

A wide-angle photograph of the Stanford University campus. In the foreground, a large, well-manicured green lawn is bisected by a paved walkway. At the end of the walkway is a circular flower bed with a red and white floral design. In the middle ground, the main entrance to the university is visible, featuring a large, ornate building with a red-tiled roof and a central archway. The background shows rolling hills under a clear blue sky.

Singaporeans@Stanford
2015-16
FROSH GUIDE

Love, from your S@S Committee ☺

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1. First Things First

If you have your I-20, your visa, passport and an excited attitude, you're ready to get onto that plane to the happiest place on earth. Not Disneyland, but Stanford. Knowing the average college student, we pack at the very last minute. Not to worry, here's a list of things you should have when you come to school. Granted, we're all unique, so it's clearly incomplete for some of us. So, bring what you feel is necessary to enjoy yourself for the next few years in California.

Things to Bring:

1. Passport, I-20 and I-94

Your I-20 is perhaps the most important thing you will need traveling in and out of the U.S. Keep it close. Your I-20 should also be signed by someone from Bechtel. Please make sure you check this early (and hopefully it's not too late by the time you read this...); and make sure that 1) you have signed, and 2) Stanford has signed the 3rd page.

The US Customs and Border Protection no longer issues paper I-94 records of arrival. Instead, an electronic I-94 will be generated at your point of entry (SO note that you don't have to worry about it the first time you come). You are now recommended to retrieve your electronic I-94 and print it out for your records each time you enter the country. For more information on this new development, see the Bechtel International Center's guide: http://icenter.stanford.edu/students/current/Electronic_I94.html

2. Plane ticket

Enough said. Actually, refer to the section on Flights for tips re: flying.

3. \$1000 - \$2000 in cash

You'll need the cash to pay for things (like deposits, phone, books and things for your room), and money takes time to get into your bank account, whether it's a wire transfer or a cheque. Also, try to bring some small change. If not, you can make change in the airport. Do so before trying to pay the shuttle driver who will be bringing you to Stanford. Refer to Section 2.3 for more information on shuttles. You can bring the rest of your money in a bank draft - bank drafts drawn on Singaporean banks (e.g. DBS) may take longer to be processed, usually a week, which is why having some spare cash on you would be useful. Alternatively, you can set up a Citibank USD account in Singapore, and explain to them you want to use it in the US - it will be very convenient.

4. Clothing (winter clothing and semi-formal attire included)

Feel free to bring your clothes from home. For most of the year, the weather is well-suited to your well-worn t-shirts and jeans/shorts. That being said, although it doesn't get very cold in California, it can get a bit chilly here in the bay area especially during the Winter. The wind is awfully strong and at night temperatures can drop to within the single-digit range (Celsius). Hence, some sweaters and jackets would definitely be good to pack as well.

You will be attending semi-formal events while at Stanford: a blazer and business pants, a summer dress, or a nice blouse and skirt are perfect. Don't forget the fancy clothes for when you attend Frosh Formal, or if you score a date to one of the upper-year formals.

Ultimately, even if you decide not to pack certain articles of clothing for whatever reason, you can honestly buy whatever you need here in the US, so don't worry too much about it.

5. Suitcases

On every international airline flying in, you're allowed 2 pieces of luggage (excluding 1 carry-on bag) weighing a maximum of 23kg each. If you have more than that, you might have to pay a huge fee depending on how merciful they decide to be (SIA is usually not so niao). This can be insanely expensive, so do take note. Also, you will be storing your suitcases in your dorm room so bringing along multiple big and bulky suitcases may not be the best

idea. Consider bringing one big suitcase and one smaller one, which you can bring along for any mini-trips you embark on.

6. Stationery

Stationery is definitely more expensive in the States, and there is a limited variety to choose from, so buy all your stuff at home. If you use correction tape, get it in Singapore – it's \$4 for a tiny, ratty one there. Bring over your Singapore-bought stapler and staples.

Don't bring hole punchers, paper or folders; they don't use A4 sized paper there (they use Letter-sized instead).

7. Singapore Driver's Licence (if you have one)

Please bear in mind that a Singapore license cannot be converted into a Californian one. The moral of this story is that all residents, meaning you, have to sit for the in-state DMV driving test. If you are thinking of bringing along an International Driving Permit, please note that if the 'fuzz' stops you on your way to Jack-in-the-Box, they will ask to see your original Singapore Driving License – the IDP by itself is not recognized.

8. Original certificates

Your A-Levels, NUS High Diploma, IB, or anything we may have missed – Mostly useful for claiming credits and meeting prerequisites for various classes.

9. Immunization Form/Proof of immunizations

Follow Stanford's instructions. You need to complete your immunization and TB test requirement either in Singapore before you arrive or at Stanford's Vaden Health Center. They may bar you from enrolling in classes if you don't complete these procedures, and if you do not complete the Mantoux Test by the deadline! If you haven't already gotten some of these immunizations prior to this Stanford thing, there is no need to rush to get them all done in Singapore. With the Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare") having gone into effect, many vaccination jabs are now insured and therefore come at no additional cost to Stanford students. These include hepatitis, meningitis, HPV, tetanus, and flu shots and boosters. Refer to the Vaden Health Center's website: <http://vaden.stanford.edu/>. You will need to make an appointment online with them.

10. Your Stanford Email Account

Prior to arriving at Stanford, Stanford should have led you through the process of creating your @stanford.edu email address. It would be helpful if you get this done while in Singapore.

Things Not to Bring:

1. Textbooks

It is unlikely that you'll find the textbooks you need in NUS Co-Op/Kinokuniya; textbooks for popular fall courses for Singaporeans such as CS 106A, Psych 1, Chem 35, Econ 1 and Math 51 aren't available anywhere in Singapore. Buy your textbooks when you get here, either from the truly exorbitant Stanford Bookstore, or other cheaper options online. You can search the web for the class webpages, which usually tell you what books they need. Your best friends would be your seniors, followed by Amazon. Then, try www.dealoz.com, www.campusbooks.com, or other second hand sources (the Facebook groups *Textbook Exchange* and *Free & For Sale*) for cheaper books. When you get a P.O. Box, Amazon Marketplace is also comparatively more affordable, and you can ship your books to school at the start of every term. Using your Stanford.edu email, you'll be able to get Amazon Prime for free for 6 months, which gives you free two-day shipping off Amazon (really useful for other things you're too lazy to go out to buy too!) but remember to cancel it before the subscription period is up if you don't want to have the annual fee automatically charged to your card.

SUPost and Free & For Sale are also great places to find textbooks especially during the first few weeks of the quarter and for classes like CS 106A which usually has a healthy number of people eager to be rid of their textbooks. Quick suggestion though, don't buy language textbooks second-hand. Many atimes language classes require online access codes that can only be found when purchased through certified vendors.

