Introduction and Overview of Session

- Advising at Columbia
- Transition from high school to college
- Basic requirements for a Columbia College degree
- Columbia College Core Curriculum
- Academic integrity
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I. Advising at Columbia

The Center for Student Advising (CSA) strives to be a trusted and indispensable source of knowledge and support for students throughout their undergraduate years. In August, you will be assigned a CSA adviser who will work with you over the course of your four years here. He or she will not only help you plan your course schedule and fulfill your graduation requirements, but also assist in the exploration of your various academic and co-curricular interests and plans.

Areas of Advising

Your adviser is your primary point of contact for a variety of issues and questions, including the following:

- General academic questions, concerns, or difficulties
- Personal goals, issues, or concerns
- Registration questions and problems
- Referrals to other resources on campus
- Planning for study abroad
- Premed and pre-law requirements, graduate school, and other academic opportunities
- Future life plans

General & Major Advising

During the second semester of your sophomore year, you will declare your major or concentration. You will be assigned a departmental adviser in your academic department in addition to your CSA adviser. Your departmental adviser can help you with questions specific to your major or concentration, such as course planning, internship and research opportunities, career options, and graduate study within the discipline. The Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) of each department is available to discuss the major. Remember that you can access faculty at any time, even before you declare a major or concentration.
Adviser Availability

You can make appointments with your CSA adviser using our online appointment system. Your adviser is also available to answer quick questions during walk-in hours every Monday through Thursday from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm. In addition, you can reach your adviser via email and expect to get a response in a timely manner.

The Advising Partnership

Productive advising is built on a true partnership in which the student and the adviser work together. The spirit of an ideal advising partnership is mutual engagement, responsiveness, and dedication. Regular advising conversations, the fundamental building blocks of the partnership, enable an adviser to serve as a resource of knowledge and a source for referrals, so that students may plan and prepare, in the broadest sense, over the course of their years at Columbia.

To make this partnership a success:

**Students should:**

- Actively engage in the advising relationship
- Respond to adviser outreach and be forthcoming about perceived obstacles to success
- Proactively research and plan ways to reach academic goals and be open to sharing these goals with their advisers
- Be open to researching the answers to questions with advisers in order to learn ways to find information on their own
- Act upon referrals to other sources of information and advice
- Let advisers know when they have not been able to find information and advice they need

**Advisers should:**

- Be knowledgeable, responsive, and supportive
- Reach out to advisees, especially when an advisee seems to be struggling
- Inquire about students’ short- and long-term goals and ask students to consider study abroad, fellowships, scholarships, internships, research opportunities, etc.
- Research the answers to questions with students as a way to show students how to find information on their own
- Refer students to other sources of advice and information and connect advisees with appropriate faculty members and departments and other campus offices
- Follow up with students on important matters in a timely way

This is what you can expect from us, and what we will expect from you. At the end of your first year at Columbia, we will ask you to take a survey in which you evaluate your adviser and yourself in terms of these specific expectations and standards.

The CSA strives to ensure that you have a positive and productive relationship with your adviser. On occasion, students may feel that their initial advising assignments were not the appropriate fit for them. If you believe
that you would benefit from a different CSA adviser after you have worked together in your first year, you can meet with Monique Rinere, the Dean of Advising, to discuss an adviser switch.

II. Transition from High School to College

Be aware of some of the areas in which college will differ from high school: attendance policies, class schedules, number of graded assignments, class size, and communication and interaction with parents. High school can be relatively formulaic: if you do $a$, $b$, and $c$, you will be able to get into colleges $x$, $y$, and $z$. There is a straightforward goal and a clear set of steps to get there. College is different. People have different goals, and there is never only one way to reach a goal. For that reason, we in the Center for Student Advising encourage students to discover and follow their passions, to explore and grow through the process.

Advisers can support and guide you, but you are in control of your education and experience, and ultimately responsible for your own choices, both academic and social. You will have the opportunity to manage your own time, create your own support network, and carve out space for rest and reflection. Remember, one of the most important things to keep in mind is that nobody is perfect. It is a sign of wisdom and maturity to ask for help when you need it.

Always remember to:
- Take care of yourself – experience your new freedom wisely.
- Respect the rights of others. Behave responsibly.
- Know when to ask for help, and then ask for it.
- Maintain academic honesty and integrity at all times.

