

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY | OFFICE OF THE Dean of the College

### CONGRATULATIONS & WELCOME

e are delighted that you have chosen to join our vibrant learning community. Princeton's liberal arts education will encourage your curiosity, expand your critical thinking, and prepare you to work in our diverse and changing world.

As you begin this next step in your academic journey, we want you to know that there will be many people to support you while you navigate your path through Princeton. We are a caring and relatively small community, so it is not difficult to find help, advice, information, and encouragement. This guide will serve as your road map, a resource for academic questions that may arise during your first year, and an introduction to some of the people you will get to know.

This guide should also help you reflect on what you want from your undergraduate education and take the first steps toward reaching your goals by preparing you to choose—and succeed in!—your first Princeton courses. Please read it carefully and consult the resources on the Your Path to Princeton website (path.princeton.edu) should you have any questions. And remember that the most authoritative source of academic policy is the *Undergraduate Announcement* (ua.princeton.edu).

# ACADEMIC GUIDE

2023-24

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### INTRODUCTION

his booklet tries, in a relatively small space, to give you a sense of the opportunities open to you. Because every student will experience Princeton differently, you should talk with your faculty, staff, and peer advisers to create a plan that is right for you. We hope that your years here are as rich, rewarding, and challenging as they were for those who came before you.

We wish you great success!

# WHERE WILL I GET ACADEMIC ADVICE?

As you enter Princeton, your new home will be your residential college: a place to eat, study, and relax, and a place to get academic guidance and support. During your first and sophomore years, your academic advising community will include your dean, assistant dean for studies, faculty adviser, peer academic advisers (PAAs), residential college advisers (RCAs), and resident graduate students (RGSs)—all of whom are affiliated with the residential college.

### **ASSISTANT DEANS FOR STUDIES AND DEANS**

Your residential college **assistant dean for studies** and **dean** can help you navigate the curriculum, change a course, find course support, get an extension, choose a major, and point you in the right direction to get your questions about life at Princeton answered. They also train your faculty advisers and peer academic advisers (see below). Assistant deans for studies generally work more closely with first-years and sophomores, and deans work more closely with juniors and seniors. As you select a major, you will continue to work with your college dean, but also develop advising relationships with the relevant departmental representatives and faculty advisers in the areas of your independent work. A.B. students normally select a major in the spring term of sophomore year. B.S.E students normally select a major within engineering in the spring term of their first year.

### **FACULTY ADVISERS**

Before you arrive at Princeton, you will be assigned a **faculty adviser**—a faculty member who will help you navigate your academic choices during your first year and help you become more comfortable interacting with faculty members throughout your undergraduate career. It is not always possible to match advisers

with advisees' interests exactly, but you can be assured that your adviser understands University requirements and is trained to help students with a wide variety of interests. Advisers have a feel for balancing workloads, exploring new areas, and fulfilling requirements, and if they do not know the answer to one of your questions, they will know where to find it.

Faculty advisers differ a bit from high school guidance counselors, so having realistic expectations about their role will help you get the most from your relationship. You should expect your adviser to talk with you about your academic goals, helping you plan not only this semester's courses but also a strategy for taking the greatest possible advantage of your undergraduate education.

Later, in junior and senior year (or in sophomore year for B.S.E. students), you'll work with a departmental **director of undergraduate studies** (DUS) for advising. Before choosing a major, we encourage you to consult the department's DUS to learn more about particular fields of study.

### PEER ACADEMIC ADVISERS (PAAs)

**Peer academic advisers** are another important part of the college advising community. PAAs are experienced juniors and seniors who have been trained in the nuances of good advising. They offer their perspectives on a range of issues: course selection, study strategies and resources, choosing an academic major, and adapting to the academic demands of Princeton.

Your PAA will contact you over the summer to welcome you to Princeton. In July, you will complete a short online academic advising course, ClassPath, that will help you think through aspects of your academic transition to Princeton. Your PAA will offer to chat with you about your academic goals after you complete the guided exercises in ClassPath. Your PAA will then meet you in person during Orientation and serve as a resource throughout the year.

### RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE ADVISERS (RCAs) AND RESIDENT GRADUATE STUDENTS (RGSs)

It is useful to get multiple perspectives as you make decisions, so you should also feel free to consult your **residential college adviser** and the **resident graduate student** affiliated with your residential group for advice. RCAs and RGSs are also experienced students in a variety of fields, and, depending on your interests, may prove as important to your early academic decisions at Princeton as your PAA.

# WHEN AND HOW DO I CHOOSE MY FIRST COURSES?

ou'll begin to think through your fall course choices when you complete the ClassPath online academic advising course in late July. ClassPath culminates with a call from your PAA, who will offer peer advice on the academic paths you're considering. In early August, your faculty adviser will reach out to you to schedule a one-on-one Zoom appointment to discuss your academic interests and think through your fall course choices. Your adviser will make sure you explore options and arrive at a plan you feel excited about. Then, you'll head to campus, where you'll participate in a range of Orientation events designed to support your transition to Princeton's campus community. During the first few days of Orientation, you'll attend a "College Academic Meeting" led by your residential college advising staff and have the opportunity to explore Princeton's academic departments at an Academic Expo. The following day, you will enroll in your fall courses! During the first two weeks of the semester (the add/drop period), you'll meet again with your faculty adviser, checking in about how your first classes are going and discussing any changes you may want to make to your schedule.

Before then, though, there are some things you can do to prepare yourself: think about your goals, review Course Offerings (**registrar. princeton.edu/course-offerings**) thoroughly, and complete your Program Form (mid-June) and Academic Planning Form (early August). These activities will allow you to make the most of all of the conversations during Orientation and the appointment with your faculty adviser.

As you begin to consider your options, our first piece of advice is to think broadly. Course Offerings will tell you what's being offered in the upcoming term. You'll notice some familiar fields like mathematics and languages, and some others—like anthropology or philosophy—that may be entirely new to you. In general, we advise balancing new fields with familiar ones, required courses with electives, and pre-professional training with the ideals of a liberal arts education. Look for the sweet spot between challenge and security. You can get some sense of the work required by consulting Course Offerings.