2. Getting to Stanford

2.1 Immigration Hassles

Don't worry - nothing too terrifying, just don't say anything stupid at the airport... what's more important is that you have a functional F1 Visa and a signed I-20 (which you should have sent over to Stanford somewhere in April/June; don't spend extra on buying priority mail). **WHATEVER YOU DO, MAKE SURE THEY'RE IN YOUR HAND-CARRY.**

Every student entering the US should have the new SEVIS and I-20. Remember to sign your I-20 and check that you have an electronic I-94 record of entry each time you cross the immigration checkpoint. We apologize for the repetitive warnings, but we can't reiterate it enough. Look respectable and follow all instructions that airport security issues when you arrive at the airport, and getting in and out of the country should be a walk in the park.

When in doubt, refer to the information sheet that Bechtel (Stanford's international center) sent out to all international students together with the instructions for applying for visas.

2.2 Flights

Yes, you may have booked your flights some time back, but this is good advice nonetheless, especially when booking more tickets. Some tips are given below.

- There are really only that many airlines doing the SFO-SIN route; all involve at least one stop. Singapore Airlines (SQ) flies 2 trips per day (one flight does its layover at Hong Kong and another flight at Seoul). SQ is most people's option of choice, but if booked at the wrong time can be mighty expensive (and they tend to never be the cheapest option anyway).
- Start thinking of getting a frequent flyer account (they're all free!)
4 years of flying will mean at least enough miles for a free round-trip home (or upgrade to business/first class). The frequent flyer account you get will really affect the airlines you end up flying - that's because airlines tend to work under alliances, and you can claim miles on your frequent flyer account when you travel on another airline under the same alliance (for example, flying United = obtaining SQ KrisFlyer miles).
- The three main airline alliances (and some of the airlines that serve the SFO-SIN route) are **Star Alliance** (Singapore, United (stopovers in HK and Tokyo), Asiana (Seoul), ANA (Tokyo), EVA (Taipei), Air China (Beijing)), **SkyTeam** (Korean (Seoul), China Airlines (Taipei), Delta (Narita + Seattle/LA - you may fly Delta often in the States) and **oneworld** (Cathay (HK), JAL (Tokyo), American Airlines (which you may fly often in the States)).
- If you do already have a history of frequent flying, just follow your frequent flyer account; you can't go wrong.
- If you're new though, try to get a frequent flyer account with any of the Star Alliance members (so you could, in theory, sign up for Lufthansa's frequent flyer account...) This is because the SFO-SIN route has more Star carriers doing it, and if you love travelling you can do free 1-day stopovers in more countries (and eat your way through HK/Taipei/Seoul/Tokyo/Beijing). If you foresee yourself flying predominantly SQ, get KrisFlyer; if not, try United's MileagePlus or Asiana's Asiana Club (United requires fewer miles for the same type of redemption- and you can redeem an SQ flight!, while Asiana can easily get you to Star Alliance Gold status, which gives you 1 MORE free checked bag (i.e. total = 3), priority boarding/queueing and free airport lounge access. KrisFlyer is pretty trash for these things, to be honest, but is better if you fly SQ a lot.
- Also, the air alliance you get now will probably determine how you fly in the future, so it'd be advantageous to remember all the airlines that get you miles; for example, if you're a KrisFlyer member you'd want to remember to fly Lufthansa over Air France/KLM, United over Delta or American, Turkish over Emirates, ANA over JAL etc...
- Book tickets early! Research suggests that airline tickets are cheaper 4 months in advance so...also, try changing flight dates (Tuesdays/Wednesdays are cheaper). Generally, a return trip is cheaper than 2 one-way trips. Also, average prices SIN-SFO return in fall is US\$1500, SFO-SIN is US\$1200; so buy a one-way SIN-SFO then do SFO-SIN trips instead to save money. Winter tickets are more expensive, and tend to run out really fast, so get your winter flight (which usually costs upwards of US\$1500 return) as soon as possible; Refer to the Stanford academic calendar for when finals end and when terms officially start –

these dates rarely change once broadcasted so arranging your flight plans around these dates would be a safe bet.

- Where to book tickets? KAYAK and Google Flights are good first sources; keep finding - sometimes the airline website may be cheaper too.
- Last protip - if you can, sign up for a credit card that is linked to your frequent flyer account, so whenever you spend, you earn miles. Each time you buy a ticket you can then get a lot of miles! (or even better, you can pay school bills and earn a ton of miles)

2.3 From the Airport to Stanford

To get to Stanford from SFO, you have three options:

1. A SuperShuttle (or any other shuttle) from the International Terminal (pick-up from the roadway centre island on the Departures level, <http://www.supershuttle.com/> Stanford discount code: **T9X58** saves you \$6), On that note, it's always cheaper if you travel in groups on a shuttle. For example, SuperShuttle charges \$26 one-way from SFO to Stanford for the first person, and an additional \$8 for every extra person in the group.

2. Rent a car if your parents are around

3. Take the BART one stop to Millbrae, then transfer to the Caltrain towards San Jose and get off at Palo Alto, and wait for Stanford's free internal shuttle bus, called the Marguerite, which DOES NOT work like NUS buses (this is only recommended for the adventurous).

If necessary, call the committee members, some of whom will be in Stanford before you. Refer to the section on early birds.