III. Basic Requirements for a Columbia College Degree

Students have 4 years (8 semesters) to graduate.

Students need a minimum of 124 credits to graduate. Students must enroll in a minimum of 12 points per term. The average course load per semester is 15-16 credits, or 5 classes. We often recommend taking 4 classes in the first semester, however, as you adjust to college life.

These 124 credits are made up of:
- Columbia College Core Curriculum (1/3)
- A major or concentration (1/3)
- Electives (1/3)
IV. Columbia College Core Curriculum

The Core has been the cornerstone of the Columbia undergraduate experience since 1919. The courses listed in this section make up Columbia’s Core Curriculum; they are discussed in much greater depth in the Academic Planning Guide for New Students and the Columbia College Bulletin.

Note: Advanced Placement (AP) scores or pre-matriculation summer classes will not exempt students from any of the Core requirements, except possibly foreign language. Students with questions about AP credit or summer classes should consult the 2013-2014 Columbia College Bulletin, the CSA website, or their adviser.

Literature Humanities (HUMA C1001- C1002)
Lit Hum, as it is commonly known, is designed to enhance students’ understanding of the main lines of literary and philosophical development that have shaped Western thought for nearly three millennia. Much more than a survey of great books, Lit Hum encourages students to become critical readers of the literary past we have inherited. Lit Hum must be taken in the first year and may not be dropped. Students will be pre-registered for a section of Lit Hum (4 credits each semester).

University Writing (ENGL C1010)
University Writing is intended to facilitate students’ entry into the intellectual life of the university by helping them to become more capable and independent academic readers and writers. With its small section size and emphasis on critical analysis, revision, collaboration, and research, the course leads students to develop specific skills and general habits of mind important to their future academic success. Students read and discuss texts from a number of fields, complete regular informal reading and writing exercises, write several longer essays, and undertake a collaborative critical project of their own design. University Writing, a one-semester course, is required of all first-year students and may not be dropped (3 credits).

Half of the first-year class will be pre-registered for University Writing in the fall. Students who take University Writing in the fall will take Frontiers of Science in the spring, and vice versa.

Science Requirement
Three semesters of science are required: Frontiers of Science (SCNC 1000), plus two other courses from the approved list, which you can find in the CC Bulletin. Of the two other classes, at least one must be in one of the science departments (i.e., astronomy; biological sciences; chemistry; earth and environmental sciences; ecology, evolution, and environmental biology; physics, or psychology). The remaining class can be either another science course or a quantitative course (i.e., math, statistics, or computer science).

Frontiers of Science is a one-semester course that integrates modern science into the Core Curriculum to change the way students think about questions of science and about the world around them. On Mondays throughout the semester, four of Columbia’s leading scientists present a mini-series of three lectures each. During the rest of the week, senior faculty and Columbia post-doctoral science fellows (research scientists selected for their teaching abilities) lead seminars to discuss the lecture and its associated readings, plan and conduct experiments, and debate the implications of the most recent scientific discoveries.
Half of the first-year class will be pre-registered for Frontiers in the fall. Students who take Frontiers of Science in the fall will take University Writing in the spring, and vice versa.

Premed students must take chemistry (and chem lab, a separate course) in the first year. Any student planning to take a chemistry level beyond 1400 must take the chemistry placement test offered during Orientation.

**Foreign Language Requirement**
This requirement is met by satisfactory completion of the 4th semester of a foreign language or the equivalent. Exemption from the language requirement may be granted on the basis of AP scores, SAT II scores, or through a placement exam given by the department.

**Contemporary Civilization (COCI C1101-1102)**
The aim of Contemporary Civilization (CC), the Core’s survey course on political theory and philosophy, is to introduce students to a range of issues concerning the kinds of communities – political, social, moral, and religious – that human beings construct for themselves and the values that inform and define such communities. CC is a required year-long course taken in the sophomore year (4 credits each semester).

**Art Humanities (HUMA W1121)**
Art Humanities teaches students how to look at, think about, and engage in critical discussion of the visual arts. The course focuses on the formal structure of works of architecture, painting, and other media, as well as the historical contexts in which these works were made and understood. In addition to discussion-based classes, all sections of Art Humanities make extensive use of New York City through field trips to museums, buildings, and monuments. This requirement should be fulfilled before the end of the junior year (3 credits).

