

REGISTRATION

Registration is the systematic process that reserves seats in particular classes for eligible students. It is accomplished by following the procedures announced in advance of each term's registration period. Enrollment is the completion of the registration process and affords the full rights and privileges of student status. Enrollment is accomplished by the payment or other satisfaction of tuition and fees and by the satisfaction of other obligations to the University.

Registration alone does not guarantee enrollment, nor does registration alone guarantee the right to participate in a class. In some cases, students will need to obtain the approval of the instructor or representative of the department that offers a course. Please check this website and the registration instructions contained in the [Directory of Classes](#) and/or [Vergil](#) for all necessary approvals.

Registration

New Students

New students may register for classes only after completing an undergraduate Academic Planning Session or Postbac Planning Session. Students are expected to consult with their advisors for approval of their schedules either prior to, or shortly after, registering for courses. Additional details will be covered as part of the Academic or Postbac Planning Sessions for students matriculating each term.

Process for All Students

Prior to meeting with their advisors about registration, students should consult the GS website in order to plan a schedule of classes. The website provides major requirements and current course descriptions for undergraduates and the prescribed prehealth curriculum for Postbac Premed students, as well as times and locations of classes. Students may also consult the [Directory of Classes](#) and/or [Vergil](#) for detailed information. Students plan their programs with the help of their GS advisors and, for those who have declared their majors, with the additional assistance of faculty advisors. If a course requires permission of the instructor or department, a student is responsible for obtaining that permission. Registration for courses in divisions of the University not listed on the GS website requires permission from the Office of the Dean of Students.

GS students will register online via [SSOL](#) during designated registration periods and the change of program period (typically, the first two weeks of each semester). Under special circumstances students may also be able to enroll after the change of program period with instructor approval and permission of the GS Committee on Academic Standing or Premedical Committee. In all cases, students may not register for a class after the third week of class meetings.

The dates for registration periods are published in the GS Academic Calendar and on the [Registrar's Academic Calendar](#). Students will need their University Network Identification (UNI), Network Password, and all relevant course numbers and call numbers in order to complete the registration process. All students are strongly advised to participate in the early registration period for each term that allows them to reserve seats in courses for the following semester.

Cancelations and Changes to Registration

Canceling Registration

Students who decide to defer their admission, take a leave of absence, or not matriculate at GS after having registered for classes must contact their GS advisor to initiate the withdrawal process required for canceling registration. Failure to complete this mandatory administrative procedure in a timely fashion will result in the student being liable for tuition and associated fees for the term in question.

Changes to Registration

Students are able to make changes to their registration online during the registration and change of program periods each semester. Students are expected to consult with their academic advisors for approval.

Registration Holds

A "hold" on an account prevents a student from registering. Students may check for holds by logging on to Student Services Online (SSOL). Possible reasons for having a hold include significant debt to the University (financial hold); failure to provide evidence of required inoculations (health hold); overdue library books (library hold); or other academic, disciplinary, or administrative reasons designated by GS (dean's hold). Students with a dean's hold must contact their GS advisor.

Course Prerequisites and Instructor Approval

Prerequisites

Prerequisites are specified in the individual course listings available in Course Offerings. Prior to registering for courses, students should ensure they have met the prerequisites for each course. If prerequisites are not specified for upper-level courses, students are advised to consult with the instructor prior to the first day of class. Students should not register for courses if they have not met the stated prerequisites. However, in exceptional cases, students may be granted permission to enroll in such courses by demonstrating to the instructor that they have competence equivalent to the prerequisites. Some courses, especially seminars and colloquia, require instructor permission even when students meet course prerequisites; students should consult the online directory of courses to note whether instructor approval is required.

Instructor Approval

Instructor permission may also be granted electronically via SSOL in cases where courses have an electronic wait list. Students may choose within SSOL to place themselves on course wait lists, which are of two varieties: either filled automatically on a space-available basis or filled by the course instructor based on student qualifications. Once a student is admitted to the course, the student is notified that they have been enrolled in the course and removed from the wait list.

Several departments that limit enrollment in their upper-level seminars and colloquia have special application processes. Priority enrollment in these seminars is often given to majors and seniors. Students are responsible for following special application or registration processes specified by individual departments for these limited-enrollment courses.

Registration Details

Core Courses

Students interested in registering for Core courses or petitioning to transfer sections should consult the Core Registration and Petitions page.

Visual Arts Courses

It may not be possible to register online for all visual arts courses; students must follow a procedure that is different from registering for most other courses. Some visual arts courses require that students show a portfolio prior to registration. Most visual arts courses require that students attend the first two days of class to ensure their spot and then secure the written permission of the instructor. Preference in visual arts classes is given to majors. For more information about registering for Visual Arts classes see Visual Arts Registration.

Dance Courses

Registration for dance classes is by permission of the instructor. GS students registering for a dance class must register for at least one point; GS students **may not** register for a zero-point dance class.

Physical Education Courses

General Studies students are not required to take physical education courses. Students who are interested in registering for a physical education course as an elective should follow the directions on the [Physical Education website](#). Normally students may take only one P.E. course per semester; enrollment in more than one P.E. course per semester requires the approval of the Director of Physical Education Programs, to whom students should submit a petition.

Cross-registration into Other Columbia Divisions

Students who wish to take courses in one of Columbia's graduate or professional schools or programs must receive written approval from both GS and the appropriate graduate or professional school or program, as well as the instructor of the course, and must also submit a [Cross-Registration petition](#). Undergraduate students should have completed one semester and 15 points of letter-graded Columbia coursework and be in good standing within the School to be eligible to petition for coursework in another school. Postbac Premed students must be in good academic standing within the Program and must have a compelling reason, consistent with their academic goals, for cross-registering. All work for these courses must be completed within the term in which the student is enrolled. Students registering for courses at Barnard, SEAS, or in the graduate or professional schools should be aware that such courses may be subject to registration policies specific to the program offering them and may present unfamiliar academic challenges.

Note: GS students are not allowed to count professional courses in any of the professional studies programs offered through Columbia's School of Professional Studies toward the degree. Rare exceptions to this rule exist when a course is listed as an approved part of a student's major or concentration (for example, Sustainable Development). Students are strongly encouraged to discuss such courses with their GS academic advisor prior to registering.

Limit on Professional Courses Counted Toward the Degree

GS students are permitted four courses of professional coursework toward their GS degrees. Exceptions to this rule include GS students accepted into the combined or dual degree programs with Columbia's professional schools, where applicable. Courses which are cross-listed with undergraduate departments do not count toward this limit; nor do courses approved by the student's major department to count toward major requirements. For more information see [Degree Fulfillment](#).