

### **How was the transition to a university like Berkeley from \_\_\_\_\_?**

I grew up in Lexington, Massachusetts. The biggest differences were the population and demographics. Berkeley is much more diverse. New perspectives from others have shown me that life doesn't have to be lived in a particular way. There's also a larger number of people who share your perspective which can be comforting. However, the large population of UC Berkeley (as big as Lexington as a town!) can make it intimidating to meet people unless you're confident to open up. Finally, the large class sizes means you need to create relationships with your peers and course staff to create a good social learning environment similar to high school -Kaushal Balagurusamy (Sophomore)

The transition to Berkeley from a small public high school wasn't so bad because of all of the resources that they offer for students. The classes are definitely more challenging and I never really went to office hours my first semester because I was a little intimidated by all of the IQ, but I happily went to other sources of help like the CAEE or ESS for help on most of my lower division classes -Brandon Lou (Freshman)

Coming from a public high school, I loved the new atmosphere! The "hustle and bustle" of walking through Sproul was familiar to me, but it had a fresh feel to it that I now both love and hate (looking at you people selling In n Out that I will inevitably buy). - Matthew Michalek (Sophomore)

### **What was your favorite part of being an MSE student at Berkeley?**

My favorite part is really being part of a small community. It's amazing that I know most of the people in my major, as they can be great people to hang out with or study with. There are a bunch of fun events hosted by MSEA, and they really made me love the tight knit community! - Tarun Allaparti (Junior)

I really enjoy how the MSE department is really close knit. The department hosts events like weekly seminars, and MSEA has a lot of fun events like game nights and socials for students. As a first year doing the year remotely, I've really enjoyed meeting new people at these events, and I am really looking forward to attending them in person in the coming years!- Armina Mayya (Freshman)

My favorite part of being an MSE student at Berkeley is the shared passion and interest in materials science. Before coming to Berkeley, I thought materials science was this really cool, weirdly specific but really broad science that not a lot of people were aware of. Since coming to Berkeley, I've met a lot of like-minded students and professors that all share the same interest in understanding materials, which has only enhanced my passion for materials science and made me even more sure that this is what I want to pursue. - Maya Valeriano (Junior)

### **What is your favorite MSE class and why?**

My favorite MSE class is MSE 45. This class is the introduction to materials science and covers all aspects of the major. It's really great because you get surface level exposure to all of the engineering

concepts, and it can also help you choose what specific concentration you would like to go into after graduation. - Tarun Allaparti (Junior)

MSE 120. The class gives you a chance to read up on MSE news and learn about how MSE is used to tackle humanities greatest issues. This can provide career direction for people who haven't thought about it yet -Kaushal Balagurusamy (Sophomore)

MSE 125 thin film materials science. It took the understanding of materials thermodynamics from MSE 103 and applied it to the theory of electronic materials I gained from MSE 111 in a way that was very applicable to current research. The course single-handedly brought me from not understanding papers and talks by grad students to being able to understand some of what was going on. -Stephen Gee (Senior)

My favorite MSE class I've ever taken is Bonding and Crystallography (MSE 102) taught by Professor Chrzan. It was the first upper division materials science class I took and it delved really deep into the structure property relationship of materials that was so interesting to me. Even though it was a really dense class and some of the concepts took me multiple tries to finally understand, I got a lot out of the class and felt a strong sense of accomplishment from being able to understand these difficult but really cool topics about crystal structures and bonding. Professor Chrzan is also one of my favorite professors who does a really good job of breaking down topics in the most basic way possible, and he is really down to earth and approachable. -Maya Valeriano (Junior)

### **Why did you choose Berkeley?**

I chose Berkeley because when I visited campus, I could just see myself being here for four years and having a really good time. The campus is really beautiful and I could envision myself studying and hanging out in the open green spaces. I also liked how students are really engaged and active in local and nonlocal social movements. In addition to this, the engineering department is fantastic and I was really excited about the great education I would get here. -Armina Mayya (Freshman)