3. Now What? - Things to Do while Jetlagged (aka When You Get to Stanford)

- Get hold of a **map** and carry it with you for the first few days (you can either get one at Stanford, or at <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/visitorinfo/plan/maps.html>). Alternatively, use the map found in the Stanford app (called iStanford). Pick up a bike map too, which outlines the bike routes used in and around Stanford. We've got a huge university campus – allegedly the second largest in the world in terms of land area. It takes about an hour or more to get from one end to the other on foot or 15 minutes on bike. You have been warned. Again, get a map!
- Pick up your **Stanford University ID (SUID, pronounced ess-you-eye-dee), P.O. Box key and room key**. All these items should be given to you on the first day when you register for International Orientation. You will not be picking them up at your dorm but probably at Bechtel International Center, so don't show up on the day itself at your dorm with all your suitcases expecting to unload it all in your dorm room without having first picked up your necessary SUID and keys.
Do not lose your card – you need it to eat at the dining halls, to get into all libraries on campus, and to get into many events and parties. A replacement costs US\$20. It's not much, but try not to lose it.
- Go for **International Student Orientation (ISO)**. Or don't. The great thing about ISO is that during this time you get to meet so many other incredible people from all over the world, and due to the limited number of international students, it's a nice way of being eased into Stanford and finding various pockets of friends to hang around with. However, in general, there won't be a ton of super essential programs, so you could always choose to skip them and use the time to instead settle yourself into Stanford by buying whatever you need from the stores – bedding, toiletries, snacks, etc. or by familiarizing yourself with the vast wilderness that is Stanford.
Also, chances are you will not be fed well at ISO. Sticking with the international theme, you will be fed lovely international delicacies like pizza and General Tzo's chicken. So be prepared.
- Then go for the “real” orientation (**NSO**). Have more fun, but the introduction to the academic portion of Stanford begins now (yes, you're at school, although it doesn't seem like it). Fit as many events as you can into your schedule. Go dance, eat with your new friends, buy school sweatshirts, talk to professors. Meet upperclassmen and ask for course recommendations. Find the S@S committee members. We're here to help! Oh, and skip anything if you want.
- But most importantly...**Be Kiasu**. (It can be surprising how un-Kiasu Singaporeans are relative to other Stanford students – moral: do not take “kiasu-ness” for granted.) Take the first few days to do all your administrative stuff, since very few of the American frosh will be on campus this early. Do all the stuff below in between International Orientation stuff, and you'll save yourself a lot of grief fighting with everyone and their moms. Stuff at ISO that is really important will be compulsory, so go for the fun stuff, and you can figure out the rest. If you get to campus a few days before orientation starts, you can get a lot of admin stuff done without having to wait in line for too long. However, be warned that you cannot do some university related administrivia (e.g. signing up for classes) before orientation starts due to holds on your account. Also, it may be inconvenient to apply for stuff when you don't have an address, but it is still possible.
- Activate your **in-room network connection**. Access the website rescomp.stanford.edu. You'll need a computer and a network connection. It's helpful to have an Ethernet cable on hand just in case the wireless connection doesn't work the first time. If you arrive early (being international, of course you will), find your Resident Computer Consultant (RCC) immediately and he or she'll be glad to help you out (there's no one else in the dorm yet anyway!). If you can't find your RCC, wander over to the LaIR, the CS help center, on the second floor of Tresidder Union, and see if your RCC or a techie CS major is hanging out there.
- Also, activate your Stanford Card Plan on Axxess. It comes in handy for stuff like printing from the computer clusters in dorms and libraries. It works like a credit card, but you have a limit of \$1000 per quarter, and the charges go to your university bill. It's not necessary; some of us don't have one, but it definitely comes in handy when you need to print something.
- Work out your **Meal Plan**. The Meal Plan is not the same thing as the Stanford Card Plan. All freshmen are required to be enrolled in a dormitory, and at the same time, a meal plan. There are 19, 14 and 10 meals/week meal plans. You will automatically be put on the 14 meals meal plan, so to change it, you need to access your account at <http://web.stanford.edu/dept/rde/cgi-bin/drupal/dining/meal-plans-0>
With the 14 and 10 meals/week meal plan, you also get Meal Plan dollars which you can use at certain dining outlets on campus (not all though!). These Meal Plan dollars come in handy for lunch at Tresidder,

stocking up on groceries at Munger, or hanging out at Late Nite (Lagunita Dining and Arrillaga Dining are two of the campus' late night eateries). Before you get too excited, Meal Plan dollars are unfortunately not accepted at every food place on campus. Check online for which places accept them.

Another detail: Meal Plan dollars are not the same as Cardinal Dollars. You can choose to buy Cardinal dollars in addition to your meal plan, which work somewhat like the Meal Plan, but can be used for more dining outlets on campus.

- Open a **savings and a checking account**. Apply for a credit card. An ATM and check/debit card keeps your expenses account separate from your savings account. Read the section on banks.
- Get a **cell-phone** (if you need it). All rooms have a fixed line telephone installed and local calls within a 12 mile radius are free, so you may not need a cell-phone on campus. Though cellphones are as always extremely convenient, especially one with Google Maps. Read the section on phones.
- Settle your **AP credit and your mother tongue** (where applicable). If you didn't get an exemption from the language requirement, go and ask them how to deal with the problem. To settle your AP credit, go to the student's services center/registrar's office with your A level (or equivalent) certificate. Yes, remember to bring your original A' level (or equivalent) certificates with you to Stanford. For those who took AP or IB exams in Singapore instead, bring those certificates as well. For A-Levels, you should be able to get Mother Tongue credit, but for other subjects e.g. H2 Math, the S@S Committee is still working it out with Stanford.
- Go **shopping**. Bike, roller blades, skateboard, lamp, bed sheets, comforter, pillow, clothes, food, bike lock, books, posters, printer, microwave, water boiler, whatever floats your boat. Don't go with the crowd if you're buying bikes from Walmart; the shuttle can only hold 3 bikes at max. Refer to the section on shopping.
- **Pay your bills** (eventually). Stanford has gone green and stopped issuing paper bills, so all payments are now done electronically. Bear in mind that you will be issued the bill for the next term on the 20th of the month before the current term ends. There are (1%) fines for late payments. Your parents can now pay in SGD from your bank at home!
- Sign up for **classes**. Yes, spend hours trying to arrange your schedule and trying to find the perfect combination that allows you to wake up at 10 and be done with classes by 3. Even better, have no classes on Friday. (Of course, going for classes is not entirely compulsory, though strongly recommended. You are paying a ton of money for the Stanford education for a reason.) The websites that you will become very familiar with are: axess, explorecourses, coursework, pwr, introsem. Add .stanford.edu to each of these. (The cool thing is, when you're logged on to the Stanford network and want to access any of these website, you don't actually have to do this – all you have to do is type the name of the website into the URL box. For example, 'axess' is all that is necessary!)
- Note that due to a change in rules, you are no longer eligible for a **Social Security Number (SSN)** unless you have a job. Some banks require you to have a SSN in order to apply for a credit card, and you definitely need one if you want to get your driver's license. Putting in an hour a week filing books at the library is not really that bad, and Stanford pays relatively well! Visit the Bechtel International Center for information on the paperwork needed to obtain the SSN. Alternatively, ask seniors - not something you need to worry about until at least mid-fall.
- Finally, look for your upperclassmen (see Section 6) if you still have queries, problems, doubts, or too much cash. We're here to help. Come find us! :)

4. Early Birds

It sure sucks to be in a strange land with 2 pieces of luggage, and no idea how to get to Stanford without looking like Mr. Bean lugging your luggage around and trying to juggle a map. No fear! Below is an incomplete list of people who will be around just before or during ISO. If you really need help getting around or need some advice on where to go to find something, you can give us a call. You'll probably be having too much fun once NSO starts to be running about buying stuff though.

Name	Contact No.	Email
Alan Aw	(650) 656-3367	alanaw1@stanford.edu
Teo Zhi Ping	(650) 924-5630	zpteo@stanford.edu (19 Sept onwards)
Ren Zhaolin	(650) 924-5626	rzl@stanford.edu

5. Life at Stanford

5.1 Shopping!

You will eventually learn to stop converting from US to SGD as it saves a lot of pain and agony. You either need a car for getting around and ferrying your cargo, or shop with the International Orientation group which usually organizes a few shopping trips. Here is a rough guide for places to try:

1. Appliances/Electronics:

(a) Newegg/other online retailers – Cheap and convenient, especially if you don't have a car. Beware of mail in rebates though, sometimes you might not get them, or they take ages to process.

