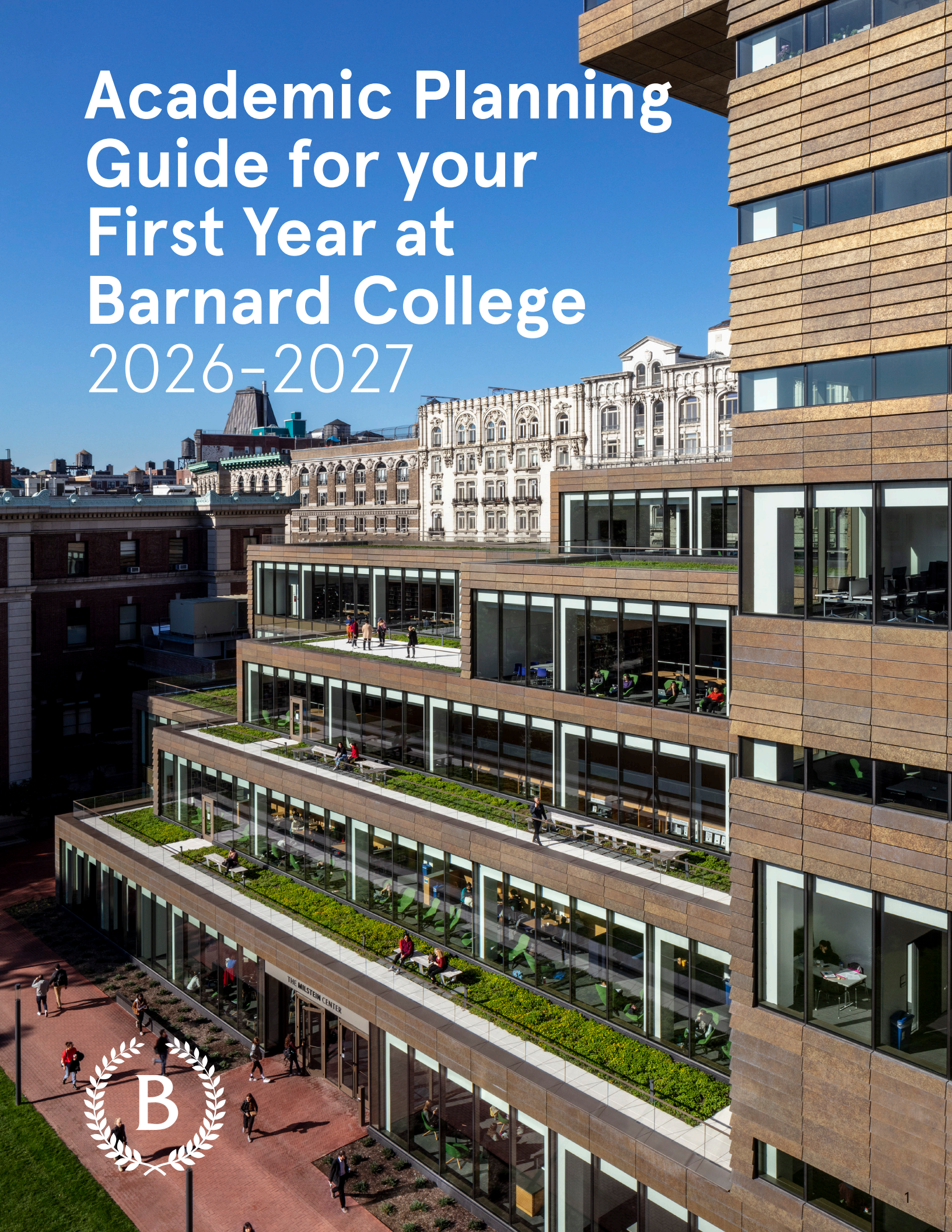


Academic Planning Guide for your First Year at Barnard College 2026-2027



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Welcome from the First Year Dean

Dear Class of 2030,

As your Class Dean, I am delighted to welcome you to Barnard College, and I look forward to working with you this summer and during your first year. This Academic Planning Guide will help you get ready for the Fall 2026 semester. It also provides information to keep in mind as you work towards earning your degree. The Guide focuses on academic advising, academic policies, and registration. Please continue to log on to the [Enrolling Student Portal](#) for more information about required enrollment forms, move-in and orientation, financial aid, Access Barnard, and non-academic summer programming.