As your advising appointment approaches, you'll also want to consider the kinds of assignments and assessments demanded by a particular set of courses. Although University requirements (described on pages 6–8) compel you to explore a variety of areas, you should also try to vary the kinds of work you'll do. For example, if all your courses require textbook reading, and weekly problem sets or quizzes, after a month or two, the thought of reading some novels or writing essays might provide a welcome balance.

#### **HOW MANY COURSES SHOULD I TAKE?**

The standard course load during the fall term of your first year is four courses. Although students may see that they have open class hours and could fit a fifth course into their schedules, most students find that they have more than enough work to do in four courses, especially at the end of the term and during reading period (the eight days devoted to studying before final exams begin). Moreover, there is more to college than classroom study, and you should explore the range of activities that are available to Princeton students. If you feel that there are sound educational reasons for taking five courses, you should discuss the matter with your faculty adviser or assistant dean for studies. Be aware that only in very unusual cases will a five-course first semester be approved. We want you to have time to make friends, explore campus, and get used to Princeton!

### **HOW WILL I BE PLACED INTO THE RIGHT COURSES?**

Information about your high school record and test scores will allow your faculty adviser to help you select courses that will challenge but not overwhelm you. You will also have the opportunity to take Princeton-sponsored placement tests in a range of fields so as to ensure that you find the appropriate entrance point into our curriculum. The more information your adviser has about you beyond your test scores, the better they can help you make informed choices. Your faculty adviser will suggest a particular level or "placement" for certain courses during your first advising conversation. These placement decisions, which are especially common in languages, mathematics, and the sciences, are a best estimate of the level for which you are prepared and at which you will feel challenged. Your faculty adviser can talk with you about how these courses might fit into your overall program.

If you have any hesitation about your placement recommendation, you can share your concerns with your adviser or assistant dean for studies. When you choose your courses during Orientation, you will be able to connect with placement officers from different academic departments to answer questions and offer advice.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF I CHANGE MY MIND ABOUT MY CLASSES AFTER I'VE ENROLLED?

It's not unusual for students to have second thoughts about one or two of the courses they have selected. If it happens to you, don't panic. During the first two weeks of classes you can drop and add courses, with the guidance of your faculty adviser or assistant dean for studies, without incurring a fee. After the second week, you may not add any courses (except in extenuating circumstances when you have been attending the course from the beginning), but you may still drop a course (with a late fee of \$45 for each change) until the ninth week of the semester.

#### CAN I SWITCH BETWEEN A.B. AND B.S.E.?

Every year some students enter Princeton as candidates for the A.B. degree but decide that they are really interested in engineering. Permission is granted for such changes on a case-by-case basis. Because there are basic requirements for the B.S.E. degree that must be met prior to the sophomore year, especially in physics and math, students who wish to change from A.B. to B.S.E. must plan their academic programs carefully.

Similarly, some students who enter as candidates for the B.S.E. degree decide that they prefer to study in the A.B. program instead. Again, changes are possible. A major consideration in changing from B.S.E. to A.B. candidacy is the A.B. language requirement.

Students who wish to change degree candidacy should consult first with the associate dean for undergraduate affairs in the School of Engineering and Applied Science (609-258-4554, Room C-209 in the Engineering Quad), and then with their residential college dean or assistant dean for studies.

### WHAT ARE MY REQUIREMENTS?

Ithough you'll experience considerable freedom in making many of your course choices, it will be necessary to fulfill a set of University requirements over the course of your four years. These requirements are designed to ensure that you experience the full benefits of a liberal arts education while at Princeton, one that balances specialized knowledge in a field of concentration with broad areas of understanding and important kinds of critical thinking. The various approaches included in the requirements will acquaint you with significant intellectual issues and will show you how to view problems and formulate solutions in new ways.

While the requirements for the A.B. and B.S.E. degrees are different, both are easily fulfilled within the overall degree program. There's no need to worry about fulfilling all of them during your first year, but it's important to plan ahead.

#### 1. WRITING REQUIREMENT

The one requirement that must be fulfilled in your first year is the Writing Seminar. In mid-July, you'll be assigned to a term, fall or spring, in which you'll take the course. You'll then have an opportunity to request topics based on your interests.

Lucid and persuasive writing sits at the heart of the liberal arts tradition, and will be essential in every course you take

at the University. Your Writing Seminar will be your starting point to developing this skill. With your fellow students, you'll experience—and contribute to—an academic community devoted to investigating a shared topic, as well as to discussing the finer points of writing itself. You'll learn how to clarify and deepen your thinking, frame compelling questions, position your argument within an academic debate, substantiate and organize claims, integrate a wide variety of sources, and revise for cogency and clarity. As you complete the assignments, including a 10–12 page research essay, you'll submit regular drafts that you'll review with your instructor and your classmates. Through collaboration with the University library, you'll also learn to use databases to locate and evaluate sources. Writing Seminars are interdisciplinary in nature to emphasize transferable reading, writing, and research skills.

### 2. LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT AND PLACEMENT

When you become proficient in a new language, you become literate in another culture and gain perspective on the world. All candidates for the A.B. degree at Princeton must demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English before graduation.

Some of our undergraduates satisfy the language requirement through AP credit or through a Princeton placement test.

In order to fulfill the language requirement through coursework, we expect successful completion of courses normally numbered through 107/108.

When a student begins a language at Princeton, three or four terms of study will usually be necessary. If you would like to study a new language, you may simply register for the first course in the language sequence (normally 101).

If you wish to continue studying a language that you have previously studied in high school, you will need to take a placement test. Placement tests in most languages will be available online during the summer before you matriculate. The placement test does not become part of your record here—it is simply a diagnostic tool to help the department place you in the appropriate course. Placement into 101/103 is quite common, even for students who have previously studied the language!

Your faculty adviser will have the results of your placement test by the time you meet to discuss course selection.

Language courses at Princeton move quickly and require

dedicated study. Students are expected to fulfill the requirement by the end of sophomore year. Because most beginning language courses are not offered in the spring, A.B. students who do not place out of the language requirement should begin language study in their first semester.

