

First-Year Students – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Welcome to the College of Arts and Sciences at Drexel University. This list of FAQs –Frequently Asked Questions– was curated with our first-year students in mind, to help make your transition to campus life as smooth as possible.

As you navigate your academic journey at Drexel, contact our College of Arts and Sciences [Undergraduate Advising](#) team with any questions you may have. We’re eager to hear from you!

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What is advising? How can my advisor help me?

Your advisor is your academic home base throughout your time at Drexel. We are here to help you:

- Build a plan for accomplishing your academic and professional goals.
- Choose your courses and develop an overall plan of study.
- Explore opportunities inside and outside the classroom.
- Figure out how to solve academic obstacles.
- Navigate Drexel University and connect with campus resources.
- Interpret Drexel University policy and procedures.

When in doubt, don't hesitate to contact us! [College of Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Advising](#).

Our job is to support you, and if we don't have the answer to your question, we'll help you get in touch with the person or office who does.

Who is my academic advisor and how are they assigned?

Your [specific advisor](#) will be assigned based on your major, and depending on the size of the program, your last name. You'll get to meet them—and many of the other Arts and Sciences advisors—during Drexel's Welcome Week in September. But it's also important to know that we work together very closely as a team. Over the course of your time at Drexel, it's possible that your advisor might change, but you'll always have a specific point person assigned to help you.

What are placement exams? Why do I need to complete them?

To make sure incoming students are enrolled in courses at the appropriate level, Drexel requires [placement exams](#) in math, chemistry, and modern languages. The exams listed in your Drexel One checklist are the placement exams needed for your specific major. Please note you still need to take these placement exams *even if you have AP or transfer credit*. **We cannot complete your schedule until you take your placement exams, so it's very important you do so by the June 26th deadline.** Please check your Drexel email account for more information.

A few more things to keep in mind about placement exams:

- Please don't wait until the last minute to take your placement exams.
- Give yourself 90 minutes per exam. Once you start the exam, you must complete it—you can't finish it later—so plan accordingly!
- Please use a laptop/desktop rather than a mobile device.
- Please take your exam alone, without help from others. Having a placement that reflects your current ability is critical to success during your first term.
- If you need a testing accommodation, please first register with [Disability Resources](#).
- If you are running into any technical difficulties, email placeex@drexel.edu and include your Drexel ID number in the email.

Why should I use my Drexel email account?

All newsletters and time-sensitive correspondence from the University will be directed to your [Drexel email account](#) so please start checking it regularly. When emailing individuals at the University, be sure to send the message from your Drexel account and include your Drexel ID number; this enables us to verify your identity and help you as quickly as possible. We also suggest setting up an official Drexel [email signature](#).

How do I change my major or co-op plan before I start at Drexel?

If you want to change your major before you arrive on campus, please email enroll@drexel.edu. The Admissions Office will evaluate your application to determine if you are eligible for the new major. In addition, you can email enroll@drexel.edu to change your co-op designation from the four-year to the five-year program, or vice versa.

How do I declare a minor?

Minors allow you to explore an area of interest outside of your chosen major. You can declare a minor once you have taken at least 30 credits at Drexel. View the most current list of minors in the [Drexel University Catalog](#).

How does co-op affect my plan of study (i.e., my timeline to degree)?

Drexel's academic calendar is based on a quarter system, and your co-op cycle will determine which quarters you will participate in your co-op experience. For example, if you have a fall/winter co-op cycle, you will work full-time during the fall and winter quarters. If you have a spring/summer co-op cycle, on the other hand, you will work full-time during the spring and summer quarters.

All students are scheduled for 12 terms of classes, regardless of the co-op concentration they choose. Visit Drexel's [Undergraduate Co-op](#) for a visual breakdown of how co-ops are scheduled; additional information about each plan follows. Although, depending on your specific program, your co-op terms may be the opposite of what appears on the graph. For example, students on a spring/summer co-op would have classes during the fall and winter terms.

It's also important to note that not all majors offer all possible co-op programs. You can confirm which options are available by looking up your major in the [Drexel University Catalog](#).

Where can I see the academic calendar for the year?

You can see important quarter dates, including the start and end of classes, term breaks, holidays, and more through academic years 2025-2026 on [Drexel's Academic Calendar](#).

What is a Summer Prep Course? Do I need to take one?

These are optional but *strongly recommended* free, self-paced online courses offered to students in some majors based on placement exam results. If you receive an invitation to a course, it's because we believe that taking it will help put you on track for a successful fall term.

How do Summer Prep Courses work?

PHYS 050 (equivalent to PHYS 100), MATH 049 (equivalent to MATH 100), MATH 050 (equivalent to MATH 110), and CHEM 050 (equivalent to CHEM 111) are all self-paced online courses that are worth zero (0) credits. These tuition-free courses can be taken over the summer and will show up on your transcript as CR (credit) or NCR (no credit), depending on whether you pass the course — either way, your GPA will not be affected.

Please be aware that even though these courses are tuition free, you may need to purchase books or other materials.

You can find additional information about these courses at Drexel Central [Placement Exam Outcomes](#).

When do I register for classes?

In your first quarter at Drexel, your schedule is built for you based on the requirements of your major, your placement exam scores, and any AP or transfer credits you are bringing with you. We will be adjusting your schedule all summer to account for any incoming exam credit and modifications for populations like student athletes or those in ROTC.

You'll be able to see your final schedule by mid-September, under the "Academics" tab in [Drexel One](#). Click on "My Courses" in the middle of the page and select the upcoming term, Fall Quarter 2024-2025.

For all future quarters, you will register yourself and can take any personal preferences into account when choosing your classes. But while you register on your own, your advisor will be on hand to help and make suggestions.

Do I have to take a language placement exam?

If you took a language in high school—even just one class!—and intend to continue with that same language here, you must take a placement exam before enrolling in any language courses.

If you are starting an entirely new language, no placement exam is necessary. However, if your major requires that you start this new language in your first term, be sure to contact your advisor so we can make sure you're registered for the 101-level course.

If language is *not* required for your degree, this won't impact your fall schedule, so we can wait to discuss your language plans once you get here. If you're not sure, you can review your program's degree requirements in the [Drexel University Catalog](#)—or just ask us!

One final note: we *strongly* recommend that you take your placement exam on your own, without the help of others. Otherwise, you might be placed into a level for which you aren't prepared.

How will AP/IB/dual-enrollment credit impact my schedule?

Depending on your major and the credit you are transferring in, exam or dual-enrollment credit could impact your fall course schedule, so it's important that you submit this credit to be evaluated as soon as possible. If you have any questions about how to do so, please refer to the [First Year Checklist](#) or email enroll@drexel.edu.

How can I change my preferred first name and/or personal pronouns?

If you have a preferred first name that differs from your legal name, you can request via DrexelOne that your preferred name be the one listed on much of your university correspondence and business, including class rosters, your email account, and your Zoom display name (though if you've already picked up your email accounts you'll also need to email IT at accounts@drexel.edu to request an update). You can make updates to your personal pronouns and gender identification through the same DrexelOne portal.

Directions and a comprehensive FAQ about preferred names are available via [Drexel Central](#).

I have a disability; how do I arrange for accommodations?

If you have a documented disability and need accommodations, we encourage you to get the [registration process](#) started over the summer, as it can take some time to complete and requires paperwork from a clinician. Note that accommodations are only given if students proactively request them and they are not retroactive, meaning they can only be granted for current and future situations. Please contact [Disability Resources](#) with any questions.

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