

Will the student population return to the Bay Area anytime soon and fill a glut of vacancies?

All Universities are taking a wait-and-see approach, taking into account public health concerns with an eye on infection rates and vaccination numbers, but all planning to hold in-person classes during the Fall 2021 semester.

Institution	Policy	Total students
UC Berkeley	After a one-week transition period, most classes will be held in person with the exception of classroom sizes with 200+ students, representing 5% of all course offerings.	41,910
SF State	“Majority” of on-campus experiences are expected to return. As part of a statewide university system, reopening plans will be determined by region.	29,607
Mills College	No longer enrolling first-year undergrad students, but wholly unrelated to the pandemic. Cites declining enrollment and budget deficits. Will stop giving degrees altogether in a couple years.	961
California College of the Arts	“Hopeful” that in-person classes will be offered come fall, according to President Stephens.	1,950
San Jose University	Convoluted, four-tier system. Now in phase 2 of a “modified campus,” phase 3 is coined a “hybrid campus,” culminating in phase 4, a “repopulated campus.”	32,773

Some preliminary thoughts/observations

Although June 15th has been the prescribed date for California to re-open, this is merely the end to the “Blueprint for a Safer Economy” color-coded system and all educational institutions will base reopening decisions on science, infection rate, and number of vaccinations come the fall semester. We haven’t addressed the community college system, but I’m assuming this will not impact housing because students already live in the Bay Area. There is no doubt that there will be a contraction of students because of distance learning or hybrid learning - these forces will never go away. Many people, moreover, will refuse to get the vaccine and will not be fully integrated on campus. Another issue is one of student visas and travel restrictions that may prevent students from entering our shores. So, there are a lot of unknowns at this point, but all universities have the goal to re-open come fall. This will be entirely dependent on the science and the numbers. Clearly, Berkeley’s housing supply will be most impacted given the sheer number of students.