

Semester in Los Angeles (UMLA) Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. General:

- a. Who is eligible to apply for UMLA?
All majors and minors from the School of Communication are welcome to apply. In order to be eligible, students must be Juniors or Seniors in good academic standing, with a minimum GPA of 3.0.
- b. Is UMLA open to graduate students?
Yes. Priority will be given to undergraduate students but graduate students in good academic standing (minimum GPA of 3.0) are encouraged to apply.
- c. Where will classes be held while in Los Angeles?
Most classes will take place off-site in a space near the residence complex where all students live. Students are responsible for transportation to classes; they typically carpool or use a rideshare app such as Uber or Lyft.
- d. When can I apply to UMLA?
The early round of admissions occurs in April and the regular application deadline occurs in September. The next deadline to submit your application for spring 2024 is October 6, 2023. An initial deposit of \$1000 is due at that time. The remainder payment will be due October 20. Application materials are posted on the SoC website at <https://com.miami.edu/special-programs/semester-in-la/>.

2. Housing:

- a. Where will students live while in Los Angeles?
Students will reside at Avalon Burbank, located at 350 S San Fernando Blvd. These are fully furnished, recently renovated, green apartments located in Burbank, in close proximity to shops, restaurants, movie theaters, and other entertainment venues. Avalon Burbank is also close to Universal Studios, Warner Bros., Disney Studios, ABC, NBC, and over 100 film and television companies. For more information on the location, please go to:
https://new.avaloncommunities.com/california/burbank-apartments/avalon-burbank/?utm_source=gmb&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=gmblist



- b. What type of accommodations will be available to students?

Most students are housed in two-bedroom apartments, **with two students per bedroom**. Each apartment comes fully furnished, equipped with bedding, cooking utensils, etc. It has been the case, though it is rare, that students have had their own bedroom within the two-bedroom apartment, based on availability, by request, and prices according to the chart below.

This is estimated pricing for Spring 2024. Housing prices are subject to change.

	Quad (Shared bedroom)	Single (1 room in 2- bedroom apt)
Tentative price per person in Two Bedroom Apartment/ Per Semester	\$ 7,500	\$ 11,550

- c. Can students find their own housing?

No, the program has a residential requirement. Students live and learn together. There is a UM residential assistant on site, who helps oversee the academic program and organizes social and cultural activities.

- d. If I'm sharing a bedroom, do I get to choose my own roommate?

We cannot guarantee that you will be matched with a roommate of your choice, though we do give you an opportunity to submit roommate requests. We make every effort to accommodate your wishes.

- e. Is there anything I need to know about making the transition from campus housing to UMLA housing?

If you are a resident of campus housing in the fall semester before you participate in Semester in Los Angeles, you will need to fill out a waiver with the Housing and Residential Life Office in November. This will ensure that you won't be charged for spring campus housing and ensure a smooth transition to the UMLA program in spring.

- e. By participating in UMLA as an undergraduate, will my campus housing status be affected for the following semester when I return to the home campus?

In order to ensure that your housing is not affected, you will want to keep an eye on messages and instructions regarding fall on-campus housing sign up. To keep your place in the housing queue, stay alert to any and all email messages sent by the Housing Office.



3. Transportation:

- a. Do I have to cover my own airfare and travel arrangements to/from Los Angeles?
Yes, students are responsible for transportation to and from Los Angeles. You will be advised of exact arrival dates, which typically occur during the first or second week in January. The program ends the last week of April. To economize, purchase round trip tickets with as much advance notice as possible.
- b. What about transportation while I am in Los Angeles?
Students are responsible for transportation while in Los Angeles. Keep in mind that your internship supervisors will have hard-line expectations for you to have your own reliable transportation. Public transportation is not very good in Los Angeles so you should plan to rent/buy/bring your own transportation. This is *highly recommended*. Some students who do not wish to drive their cars cross-country have transported them through low-cost shipping companies.
In the past, students without cars have used services such as Uber (though it can get pricey). Some students were able to carpool if/when they found it appropriate to commute to and from internships.

4. Financial:

- a. What is the price of the program fee for UMLA?
The program fee for 2024 has been estimated at \$3,000 for the semester, which students pay in two installments. An initial deposit of \$1000 is due with your application (October 6, 2023) and the remainder of the fee (\$2,000) will need to be paid by October 20, 2023. Payment can be made online at <http://com.miami.edu/payment>.
- b. Why is there a program fee associated with UMLA?
We do what we can to keep UMLA costs as low as possible. The program fee goes toward supporting the costs associated with running an academic program that takes place off-site, away from campus. These include things like classroom rental space, supplies and equipment, administrative costs, and ensuring that there is residential supervision.
- c. Will I be able to apply my financial aid to UMLA?
Mostly yes, but you should consult with your financial aid advisors to review the specific requirements of your awards.