(b) Fry's Electronics – the one located near Stanford gives allegedly horrible service; the one in Sunnyvale, about 20 minutes drive away, is further but larger and has better service.

(c) Walmart, Target, Safeway, Trader Joe's – Located at San Antonio Shopping Center, where there are many other supermarkets and eateries, you can find various cheap appliances (e.g. radio clock, lamp, printers, refrigerators). You can get here with the Stanford Marguerite's Shopping Express (abbreviated SE). See <http://transportation.stanford.edu/marguerite/> for maps and schedules of the Marguerite Shuttle Bus.

It might be a good idea to wait for your roommate(s) to arrive to discuss with them if you'd like to share items like refrigerators, printers, fans and whatnots – by and large Americans tend to bring/buy these appliances, so you would probably be able to make some arrangements for sharing these.

2. Linen/Household Goods:

(a) Stanford Shopping Center hosts a wide range of department stores such as Macy's, Nordstrom's and specialty household shops such as Stroud's, Home Depot, and Bed Bath and Beyond.

(b) IKEA – conveniently located in East Palo Alto, a 15 minute drive away. NB. For sheets, you need twin long, not just twin. Twin longs tend to be harder to find, and often are sold out by the time you get there. (You might be able to find some at Target or Walmart during ISO, but they'll be the last few pieces if you're lucky!) This can't be helped as you can't find them in Singapore, except in IKEA. Their (super) single fitted sheets do fit the beds over there but IKEA doesn't have many designs. For comforters, choose between a down comforter (very soft and season adaptable, although somewhat warm in Spring and more costly), and polyester ones.

3. Groceries/Personal Care:

(a) Walmart/Target/Longs Drugs/Safeway: Find out about "Secret Safeway", south of campus by Sharon Heights which is within bike-able distance and also accessible by the SLAC line of the Marguerite Shuttle Service. A useful alternative to the dining halls in the future. Safeway offers fresh fruits, vegetables and food, whereas the others focus on household equipment. At Safeway, apply easily for the Safeway card for special discounts. There's another Safeway/Walmart/Target down by San Antonio Shopping Center, which is accessible via the Shopping Express line of the shuttle service. There is also a Trader Joe's at *Town and Country*, a 10-20 minute bike ride off campus (depending on how fast you ride your bike).

(b) Walgreens: A short bike ride away in Palo Alto, if you're not shopping for too much or if you're not being picky. In addition, the intense competition in the US also tends to mean that if you search hard enough, you'll be able to find discount coupons for just about anything, or cheap rock-bottom deals on airline tickets and the like, just so long as you're not fussy. Some good places to look at are in the Unofficial Guide to Stanford; you'll be given a copy sometime during September. The downside though, is that there tend to be gimmicks for many of the so-called free services. Caveat Emptor they say.

(c) Online shopping. Really, with Google Shopping Express and Amazon Prime (you get a 6-month trial so long as you use your Stanford email, and you can create multiple emails = free Amazon Prime forever), why even bother

to leave campus? Except when you need your 99 Ranch craving (Asian supermarket - be warned: homesickness will strike one day).

5.2 So Near Yet So Far (How to get between Stanford and SFO, SJC)

The regional rail service, CalTrain (check out the schedules at www.caltrain.com), runs from San Jose all the way to San Francisco. It's the cheapest way to get to the city or to the airports. Take the Marguerite Shuttle to the Palo Alto Station, and board a train from there. You can cycle there too – it's not far, but you'll have to chain your bike at the train station very, very securely and not leave it there for too long. Going to SF International Airport requires a change to the BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) at Millbrae station though.

Stanford is NOWHERE near the city of San Francisco. It's like saying, Tampines is near to Johor Bahru. On average, the Caltrain (that comes once an hour on weekends and ends at 9pm on Sundays) takes about 1 hour and US\$7 one-way; total time usually averages 1.5 hours. Driving there takes 30-45 minutes.

5.3 Electric Appliances/Computers

- Electrical appliances run on 110V AC in the US, as opposed to 240V in Singapore (i.e. many things won't work there). Get a transformer (the step-up kind, not the more-than-meets-the-eye kind) if you're bringing certain appliances over - check the big black box on the cable for the range of input voltages. Your laptop power supply should take a range from 110-240V, so you won't need one for that. Alternatively, check out the nearest Radio Shack to get a clumsy black transformer that will suffice. Generally, for most things, unless you're bringing half the appliances in your house and the kitchen sink, you won't need to get a transformer.
- Also, the plugs are different in the US. Get an international adaptor of sorts so you can plug in your devices from home. However, note that the adaptor is not a transformer – it merely allows you to plug your device into the power socket. The devices you are using in must still support 110V AC operation or they will not work (or even self-destruct) when switched on.
- Rice cookers are unnecessary. Rice is commonly served in dorm dining halls (and if you find them unsuitable, let your Dining Ambassador know – they usually do their best to make sure that the food's good and that you feel comfortable!). Hot pots however are a different kettle of fish. They are immensely useful for cooking instant noodles, bah kut teh and having steamboat, as well as for taking down and shorting the entire mains power supply to your dorm. You can get hot pots in the States. It's a little more expensive, but it's much more convenient. The ardent foodies among you might want to buy slow cookers, which can be very useful for making stews and soups that'll carry you through Winter, when you're craving home-cooked food the most.
- Buy your desktop computers in the US, even though they're more expensive than in Singapore – it's obviously more convenient. Laptops used to be cheaper in Singapore, but for many brands, they seem to be cheaper in the US. For example, I bought my laptop in Singapore for over \$2500 and found that it was only USD\$1100 at Stanford and that that wasn't even the newest model anymore; the newest model was going for USD\$1300 (still a FAR CRY from SGD2500). That being said, do your own research and make a decision that's comfortable for you – whatever happens, try to get a laptop with an international warranty though. Ask your friends in NUS/NTU if they will help you buy a laptop at a fabulous discount. Stanford has deals with IBM, Dell and Apple to offer laptops at discounted prices that approach that of the NUS/NTU deals.
- If you're having trouble deciding on what computer to get, check out <http://rescomp.stanford.edu>.
- You'll probably want to get a table lamp or some form of extra lighting other than the light in your room, which is insufficient for proper studying (if you want to get some studying done in your room, of course). Halogen lamps are not advised because they are illegal under Stanford law. When Housing inspects your room over winter break, you don't want to get a fine for having a halogen lamp on your desk.
- A hairdryer and an iron, in addition to an ironing board would be extremely handy (although some dorms already have them in the laundry room – you might want to wait till you get to check out the services in your dorm before you buy all these stuff).
- For those of you messy eaters, buy a Stain Stick, which gets those soy sauce stains out really fast! Liquid detergent is recommended, and the most mess-free option is Pod capsules, which you can get at any grocery store. Costco sells detergent in large quantities (some of us think a little too much), enough to last you one to

two years, depending on how often you do your laundry, which we hope is at least two times a month. Or you better have a lot of clothes.

