

CSUN EXPLORERS

Our Program

Explorers at California State University, Northridge is an inclusive, postsecondary, two-year program for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Students in the Explorers program increase their independence, work and life skills by experiencing university life in an age-appropriate setting along with their university peers through facilitated and non-facilitated interactions.

Students in the Explorers program take classes that are focused on preparing them for transition to employment and the independent living of their choice. The Explorers program curriculum is based on the current best practices of inclusive postsecondary education programs.

Program Description

CSUN Explorers is a 2-year program for individuals between the ages of 18-28 who are identified with intellectual/developmental disabilities. Explorers will enroll at CSUN through Extended Learning. Explorers will take two (2) classes each semester with CSUN undergraduate students and may participate in clubs, and other activities on campus. During the second year of the program, Explorers will be involved in internships on campus or in the community. A Peer Mentor will be identified in each academic course and Best Buddies will be identified in each club.

Eligibility Criteria for Applicants

Applications should be submitted only for individuals who are able to:

- Function without attendant care for personal needs.
- Independently communicate basic needs and wants.

Further, the program will consider only individuals that meet the following criteria:

- The applicant must have an identified intellectual/developmental disability.
- The age range of students to be accepted is 18 - 28 years of age.

- Strong motivation to want to fully embrace the university experience and all that the Explorers program has to offer.
- The applicant cannot be conserved under any area.
- The applicant must have received, or will be receiving, a diploma or certificate of completion or equivalent from a high school program.
- The applicant must possess enough self-help skills and responsibility to safely and independently function around campus with minimal to no supervision.
- The applicant must have acceptable social behavior, verified by previous schools, family, and/or agency personnel as well as the ability to get along with peers, follow rules, and accept supervision.
- The applicant must be willing to participate in all hours of instruction a week, as well as in social activities during various hours and possibly weekends.
- The applicant must be free of any communicable diseases that are transmissible by casual contact and all immunizations must be up to date. He or she must have health insurance (i.e. private or Medi-Cal).
- The applicant must be able to participate in a personal interview.
- The applicant is required to provide current assessments from school, regional center and/or current program attending.
- The applicant must have a strong *desire* to complete the program.

Good reasons for referring an individual:

- The applicant expresses a desire and is ready and motivated to attend a University program.
- The applicant expresses a desire to learn vocational skills and become employed.
- The applicant is interested in exploring academic interests on a college campus.
- The applicant is motivated to participate in activities of interest in their free time.
- The family is supportive of the applicant's decision and is willing to partner with the Explorers staff.
- Parents/family are ready to for their son/daughter to learn/allow to make decisions on their own with the support of Explorers staff.

Wrong reasons for referring an individual:

- The family wants the applicant out of their home for part of the day.
- The applicant lacks motivation for learning in their present environment and parents believe the Explorers program will ignite their motivation.
- The applicant feels ready to live independently, but the family, teacher and Regional Center Service Coordinator (RCSC) does not feel they are ready.
- The applicant has behavioral issues and Explorers will fix them.

If the individual **does not** meet the criteria for the Explorers Program, he or she is encouraged to search other options through the local Regional Center, local school districts, and other community groups. The individual may apply to CSUN Explorers at a later time once the eligibility criteria have been met.

Estimated Annual Cost

The following is an estimate of the annual costs associated with a student attending CSUN Explorers. The estimate is based on the following:

1. Estimated Tuition- The student will take 6 units per semester (\$2,112)
2. Student Recreation Center (SRC) Membership (\$340)
3. Additional fees will include, books, materials, food, and transportation.
4. Estimated Total for year: \$4,564, in addition to #3 above.

Application Procedure

STEP #1

CAREFULLY READ THE CSUN Explorers ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (ABOVE.) If all criteria are met, proceed to step #2.

STEP #2

Fill out the CSUN Explorers Application Packet.

All required documents of the Application Packet must be submitted together to complete the process for admission consideration to CSUN Explorers. It is important that the most current information is submitted in order to ascertain that the Explorers Program is an appropriate placement and that the student has the combination of desire, motivation, skill, and experience to be successful in the program. Once the completed application packet has been reviewed one of the following will take place:

- a) The applicant and parent(s) or guardian(s) will be contacted to set up an interview (see step #3 below.)
- b) The applicant is not selected and may be encouraged to reapply.

STEP #3

For applicants who are selected to be interviewed:

The applicant and parent(s)/guardian(s) must be present and will be interviewed separately.

The interview process will ascertain the following:

- The applicant has the desire, ability and motivation to complete the program in the expected period.
- The program staff and/or community resources can appropriately serve the applicant's needs.

- The program provides the least restrictive environment for the applicant.
- The applicant is prepared to enter the program.
- The applicant meets the entrance requirements.
- The parents are ready and willing to allow their child to make their own decisions with the support and guidance of the Explorers staff.

RESULTS NOTIFICATION

The applicant will receive notice from CSUN Explorers indicating one of the following:

- a) The applicant has been accepted to CSUN Explorers and must accept or decline the offer within 7 days.
- b) The applicant has been placed on the wait list.
- c) The applicant was not selected and may be encouraged to reapply.

All Explorers must attend Freshman Orientation (date to be announced).