- d. Are there special scholarships available for applicants in the UMLA Program?

Yes, there are scholarship funds available to UMLA students on a limited basis.

These funds may only be used to help offset the housing portion of the program. Scholarships are based on financial need and academic standing.

Scholarship applications may be submitted anytime, with a final deadline of October 6, 2023 and are available at <https://com.miami.edu/special-programs/semester-in-la/>.

5. Academics:

- a. How many classes will be offered in Los Angeles?

There will be three classes and an internship component (Professional Development) offered in Los Angeles. Classes for 2024 have yet to be announced. In the past, we have offered such courses as:

- i. International Media
- ii. Inside the Studio Walls
- iii. Hollywood Primer: Business and Regulatory Aspects of the Industry
- iv. Professional Development within Communication Industries

- b. Do I have to take all classes?

Yes, undergraduate students have to take all course offerings plus enroll in the internship in order to maintain full-time status. Graduate students will want to speak with their advisors.

- c. When do the classes take place?

Classes typically take place in the evenings after 7:00pm. This gives you the ease of scheduling internship hours for during the daytime, Monday through Friday.

- d. Who teaches the classes?

The academic program is overseen by a University of Miami faculty member who remains in Los Angeles full time during the spring semester. The classes are taught by this faculty supervisor as well as Los Angeles-based instructors, all of whom are seasoned film and television industry professionals.



6. Internships

- a. Will UM provide me with an internship?

Securing an internship is the student's responsibility. UM faculty and staff provide support and suggestions along the way. There are required sessions in the fall, including training that assists you with resumes, interviews, and professional development.

- b. When do I begin searching for internships?

As soon as you have been accepted into the UMLA. Positions begin to be posted by companies in early fall, and continue in stages, with the most activity occurring between early October and early December.

- b. What if I don't have an internship before I arrive in Los Angeles?

Many students will begin the UMLA Program without having finalized their internship. This is not unusual given that late-stage interviews may still be taking place. It may take until mid-to-late January for positions to be secured.

It is important to start applying early, show perseverance, and remain ready to act quickly, especially in competitive arenas.

- c. How many hours per week will I spend doing my internship?

Internships run 15-20 hours per week. They must be scheduled around class time, which Los Angeles-based media companies generally understand. UMLA provides a flexible internship structure, avoiding scheduling your classes during weekday hours.

- d. Will internships be remote or in-person?

This varies, according to internship. If you have a specific preference, make sure your preference guides your internship application process. Also, we recommend that you remain flexible regarding format, given the current industry climate.

- d. Can international students participate in UMLA internship programs?

Yes, and we encourage international students to apply to UMLA. Keep in mind that if you will have additional paperwork to fill out with the International Student and Scholar Services Office in order to remain in compliance with your visa requirements. International students need to be aware of the strict policies that



prevent them from working over twenty hours per work and they need to make sure they adhere to these rules.

Keep in close touch with ISSS team so that you are aware of procedures and policies, and make sure you receive all necessary authorizations to work off campus.

7. Student Life

- a. Besides taking classes and doing my internship, how will I spend my time?

While your classes and internship will keep you very busy, there will be time to fit in a series of social activities and industry networking events as the semester goes along. You will become better oriented to the area through outings such as a studio tour, a museum trip, a professional mixer, or a hike around Lake Hollywood. UMLA offers an immersive Los Angeles experience.

8. What kind of students are you looking for?

Students who have participated in UMLA say that it is challenging, exhilarating, and life changing. They keep very busy hours, between the professional requirements of the internship and their many classroom activities. They learn how to improve their organizational skills and self-discipline.

We seek students who are highly motivated, hard-workers and good communicators. If you are reliable, professional, you have a “can-do” attitude, and are interested in learning more about a career in media or entertainment industries, this program is an excellent fit.

9. Why choose the Semester in Los Angeles Program?

This program is strategically designed to provide you with knowledge and experiences that you won't find on any college campus. UMLA offers you a bridge to the professional world, giving your education and career a distinct advantage, by affording you hands-on learning, classes with industry experts, and the opportunity to meet and interact with masters in their respective fields.