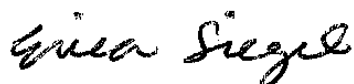
In the following pages, you will find:

- An overview of Barnard's academic advising system
- Information on how to register for your first semester at Barnard
- A description of Barnard's Foundations curriculum, and requirements for the Barnard Bachelor of Arts
- Your options for Majors and Minors – and when and how to start thinking about them
- Advanced placement and AP/IB credit
- A list of campus resources

Please plan to attend the following few mandatory events this June: We will hold a **general advising webinar on Monday, June 8, at 7 PM Eastern Daylight Time**. If you cannot attend this event, a recording will be available. You will also be required to schedule a **30-minute appointment with an Academic Adviser** at some point in the period between June 9 and July 17. These meetings will help you get ready for **registration for the Fall 2026 semester**, which will take place July 20–24. Please see the next page for a list of summer events and deadlines pertaining to academics at Barnard.

The First-Year Team will be emailing you throughout the summer with information and reminders, and we invite you to follow us on the [First-Year Blog](#), which we will regularly update. If you have any questions at any time, please reach out to us at first-year@barnard.edu or by calling the Deans' Office for Advising and Support at 212-854-2024. We are so excited to meet you.

My best,



Erica Siegel, PhD
Associate Dean for Academic Assistance
First Year & Junior Class Dean

Academic Calendar

2026-2027

Fall Semester 2026

September 2-6
New Student Orientation Program (NSOP)

September 7
Labor Day Holiday

September 8
First day of classes

September 18
Last day to add a class

October 13
Last day to drop a class

November 2-3
Election Day Holiday (no classes)

November 19
Last day to withdraw from a Fall 2026 class

November 25
Academic Holiday (no classes)

November 26-27
Thanksgiving Holiday

December 14
Last day of Fall 2026 classes;
Last day to elect Pass/D/Fail Option

December 15-16
Reading period

December 17-23
Final exam period for Fall 2026 classes

December 24-January 17
Winter Break

Spring Semester 2027

January 18
Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Observed
College Holiday

January 19
First day of Spring 2027 classes

January 29
Last day to add a class

February 23
Last day to drop a class

March 15-19
Spring Break (no classes)

March 25
Last day to withdraw from a Spring 2027 class

May 3
Last day of Spring 2027 classes;
Last day to elect Pass/D/Fail Option

May 4-6
Reading period

May 7-13
Final exam period for Spring 2027 classes

Important Notes

Dates are subject to change. See the College's [Academic Calendar](#) for important deadlines about adding and dropping classes, and the Pass/D/Fail options.

Vacation travel – Students should not make travel plans until they know their final exam schedule. Final exams will not be rescheduled for vacation travel purposes.

Advising Dates and Deadlines

Summer 2026

June

June 8

General Advising Webinar

June 9

Individual 30-minute Summer Advising appointments with Barnard staff and faculty begin

June 12

Three Forms Due

- Fall 2026 First-Year Experience Course Preference Form
- 2026 Physical Education Requirement Preference Form
- Pre-Major Adviser Questionnaire (Adviser assignments will be announced in August-September)

June 22-26

Information Sessions from Academic Departments and Programs (Specifics will be announced prior to this date)

July

July 6-17

First-Year Experience and PE assignments announced

July 17

Individual Summer Advising appointments end

July 20-24

Registration for Fall 2026 semester (Round 1); Advisers will be available during this week over Zoom and email for last-minute questions

July 28, 29, or 30

Barnard Basics: Strategies for Success in Your First Year (optional but recommended; choose one one-hour webinar)

September

September 2

Move-in

September 2-6

New Student Orientation Program (NSOP)

September 4

Registration (Round 2)

September 8

First Day of Classes

Please refer to the [Enrolling Student Portal](#) for nonacademic summer programming, deadlines, and forms.

