signature remains valid, you must follow the instructions below exactly. Failure to do so may permanently disable the signature and require you to start over.

- Download and save the application to your computer. **Do not complete or save the application in a web browser** (Chrome, Edge, Safari, etc.).
- Open the saved application using **Adobe Acrobat Reader** or **Adobe Acrobat Pro**. If you do not have Adobe Acrobat Reader, download it for free: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
  - Do not use:**
    - Web browsers
    - Preview (Mac)
    - Mobile PDF apps
    - Cloud preview windows (Google Drive, OneDrive, etc.)
- Complete the application in **Adobe Acrobat**.
  - Enter all required information.
  - Save your application frequently while completing the form.
  - Do **not** print the file to PDF at any time. Printing to PDF disables the digital signature.
- Attach required documents **BEFORE** signing.
  - Attach all required documents (transcripts, passport, test scores, etc.) before you sign.
- Sign the application
  - Click the digital signature field. When prompted, save the file.
- After signing- **Important Restrictions**
  - Do not re-save the file in a web browser.
  - Do not print the file to PDF.
  - Save the application using Adobe Acrobat Reader or Adobe Acrobat only.
    - Do NOT print, scan, or “save as PDF” using a browser or other software.
  - Submit the signed application exactly as saved in Adobe Acrobat.

### Actions That Will Disable the Signature (Do Not Do These)

- Opening or saving the file in a web browser
- Printing the file to PDF
- Editing the file in Preview (Mac) or mobile apps
- Uploading the file and re-saving it from a cloud preview
- Using third-party PDF editors

Once any of these actions occur, the digital signature cannot be recovered.

### Important Information for MAC Users:

What is **NOT** allowed on a Mac

- **Preview** (the default macOS PDF app)
- Editing or saving the file in **Safari, Chrome, or Edge**
- iCloud or cloud preview editors
- Printing the file to PDF

Preview in particular:

- Does not support Acrobat digital signature fields
- Can silently flatten or corrupt the form
- Is the most common cause of “signature field disabled” on Macs



## CSU Systemwide Student Exchange Application Instructions (For International Exchange Students)

### PAGE 3 – Personal Statement

Write a thoughtful personal statement of approximately one full page, using your own words. In this statement, explain why you chose the California State University (CSU) system and why you selected all the campuses listed on your application. Your response should reflect your academic interests, personal goals, and any experiences that influenced your decision to apply to the CSU and these specific campuses.

### PAGE 4 – Declaration of Financial Support

Read and follow the instructions on this form carefully. Complete the form to demonstrate that you have sufficient liquid funds to support yourself at the campuses listed on your application for the full duration of your anticipated exchange period. Do not include actual verification of finances (such as bank statements) with your CSU application. Your host campus will request financial verification after placement, and you must send those documents directly to them.

### PAGE 5 – Sections IV–VIII

Read these sections carefully, including the “**Exchange Student Agreement.**”

- After reading page 5, if you have not already attached your **required documentation** (listed on page 1), do so at this point. Enter the date and sign using your digital signature.
- If you have not yet created a digital signature, follow the Adobe instructions to set up your digital signature.
- Once signed, save the application as a new PDF document.
- If you have not yet entered the date, you can do so now.
- Submit completed application to your **Exchange Coordinator**.

#### Your Exchange Coordinator will:

1. Complete the bottom of Page 4.
2. Review your application.
3. Submit your application to CSU International Programs (CSU IP), either directly or through CSU IP representatives abroad (France, Germany, Japan).

#### CSU IP will:

1. Review your application.
2. Place you at a CSU campus and notify you of your placement.
3. Forward your application to your host CSU campus.

#### Your host CSU campus will contact you to:

1. Submit verification of financial support for the duration of your exchange to them directly.
2. Inform you of any additional required documents (e.g., original transcripts or English test scores).
3. Advise if you will also need to complete their campus application.
4. Provide information about housing, course registration, visas, and other prearrival details.

If you are asked to complete a campus online application:

- Follow their instructions and adhere to their deadlines.

## CSU Systemwide Student Exchange Application Instructions (For International Exchange Students)

### Mailing Instructions

Before mailing financial documents, original transcripts (if required), or other documents to your host CSU campus:

- Contact your Exchange Coordinator at your home institution for any special instructions or to have your documents checked.
- Confirm the postal address of your host CSU campus.
- Use a trackable international courier service when sending any original documents.