### 3. INTRODUCTORY SCIENCE COURSES

While you are not required to study science in the first term, B.S.E. students, pre-health students, and students who plan to major in a natural or quantitative science should begin working in the sciences right away.

Because independent research in science and engineering demands deep familiarity with basic sciences, departmental prerequisites in these disciplines are often extensive—in certain departments you will need four semesters to complete them.

Some students may enter Princeton with more experience in math and science and may choose to take a placement exam in math, chemistry, physics, or computer science in the summer before they matriculate. Students should also discuss proper placement with their faculty advisers.

### 4. DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS

Approach your selection of distribution requirements with a sense of openness and adventure. In making your choices, you have the opportunity to experiment with subjects totally new to you; moreover, because courses marked as fulfilling distribution requirements can also satisfy departmental prerequisites, you can easily use them to explore potential majors. See page 26 of this guide for the complete list of distribution requirements for A.B. and B.S.E students.

Course Offerings (registrar.princeton.edu/course-offerings) and the *Undergraduate Announcement* (ua.princeton.edu) indicate with letter abbreviations the distribution areas fulfilled by each course. No designation means that the course does not fulfill a distribution requirement.

# THE FRESHMAN SEMINARS PROGRAM IN THE RESIDENTIAL COLLEGES

hough not a requirement, the Freshman Seminars Program (frs.princeton.edu) is designed to provide you with an early opportunity to form strong connections with faculty and fellow first-year students through an engaging course of study. Approximately 70 unique seminars cover a wide variety of topics and academic disciplines.

All of the seminars count as regular courses and fulfill distribution requirements. Unless specifically indicated in the course description, the seminars do not assume prior knowledge or advanced placement in the subject. Enrollment in each seminar is limited to 15 students. You may apply to take a seminar during each semester of your first year. We encourage you to consider adding a freshman seminar if your schedule permits.

Feel free to take a freshman seminar in the same semester as your writing seminar. Both courses are small and allow you to work closely with a professor, but your freshman seminar will be focused primarily on the course topic and accompanying texts, whereas your writing seminar will explore strategies for effective reading and essay construction in any academic discipline.

# HOW CAN I USE ADVANCED PLACEMENT/IB/A LEVEL EXAMS?

ome students arrive at Princeton having completed collegelevel work as part of a high school curriculum. The advanced placement policy at Princeton is designed to recognize that work and encourage students to pursue their studies at a level appropriate to their preparation.

### **USING THEM TO CHOOSE YOUR COURSES**

Advanced placement is awarded by individual departments on the basis of performance on certain standardized tests or departmentally administered placement examinations. Students who have taken AP or IB exams should have official scores for these standardized tests reported directly to Princeton, even if you think you included them in your application. Students with A Level exams should bring official certificates to their assistant dean for studies. If you have a question about whether a score has been received or about your eligibility for advanced placement, you should review your records with your assistant dean for studies after arriving on campus.

You are not required to continue in a subject in which you have earned advanced placement. If, however, you elect a course that is below the level at which advanced placement was granted, you forfeit your advanced placement units in that subject for advanced standing purposes. For example, if you are placed into French 207 (the next level after fulfillment of the language requirement) but elect French 108 (the last term of the language requirement), you will forfeit your advanced placement units in French language.

If you have concerns about maintaining your advanced placement in a subject, be sure to consult your dean or assistant dean for studies before changing courses. You should also refer to the Advanced Placement website (advising.princeton.edu/placement/advanced-placement) for information on advanced placement and advanced standing.

Please note that advanced placement in a subject does not reduce the total number of courses required for graduation. Instead, it permits you to elect a more advanced course in that subject. Similarly, advanced placement cannot be used to reduce a course load in a given term or to make up course deficiencies.

# WHAT ADVANTAGE IS THERE TO MAINTAINING YOUR ADVANCED PLACEMENT STATUS IN A GIVEN SUBJECT AREA?

Generally, you don't want to repeat material that you covered in high school. However, if you feel that you were not well prepared for a more advanced course, you should consider taking a course that will improve the foundation you have, especially if you plan to do further coursework in that area. This is absolutely fine, and you shouldn't feel "behind." Remember that our placement system is very good but not perfect. We are often basing placement decisions for the Princeton curriculum on a single test result.

### **USING THEM FOR ADVANCED STANDING**

There is another reason why you should consider maintaining your advanced placement in a given subject area: eligibility for advanced standing. Advanced standing allows a student to graduate in three years or with three and a half years of study.

A.B. candidates may apply for a full year of advanced standing if they have eight advanced placement units distributed in at least three of the following subject areas: languages other than English, historical analysis, literature and the arts, quantitative and computational reasoning, science and engineering, and social analysis. B.S.E. candidates can also apply for a full year of advanced standing if they have eight advanced placement units, but they must include among them two units in physics, two in mathematics, and one in chemistry.

A.B. candidates with four advanced placement units in at least two subject areas and B.S.E. candidates with four advanced placement units, which must include two in physics, one in mathematics, and one in chemistry, can apply for one term of advanced standing.

In November, you will be notified of your eligibility to apply for advanced standing. You may submit an application for either one term or one full year of advanced standing, depending upon your qualifications. With a full year of advanced standing, you may apply to become a second-semester sophomore in the spring of your first year, or a first-semester junior in the fall of your second year. With one term of advanced standing, you will take a leave of absence from Princeton either in the fall or spring of your sophomore year. You will thus spend three terms at Princeton prior to your junior year.

The rules are rather complex and may be subject to change; contact your assistant dean for studies if you have questions. Your assistant dean for studies will be happy to explain the current policies and practices in more detail.

## HOW DOES THE ACADEMIC YEAR WORK?

The Princeton calendar moves quickly, so it's important to plan ahead. Midterm exams are normally scheduled during the sixth week of the term, followed by a week-long break (either fall recess or spring recess). This may vary a bit by class; some classes have two "midterms," so the timing can be different. It's important to check the syllabus for details.

After classes end, there is an eight-day reading period to allow you to complete papers in your courses and to begin preparing for your final exams. The last day of the reading period is referred to as "Dean's Date," and is the day on which all papers are due. Final exams begin the day after Dean's Date.

