Spring Course Registration Guide:
What You Need to Know (and Where to Find More Information)

Your first semester at Harvard has given you new experiences to draw on as you plan your spring courses. You may have discovered an unexpected interest, learned more about how you approach academic work, or begun asking new questions about what you want to study.

Good academic advising starts with ***your questions***. This guide will help you understand the registration process, explore your options and find people who can help you make informed decisions.

Important Dates and Tasks

Date	What happens?
October 21	Crimson Cart opens
Beginning October 25	Required entryway advising meetings begin
October 29 - November 10	Make-up entryway advising meetings with FDO staff
November 4-18	Spring course registration
11:59 p.m. November 18	Spring course registration deadline – you need to be registered for 16 credits by then
January 19-February 1, 2027	Open add-drop period – no instructor permission needed to change courses (unless it's required for an enrollment cap, etc.)

All first-year students must attend an entryway advising session to have their spring course registration advising hold lifted. Your proctor and PAFs can tell you when and where your entryway meeting will take place. **Bring your laptop** so you can begin exploring courses and building your Crimson Cart.

★ *Remember:* Just adding a course to Crimson Cart does **not** register you for it. You must complete registration during the November 4-18 registration period.

If you cannot attend your proctor's meeting, register for a make-up session:

- Visit scheduler.fas.harvard.edu.
- Select "Academic Advising Workshops."
- Find a session with available seats.
- Click the three vertical dots beside the session and select "Book."

What Should I Consider When Choosing Courses?

To start, think about **what you've experienced** this fall:

- What academic interests have become more compelling since August?
    - Similarly, is there something you *thought* you wanted to study that you are now reconsidering?
- What new subjects or questions would you like to explore?
- What have you learned about the kinds of academic work you enjoy?
    - Or the kinds of academic work you enjoy less?
- What have your courses taught you about managing your time and workload?
    - What does your schedule balance feel like this term? Should you make adjustments for the spring (fewer or more p-set courses, fewer or more writing/reading courses, adding a First-Year Seminar, etc.)?
- What surprised you that you might want to think more about?

Next, think about **course sequences**. Are you enrolled in a course now that will continue in the spring? Examples include:

- Math
- Economics 10a/10b
- Life Sciences sequences (LS1a/LS1b, LPSa/LS1b, Life Sciences 50a/50b)
- Humanities 10a/10b
    - Note that you will be auto-enrolled in HUM 10b. If you decide not to continue with the course, you need to let them know and work to get scheduled for Expos in the spring.
- Language sequences
    - Note that you must have at least *two semesters of the same language* to meet the language requirement.

Finally, consider exploring (or continuing to explore) concentrations via gateway courses. While you won't need to declare your concentration until October of your sophomore year, it's important to experience departmental coursework so that you can narrow down your concentration choices. Find a list of Spring 2027 gateway courses you might consider for each of Harvard's 51 concentrations in the "Resources for Exploring Courses" section of this document.

Specific Course Information

Expos

- ★ If you're taking Expos Studio 10 now, you will enroll in Expos 20 or Expos Studio 20 in the spring. Talk to your preceptor about which is right for you.

- ★ Students recommended for Expos 20 were assigned to take it in either the fall or spring.
    - Explore Expos 20 course options here.

If you're scheduled for either Expos 20 or Expos Studio 20 for the Spring, keep this timeline in mind:

- **Early November:** You'll hear from the Writing Program about the registration process. Keep an eye on your Harvard email.
- **Tuesday, November 10:** Sectioning for both Expos 20 and Expos Studio 20 opens at 9 a.m. in my.harvard. Start entering your sectioning preferences then.
- **Wednesday, November 11:** Sectioning for both Expos 20 and Expos Studio 20 closes at 11:59 p.m. You must enter your preferences before then.
- **Thursday, November 12:** Sections are assigned and students will receive an email about their final assignment. It will also be posted in my.harvard.

- ★ *Remember:* You cannot add or drop section assignments for Expos through my.harvard. If you have changes you need made, you must be in touch with the Writing Program at expos@fas.harvard.edu.

First-Year Seminars

If you applied for a Spring First-Year Seminar and received a seat, you were notified in August. You will be automatically enrolled in your seminar for the spring.

Students who no longer wish to take their spring seminar may drop it when registration opens – but think carefully about that decision! First-Year Seminars are an excellent way to get to know a faculty member and a small cohort of classmates in an intimate, intellectually engaging setting. They're a great addition to your schedule, and the first year is the only time you may take one.