Academic Advising at Barnard

The First-Year Team

Meet the First-Year Team, who will be available to you this summer and throughout your first year at Barnard, for any questions that may arise. You can email us at first-year@barnard.edu or call 212-854-2024.



Dean Erica Siegel

*Associate Dean for Academic Assistance
First Year & Junior Class Dean*

As the Dean of the First Year Class, it is my great privilege to welcome you to Barnard College, to help you manage the transition to college life, and to brainstorm with you about what you will do with your time here. I am here to clarify academic policy, and to support you and refer you to appropriate campus resources if you experience an emergency or any other difficult extenuating circumstances. I have worked at Barnard College since 2022, but I have been at Columbia University since the Fall of 1994. I earned my B.A. at Columbia College, and my M.A. and Ph.D. at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, all in Slavic languages and literature. I have taught in Columbia's Slavic Department and Core Curriculum, and I served for over a decade as an academic adviser and dean at Columbia, before making my way across Broadway to Barnard.



Lauren Quach

Administrative Assistant to the First-Year & Senior Class Deans

Hello, First-Years! Welcome to Barnard! My name is Lauren Quach, and I am the Administrative Assistant to the First-Year and Senior Class Deans in the Deans' Office for Advising and Support, as well as a member of The First-Year Team. I have been working at Barnard for four years. I am looking forward to helping you navigate the summer as you prepare for your first year and make your transition into Barnard as smooth as possible. Prior to my arrival at Barnard, I earned my B.A. at SUNY University at Buffalo in psychology with a minor in counseling. After finishing college, I returned to New York City, where I earned my M.S.E. in Counseling and Personnel Services (School Counseling) at the Fordham University Graduate School of Education.



Sophia Brown

Barnard College Class of 2028

Hello!! I'm the Student Assistant working in the Deans' Office for Advising and Support and a member of The First-Year Team. I'm from St. Louis, Missouri, and I'm majoring in Latin and Cognitive Science with a focus in Cognitive Linguistics. I make crosswords as the Games Editor for *The Columbia Federalist*, I'm an assistant in the Emerging Scholars Program for Intro CS students, and I'm a fair-to-middling pickleballer. This summer, I'm also a fellow with Eleanor's Legacy, working on a pro-choice woman's primary campaign! I'll be here to answer any general questions you may have, respond to your emails, run our Instagram page, and overall, hope to ease your transition!

Advising this Summer

This summer, you will be receiving regular correspondence from the First-Year Team. You will also be asked to set up an individual advising appointment between June 9 and July 17 with a summer adviser. These are Barnard College deans, faculty, and staff, who will help you prepare for registration, which will take place the week of July 20. They are also available to talk to you about any general questions you may have about beginning your studies at Barnard.

Advising During the 2026–2027 Academic Year and Beyond: Class Dean, Pre-Major Advisers, Major Advisers

When the Fall 2026 semester begins, you will be assigned a **Pre-Major Adviser**, who will provide guidance as you develop your educational plans and your academic and life goals. In order to help us match you with an adviser, we ask that you please complete and submit this [Pre-Major Advising Questionnaire](#) by Friday, June 12th at 5:00 PM EDT. The information you provide in this questionnaire will be shared with your pre-major academic adviser. Your responses will help your adviser get to know you better before your first meeting in the fall semester. You will receive your assigned pre-major adviser later in the summer during August–September before the second registration round.