The academic year calendar is available on the Registrar's website (registrar.princeton.edu/academic-calendar). In addition to the academic calendar, you should be on the lookout for the final exam schedule, which will be published a few weeks into the term; always be sure to check and double-check your syllabi and exam schedule before making any travel plans.

### **HOW DO COURSES AT PRINCETON WORK?**

While each course you take at Princeton will be unique, there are several general types of courses that you will encounter.

The lecture/precept format is especially common for introductory courses. The professor in charge of this kind of course lectures twice a week to all the students enrolled in the course. Each student also signs up for a section meeting, called a precept (from the Latin praecipere, "to teach"), where normally 12 to 15 students meet with a section leader, called a preceptor, to discuss the material in greater depth (the professor of the course usually teaches at least one precept). In most cases, each section is graded by the preceptor. Precept attendance and participation are required components of the course.

Other kinds of courses are taught in the class format. This kind of course has no lecture where all the students meet. Rather, the course is broken down into several sections, at which you meet with the same group of students and the same instructor for an hour three times a week or for an hour and a half twice a week. The format might best be described as a combination of lecture and discussion. The same instructor lectures, leads discussion, and does the grading for those students in the class. Normally, the exams are uniform throughout all classes (as they are in lecture/precept courses). Mathematics courses are often taught in this format.

Laboratory science and engineering courses have lectures, sometimes a discussion section, and a required laboratory exercise one afternoon or evening a week. These courses do have more than the average number of class hours, and you should plan accordingly when organizing your schedule.

Finally, a small number of courses at the introductory level, and more at the advanced level, meet only once a week for a period of three hours. These courses, called seminars, bring together a professor and usually no more than 15 students; the intellectual dialogue is robust, and everyone is expected to be an active participant. Seminars often require students to produce a substantial paper and to deliver to the class the results of their research.

In almost every course that you take at Princeton, instructors will provide a syllabus of the course on the first day of class. The syllabus provides a detailed outline of reading assignments, written assignments to be handed in, examination dates, and, generally, the method for calculating the final grade in the course. The combined syllabi of all your courses may seem a bit overwhelming at first, but if you use them for long-term planning, sketching out the contours of your major assignments, you will find it easier to manage your daily workload.

Learning to manage a Princeton workload can be challenging! See your residential college assistant dean for studies to get advice and support.

### HOW AND WHEN DO I CHOOSE MY MAJOR?

here's lots of time before you have to narrow your academic path at Princeton. **A.B. students** normally choose a major officially at the end of their sophomore year. **B.S.E. students** choose at the end of their first year. At the beginning of their first term at Princeton, most students have no firm plans about a major and are open to exploring a variety of fields. Many students who do have plans will end up changing their minds after taking a class in a new field of study that captures their imagination and interest.

Assessing your interests and matching them with an academic discipline is not always a simple task. Questions about graduate school and careers, as well as family and personal aspirations, are bound up with choosing a field of concentration. When you think about choosing a department, you should consider its requirements, its opportunities for interdisciplinary study, the accessibility of its faculty members, its special strengths or weaknesses, and whether or not you will be supported in your choice of independent work projects.

Junior independent work and the senior thesis are hallmarks of a Princeton education and should be prime considerations in choosing a major. Ask your dean or assistant dean for studies, faculty adviser, departmental representatives, and junior and senior departmental concentrators about the kinds of research done in different departments, the kinds of independent work pursued by undergraduates, and the careers chosen by departmental concentrators.

# HOW CAN I BE A SUCCESSFUL PRINCETON STUDENT?

s you transition into Princeton's academic community, you will likely be challenged by new expectations: courses will move at a rapid pace; you may find that you are expected to solve problems in math and science at a higher conceptual level; you may read multiple unfamiliar texts that require new approaches. Princeton instructors are active scholars in their chosen fields. In addition to learning from them about the particular subject at hand, you will be encountering the particular conventions and assumptions of their disciplines, often in your first semester at Princeton.

Given all this newness, it's perfectly normal to feel that the study strategies that got you here are not as effective as they were in high school. You have arrived at Princeton with good adaptive skills, and with the help of your professors and peers, you will learn from

challenges. Keep in mind that learning is a process that should challenge you. With time and practice, you will adapt and grow.

### **SCHEDULING YOUR TIME**

Learning at Princeton requires students to plan their unstructured and out-of-class time in new ways. You may have many unscheduled hours each day, and you will need to use that time effectively.

**Create and use a calendar.** Whether through your Google calendar or a paper planner, it's important to keep track of your schedule each day so that you know where you need to be—and what hours you have free to study, socialize, or rest.

**Find a place where you can work effectively.** If your room is a hub of social activity, plan to work in one of the residential college or University libraries. For accountability and support, make a weekly appointment to study with a friend or classmate.

Use your free weekday hours for study. Do not try to do all of your studying in the evenings or put it off until the weekends. Many of us (undergraduates, graduate students, even faculty) think, incorrectly, that we need long, uninterrupted stretches of time in order to work in a concentrated fashion. When the opportunity arises to make use of small amounts of time, ask yourself, "How can I use this time to keep up with my coursework?"

Break up your study periods by working on two or three different subjects, particularly if you find yourself losing attention or interest. Take breaks.

Make time for drafts. The papers that are due at the end of the term can rarely be written the night before. They require substantial reading and research. When you get the assignment, enter a start date in your calendar and plan backwards from the due date, creating your own benchmarks. Consider making an appointment at the Writing Center to get free, one-on-one conferences about your writing at any stage in the process.

Balance your academic commitments, your job assignments, and your recreational and extracurricular activities. Research indicates that one or two regular extracurricular activities is best. If you are involved in sports or other regularly scheduled and demanding commitments, be especially careful about budgeting your time.

**Get advice early and often!** There are lots of great resources—including the staff of your residential college and the McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning—who are here to help.

### **DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES**

At Princeton, you should expect to be an active learner. You will find, for instance, that memorization is insufficient preparation for the learning tasks posed to you at Princeton. As you prepare for your classes each day:

**Think like your professor.** Why do you think they would assign this particular reading or problem set? What might your professor hope that you're learning? Use your syllabus to connect specific assignments to larger course goals.

