

## **Chemical Engineers: Spend Your Junior Year Studying at Imperial College London**

### **Kira Watkins**

Leading into my sophomore year, I attended Berkeley's study abroad fair to look into possibly spending a summer in a different country, studying poetry or whatever "fun" courses were available. However, after a bit of research, I came across an engineering-focused exchange program between UC and Imperial College. Imperial College is "the MIT of England," with highly ranked engineering departments and rigorous courses. Also, one of the benefits of studying in England is that there are no language requirements, so you can focus on major-related coursework.

I ended up applying for the program in December of my sophomore year, which may seem early, but the application deadline is January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Essays/LORs also required a bit of pre-planning. I was notified of my acceptance to Imperial in February (over 90% acceptance rate for UC students), and soon I was planning my year abroad!

Now, I am in London attending Imperial College and have had a great experience so far. I am able to take the exact same courses as I would have otherwise taken at Berkeley my Junior year. Specifically, I am currently taking the equivalents of ChemE150A, 142, 162, and 170A. All other courses are available as well.

Most ChemEng students do not know about this exchange program, and after I had been accepted into the program last year, many of my peers were sorry that they had not known about it as well and had missed the application deadlines. I and one other Berkeley student, a MechEng major, are studying at Imperial along with ChemEng majors from UCSB and UCSD. I'm hoping that if more people are aware of the opportunity, they will apply as well. An international education is extremely useful in exposing students to different learning styles and cultures, and I think everyone can benefit from the experience.

If you are a ChemEng major, please check out the exchange program:

[http://eap.ucop.edu/OurPrograms/United\\_Kingdom\\_England/Pages/host\\_ImperialUKImmersion.aspx](http://eap.ucop.edu/OurPrograms/United_Kingdom_England/Pages/host_ImperialUKImmersion.aspx)

Deadlines for sophomores are approaching, so act soon!

I have no reason to promote the exchange program other than feeling thankful that I am here and wanting others to benefit from a similar experience. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [kirawatkins@berkeley.edu](mailto:kirawatkins@berkeley.edu) if you have any logistical questions or want advice/details about the program. I'm more than happy to help!