When you declare your major toward the end of your sophomore year, you will be reassigned to a **Major Adviser**, a faculty member who specializes in that field and who will guide you through the remainder of your time at Barnard and assist you as you choose the advanced coursework in your department or program. Students who choose to double major will have two major advisers, one in each field.

In addition to your Pre-Major and then Major Adviser, you will have access to a **Class Dean**. In the First Year, this is Dean Siegel (whom you have met). Dean Siegel and the Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Deans work in the [Deans' Office for Advising and Support](#), located in 105 Milbank Hall. Throughout your time at Barnard, you can meet with your Class Dean individually to talk about questions that may arise or concerns that you may have. Your Dean will also provide guidance, advice, and important

information throughout the semester in weekly e-newsletters and regular blog posts. The Class Deans can also help you identify the many people on campus who can help answer your questions, and can provide assistance if you experience an emergency or difficult extenuating circumstances during the year.

When would I go to my Class Dean?

- I have a specific academic concern/question.
- I have general questions about academics and life at Barnard, such as: I am trying to figure out what major to pursue; I want to make sure I understand my degree requirements and am on track to graduate; I am curious about what resources are available to me while I am here.
- I am dealing with a personal issue, and I need help communicating with my professors about it. I'm also wondering what forms of support are available to me on campus.
- I have consulted with my pre-major/faculty adviser, but feel I need additional academic advising.
- I am struggling in a particular class and wondering if I can get some extra help in it.
- I am struggling with time management and getting things done.
- I am thinking about taking a break from Barnard and want to learn more about leaves of absence and the process of returning from them.
- I have a problem/question, and I don't know where to go.
- I'd love an opportunity to meet my dean and talk about how my year is going.

How can I make the best use of my advising relationships?

Remember that this is your college career, so you should give some thought to what kind of guidance and advice you may want or need. It's important to see yourself as the active party in the advising relationship. To be an active and engaged advisee, you should be ready to:

1. Initiate meetings with advisers by dropping by office hours or by emailing or calling to schedule an appointment.
2. Prepare for meetings by writing down the questions or ideas that you have before you go to an adviser's office.



3. Ask about policies, procedures, prerequisites, deadlines, or requirements – if your adviser doesn't know the answer, they can direct you to the right person or office. It is your responsibility to keep track of deadlines and requirements, so check with an adviser, dean, or registrar if you're unsure.
4. Inform your advisers of the experiences that you are having that are shaping your thoughts about your academic path.
5. Talk frankly with your advisers about your successes and your challenges.
6. Reflect on your experiences, your plans, and your goals between your meetings with advisers.

Remember that your academic advisers want to be helpful to you, but it is your responsibility to ask for their guidance and assistance.

How frequently should I meet with my Pre-Major (and then Major) adviser?

You are required to meet with your assigned academic adviser at least twice every semester: once during the first weeks of the semester to finalize the courses that you are taking, and another time during the latter part of the semester when you create a plan for the following term. Once the semester begins, you will not be able to add or drop courses online until you have met with your adviser and discussed your options together. You should also feel free to meet with your adviser throughout the semester when you have questions about your current classes or your future plans. It is especially important to let your adviser know if you have concerns about your performance in any of your courses; your adviser can help you think about what questions you might ask or what actions you might take to improve.



The Curriculum: Foundations@Barnard

Your academic journey at Barnard is shaped by the innovative [Foundations curriculum](#). Rigorous yet flexible, Foundations hones your ability to skillfully interpret information, think critically, and powerfully communicate your ideas. With Foundations, you will explore disciplines across the arts and sciences and master different Modes of Thinking, including a distinct technology requirement that sets Barnard apart.

In your first year, you will take all of your courses, with few exceptions, at Barnard College, with Barnard faculty. Exceptions include languages offered by Columbia University and Columbia classes required to explore certain majors. You will be permitted to take other classes taught by Columbia faculty in your sophomore, junior, and senior years.