**Use office hours.** You don't have to be a mind reader to learn to think like your professor! Visit your professors and preceptors in their office hours and ask them questions about the course material, course learning goals, or assignments. That's what office hours are for.

**Take good notes.** Review your reading assignment notes and lecture notes as soon as possible after you have taken them, noting what you don't understand so that you can follow up with the professor or graduate student assistant.

**Find a team.** Working with a small group of fellow students can be extremely effective in both tackling weekly problem sets and reviewing for exams. Studying with your peers provides opportunities to learn a variety of approaches to the material, and because everyone is an active participant, you learn more and retain what you've learned. Consult with your instructor in each course to determine the extent to which collaboration on assignments is acceptable.

### **CONSULTING YOUR PROFESSORS**

In order to get the most from your courses, and to be successful in them, you should seek out opportunities for learning beyond those afforded by class time and assignments. Meeting with your instructors will be an important way to deepen your learning, no matter how well you're doing. In fact, a student's engagement with faculty is a good predictor of success in college, so it's important to make this a priority!

Every professor schedules time to provide individual assistance to students, and most professors post their office hours. Students who visit their instructors will find them almost without exception interested and helpful.

If you're having trouble with a course, the first person to turn to is either the preceptor or the professor in charge of the course. Instructors will usually be pleased that a student is concerned enough to ask for further explanation of a concept or for a

diagnosis of problems that arise on tests and papers. If you would like help framing your questions, you can always meet with a learning consultant at the McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning to prepare for a productive office hours meeting.

Several departments have clinics or resource centers open to students on a walk-in basis. The help you will get there is often related to the material of the course in which you may be encountering difficulties.

Don't hesitate to approach your preceptor or lab assistant for academic support. Some do not have individual offices, and you may have to make a special effort to locate them. Nevertheless, they are knowledgeable, approachable, and willing to help!

### STUDYING FOR EXAMS

Professors organize courses around specific aims; know the aims of the course and direct your learning to achieve them. Your notes from lectures and readings can provide a good basis for studying; make them purposeful throughout the term.

How is studying for exams different at Princeton? You will be examined less frequently on larger amounts of information. Exam questions will often be far more difficult than homework and will require the application of concepts to novel situations. Your instructors' standards will be exacting. To be successful, you should be prepared to adopt new methods of study.

Studying—as distinct from reading or taking class notes—is characterized by organizing your knowledge, making connections among concepts, distinguishing the relative importance of information, and synthesizing what you have learned in order to demonstrate what you know on novel questions.

Practice taking previous years' exams if they are available. Try to complete these exams under exam conditions (e.g., timed and without the outside materials that will not be available to you the day of the exam) to assess your readiness. Analyze previous years' and returned exams to guide you in selecting which materials to emphasize in your study and how to demonstrate your knowledge. Think up your own questions, and imagine other ways your professor might challenge you. For advice and tools to prepare for specific exams, arrange an appointment with a McGraw learning consultant at the McGraw Center.

**Do everything you've already learned to do.** Be ready to start on time, follow directions, survey the whole exam before starting, and read questions carefully. On essay questions, take

the necessary time to organize your response before beginning so that you can make a compelling argument, not simply list all that you know on a topic. Support your points with clearly explained evidence that your reader can follow. Expect questions unlike those posed in homework and quizzes. In science and math courses, be prepared for problems that combine course content in novel ways. You are not expected to "know" the answers to these problems in many instances, but rather to figure them out. To do so, think on paper as methodically as possible and leave a record of your work.

### WHAT DOES ACADEMIC SUPPORT MEAN, AND WHY/HOW SHOULD I USE IT?

or many students, "academic support" or "extra help" in high school meant working with a tutor to "fix" something, or to make up for a gap in understanding. At Princeton, "academic support" is more like coaching: the most successful Princeton students take advantage of opportunities outside of a formal classroom setting to enhance their performance, and no student goes at it alone. You'll find that learning is a collaborative process here, and it's important to explore the kinds of resources available to you from the very beginning so that you can become an even better learner. Academic support may include study groups, oneon-one consultations with specialists to better understand your own learning, and much more. All of our academic support resources are free of charge and available to all Princeton students. Your residential college dean or assistant dean for studies will be happy to help you identify what kinds of support will meet your needs; keep in mind that it's normal to feel challenged by many aspects of your academic experience, and we are here to help even before you might feel lost or overwhelmed.

**THE MCGRAW CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING** offers group study halls and individual tutoring in introductory chemistry, economics, mathematics, molecular biology, physics, and statistics (in some disciplines). Emphasis is on mastering approaches to learning and problem-solving, especially creative application of knowledge to unfamiliar problems. For more information, visit **mcgraw.princeton.edu**.

The McGraw Center offers many resources to help students develop awareness of their approaches to learning. Hands-on Academic Strategies Workshops help students learn and apply strategies designed expressly for the demanding Princeton context. One hour one-on-one Learning Strategies Consultations offer an individualized approach to learning that draws upon students' unique strengths and are tailored to the specific demands of each course.

**THE WRITING CENTER** offers student writers free one-on-one conferences with experienced fellow writers trained to consult on writing projects in any discipline. For more information, visit writing.princeton.edu/undergraduates/writing-center.

It's important to note that students may engage only the services of tutors in the Princeton undergraduate tutoring program (through McGraw or academic departments). Private tutors fall outside this program, and students are in violation of University regulations if they engage the service of private tutors (see *Rights, Rules, Responsibilities*, **rrr.princeton.edu**).

### WHAT OTHER KINDS OF SUPPORT MIGHT BE IMPORTANT?

During your four years at Princeton, you may find it helpful to get advice and mentorship from others who understand where you've come from and can help you reach your long-term goals. There are a number of other offices where you might find support on your path through Princeton. All phone numbers listed are campus extensions that begin 609-258-xxxx.

#### **CENTER FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

36 University Place, Suite 200, 8-3325

The Center for Career Development helps students explore and prepare for careers that align with their skills, strengths, interests, and values. One-on-one advising and programs provide personalized support for students on a variety of topics, including self-assessment, exploration of career-related interests, building a professional network, pursuit of internships and employment, and application to graduate school. For more information, visit careerdevelopment.princeton.edu.