- Lots and lots of non-original software. Hard to find, but useful. However, this is not strictly necessary because the University has taken out lots of licenses on all the software you might need, including Photoshop and software compilers. Stanford has even taken out a corporate copy of Norton Antivirus, so your virus-worries are over. The website you need to access at some point is Essential Stanford Software, which you can reach at ess.stanford.edu. At least some of our tuition fees go to good use.

5.4 Banks

The main banks that you will no doubt be interested in opening an account with are Stanford Federal Credit Union, Wells Fargo Bank, Bank of America and Citibank. Regardless of what conclusion you arrive at after reading this, you should definitely check out their booths after moving in, as they would have the most updated information. We highly recommend that you also check out their websites, where you can find detailed information on the kinds of accounts and cards that they have and save yourself some time during orientation to do the more fun stuff.

- Stanford Federal Credit Union (<https://www.sfcu.org/>). Decent bank with pretty good rates in the Money Management Accounts. They have the most ATMs on campus and at the hospital, however expect to pay ATM usage fees if you have to draw money off campus. (Hint: Places like Walgreens have cash-back service, so you can make use of that when you're not on campus.) Most popular pick among Stanford students, especially international students, since they do not charge a fee on incoming telegraphic transfers (but beware that transfer chargers are still levied by intermediary banks). They also allow you to apply for a credit card without an SSN. Recommended only if you don't expect to be travelling all over the US for long stretches at a time. Then again you're a student. What would you be doing gallivanting around...? Please note that you will need to be there physically (most use the one on campus, i.e. at Tresidder Memorial Union, or Tresidder for short) to open an account.
- Wells Fargo Bank (<https://www.wellsfargo.com/>). One of America's oldest and most established banks. Wells Fargo has a large network of ATMs in California. You can apply for a credit card with Wells Fargo without an SSN, but it will be a secured credit card that has a limit of \$1000, but can be upgraded to a normal card after a year or so. Unfortunately their only on-campus ATMs are all at Tresidder Union. Then again, you won't really be carry much cash around on you in the US, because you can pay with your check/credit card at most places and have cash-back at most stores like Walmart, Target, and Safeway.
- Bank of America (<https://www.bankofamerica.com/index.jsp>). Another popular American bank, Bank of America loses out in appeal because their service center is a 15 minutes bike ride away at the Stanford Shopping Centre. In addition, they only have one ATM on campus, at Tressider Union.
- Citibank (<http://www.citibank.com/>). Citibank is popular because out of all the banks mentioned, it has the biggest existing presence in Singapore. With Citibank, you can transfer money from your Singapore Citibank account to your US one, free of charge. Citibank, however, has no ATMs on campus, though there is one on University Avenue which is about a 10 minute bike ride away.
- In a nutshell, with banks, some general points you'll want to note are that you will probably want to open both a checking (expenditure) and savings (money management) account. If you anticipate large inflows of money at a time such as when you are on scholarship, the interest you accrue from putting the bulk of your money in the savings account can be pretty significant.

Also, you'll want to note that banks may offer different interest rates, and that you should always ask to compare the annual percentage yield or APY rather than just the number they give you as those can be very misleading, especially when they are given on a monthly basis. Another important service feature that makes a difference is the cost of accepting Telegraphic Transfer or Wire Transfers. All this information can be found online at the bank's website.

5.5 Phone Services

- Internet calling is fun and free. Skype (www.skype.com) or Google Hangout work just fine. This should be the option of choice if you have at least a broadband connection at home. You can also use Skype or Pingo calls for very affordable rates to Singapore. If you have a Mac, our resident Macgeniuses insist that iChat is the most stable of them all.
- For cell-phone service, **AT&T** is one of the best bets. It's the only network with decent coverage around Stanford. Not to mention the student discount of 15%. They'll also have a booth during orientation in White Plaza or outside the bookstore that would probably be set up halfway through ISO. If you're a really early bird and can't wait to get a phone, the nearest store is at the junction of Page Mill and El Camino. T-Mobile and other services have very poor network coverage in Stanford.
- Also, if you wish to save even more, you might want to sign up for a family plan with other friends (max is 5 people) – you'll share a pool of minutes (which is a lot) and each of you will end up paying less.
- An alternative is pre-paid service such as a prepaid GoPhone plan which comes with unlimited local and international SMS, if you don't foresee yourself using a cell phone much (you go on a \$25 plan without data, which really isn't necessary if you're on campus a lot).
- One thing to note is that you'll have to pay a deposit of US\$500, if you don't have a SSN (which you almost certainly don't). The above holds if you are on a family plan. Do bring more cash for the upfront deposit.
- Remember to pay external phone bills on time – they are separate from your University phone bills. Some phone service providers have surcharges for late payments. AT&T, for example, charges you \$36 to reconnect your line if you decide to leave that bill underneath the bed and they have to suspend your line to punish you. Use the autopay feature. It saves a lot of hassle.

5.6 Getting Around

Nearly all Stanford students either bike, blade or skateboard on campus. But, if you choose to walk, it is definitely possible, especially if your classes are clustered around an area. Whatever you do, do not buy from Stanford Student Enterprises. Their bikes are overpriced and prone to theft as a result.

The International Student Orientation committee usually organizes a big shopping trip to the San Antonio Shopping Center in Mountain View (check your ISO schedules, or drop an email/Facebook message to your friendly ISO coordinators). Bikes there are cheap (US\$59-\$99), so it is recommended that you join in. Walmart has cheap bikes too. However, note that cheap bikes offer a rough ride and tend to fall to pieces quickly. Also, note that bikes at Walmart and Target run out very fast once school starts. So get your bikes ASAP.

Mike's Bikes and The Bike Connection, found along El Camino Real, sell more expensive bikes. These may last longer, be of higher quality, and may be more cost-effective in the long run as repairs are expensive, but they also tend to be stolen more quickly. A good, new bike can cost you around US\$250, and a good, second hand bike about US\$150.

Buying a helmet is recommended, especially for the day when you pulled an all-nighter the night before writing a Thinking Matters paper, took a Math midterm and then rushed to class after lunch, only to get into a bike accident because you were too sleepy. Accidents can get pretty bad here at Stanford. Being a student at Stanford means your brain is probably worth the US\$15 you spent on the helmet to protect it. If you're going to bike off campus, you really should get one. Bumping into a car is quite different from bumping into another bike. Most undergrads don't put on a helmet on campus though. If you want to hold off getting a helmet, your Peer Health Educator (PHE) in your dorm might offer you a helmet for just US\$5.

