

ADVISING ANSWERS FOR PARENTS OF PHILADELPHIA UNIVERSITY FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

1. My student will be a freshmen at Philadelphia University, how will s/he know what classes are required for their major?

All new First Year students will receive a semester schedule with courses required for their major at their START session. They will also receive a course check sheet for their major at the Meet Your Advisor Session of New Student Orientation, directly before the start of fall classes. This course check sheet will guide them in course selection throughout their time at Philadelphia University

2. How is placement determined for all new students at Philadelphia University?

Students in all majors and programs at Philadelphia University are considered for placement in three curriculum areas: Mathematics, Writing and Reading.

All new first time freshmen will sit for a Writing Placement Assessment on the first day of their START session. After completing the timed writing assessment, the tests will be graded by two faculty members from the School of Liberal Arts writing faculty. The writing assessment grades will determine the best writing course placement for student success in first year writing and writing intensive courses.

Math placement is determined by examining three distinct data points for all students. These include students' SAT scores, their answers to a trigonometry self-screening test administered on-line prior to their START session, as well as the Mathematics requirements of the major or program to which students have been admitted. Students who took Advanced Placement examinations in Math may in some cases have their Math placement determined by their advanced placement exam score.

Students who score 470 and below on the critical reading section of the SAT, or who score 20 and below on the ACT reading test, will place into Fundamentals of College Reading. This course must be completed in the first semester at Philadelphia University and prior to all reading intensive courses required for first year students.

3. Will my student be able to meet with an academic advisor at Philadelphia University?

Yes. All new First Year students will be able to meet with specially trained first year faculty advisors at the Learning and Advising Center in Haggard Hall on campus. First year students may meet with any first year advisor on a drop-in, no appointment necessary basis, Monday through Friday

from 9AM to 5PM. First year students also will be assigned to specific first year faculty advisors, who they will meet during New Student Orientation. Their assigned advisors will out-reach to them with information and academic advice throughout the fall and spring. Students are expected to meet with a first year advisor BEFORE registering for spring semester courses. When students progress to sophomore year, they will be assigned to faculty advisors in their school.

4. What does placement in a Fundamentals (099) course mean for my student?

A new first year student at Philadelphia University may place into a fundamentals course in Math, Writing, and or Reading. Fundamentals courses prepare your student for the demands of college level academic skills across the curriculum and in every major. Though your student may be disappointed in their placement in fundamentals, we have found that students who participate in these courses are much better prepared for the rigor of college work once they have mastered these college level skills. Fundamentals courses are calculated in students' GPA's and are counted toward academic progress for financial aid awards. They do not directly contribute to credits toward graduation, but because they prepare the student for other college level courses, they are an important part of all Philadelphia University curricula.

5. My student is Undecided on a major at this time, when will they have to declare a major?

Philadelphia University encourages all students who are Undecided to work with the Learning and Advising Center advisors and staff as well as the Career Services Center to declare a major no later than the end of their second year at Philadelphia University. Students must declare a major by the time they have earned 60 credits at the University.

6. What is the process for changing majors? When can my student change their major?

Your student will need the help of a first year advisor or the Learning and Advising Center staff to negotiate the change of major process. In some cases students will wish to change their major during their first year of study at Philadelphia University and this will be possible. In other majors, specifically design majors, there is a particular process and time to review students' work before accepting them into the new major. In all change of majors the appropriate approvals from their advisor as well as the program directors in the major they wish to pursue must be obtained.

7. What is the DROP/ADD period?

DROP/ADD period provides an opportunity for students to adjust their semester course schedules during the first seven days of classes. Your student must meet with a first year advisor or the Learning and Advising Center staff to participate in the DROPP/ADD period.

A student at Philadelphia University can “drop” a course and “add” another course in its place after consultation with a first year advisor ONLY during the first seven days of each semester. Students perform drop/add if they find open course sections that better fit their work or athletic schedules, or if they desire to take a course for their major not originally provided on their schedule at START.

8. Since my student will no longer receive a report card, will I be able to access my student’s academic information online?

All Philadelphia University students receive both mid-term grades, at the half-way point of each semester, as well as final grades. Final grades count toward your student’s grade point average (GPA.)

Your student always will be able to access their mid-term grades and/or final grades on-line through webadvisor. Please note that your student will NEVER receive paper copies of their grades. Since even matriculated first time freshmen are considered adults by federal law, and the privacy of their academic records is protected by the Buckley Amendment, YOU must ask YOUR STUDENT to show you his/her grades on webadvisor. It is important that parents and guardians of first time freshmen in particular ask their student to show them BOTH their mid-term as well as final grades on webadvisor.

9 I would like to speak with my child’s academic advisor and professors throughout the semester, is that permissible?

Since even first time freshmen are considered adults and their academic privacy is protected according to federal FERPA rules, (known as the Buckley amendment) parents must receive their students’ written permission to consult with advisors about their students’ academic work and records. This may seem unfair, particularly since many parents are responsible for paying tuition and fees for their students’ education, however the University must uphold and act according to these federal laws and regulations. Students must sign a release form at the Learning and Advising Center indicating that they will permit their parents to

discuss their academic progress with an advising staff member, before the Learning and Advising staff will discuss grades or a students' academic progress with parents.

At Learning and Advising, we suggest that parents and guardians discuss their own expectations of academic progress and grade disclosure with their student even BEFORE classes begin at the university. Some parents have found it helpful to inform their students' that they expect to be shown grades at BOTH mid-term grading period as well as final grades. Parents should know that grades are NEVER sent on paper, but can be accessed by their student on-line at ANY time.

10. My student has AP Credits and/or International Baccalaureate Credits and/or Dual Enrollment college level credits. Will they be accepted at Philadelphia University?

All new first year students should make certain that their AP test scores and International Baccalaureate test scores are submitted to the Office of Admissions at Philadelphia University directly from the appropriate testing agency. An official college transcript (not the high school transcript) must be submitted to the Admissions Office in order to determine whether dual enrollment credits will be accepted. Once students have formally submitted their scores, and/or an official college transcript, the student should contact the Admissions Office for more information about course credit. The number to call is 215-951-2800.

11. What can my student expect from Learning & Advising in their first year at Philadelphia University?

The Learning and Advising Center at Philadelphia University is the comprehensive source on campus for all academic assistance. All new First Year students meet with a first year faculty advisor on a drop-in basis at the Learning and Advising Center, Monday through Friday from 9AM-5PM.

Learning and Advising also offers tutoring support, including peer, professional and study skills and writing tutoring for all students at Philadelphia University at no additional cost. For more information about the tutorial support services offered at the Learning and Advising Center please visit: www.philau.edu/learning.

12. My child has been diagnosed with physical, or learning disabilities and/ or ADHD. Who should we contact to discuss the diagnosis and accommodations that s/he will need?

Students (and parents) should contact the Office of Disability Services at Philadelphia University to learn what documentation is required and what services are available for students with physical disabilities or learning disabilities and ADHD. Students and their parents should discuss the need for services as soon as possible and significantly BEFORE semester classes begin. Please call: 215-951-6830 for any and all questions regarding your student's needs and accommodations.

13. What if my first year student at Philadelphia University gets sick and cannot attend class. What should he/she do regarding missing class?

All students are expected to contact their professors directly if they are going to miss class for an illness or an emergency. Many courses have strict attendance policies, so students need to understand that even if they are sick, they may still be considered absent in terms of class participation. Professors will make that determination on an individual basis. If your student is sick and will miss class for 5 or more days, they should contact the Dean of Students office at 215-951-2970.