Students who did *not* receive a spring placement can investigate seminars with available seats and follow the First-Year Seminar Program's application process. Browse seminars and see application information here.

Gen Eds

Enrollment-capped Gen Ed courses (which is not all of them!) with demand exceeding available seats use a coordinated ranked-choice lottery. You can see which Gen Eds have caps and are therefore lotteried easily via their course catalog.

★ Note that this is different than when you enrolled in Gen Ed courses this fall.

If you'd like to lottery for a capped Gen Ed, you'll do that through my.harvard. See this page for more information. Here are the important deadlines:

- **11:59 p.m. Monday, November 9**: Deadline to rank lottery Gen Ed courses
- **Tuesday, November 10:** Gen Ed lottery runs
- **11:59 p.m. Thursday, November 12:** Deadline for claiming your seat if you are offered one

Introductory Math Courses (Ma/b, LS, 1a/b, 21a, 21b, 22b)

Math PL is open for spring, and every student planning to take a math course in the spring should register for it.

What you need to do depends on your fall experience:

Your Math Situation	**What's Next?**
You took math this fall and are continuing in sequence	You can proceed to the next course *without another placement exam*
You want to skip ahead in your math sequence	You must take the Math Placement Verification Exam (MPVE) to assess options
You did not take the MPVE in the fall	You must take the MPVE to assess options
You want to place above the level permitted by your fall MPVE result	You must retake the MPVE to assess options

If your situation requires that you take the MPVE in the spring, you will sit the exam on the first day of class, which happens at the day/time you selected when you registered for Math PL.

For more information on introductory math, click here. Students with questions about their individual placements should consult the math advising team at calculus@math.harvard.edu.

Important Information about Intro Math Midterm Exam Scheduling

Introductory math courses have a set midterm exam time of **6-9 p.m. on Thursdays** (not *every* Thursday, but when there is an exam, it will be during this time).

→ When you register for Math PL, choose one exam session:
  - Main session (most students): Thursday, 6-9 p.m.
  - Academic conflict or DAO accommodation ONLY: Thursday, 3-6 p.m.

Students **must keep their scheduled midterm exam times free**. A conflict with a Thursday evening exam can be accommodated only when the conflict involves a required component of another course and that course offers no alternative time.

Students with Disability Access Office (DAO) accommodations will receive exam time slots appropriate to their approved accommodations.

Alternative exam times will *not* be publicly posted. Students with qualifying conflicts should contact Sarah Chin (schin@math.harvard.edu) to arrange an alternative.

Resources for Exploring Courses & Considering Your Schedule

My.harvard Tips

- *Crimson Cart:* Collect potential spring courses and compare your options before registration. Adding a course to your Crimson Cart doesn't obligate you to take it, and it allows you to access the course's Canvas site.
- *Advanced Course Search:* Search for courses by subject and relevant academic requirements, including Quantitative Reasoning with Data and divisional distribution.
  - In my.harvard, expand the menu to the left of the course search button, then expand the FAS options to access additional search features.
- *Academic Advising Report (AAR):* Review progress toward degree requirements (i.e., see what your courses fulfill). Find it in the "Academic Program" tab.
- *What-If Report*: Explore how your completed and planned coursework might fit the requirements of different concentrations. Find it in the "Academic Program" tab.

Gateway Courses

Gateway courses can help you explore unfamiliar disciplines, investigate possible concentrations or build on interests that emerged during the fall. Departments have identified spring 2027 courses that serve as useful introductions to their fields.

Spring 2027 Gateway Course List

Using Available Resources as You Consider Courses

A course title and description in my.harvard is only a starting point – you'll also want to carefully review its Canvas site and its syllabus as you consider whether to enroll in it. When investigating a course, consider:

- What questions and subjects does it explore?
- What kinds of assignments and assessments are involved?
- What background knowledge does it expect? (And do you have it?)
- How does it fit alongside your other courses?
- What makes you excited or uncertain about taking it?

If you don't have information for any of these questions, you should talk to either departmental advisors (for course-specific information) or a member of your advising network (PAF, proctor, Resident Dean, or FDO advising team).