**Music Humanities (HUMA W1123)**
Music Humanities strives to awaken in students an appreciation of music in the Western world, to help them respond intelligently to a variety of musical idioms, and to engage them in the debates about the character and purposes of music that have occupied composers and musical thinkers since ancient times. This requirement should be fulfilled before the end of the junior year (3 credits).

Note: A Music Humanities exemption test is offered to first-year students one time only, during the first week of classes. If students do not take the test during this week, they will not be able to take it at a later date (i.e., sophomores, juniors, and seniors are not eligible to take the test). Information on the test will be included in the Academic Packet distributed during Orientation.

**Global Core Requirement**
Students must take two courses in a non-Western culture, chosen from the approved Global Core list (available here: [http://www.college.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/global_core.pdf](http://www.college.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/global_core.pdf)). These courses—all broadly introductory, interdisciplinary, and temporally or spatially expansive—examine areas of the world outside the primary focus of Literature Humanities and Contemporary Civilization. They fall into two categories: the first focuses on a specific culture or civilization; the second addresses several world settings or
cultures comparatively, in terms of a common theme, a set of analytical questions, or interactions between different world regions.

**Physical Education (PHED C1001)**

The PE component of the Core emphasizes the importance of intellectual and physical balance. Two Physical Education classes are required; students must also pass a swim test. During terms in which they compete, varsity athletes can register for their sport (PHED C1005), which will then count toward this requirement.

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**V. Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity defines a university and serves as a cornerstone of community. A Columbia education emphasizes the development of the individual’s moral character and personal ethics as well as the student’s mastery of intellectual material within a discipline. Columbia requires that students take full responsibility for their actions. As a Columbia student, you are responsible for making informed choices with regard to academic integrity both inside and outside the classroom.

Academic dishonesty is one of the most serious offenses a student can commit at Columbia, and can be punished by permanent dismissal from the university. Speak to your instructor, speak to your adviser, but do not be tempted into an act of academic dishonesty for any reason. It isn’t worth it. Please refer to the Academic Planning Guide for New Students for important information about academic integrity.

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**VI. Planning Your First-Year Schedule and Registering for Classes**

At the end of the Columbia College section of the Academic Planning Guide, there is a tear-out sheet that you should complete before arriving on campus for Orientation. Your answers on that sheet will provide a springboard for further conversation and exploration when you first meet with your CSA adviser. We also would like you to use that sheet as a means to start thinking about courses for the fall term and about your Columbia career in general.

Certain courses must be completed in the first year: Literature Humanities, University Writing, and Frontiers of Science. We recommend making substantial progress through the Core in your first and second years, but some courses can be completed in the junior and senior years.

It is important for students who are undecided about a major to take electives in the first and second years that may introduce them to their future major field of study. Explore different departments by taking at least one elective each semester. Look at introductory level courses (normally 1000-2000 level) using the online Columbia College Bulletin, which has course descriptions. Don’t limit your search to departments and majors you are already familiar with or interested in; instead, explore the variety of disciplines and courses available.

You should plan to take 4-5 courses in the fall term: Lit Hum, University Writing or Frontiers of Science, and 2-3 others (a language course, if needed for the language requirement, and electives to explore different fields of study).
When choosing courses to round out your fall schedule, here are some things to consider:

- If you have not placed out of the **language requirement**, you should begin or continue a language in your first year.
  
  Note: Students should not worry too much about correct placement level in either language or math. Changes in level can easily be made in the first 2 weeks of school if warranted.
- If you are interested in going to **medical school** (being premed), you should take chemistry and chemistry lab in the first year, as well as calculus.
- If you are interested in being a **science** major, you should begin planning your schedule early, consulting the Columbia College Bulletin and the website of the department you are considering for your major.
  o Chemistry and biology majors are required to take chemistry during their first year.
  o Astronomy, mathematics, physics, and statistics majors should take calculus during their first year. Chemistry, biochemistry, and physics majors are required to take physics in their first year.
- If you have an interest in **math** or **economics**, you should take calculus in your first year.
- Students with **no idea** of a major or area of interest should explore different departments by taking at least one elective each semester.