### Verification of Financial Support

- Your financial documentation must meet or exceed the amounts listed on your Declaration of Financial Support Form.
- Your host CSU campus will require that you submit proof that you have sufficient funds for the full duration of your exchange.
- Acceptable proof includes recent official bank letters or statements showing liquid funds from you and/or your sponsor(s). Credit cards are not accepted.
- Plan to have more funds than the minimum required due to fluctuations in exchange rates. Refer to [“CSU Campus Costs and Other Requirements”](#) for details.
- **Send your financial verification documents directly to your host CSU campus**, unless your home institution chooses to send them for you. **Do not send these documents to the CSU IP Office.**

### Admission

Once admitted, your host CSU campus will issue an admission letter and a **DS-2019** (Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status), which will be emailed to the primary address on your application. The DS-2019 allows you to apply for a **J-1 visa**.

**Do not make travel plans until your visa is issued.** The visa allows entry into the United States up to 30 days before the program start date.

### Health Insurance and Other Costs

- After you are accepted, your host CSU campus will send information about required insurance and costs. **You cannot register for classes until you provide proof of insurance.**
- By the first day of class, exchange students are required to purchase health insurance that meets or exceeds their host CSU campus requirements for the entire exchange period. This is a U.S. State Department requirement.
- Some campuses require students to buy the campus-provided insurance, even if they already have coverage. Check each campus’s international student website for details.
- Failure to purchase or verify required insurance may result in dismissal from the exchange program. Refer to [“CSU Campus Costs and Other Requirements”](#) for more information

Although tuition is waived for exchange students, **you are responsible for any campus-based fees** not covered by the exchange agreement with your institution. Refer to [“CSU Campus Costs and Other Requirements”](#) for estimated costs.

### On-Campus Housing

Students interested in applying for on-campus housing (where available) are advised to:

## CSU Systemwide Student Exchange Application Instructions (For International Exchange Students)

- Submit their applications to their Exchange Coordinator as early as possible.
- Visit the housing websites of the campuses to become familiar with the housing situation. Once placed at a campus, your host CSU campus will provide housing information to you.

### Immunization/Vaccination Requirements

Some CSU campuses require a Health Evaluation Form which includes an immunization history with day, month, and year when immunizations were given. If your records are not in English, you must provide a translation.

### Contacting Your Host CSU Campus

- Before placement, direct all questions to your Exchange Coordinator at your home institution.
- Once your host CSU campus contacts you, you may communicate with them directly about any questions you have. Your main contact will typically be a staff member from the International Office at your host CSU campus.

### Acceptance

- Your host CSU campus will send your acceptance documents about 8–12 weeks **after** the application deadline. Check the email address you listed on your application regularly.
- Review acceptance documents carefully for accuracy, including your name, birth date, birthplace, and study term. If anything is incorrect, **email your host CSU campus immediately**.
- If the DS-2019 needs correction, request that your host CSU campus sends a replacement right away, as errors may delay or prevent your visa from being issued.

### Registering for Courses

- Your host CSU campus will provide course registration instructions after you are accepted. Some campuses allow online registration through their online registration system.
- Pay close attention to your assigned registration date and time and follow all instructions carefully. Failure to register on time may result in losing course options or withdrawal from the exchange.
- Do not enroll in online courses.

### Campus Orientation

All CSU campuses require exchange students to attend orientation. After receiving your acceptance materials, check your host campus' orientation schedule and plan to attend. Campuses have strict attendance requirements and will not allow students to participate in exchange if students miss their orientation session.

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### **Extending your Exchange after Arrival to your Host CSU Campus**

If you have applied for one term only but wish to extend to a full academic year, then do the following:

- Contact your Exchange Coordinator at your home institution for approval (you may also need approval from your academic advisor).
- Speak with the International Office at your host CSU campus about the possibility of extending.

Students who wish to extend their exchange must:

- Have support from your home institution, host CSU campus, and CSU IP.
- Be in good academic standing.
- Provide updated financial verification and proof of health insurance for the extended term.
- Have no outstanding debts or conduct issues.
- Meet all other exchange requirements.
- Select enough appropriate courses for the extended term to maintain full-time enrollment.

### **Final Transcripts**

- CSU IP Office will order one official transcript and send it to your Exchange Coordinator at your home institution, provided you have no outstanding debts.
- If you need additional official transcripts, you must request and pay for them directly from your host CSU campus. Unofficial transcripts are usually available for free through your campus student portal.

### **Questions?**

Contact CSU International Programs at [CSUexchange@calstate.edu](mailto:CSUexchange@calstate.edu).