Taking Five Courses (20 credits)

Spring is the first semester in which first-year students may enroll in five courses (20 credits) without special permission from their Resident Dean of First-Year Students. But just because you *can* doesn't always mean you *should!* If you're thinking about this, consider the actual work involved:

- How many problem sets, labs, papers, readings and exams will the courses require?
- What would this schedule look like alongside your extracurricular commitments, work schedule, and general life needs?
- What have you learned about your college workload, and how would that change or adapt in a five-course schedule?
- If you needed to reduce your course load, which course would you consider dropping?
    - Would changing a course's grading basis be an option, and what academic consequences might follow?
    - *Important:* Students should always consult a member of the academic advising network (from a department or from the FDO) before making grading-basis decisions.

Navigating the Academic Advising Network & Getting the Right Information

Harvard has a wide academic advising network of people who can help you explore your interests and plan your education. Remember that **different people bring different kinds of expertise.**

- ★ Your **Proctor** can help you reflect on your academic experiences, develop effective habits, navigate campus resources, and identify people who can help with your questions.
- ★ Your **Peer Advising Fellows (PAFs)** can share their experiences as undergraduates, help you navigate opportunities, and connect you with appropriate resources. They are valuable guides to Harvard life, but they do not replace specialized academic advisors.
- ★ **Faculty and departmental advisors** can answer questions about particular disciplines, course sequences, prerequisites, concentration requirements, and opportunities within fields of study.
    - Departments organize advising differently. You may encounter Directors of Undergraduate Studies (DUS), Assistant or Associate Directors of Undergraduate Studies (ADUS), undergraduate program staff and other advising professionals. You can find this information on each department's website.
- ★ The **First-Year Academics team in the FDO** can help you consider course choices, academic options, degree requirements, and more. They can also refer you to appropriate sources of specialized guidance.
- ★ Your **Resident Dean of First-Year Students (RDF/Yard Dean)** can provide guidance on academic circumstances requiring additional support, policy interpretation, or formal approval.

Not sure whom to ask? Start with someone you know (your proctor, PAF or an FDO advisor) and ask for help identifying the appropriate expert. You don't have to know the entire advising network before using it.

More Advising Opportunities for You

- → **Individual advising drop-ins:** The First-Year Academics team offers bookable 15-minute advising appointments. These can be about anything – big-picture questions, considering course options, or whatever you need.
    - Schedule an advising appointment here.

- → **Advising Corner in Annenberg:** Every Wednesday and Thursday at lunch, stop by to speak with departmental representatives and advising staff right in Berg. Here's a schedule for the rest of the term:

Date	Time	Guests
Thursday, October 29	12:30–2 p.m.	Economics
Wednesday, November 4	11:30 a.m.–1 p.m.	Sociology
Thursday, November 5	12:30–2 p.m.	First-Year Seminar Program
Tuesday, November 10	Noon–1:30 p.m.	Statistics
Thursday, November 12	12:30–2 p.m.	RDFs, FDO
Wednesday, November 18	11:30 a.m.–1 p.m.	First-Year Academics, FDO

→ **Ask-a-Department: Divisional Drop-Ins:** Faculty and staff from all concentrations will be available to first-year students for drop-in questions around course registration. Sessions are held in Cambridge Queen's Head unless otherwise noted.

Date	Time	Division
Monday, November 2	3–5 p.m.	Arts & Humanities
Tuesday, November 3	1–2:30 p.m.	Math & Introductory Math
Tuesday, November 3	3–5 p.m.	Sciences
Wednesday, November 4	3–5 p.m.	SEAS
Thursday, November 5	3–5 p.m.	Social Sciences
Monday, November 16	3:30–4:30 p.m.	SEAS Course Advising (Maxwell Dworkin Ground Floor Lobby**).** RSVP by November 10.

→ **Spring Course Registration Open Office Hours:** The First-Year Academics team and colleagues will be available to help with registration questions in **Memorial Hall Room 029** during the course registration period.

- *Monday, November 16*: 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- *Tuesday, November 17:* 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- *Wednesday, November 18:* 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Your Next Steps

As you prepare to register, remember to:

- ❑ Reflect on what you've learned about your academic interests and experiences.
- ❑ Explore courses and build your Crimson Cart.
- ❑ Identify questions about requirements, sequencing, workload or academic possibilities.
- ❑ Connect with people who can help answer those questions.
- ❑ Complete registration by November 18 at 11:59 p.m.

★ *Remember:* You have a network of people ready to help you. Make use of it, ask questions, and give yourself room to discover something unexpected.