The Foundations curriculum includes First-Year Experience and your General Education Requirements, which comprise two categories: Modes of Thinking and Distributional Requirements. Please note that for your entire time at Barnard, only classes taught by Barnard faculty will count towards the six Modes of Thinking requirements.

Barnard Degree Requirements

FOUNDATIONS

First-Year Experience

First-Year Writing · First-Year Seminar · Physical Education

Distributional Requirements

May be satisfied with Columbia classes

Language (2 courses)
Arts/Humanities (2 courses)
Social Sciences (2 courses)
Science (2 courses, 1 with a Laboratory)

Modes of Thinking

Can only be satisfied by Barnard classes

Quantitatively and Empirically (1 course)
Technologically and Digitally (1 course)
Through Global Inquiry (1 course)
Local–New York City (1 course)
About Social Difference (1 course)
With Historical Perspective (1 course)

Major

Varies by program, generally 9–14 courses

Senior Experience

Varies by program: thesis of other research or creative project

Electives

Number of courses will vary and may include a minor or prerequisites for professional school

Total

122 credits, which is approximately 40 courses

General Education Requirements

The General Education Requirements weave together Modes of Thinking and Distributional Requirements. This intersection encourages you to explore multiple disciplines before picking your major and helps you make connections between topics and subjects. You can also choose electives that support and extend your interests.

Requirements are described below; You can use [this site](#) to search for a particular class or requirement.

Modes of Thinking

The six Modes of Thinking are at the heart of the Foundations curriculum. They emphasize the dynamic process of thinking over the certainty of knowing. Some courses for your major will fulfill Modes. Only courses taught by Barnard Faculty at Barnard College can fulfill Modes of Thinking requirements. Courses taken at Columbia University or at other colleges or universities (e.g., courses taken while studying abroad, or off-campus, during summer sessions, or while on approved leave of absence) cannot satisfy the Modes of Thinking.

- 1. Thinking Locally- New York City**
One course that asks students to examine the community and environment in which they find themselves as residents of New York City.
- 2. Thinking through Global Inquiry**
One course that asks students to consider communities, places, and experiences within a global perspective.
- 3. Thinking Technologically & Digitally**
One course that engages students with contemporary and emerging fields such as computational sciences and coding, digital arts and humanities, geographic information systems, or digital design.
- 4. Thinking about Social Difference**
One course through which students examine how difference is constituted, defined, lived, and challenged in cultural, social, historical, and/or regional contexts.

- 5. Thinking with Historical Perspective** One course that enables students to study events and societies of the past, to learn theories and methods of historical analysis, and to discover how different understandings of history shape our conceptions of both past and present.
- 6. Thinking Quantitatively & Empirically** One course that exposes students to empirical and mathematical analysis and tools for problem-solving.

Distributional Requirements

You may start exploring your Distributional Requirements in your first year. They'll expose you to the disciplines, approaches, and skills that together form a Barnard education. As with Modes of Thinking courses, certain courses may even satisfy the requirements within your major. Unlike the Modes of Thinking requirement, Distributional Requirements may be satisfied with Columbia courses.

A. ARTS & HUMANITIES

Requirements: Two courses that explore modes of cultural and artistic expression.

B. SOCIAL SCIENCES

Requirements: Two courses that prepare students to analyze societies and social structures critically and constructively through theoretical and empirical inquiry.

C. SCIENCES

Requirements:

1. One approved science lecture + lab combination.
2. One additional approved 3-point science lecture or lab, or an additional approved science lecture + lab combination.

D. LANGUAGES

Requirements: Two courses in the same language other than English to allow students to explore a new language or deepen their skills in a language they have already studied or used.

