

Call for Applications
First Year Global Opportunities (FYGO) Mentor
September 2025

The First Year Global Opportunities (FYGO) Program is now accepting applications for the spring 2026 First Year GO Mentor. Applications require a statement of interest, CV and a letter of support. The deadline for priority consideration is October 10, 2025. See details below for submitting an application.

Overview

The FYGO program provides opportunities for Cal Poly students to enhance their studies through the high-impact practice of study abroad. In collaboration with CEA CAPA Education Abroad, a study abroad program provider with expertise in first-year experiences abroad, Cal Poly launched the inaugural [First Year Global Opportunities \(First Year GO\) program](#) in 2024-25 with the program offered spring 2025 in Seville, Spain. Designed for first-year Cal Poly students in the College of Liberal Arts and the Orfalea College of Business and open to students from all majors for whom the curriculum fits within their degree plan, this immersive program empowers students to explore contemporary global issues, develop cultural humility and leadership skills, foster community, and immerse themselves in interdisciplinary learning. For the 2026 iteration, the program dates will be 4/7/26 - 6/27/26 with the mentor on-site for the first 2 weeks.

Position Summary

The First Year Global Opportunities (FYGO) Mentor serves as the Cal Poly Program Leader and is a dedicated resource for FYGO students throughout their pre-departure and abroad activities. The mentor should possess at least basic conversational Spanish skills and a working knowledge of Spanish culture. As a staff member familiar with the needs of first-year students, the mentor serves as a strong advocate, helping students navigate academic and personal challenges while encouraging them to maximize their study abroad experiences.

The work of the mentor is a professional development opportunity in line with Cal Poly/CSU policy. The mentor will receive a stipend/bonus for their work as the First Year GO Mentor and work collaboratively with the Cal Poly International Center (CPIC), CEA CAPA Education Abroad and other campus stakeholders.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

- Participate in FYGO recruitment and program planning sessions in fall 2025 and pre-departure sessions in winter 2026
- Be present in Seville, Spain, for the beginning of the program (2 weeks); the mentor would arrive on 4/6/2026 and students to arrive on 4/7/2026
- Serve as a resource for students and their supporters in collaboration with the International Center and CEA CAPA staff
- Actively support students in collaboration with CEA CAPA staff during the Welcome Week (see below for more details), the add/drop course period, and their transition into academic and cultural life abroad



- Host mandatory 1:1 check-in sessions with students at the CEA CAPA Study Center while on-site
- Schedule small-group meetings to connect with students, build community, and provide ongoing student success resources
- Hold team-building and intercultural engagement sessions in the student residence hall onsite
- Remain a point of contact for students throughout the program, hosting weekly virtual check-ins or office hours and helping students connect with campus resources such as the Mustang Success Center, college advising offices, and other support services – especially during fall registration period
- Meet monthly with CEA CAPA staff and liaise with the International Center as needed to support students of concern throughout the program
- Attend a welcome back gathering in fall 2025 to learn from past participants

Required Qualifications

- Full time appointment at Cal Poly as a staff member
- Familiarity with Cal Poly's study abroad/away programs and processes
- Basic conversational Spanish skills and a working knowledge of Spanish culture
- Demonstrated experience in supporting student learning and experiences
- Excellent communication and organizational skills

Preferred Qualifications

- Understanding of first year student needs and support
- Demonstrated experience with international travel and a strong interest in study abroad/away initiatives
- Experience traveling with students
- Ability to advocate for diverse student needs
- Knowledge of study abroad cultural adjustment cycle

Application Process

To apply for the First Year GO Mentor position, please submit:

- A statement of interest (up to two pages) highlighting your experience and interest in first year and study abroad programming.
 - Include your Spanish language proficiency level
 - Discuss your experience and/or knowledge of Spanish life and culture
 - Discuss your experience working with first year students and/or student groups in an off-campus capacity
- Your CV or resume
- A letter of support from your supervisor and appropriate administrator (Dean, AVP or equivalent)



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Review of applications will begin October 13, 2025. Open until filled. Application materials should be submitted to Cari Vanderkar, Assistant Vice Provost for International Programs at civander@calpoly.edu.