### **ENGINEERING SCHOOL UNDERGRADUATE AFFAIRS OFFICE**

C209 Engineering Quadrangle, 8-4554

This office provides general advising, including changes of degree program, and organizes academic support and professional development programs for engineering students. For more information, visit engineering.princeton.edu/undergraduate-studies/undergraduate-affairs-office.

### **HEALTH PROFESSIONS ADVISING (HPA)**

36 University Place, Suite 230, 8-3144, hpa@princeton.edu

The advisers for the health professions are available to help students with questions about course selection, choice of major, work experience, and other academic and nonacademic concerns that may arise in exploring the possibility of careers in medicine, veterinary medicine, dentistry, public health, or other health-related professions. Health Professions Advising suggests some plans for your first-term courses that may be found under "Pre-health Prep" on the Health Professions Advising website. HPA advisers encourage careful consideration of decisions such as choosing a major, engaging in meaningful co-curricular endeavors, and developing personal competencies that will be important in pursuing a medical career. For more information, visit hpa.princeton.edu.

#### OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS (OIP)

Louis A. Simpson International Building, 20 Washington Road, 8-5524

The Office of International Programs develops, promotes, and coordinates a range of international academic activities for Princeton undergraduates. Among the office's responsibilities are advising students about opportunities for study abroad during the academic year and the summer, internships and work abroad, and fellowships. The Novogratz Bridge Year Program, the Study Abroad Program, the International Internship Program, and Fellowships Advising are all administered through OIP. Princeton encourages all of its students to incorporate an international dimension into their undergraduate and/or postgraduate careers, and the advisers in OIP can help you decide what kind of opportunities might be the right fit for you. For more information, visit oip.princeton.edu.

### EMMA BLOOMBERG CENTER FOR ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY

36 University Place, Suite 350, 8-1013

The Emma Bloomberg Center for Access and Opportunity advances Princeton's commitment to an inclusive student body. Its programs are designed to provide all students, including those from first-generation, lower-income and underrepresented backgrounds, with the mentorship, academic enrichment and community that they need to thrive at Princeton. For more information, visit access.princeton.edu.

The Scholars Institute Fellows Program (SIFP) provides all first-generation and lower-income (FLI) students with mentorship, academic enrichment, and scholarly community throughout their time at Princeton. As part of the Emma Bloomberg Center for Access and Opportunity in the Office of the Dean of the College, SIFP empowers students to successfully navigate the University's many resources so that they can achieve their academic, personal, and professional goals. Through the program, students are supported by

a community of like-minded scholars as they transition to college, find success there, and prepare for graduate study or a career. SIFP fellows benefit from workshops, roundtables, and advising events that support academic achievement, facilitate mentorship across cohorts, and provide ongoing academic and professional development opportunities. We encourage all students who identify as FLI to consider joining the SIFP community.

The director of **Transfer, Veteran, and Non-Traditional Student Programs** works within the Emma Bloomberg Center for Access and Opportunity, and is a valuable resource for students who identify as members of these populations. Students can benefit from peer-mentoring programs, community events, and specialized advising in collaboration with the residential colleges.

### HOW DO EXTRACURRICULAR EXPERIENCES FIT INTO LEARNING?

Intellectual inquiry is an integral part of Princeton life: you cannot abandon it as you step beyond the threshold of the classroom. Indeed, you may discover that some of the important learning at Princeton goes on outside of formal courses.

The **residential colleges** foster opportunities for interaction between students and faculty. Your faculty adviser is one of a large group of faculty members who are affiliated with your residential college as "faculty fellows." Most interactions with faculty fellows occur over meals. You are encouraged to invite professors to join you for lunch or dinner to discuss coursework, your academic plans and aspirations, their academic discipline and research, or simply interests and concerns that you share. In addition, you will find a program of talks and discussions organized in the residential colleges every week. Sometimes led by Princeton faculty, sometimes by someone from outside the University, and sometimes by a resident graduate student or even a fellow undergraduate student, these are excellent opportunities for an informal exchange of ideas on topics ranging from campus controversies and world affairs to jazz, photography, literature, and dance.

The academic departments also provide many opportunities to learn beyond the structured setting of the classroom. On almost any afternoon you will find three or four department-sponsored lectures on a wide range of subjects. These are usually talks by Princeton faculty or their colleagues from other universities on research in progress. Often you can hear the leading experts in a field debate their discipline's most pressing issues. Sometimes the subject matter is arcane, but many lectures are intended for non-specialists. Undergraduates are especially encouraged to attend these lectures. Watch for advertisements in *The Daily Princetonian* 

student newspaper and notices on bulletin boards, on the University homepage (**princeton.edu**), and in your email.

In addition to the residential colleges and the academic departments, the University has many centers that offer opportunities for extracurricular learning. Together these centers help students learn more about and celebrate cultural traditions, support identity-based groups, explore common experiences, and ponder the challenges and rewards of life in a pluralistic society.

Here are just a few of many options you can explore:

### THE CARL A. FIELDS CENTER FOR EQUALITY + CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING 58 Prospect Ave., 8-5495

At the Fields Center, diverse perspectives and experiences of race, class, gender and their intersections are supported and challenged, questioned and answered. These values are cultivated through the celebration of heritage months, dialogues and discussions, the Princeton University Mentoring Program (PUMP), and the Carl Fields Fellows peer educator program. Additionally, the center's student friendly spaces offer numerous opportunities for relaxation and engagement—comfy lounges, study breaks, movie nights, galas, festivals and more. For more information, visit fieldscenter.princeton.edu.

#### THE GENDER + SEXUALITY RESOURCE CENTER

246 Frist Campus Center, 8-1353

The Gender + Sexuality Resource Center (GSRC) fosters a supportive and inclusive campus community for women, femme, trans, and queer Princetonians through collaborative programming, education, advocacy, and mentorship. For more information, visit **gsrc.princeton.edu**.

### THE PACE CENTER FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

201 Frist Campus Center, 8-7260

Service and civic engagement are a central part of the Princeton University student experience. The Pace Center helps students learn to respond to the needs of the world in responsible ways. The Center supports learning about community, sustained volunteering, advocacy and activism, and summer internships and post-graduate fellowships. For more information, visit **pace.princeton.edu**.

#### OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED ON CAMPUS

Finally, student organizations are another important means of expanding your education beyond the walls of the classroom. There are more than 300 such organizations, including campus publications, cultural and educational organizations, performance

groups, and political organizations. Through these activities you can hone your writing skills, develop your leadership and organizational abilities, satisfy your musical or theatrical interests, or test your powers of verbal debate and persuasion.

In addition to the array of activities offered by student organizations, you can enrich your Princeton experience through participation in community volunteer work, athletics, or Outdoor Action trips.

Ideas are the currency of an intellectual community, and we encourage you to exchange them freely. This does not mean that every conversation you have at Princeton will be (or should be) a serious one! But we hope that you will explore new intellectual territory over meals or during study breaks, and that you will see connections between the ideas you encounter in class and everyday life. Education will be going on all around you at Princeton, often when you least expect it.

# ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT RESOURCES

ou will undoubtedly seek most of the academic advice you need from your faculty adviser, your residential college dean and assistant dean for studies, and the faculty fellows in your residential college. But in order to be the most successful student you can be, it's important to be attentive to your social, physical, financial, and spiritual needs, too. There are offices on campus to help you meet all of these needs. All phone numbers listed are campus extensions that begin 609-258-xxxx.

### DAVIS INTERNATIONAL CENTER

Louis A. Simpson International Building, Room A45, 20 Washington Road, 8-5006

The Davis International Center offers specialized support for the growth, development, and welfare of international students and scholars on multiple levels—immigration regulatory advising and processing, cultural adjustment, social enrichment, and assistance with practical matters related to living in the U.S. The Davis IC also acts as a center for cultural and educational programming that advances cross-cultural understanding and interaction between domestic and international students and scholars and promotes cultural competency across the University. For more information, visit davisic.princeton.edu.

#### OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF THE COLLEGE (ODOC)

4th Floor, Morrison Hall, 8-5519

This office oversees all aspects of the undergraduate academic experience at Princeton from admission to commencement. Responsible for the undergraduate curriculum, academic advising, and learning support, ODOC works to foster intellectual engagement and growth along every step of the undergraduate career. Learning at Princeton extends far beyond the classroom, so the office promotes opportunities for study, research, and service abroad, as well as in our local schools and communities. ODOC's deans and directors oversee academic advising in the residential colleges, where students develop community and find support for their academic development and personal well-being. ODOC also supports the faculty in their efforts to create new courses, incorporate new technologies, and develop innovative teaching methods. For more information, visit odoc.princeton.edu.

### OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS LIFE (ORL)

Murray-Dodge Hall, 8-3047

This office supports the practice and exploration of religions and spiritualities through the coordination of religious services, sacred text study, counseling, gatherings for anniversaries or crises, denominational chaplaincies, concerts, performances and retreats. For more information, visit religiouslife.princeton.edu.

### OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS (ODUS)

313 Morrison Hall, 8-5750

This office is responsible for student organizations and student agencies, residential life, extracurricular activities, Outdoor Action, the undergraduate discipline process, and certain special needs services for undergraduates.

In addition, the office oversees Campus Club (a student social and programming space), Frist Campus Center programming, and also serves as the University's liaison to the Prospect Avenue eating clubs. This office is also responsible for coordinating undergraduate emergency and crisis response. For more information, visit **odus.princeton.edu**.

### OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES (ODS)

241 Frist Campus Center, 8-8840

Offering a range of services, the Office of Disability Services facilitates reasonable accommodations to support students with disabilities. This office also serves as a resource to the many University administrative units and academic departments that have responsibility for or obligations to accommodate faculty, staff, and campus visitors with disabilities. For more information, visit **ods.princeton.edu**.

#### OFFICE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (ODI)

306 Frist Campus Center, 8-0942

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion is committed to supporting and challenging all undergraduate and graduate students by facilitating co-curricular experiences and learning about identity, inclusion, equity, and social justice education. This office serves the campus community through education, advising and training, and University-wide programming. The Carl A. Fields Center for Equality + Cultural Understanding and the Gender + Sexuality Resource Center are both housed within the Office of Diversity and Inclusion and are distinct units with specific missions, histories, and legacies. Together, the centers work intersectionally to support students' layered identities and experiences. For more information, visit odi.princeton.edu.

### UNDERGRADUATE FINANCIAL AID

Helm Building, 4th Floor, 330 Alexander Street, 8-3330

This office determines eligibility for need-based financial aid and provides counseling to both aid and non-aid families regarding payment and financing options. The staff also maintains a student employment site available to all enrolled undergraduates interested in working during the academic year. For more information, visit **finaid.princeton.edu**.

### UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES (UHS)

McCosh Health Center, 8-3141

Princeton University Health Services is a fully accredited health care facility that provides quality medical, mental health and wellness services to Princeton University undergraduate and graduate students, their dependents, and faculty and staff. UHS's multidisciplinary clinical staff are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week during the academic year. Located at the McCosh Health Center in the heart of Princeton's campus, UHS is composed of the following areas: Medical Services; Counseling and Psychological Services; Health Promotion and Prevention; Occupational Health Services; and Sexual Harassment/ Assault Advising, Resources, and Education (SHARE) Services. For more information, visit uhs.princeton.edu.

#### COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CPS)

University Health Services, McCosh Health Center, 8-3141

CPS supports the psychological well-being of the Princeton University community and are available at no cost to currently enrolled Princeton students and their eligible dependents. Students come to CPS for a wide variety of concerns, from adjustment difficulty, gender identity and relationship problems to more serious mental health issues. We encourage you to use CPS's services even if you think your problems are not "that serious." Because early intervention can lead to quicker recovery, it is better to use CPS's services before a problem becomes severe. CPS is equipped to help with difficult situations and short-term challenges you may experience, as well as with more serious and longstanding issues. For more information, visit uhs.princeton.edu/counseling-psychological-services.