First-Year Experience: First-Year Writing and First-Year Seminar

First-Year Writing: Critical Conversations

First-Year Writing (FYW) courses work from the belief that writing is an essential tool in every discipline — one that challenges you to develop meaningful, nuanced questions and complex ideas. Working closely with your instructor and peers in a small, discussion-based seminar, you will learn to translate those complex ideas into clear, precise, and persuasive essays. You will choose from a variety of special topics that focus on a particular theme. All sections analyze a variety of texts, including poems, novels, myths, memoirs, and short stories, along with theory, historical texts, and other scholarly articles that enrich your literary and cultural analyses.

A “critical conversation” is a conversation about ideas. It is sophisticated and thoughtful rather than one-sided and simplistic; it’s not about finding one right answer but rather about closely analyzing all of the evidence at hand and discovering something meaningful. By communicating what you discover clearly and cogently, you add to the broader scholarly conversation. When engaged in a critical conversation with other scholars, you consider their ideas in ways that help you develop your own thinking, rather than merely agreeing or disagreeing with what others have to say. The critical reading, discussion, and academic writing skills we focus on in First-Year Writing provide a foundation that crosses disciplinary boundaries and will help you in all of your courses.

First-Year Writing Workshop

First-Year Writing Workshop is a four-credit course that provides extra support with your critical reading and academic writing skills during your first semester at Barnard. FYW and FYW Workshop are equally rigorous; both fulfill your FYW requirement, and both share the same learning goals. However, FYW Workshop meets 3 times per week instead of 2 times per week; the class sizes are slightly smaller; and all students in FYW Workshop are guaranteed to work with the Barnard Writing Fellows (specially selected and trained Barnard students who

read and comment on your essay drafts, and then meet with you one-on-one to talk about your ideas and revision strategies). Because of the intensive nature of the course and additional class time it requires, FYW Workshop is worth 4 credits instead of 3. FYW Workshop is only offered in the fall semester (not in the spring semester).

If you are interested in one of the limited number of spaces in FYW Workshop, select “First-Year Writing Workshop” on the [First-Year Experience \(FYE\) Course Preference Form](#) AND fill out the accompanying [FYW Workshop Questionnaire](#) by Friday, June 12th. Filling out the FYW Workshop Questionnaire is required in order to be considered for a spot in the course. It will take you about 15–20 minutes to complete. Please answer the questions on your own, without help or edits from others. Do not use generative AI. We want to read your responses, in your own words.

You will receive an email (in your Barnard inbox) before the first registration period confirming whether or not you have secured a spot in FYW Workshop.

First-Year Seminar: Special Topics and Reacting to the Past

First-Year Seminars provide the opportunity to practice your critical reading and writing skills in the context of a seminar environment. Seminars — small, discussion-based format classes — are a crucial element of Barnard’s course offerings across the disciplines and First-Year Seminars prepare students to participate in those discussion-based classes while learning about an interdisciplinary topic. Readings range across genres and historical periods, drawing from a variety of literary texts, films, artwork, performance pieces, data, historical documents, and scholarly articles. The seminars are designed and taught by Barnard faculty from a wide range of home departments and support students to work through challenging material across disciplinary lines. Through generative class discussions and scholarly writing, First-Year Seminars initiate you to the intellectual community of the

college and prepare you for future college-level work. Students choose either a Special Topics seminar or a section of Reacting to the Past.

Special Topics

Special topics seminars are developed individually by faculty to explore interdisciplinary themes. Please see the [First-Year Seminar course descriptions in Vergil](#) for each semester's offerings.

Reacting to the Past

In these seminars, students participate in complex historical role-playing games informed by classic texts. After an initial set-up phase, class sessions are run by students with the guidance of the instructor. These seminars are speaking- and writing-intensive experiences, as students pursue their assigned roles' objectives by convincing classmates of their views through dialogue and debate.

Which one should you take in the fall?