The main bike shop you will frequent (especially after your glorious bike crashes) is the Campus Bike Shop, located right on campus, next to the CoHo at Tresidder Union, a place to get bike repairs and checks, and to buy bike accessories like locks and lamps. The campus shop may be cheap relative to shops off-campus, but expect to be ripped off all the same. Another way to get a bike is to look for used bicycles on SUPost, or to get into contact with graduating seniors who might sell off their bicycles in June (hardest to do but potentially save a lot of money!). Learn how to fix bikes yourselves. Do maintenance (e.g. oiling and air-pumping) every week. The bike shop has also set up several stations around campus where you can use the tools to fix your bike or pump the tires on your own for free. There's one near Meyer library between the library and Stern.

Get a good U-Lock, even though it may be more expensive. They are more difficult to break into than chain locks. Make sure to lock the wheel AND the frame of the bike to the bike rack or anything immovable. Locking your nice new bike only to itself and not to the rack is a very bad idea, especially overnight. It most likely will not be there in the morning. Most people get the Kryptonite brand (US\$40ish).

Also, save the bike light; they give them out free here (during NSO); make sure you don't get caught at night without it on, or else you risk a ticket. 2 tickets in 18 months and you get fined US\$200. Not funny.

5.7 Academics (i.e. what to take note when planning courses)

Finally we get down to the main reason why you're at Stanford. Here's a list of some of the majors at Stanford and some people you can approach if you have any questions:

Anthropology	Renjie	renjie@stanford.edu
Bioengineering	Preston	lianjie@stanford.edu
Biology	Haitong	haitongm@stanford.edu
Chemical Engineering	Pan Chuen	panchuen@stanford.edu
Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity	Annabeth	annaleow@stanford.edu
Computer Science	Frank, Chuanqi	frankchn@gmail.com shencq@stanford.edu
Economics	Sherlene, Kai Jian, Jian Yang (Lumpy), Victoria, Zhaolin	sherlene.chatterji@gmail.com kaijian@stanford.edu jian.yang.lum@gmail.com pzyeow@stanford.edu rzl@stanford.edu
Electrical Engineering	Hong En, Gary	hongen@stanford.edu leecfg@gmail.com
English (Literature)	Shu Chen	song3@stanford.edu
International Relations	Jian Yang (Lumpy), Nicole, Zhi Ping	jian.yang.lum@gmail.com nicolekm@stanford.edu zpteo@stanford.edu
Mechanical Engineering	Hao Yi	haoyi@stanford.edu
Music	Shu Chen	song3@stanford.edu
Philosophy	Su Lin	sunliny@stanford.edu
Philosophy and Literature	Nicole	nicolekm@stanford.edu
Political Science	Chi Ling	chilling@stanford.edu
Product Design	Gloria	cjmg@stanford.edu
Psychology	Laura	xmlauralee@stanford.edu

Just for reference too, if you're considering any of the ILEs or FroSoCo, you can contact these people:

SLE: Nicole (nicolekm@stanford.edu)

ITALIC: Jian Yang (jian.yang.lum@gmail.com), Gloria (cjmg@stanford.edu), Shu Chen (song3@stanford.edu), Zhi Ping (zpteo@stanford.edu)

FroSoCo: Pan Chuen (panchuen@stanford.edu), Laura Lee (lauraleexinmei@gmail.com)

5.8 Holidays

If you spend your school year in jittery anticipation of the next school holiday, you'll be pleased to note that US school holidays tend to be right next to weekends, which also translates into really long holidays for people interested in making weekend trips to see the sights or go snowboarding and the like.

Thanksgiving Break: 1 week at the end of November

Winter Break: 3 weeks from mid-December

Spring Break: 1 week in late March

5.9 Choosing Classes

Choosing classes is one of the most exciting and nail-biting parts of Stanford, simply because you have a smorgasbord of options.

For a listing on first courses to consider, we have also prepared a brief list for you. You should still ask around for other ideas. For those considering:

- Any Engineering: The MATH 50 series, or the CME 100 series. The PHYSICS 40 or 60 series. Since 'A' level Physics is non-calculus-based, we probably only place out of the PHYSICS 20 series (we might still place out of PHYSICS 41, do verify this with your Academic Director). It may be sufficient for some majors, but not for the majority of Engineering majors. Also consider the introductory courses in your respective fields, like CS 106A/B/X for CS.
- Economics: ECON 1, MATH 51 (this is a prerequisite for the ECON 50 series. You cannot claim credits from 'A' level Econs towards the economics major, though you can place out of it (i.e. skip it and begin ECON 50. Rumour has it that a freshman did ECON 50 and MATH 51 at the same time, so...email Joanne DeMarchena)). Also, it is possible to replace Econ 102A with Stats 116/ CS 109 (again, talk to Joanne DeMarchena to confirm if this is still OK), which is a good option because Econ 102A is very much a plug-and-chug class, so if you want to get a really good grasp of basic probability concepts, Stats 116 or CS 109 are probably better options. Moreover, Stats 116 and CS 109 are pre-requisite classes for the MCS and CS majors respectively, so using one of these two classes to replace Econ 102A can prevent you from ultimately taking two classes that substantially overlap.
- Biology: With 'A' level Chem you should place out of CHEM 31X and 33, so you can start with CHEM 35 or 135/171. You can also clear the math requirement and not take any math other than stats, but some math is always useful (start with MATH 51). You can take the biology core in your freshman year, but it'll tend to clash with a lot of other things like PWR (then again, bio core lectures are always recorded anyway). The biology department does not accept transfer credits for placing out of the biology core. If you didn't take physics in JC, you'll have to take it eventually, but it is not a prerequisite for most biology classes.
- Music: The MUSIC 21 series is held concurrently with ear-training (MUSIC 24A-C) and will require a piano proficiency test. Don't worry too much about the test; it's completely possible for a non-pianist to pass it with 2 months of plodding. Even then, you have all the way till the end of MUSIC 23 to pass it.
- If you want to learn a new language, BEGIN IN THE FALL (because most of them tend to be sequences, so if you miss it in the fall you probably miss the year). Doesn't apply to some popular ones (Spanish, French, German, Italian) but do check.
- Others: Consider taking Introsems, especially those freshman seminars/Introsems. Some of them are good for getting rid of WAYS requirements, and even for those that don't, they're a great way to get to know a professor really well early on. There are also nice courses that just about everyone takes like CS 106A, PSYCH 1, Social Dance, and the list goes on. Ask upperclassmen, your RAs and Academic Directors for

advice - they're really friendly and willing to help. Also, with the exception of the Econ Department, most other prereqs are not strictly enforced; if you think you can do a class, just go for it.

You do NOT have to declare a major that early on; feel free to explore and get your hands dirty (it's good for WAYS anyway). Anyway, for all those crazy academic addicts out there, the average unit load most people take is 15/quarter, the maximum advertised is 20/quarter, the maximum possible is 22/quarter (but not for freshman fall - that's 20. Sorry.). No, we're not scaring you; you probably are more academically capable than the mean here (the people you meet here are definitely more amazing than you in so many other ways though!!!). Then again, only **you** know what's best for yourself; if you have many other things on your plate then **please** don't go killing yourself doing 6 classes and 22 units...

