

**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 (and transfer students who do not receive course equivalency for WRTG) are required to complete a timed, on-line Writing Placement Essay prior to attending their START session. Writing Placement essays will be graded by faculty members from the College of Science, Health and the Liberal Arts writing faculty. Writing assessment scores will determine the best writing course placement for student success in the freshman year. If a student places into WRTG 100 they will receive free elective credit for this course and after successfully passing this course with "C" or better they will take WRTG 101 to meet their WRTG 1 graduation requirement.

*** Writing Placement essays should take no longer than 50 minutes to complete a thorough thesis driven essay. However, all students will be allotted a maximum of 85 minutes (1 hour and 25 minutes) for the writing placement essay to ensure that students who are entitled to extended time under the Americans with Disabilities Act, will have appropriate time for this essay.*

***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** 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 verbal portion of the SAT, or 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, 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 rigors 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 entering the university with their major as Undeclared. When will they have to declare a major? What is DIY Programming?

Philadelphia University encourages all students who are Undecided to work closely with the Learning and Advising Center advisors and Career Services Center staff in order to select a major during their freshman year. Specific Programming for undeclared students called DIY programming will be offered to link these students with Learning and Advising and the Career Services center. It is expected that Undeclared students will participate in all DIY programming activities. Undeclared students are encouraged to declare a major by their second semester freshman year and MUST declare a major by the time they complete 60 credits in order to remain enrolled at Philadelphia University.

6. What is the process for changing majors? When can my student change his/her 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 time to review students' work before accepting them into the new major. In all change of majors, the appropriate **approvals from the student's 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, that 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 student'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 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 International Baccalaureate 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. Once students have formally submitted their scores, the

student should contact the Admissions Office for more information about what scores may be accepted for 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 academic support, including peer, professional and study skills tutoring for all students at Philadelphia University at no additional cost. For more information regarding the tutorial support services offered at the Learning and Advising Center please visit: www.philau.edu/learning.

12. My student 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?

The student (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 their students 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 the Dean of Student's Office and their professors directly if they are going to miss class for an illness or an emergency for an extended time.. 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. Their professors will make that determination on an individual basis. If

your student is sick and is going to miss class for 5 or more days, they should contact the Dean of Student's office at 215-951-2740..