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT/ASSAULT ADVISING, RESOURCES AND EDUCATION (SHARE)

McCosh Health Center, 8-3310, share@princeton.edu

The SHARE office is a survivor-centered, trauma-informed confidential resource on campus for the Princeton University community. SHARE provides crisis response, support, short-term counseling, advocacy, education, and referral services to those who are dealing with incidents of interpersonal violence and abuse including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, and stalking. For more information, visit **share.princeton.edu**.

### SEXUAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS (SHAW)

McCosh Health Center, 8-3141

SHAW is a division of the medical services offered at University Health Services. All services performed are confidential and include sexual health education, STI screening and treatment, contraception, pregnancy testing and information, and sexual and reproductive health care. For more information, visit uhs.princeton.edu/medical-services/sexual-health-and-wellness.

### DISTRIBUTION REQUIREMENTS

Note: Except in languages, no general education designation (i.e., CD, EC, EM, HA, LA, QCR, SA, or SE) means that the course does not fulfill an A.B. distribution requirement or a B.S.E. humanities/social science requirement. Undergraduate courses may carry up to two general education designations, with students using one of two areas towards their degree progress.

### **A.B. CANDIDATE**

Successful completion of these distribution requirements in the following areas:

### **CULTURE AND DIFFERENCE (CD)** 1 course

(For A.B. students, this designation may be completed concurrently with another distribution area.)

EPISTEMOLOGY AND COGNITION (EC) 1 course

ETHICAL THOUGHT AND MORAL VALUES (EM) 1 course

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS (HA) 1 course

LITERATURE AND THE ARTS (LA) 2 courses

QUANTITATIVE AND COMPUTATIONAL REASONING (QCR) 1 course

**SOCIAL ANALYSIS (SA)** 2 courses

### **SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING (SE)** 2 courses\*

\*At least one course must be a science and engineering course with laboratory (SEL). You may elect a second laboratory science course, or a non-laboratory science course (SEN).

### **B.S.E. CANDIDATE**

A minimum of 7 courses from the humanities and social sciences. These courses must include 1 course in 4 of the following areas:

**CULTURE AND DIFFERENCE (CD)** 

**EPISTEMOLOGY AND COGNITION (EC)** 

ETHICAL THOUGHT AND MORAL VALUES (EM)

**HISTORICAL ANALYSIS (HA)** 

LITERATURE AND THE ARTS (LA)

SOCIAL ANALYSIS (SA)

LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH (107/108 LEVEL OR ABOVE)

# PRINCETON ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-24

### **FALL TERM**

SEP. 5: Fall term classes begin

OCT. 9 - 13: Fall midterm examination week

**OCT. 14 - 22:** Fall recess

OCT. 23: Classes resume

NOV. 21 - 26: Thanksgiving recess (begins after last class)

NOV. 27: Classes resume

**DEC. 1:** Spring 2024 course selection for first-year students

DEC. 7: Fall term classes end

DEC. 8 - 15: Reading period

DEC. 15: Dean's Date

**DEC. 16 - 22:** Fall term final examinations

JAN. 15 - 28: Wintersession

### **SPRING TERM**

JAN. 29: Spring term classes begin

MAR. 4 - 8: Spring midterm examination week

MAR. 9 - 17: Spring recess

MAR. 18: Classes resume

APR. 18: Fall 2024 course selection for first-year students

APR. 26: Spring term classes end

APR. 29 - MAY 7: Reading period

MAY 7: Dean's Date

MAY 10 -16: Spring term final examinations

Excerpted from academic calendars available at

registrar.princeton.edu/academic-calendar-and-deadlines

# PLAN YOUR YEAR SOME SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES AND DEADLINES TO HELP YOU PLAN YOUR FIRST YEAR

### **LATE JUNE**

Submit your A.B. or B.S.E Program Form

### MID-JUNE - LATE JULY

Take online Princeton placement tests to gauge your correct placement in various subjects.

### MID-JULY - EARLY AUGUST

Complete ClassPath (your online academic advising course) to prepare for your first meeting with your faculty adviser

### **EARLY TO MID-AUGUST**

Submit your Academic Planning Form and meet with your faculty adviser over Zoom

### LATE AUGUST - EARLY SEPTEMBER

Attend Academic Expo and Departmental Info Sessions Enroll in courses

Meet with your faculty adviser to check in about how your classes are going

Sign up for McGraw Center workshops, tutoring, or a learning consultation to hone your skills

Join a study group or attend McGraw study hall

Talk with your PAA to get tips on studying and finding the right resource for you

### **EARLY OCTOBER**

Prepare for midterms with support from McGraw, your PAA, your RCA, and your fellow students in study groups

### LATE OCTOBER

Make adjustments to your study habits; connect with McGraw for academic support

Talk with your faculty adviser and/or assistant dean for studies about your plans for the weeks ahead

Explore research by attending ReMatch Meet and Greets

### **EARLY NOVEMBER**

Register for Wintersession

Begin to discuss summer study abroad options with advisers from the Office of International Programs (OIP)

### LATE NOVEMBER

Attend an advising fair in your residential college

Meet with your faculty adviser to discuss your spring courses, summer plans, and involvement on and off campus

Apply for a PICS summer internship

Apply for a Princeton International Internship

Apply for a Princeton Global Seminar or other Princeton summer study abroad programs

### **EARLY DECEMBER**

Enroll in spring courses

Prepare for Dean's Date and final exams with support from your PAA, your assistant dean for studies, McGraw study halls, learning consultations, and workshops

### MID-JANUARY

Attend Wintersession

### **LATE JANUARY**

Apply for the ReMatch+ Summer Research Program Apply for Service Focus Apply to be a Community Action leader

### **EARLY FEBRUARY**

Attend the HireTigers Fair for internships
Apply to the Office of Undergraduate Research Student
Initiated Internship Program

### **EARLY MARCH**

Prepare for midterms with support from McGraw, your PAA, your RCA, and your fellow students in study groups

### MID-APRIL

Meet with your faculty adviser to discuss courses for the fall, talk about your interests across the curriculum, summer plans, and co-curricular involvement

Enroll in fall courses

Attend an advising fair in your residential college B.S.E. students: attend the Engineering Open House and declare a major

### **EARLY MAY**

Prepare for Dean's Date and final exams Attend Princeton Research Day