Also, do keep in mind that sometimes, classes may clash (which means, the best of plans can and will go awry.) Plan your courses early on, though you really **don't** need a 4-year plan; if not planned well sometimes career paths may be shut out from you as early as freshman winter (pre-med, but really, why aren't you in NUS/NTU/UK/Australia?)

Happy exploring!

5.10 Centers

Stanford has a few centers which serves as hubs for various activities. Community centers which may be relevant to you include the Asian American Activities Center (A3C, or "A cube C"), the LGBT Community Resources Center (LGBT-CRC), and the Bechtel International Center. Others include the Career Development Center, the Haas Center for Public Service, and the new Center for Writing and Speaking. Be sure to check out these centers and if you're interested in what they have to offer! (funding, mentorship, community support, etc).

5.11 The Internet

Surfing the web will be fast and fun over at Stanford, and you'll be using it for many things, course-related or otherwise.

Here are some pages you might want to bookmark.

- Axxess (sign up for classes, get your grades): axess.stanford.edu
- Academic Calendar: studentaffairs.stanford.edu/registrar/academic-calendar-1314
- Explore Courses (look for classes): explorecourses.stanford.edu
- Courserank (course reviews and statistics): www.courserank.com
- Hume Writing Center (when you have to write those IHUM/PWR papers): hwc.stanford.edu
- Introsems: introsems.stanford.edu
- Marguerite Maps and Timings: transportation.stanford.edu/marguerite/MargueriteSched.shtml
- Mailing List Tools (for Stanford mailing lists): <https://itservices.stanford.edu/service/maillinglists/tools>
- Program in Writing and Rhetoric (PWR): pwr.stanford.edu
- Searchworks (For finding stuff in the library. PWR 1 will teach you): searchworks.stanford.edu
- StanfordWho (find people online): stanfordwho.stanford.edu
- Stanford Online (watch classes online – but note that not all classes are online): online.stanford.edu
- Stanford Bookstore: www.stanfordbookstore.com
- Syllabus (some classes post their syllabus online) syllabus.stanford.edu
- UAL (information on undergraduate matters specific for each class): ual.stanford.edu

Mailing lists

Use your Stanford email account to subscribe to sas@lists.stanford.edu, an all-purpose somewhat-moderated announcement list (list policy will be reiterated, beginning of school) and sas-kopitiam@lists.stanford.edu, a less stuffy chat list for S@S members to talk about anything they want to.

We strongly encourage you to subscribe to these mailing lists. They're a great way of keeping in touch with our activities, and from time to time people send interesting or important mails that you would never have read otherwise. We usually add you when we get your emails (we sent this to you at that address anyway), but if you aren't on the list, email us as a reminder.

5.12 Clubs

There are tons of clubs here that satisfy a huge diversity of interests. You probably won't have enough time to explore all of them, but you should definitely aim to expand your horizons by dipping your toes in as many clubs as you're interested in. See Section 6 for a list of Singaporeans and the clubs/activities they are involved in. Feel free to contact any of us if you have questions!

5.13 Getting Your Driver's License

If you intend on exploring the surrounding area and getting out of the Stanford Bubble, do consider getting your driver's license quickly. For those who are still unclear about whether a California license is necessary, it is. Your F1 status requires you to get a US license in order to drive even if some car companies such as Zipcar do not require a US driver's license. The process is relatively straightforward, though if you deviate from it you can expect to waste some time.

- 1) Go to the DMV website and book an appointment at any of the nearby DMV offices to apply for a new license.
- 2) Turn up for your appointment, bring the appropriate documents (such as your passport, I-94, I-20, and your Singapore License if you have one). If it is a good day, you might be able to get out of the DMV in 1-2 hours.
- 3) Set an appointment for your driving test and once you pass it, your license will be mailed to you!

5.14 What to do in your spare time

- Learn to play ping pong or pool properly - but your dorm might not have the appropriate table. In which case you can consider other activities like...
- Movies – Hitch a ride or steal a car and go to AMC 20 or Century 16. Go and see a theatre that makes Yishun 10 look positively puny. For US\$7.50 (with SUID) it's a cheap way to waste your time. The Aquarius on University Avenue is nearby and shows less mainstream movies and foreign films, but does not offer a student discount. The Stanford Theatre shows excellent classic films you won't ever see screened in Singapore cinemas, and is an experience not to be missed.
- Go party – but ask yourself this question, if you ever go to a frat party: Why is American beer like making love in a canoe? Because it's f***ing close to water! If you're in an all-frosh dorm, usually the party comes to you... just walk out of your room.
- Cook/bake (or learn to if you haven't). It's fun, and a great way to make friends! Anybody can cook, it's just whether they do it well or not.
- Dorm trips/activities. You aren't living on campus to hide in your room and study all day... go meet all the interesting people living together with you!
- Make holiday plans – You will have breaks during Thanksgiving (a week), winter (3 weeks), spring (a week) and whenever you feel like skipping classes for a week. Think of what you want to do, where you want to go, etc. Keep in mind you'll get chased out of the dorm during winter break but not for spring break or Thanksgiving.
- Secret Snowflake, Screw Your Roommate, Full Moon on the Quad, Exotic Erotic etc. should not, and will not, be explained to you right now. Some things are best found out for yourself.

5.15 Last things to do before you leave

It would certainly be prudent for you to sign your I-20 prior to leaving the US. Read the chapter on immigration to be scared into doing just that.

6. Upperclasspeople!

Elders are always the best people to ask - and for that we really thank the people here who have graciously given their details for you to contact!

Name	Major	Activities & Clubs	Undergrad/Grad?	Contact
Rachel Lim	CS	InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, EPATT (tutoring), Chocolate Heads Movement Band	Undergraduate	rachelim@stanford.edu
Preston Lim	Bioengineering	Fleet Street a capella, music and medicine programme, huntington's disease outreach programme	Undergraduate	lianjie@stanford.edu
Chew Hong En	Electrical Engineering	Engineers for a Sustainable World (ESW)	Undergraduate	hongen@stanford.edu
Jian Yang Lum (Lumpy)	International Relations, Economics; minors maybe Music/Chem?	InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, plays viola in music groups, AMENDS	Undergraduate	jian.yang.lum@gmail.com
Frank Chen	Computer Science		Alumni	frankchn@gmail.com
Casatrina Lee	Economics, Computer Science	Alpha Phi Omega, TEDx, d.school	Alumni	Casatrina@gmail.com
Raven Jiang	Computer Science	Stanford Daily, SIG	Undergraduate	jcx@stanford.edu
Annabeth Leow	Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity	Stanford STATIC; CSRE; Casa Zapata	Undergraduate	annaleow@stanford.edu
Sherlene Chatterji	Economics	Alternative Spring Break, Stanford Econ Association, Restaurateur Society @ Stanford, Stanford Consulting, SIW, Testimony A Cappella	Alumni	sherlene.chatterji@gmail.com
Victoria Yeow	Economics	Stanford Ballroom Dance Team, Festival Orchestra	Undergraduate	pzyeow@stanford.edu
Haitong Mao	Biology	Chinese Music Ensemble	Undergraduate	haitongm@stanford.edu
DalGLISH Chew	English		Graduate	dalGLISH@stanford.edu
Natalie Low	Biology		Graduate	nlow@stanford.edu
Chuanqi Shen	Computer Science	Chess, Birdwatching, UAV	Undergraduate	shencq@stanford.edu
Renjie Wong	Anthropology	The Stanford Daily	Undergraduate	renjie@stanford.edu
Ching Hua Lee	Physics	Music for all	Graduate	clee2@stanford.edu
Tan Chor Seng			Graduate	chorseng@stanford.edu
Gary Lee	Electrical Engineering	Badminton, Stanford IEEE	Undergraduate	leecfg@gmail.com
Shu Chen Ong	Undeclared - English Literature and Music	Stanford Undergraduate Research Journal (humanities editor); music department vocal program and choir; studio assistant at Cantor Art Centre; applying for EPASA this coming year	Undergraduate	song3@stanford.edu
Nicole	Undeclared –	International Undergraduate	Undergraduate	nicolekm@stanford.edu