**Fall Registration**

First-year students will be able to register using Student Services Online (SSOL) on the **Friday of Orientation week**. You will receive an Academic Packet during Orientation check-in which will contain your Columbia College Bulletin. In the meantime, you can consult the online Bulletin at [www.college.columbia.edu/bulletin/](http://www.college.columbia.edu/bulletin/).
VII. Advising Resources

Please take advantage of these various resources available to you to ensure your success at Columbia:

Before Orientation:

- The Center for Student Advising website and social media sites have information about academic policies, academic support, and other advising resources: www.studentaffairs.columbia.edu/csa/, www.facebook.com/ColumbiaCSA, @ColumbiaCSA
- The Columbia College Bulletin contains course descriptions, requirements for all majors and concentrations, and departmental information, including contact information for each department’s Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS), who is available to advise students on program requirements: www.college.columbia.edu/bulletin/
- The Directory of Classes lists all courses offered for the fall 2013 term: http://www.columbia.edu/cu/bulletin/uwb/
- The Academic Planning Guide for New Students is a very important resource; please read through it carefully. A hard copy has been mailed to you, and the online copy can be found here: http://www.studentaffairs.columbia.edu/sites/dsa/files/handbooks/Academic%20Planning%20Guide%202014-2015.pdf
- Included in the Academic Planning Guide is a tear-out sheet for you to complete and bring with you to Orientation when you meet with your academic adviser.
- Your Summer Advising Session adviser is available via email or phone.

During Orientation:

- Meet with your CSA adviser to discuss your fall schedule and course selection. You will be notified of your adviser’s name and contact information in early August.
- A premed information session will be held for interested students.
- Language placement exams will be given.
- The Music Hum exemption exam will be given.
- Chemistry and physics placement exams will be given and a math information session will be held. Students interested in taking an advanced level of physics or math must attend the information sessions given prior to the exams.
- Attend the Academic Resources Fair, which is an excellent opportunity to meet faculty members and learn more about Columbia’s academic departments.

After Orientation:

- Your CSA adviser can help with both immediate concerns and long-term planning.
- Tutoring; Math, Statistics, and Physics Help Rooms; and the Writing Center (http://www.college.columbia.edu/core/uwp/writing-center) can help you improve your academic performance.
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) and Academic Success Programs (ASP) will offer workshops on time management, study skills, and a variety of first-year issues.
• The **CSA Weekly** email and **CSA Blog** ([http://www.studentaffairs.columbia.edu/csa/blog](http://www.studentaffairs.columbia.edu/csa/blog)) includes the latest news and information for your academic planning.
• Arrange to meet with your **instructors** (professors and TA’s) during office hours or by appointment if you have questions or problems.

**VIII. Common Columbia Terms**

- **Schools**: Columbia College (CC), The Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS), Barnard College (BC), School of General Studies (GS)
- **Classes**: Literature Humanities (Lit Hum), Contemporary Civilization (CC), Frontiers of Science (FroSci), University Writing (UW), Art Humanities (Art Hum), Music Humanities (Music Hum)
- **Academic Terms**: Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS), Teaching Assistant (TA)
- **Advising Resources**: Center for Student Advising (CSA)
- **Orientation Programs**: New Student Orientation Program (NSOP), Orientation Leader (OL), Columbia Outdoor Orientation Program (COOP), Columbia Urban Experience (CUE)
- **Residential Programs**: Resident Adviser (RA), Community Adviser (CA), Graduate Hall Director (GHD), Living-Learning Center – Hartley and Wallach Halls (LLC)
- **Systems**: Student Services Online (SSOL), Degree Audit Report (DAR), UNI (the first part of your Columbia email address, including your initials and a number), CUID/PID (personal identification code assigned by Columbia, beginning with the letter “C” and followed by 9 digits), Columbia University Information Technology (CUIT)
- **Student Publications**: *The Spectator* (Spec), bwog.com (blog of *The Blue and White*, Columbia’s monthly undergraduate magazine)
- **Student Radio Stations**: WKCR (Columbia), WBAR (Barnard)

**Contact the Center for Student Advising**

- Website: [http://www.studentaffairs.columbia.edu/csa](http://www.studentaffairs.columbia.edu/csa)
- Email: csa@columbia.edu
- Phone: 212-854-6378
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/ColumbiaCSA
- Twitter: @ColumbiaCSA