I chose Berkeley for the great location and opportunities for research. Being taught by some of the foremost researchers in our field is something I found to be exciting and the accessibility to research as early as freshman year was a huge factor. -Sara Susanto (Senior)

I chose Berkeley because it has one of the best materials science and engineering programs and is a hub for materials science and engineering research with a lot of opportunities for undergraduate research that could give me so much exposure to different areas of materials science that is hard to find in other campuses.-Maya Valeriano (Junior)

I chose Berkeley both because of the prestige of the MSE department and Berkeley Engineering in general, but also because of the environment. The atmosphere at Berkeley at first may seem daunting, but one will soon find out that it is full of places you'll grow to love and create your own little world in. -Matthew Michalek (Junior)

### **Favorite place in Berkeley?**

My favorite place in Berkeley is the Recreational Sports Facility. -Tarun Allaparti (Junior)  
Somewhere up in the hills on the fire trails -Ayush Gupta (Sophomore)

The Student Learning Center because it saves me from utter suffering. -Brandon Lou (Freshman)

I like the west circle at sunset, it's very pretty -Sharon Hsia (Senior)

Hearst Mining Circle -Robert Yang (Freshman)

HMMB 312, the MSEA office couch is amazing for naps -Stephen Gee (Senior)

I know this is super cliché but the Glade is actually so nice -Matthew Michalek (Junior)

### **Favorite restaurant at Berkeley?**

My favorite restaurant at Berkeley is Berkeley Thai House. Try the spicy basil fried rice! -Tarun Allaparti (Junior)

Poke! -Kaushal Balagurusamy (Sophomore)

Cheeseboard -Ayush Gupta (Sophomore)

Berkeley Social Club -Armina Mayya (Freshman)

Peet's Coffee -Brandon Lou (Freshman)

Imm Thai -Amanda Guan (Senior)

Thai noodle -Sharon Hsia (Senior)

So far, I really like Imm Thai, but if you are in the units and are looking for a quick bite, anywhere in the Durant Food Court should fill your cravings. Make sure to download Snackpass for lots of deals too!  
-Robert Yang (Freshman)

Racha's has some amazing Thai food and for great value! -Sara Susanto (Freshman)

Barbarian - They have an amazing chicken tikka pizza -Stephen Gee (Senior)

Tossed on Shattuck! Amazing noodles and vibe! -Matthew Michalek (Junior)

### **Favorite activity to do at Berkeley?**

I love to play soccer at the Maxwell Family Field near the Memorial Stadium. -Tarun Allaparti (Junior)

Hiking the fire trails and Big C is a great way to catch an amazing sunset view and ~vibes~. -Sara Susanto (Senior)

Hang out with friends and play smash. -Stephen Gee (Senior)

Lounge around in the sun at a park -Matthew Michalek (Junior)

### **Favorite elective class?**

My favorite elective class is Data 100. It's a great course about the fundamentals and techniques of data science, and it ties in a lot of principles from computer science, mathematics, and statistics. I urge every engineer to take this course, it's extremely useful and very fun! -Tarun Allaparti (Junior)

Environmental Design R3b. Giuseppina introduces a broad variety of literature on the ethics of environmentalism and brings a lot of pressing issues to light that aren't covered by the news. It shows how much there is to do in this world. -Kaushal Balagurusamy (Sophomore)

SASIAN 142, Great Epics of India -Ayush Gupta (Sophomore)

EDUC 131AC :Classroom Interactions in Science and Mathematics: A Focus on Equity and Urban Schools -Brandon Lou (Freshman)

Either Public Health 271H: Greener Solutions or Asian American Health! -Amanda Guan (Senior)

I really enjoyed comparative literature surprisingly, its the kind of experience -Sharon Hsia (Senior)

Physics 141a - solid state physics -Stephen Gee (Senior)

BioE C117 Structural Aspects of Biomaterials. For people who are interested in biomaterials and materials used in medical devices, this is a really interesting class with a really great professor, Lisa Pruitt. -Maya Valeriano (Sophomore)

Music 116B, highly recommend if you like playing music and want to learn more -Matthew Michalek (Junior)