Wong	International Relations, Philosophy and Literature; Minor: Art History	Committee Board, Ram's Head's Hairspray, Chi Alpha		
Teo Zhi Ping	Undeclared - IR or Public Policy	UNICEF (JOIN!!! :)) BASES Social Impact Class Cabinet (Frosh Council for freshmen) Ultimate Frisbee Women's Community Center Kids with Dreams <u>S@S</u> <3	Undergraduate	zpteo@stanford.edu
Laura Lee	Psychology	Stanford Ballroom Dance Team (but ask Victoria, no longer in it), yoga, farmers' market outings :), Windhover Meditation Center things, Stanford Wellness Program, startups and growth hacking, peer counselling, not taking 20 units	Undergraduate	llxm243@stanford.edu
Antariksh Mahajan	Undeclared	Common Origins (hip-hop) XTRM KPop Fusion The Bridge Peer Counselling Centre Dance and life in general	Undergraduate	am95@stanford.edu
Ren Zhaolin	Economics and either Math or MCS	Jump Rope	Undergraduate	rzl@stanford.edu
Pan Chuen	Chemical Engineering	Stanford Energy Club American Institute of Chemical Engineers Stanford Dragonboat	Undergraduate	panchuen@stanford.edu
Alan Aw	Mathematical Sciences	Doing research, nature hiking, traveling and working out	Undergraduate	alanaw1@stanford.edu

7. Random Trivia

7.1 Why Cal Sucks

We don't have time or space to tell you all the Stanford traditions, so we'll just mention one of our most time-honoured precepts: Beat Cal. This caption has been seen hanging from the Leaning Tower of Pisa, during space shuttle missions and even painted in Cal's very own Memorial Stadium. And we beat them at Big Game for seven years in a row, we lost one year, and we won it back again in 2010 and haven't lost it since.

7.2 10 Reasons why Stanford Kicks Ass (as if you needed telling)

1. The most beautiful campus in the world. There's a three-year-long waiting list to get married in MemChu. (a.k.a. Memorial Church-an example of Stanford's tendency to shorten everything for efficiency. Here's an exercise: figure out GovCo, FroYo, FloMo, TresEx. When you're done, you can start boasting). Nap, read, chill on the green green grass at the Oval, and feel good to be part of all this beauty around you. Feel good that you may at any minute be part of a picture taken by some avid Mainland Chinese tourist.
2. Excellent weather. Weather affects your mood more than you would think. Summers here are not too hot, and winters are not too cold. The last time it snowed in Stanford was when America's late Supreme Court Chief Justice Rehnquist was a student in Stanford. If you've seen him lately, you'll know that that was a very, very long time ago. You're in sunny California, man. Laugh at all your friends freezing their butts off while trying to study elsewhere in the world. Go back and show off your tan. Some days when you come out of the classroom and bask in the golden sunshine and the blue sky, you just can't help but stand still and admire and smile.
3. Sports sports sports. Stanford is a lot more sporty than the other top colleges. Maybe it's the sunny weather. Maybe it's a Californian thing. Whatever it is, Stanford excels at sports, and our athletics program is the best in the country. The 2008 Beijing Olympics give you a good sense of this- at the games, Stanford athletes won 25 medals including 8 golds. We've produced Tiger Woods, John Elway, John McEnroe, Janet Evans, and others to come. Partly as a result of the school's success in athletics, the sports culture is just a lot stronger. Athletic classes in golf, tennis, gymnastics, and other sports are available! (at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels) Take advantage of them! Structured Liberal Education (SLE). While you may think that Thinking Matters is bad, you can always laugh at the SLE people (lots of work). (SLE is one of the best freshmen program that's run at Stanford and is a truly one of a kind experience. If you didn't sign up for SLE, ask your SLE friends what you're missing, including the famous Mark Mancall and Thursday SLE movies.)
4. Your peers. Amazing, talented, personable, inspiring and humble people :)
5. The Tree, our school mascot. A candidate for this spot once streaked through most freshman lectures wearing nothing but peanut butter. 'Nuff said.
6. Open-mindedness and non-judgement. Yes, all the top colleges in the U.S. are pretty liberal, but Stanford, being in the Bay Area where the hippie movement was born and where many progressive movements are still centered, is a notch ahead. Students here are very open-minded. Non-judgement is also a big thing. You'll get what we mean when you're here.
7. LSJUMB – The (One and Only Truly Incomparable) Leland Stanford Junior (pause) University Marching Band, which specialises in playing while drunk and high. Banned from playing in various universities, and also from several airlines. Genuine reason to be proud of being in Stanford.
8. Our outstanding faculty and student body makes learning a delight. Your intellectual growth will be accompanied by a total awakening of your psyche, like the simultaneous blossoming of a hundred flowers under the springtime sunshine.
9. Stanford's egalitarian nature. Class (by which we mean socio-economic status) figures less in student life than at many of the other top colleges. Unlike some other schools, Stanford doesn't have exclusive clubs and cliques of rich white boys from privileged backgrounds. Class isn't an issue at all, unless you want to bring it up and make it an issue. You will never feel uncomfortable for being from a middle- to low-income background. In fact, there are certain programs (including FLIP) designed to give you a leg up!
10. Happy students. Everywhere you go you'll see people smiling. To quote a Quora post, "The ethos (at Stanford) is very positive. The #1 thing they hear at the counseling center on campus is that people are worried there's something wrong with them because everyone else is happier. For some people the constant sunny optimism is heartening, for others it's alienating."

THE END
Welcome to the Farm!

Love from your S@S Committee 2015-16
Zhi Ping, Alan, Nicole, Laura, Pan Chuen, Antariksh, Zhao Lin
:)