Before it comes time to register for First-Year Experience classes later this summer, you will be notified if you should register for First-Year Writing: Critical Conversations, First-Year Writing Workshop, or First-Year Seminar. This is done so that students are evenly distributed

across the three different courses, and people can be in classes that best benefit them. If you are assigned First-Year Writing for the fall, you **MUST** register for a First-Year Writing course and you will be unable to register for a First-Year Writing Workshop or First-Year Seminar course and vice versa if you are assigned First-Year Seminar for the fall. If you want to start working on your writing skills right away, you should request to take First-Year Writing or First-Year Writing Workshop in the fall.

Remember that you will be assigned to a **category** of a course, not a specific class itself. You will still need to register for a specific class. If you would like to request to be placed in a specific category of courses, please fill out the preference form. If you do not request a placement, you will randomly be assigned. If you have more questions, this [FAQ page](#) may be helpful.

Requests are not a guarantee that you will be placed in that category. We will try our best to honor your request, but it is not always possible as enrollment caps are firm. Registering for First-Year Writing/Writing Workshop and Seminar will take place later this summer, and more information about that process will be provided soon. If you have any further questions, please email first-year@barnard.edu.



First-Year Experience: The PE Requirement

Physical Education

The [Physical Education requirement](#) allows students to pursue their personal interests and learn the importance of regular participation in physical activity in the pursuit of wellness.

One Physical Education course is required for the General Education requirement and must be completed by the end of the first year.* The Physical Education Department offers a range of courses – each is taught on a Pass/Fail basis for one credit. Dance technique courses also fulfill the Physical Education requirement. All Dance technique courses are two credits and are offered for a letter grade.

The Physical Education requirement may be fulfilled through satisfactory participation on an intercollegiate athletic team (including the cheerleading and dance teams). A student participating on an intercollegiate team must add the team course number to their program.

***Note:** Barnard JTS Double Degree students are not required to take PE during their first year and have until the end of their junior year to complete this requirement. If you do decide to take PE this year, you should select **Spring 2027** as your term on the [Physical Education Requirement Preference Form](#). This is because we expect that you will be enrolling in 12 or more credits in Spring 2027 and, therefore, paying the flat-rate tuition, which will keep you from having to pay extra to take PE. To ensure that students who requested PE in the fall have sufficient space, we ask that you do not enroll in a PE course this fall.

For Double Degree specific questions, please be in touch with Junior & Senior Class Dean and Barnard's liaison to JTS for the Double Degree program, Rebecca Grabiner, at rgrabiner@barnard.edu.

Students with Disabilities

Both disabled and non-disabled students at Barnard are expected to complete the one-semester physical education requirement by the end of the first year. Students with permanent or temporary disabilities will be individually advised and placed in a suitable activity, based upon the recommendations of the Director of the [Center for Accessibility Resources and Disability Services \(CARDS\)](#).

Prior to Physical Education course registration, students with disabilities are encouraged to discuss their needs with the Director of CARDS or the Chair of the Physical Education Department. Priority registration may be offered on a case-by-case basis to students who need to enroll in a particular class for disability-related reasons.

All students with disabilities should self-identify to their Physical Education instructors as soon as possible in the semester and discuss any disability-related needs they may have. Please [register with CARDS](#) if you have not previously done so. You may also want to consult with your private clinician and/or a clinician from the Student Health Service regarding your particular situation.

Planning for Fall 2026 and Beyond

Requirements for the Barnard Degree: What do I need to do to earn my BA from Barnard College?

To earn a Bachelor of Arts degree from Barnard College, you must

- Complete the Foundations Curriculum (First-Year Experience, Modes of Thinking, and Distributional Requirements)
- Satisfy the specific requirements for a major
- Earn 122 credits
- Per the [academic residency requirement](#), complete a minimum of seven full-time semesters in academic residence at Barnard

First Year Requirements: What classes must I take in my first year?

In your first year, you will take First-Year Writing in one semester and First-Year Seminar in the other. It is up to you to decide which to start with. Please read on for more information about each of these programs, which together constitute the First-Year Experience (FYE). You will also be required to take Physical Education in your first year. The First-Year Team will be reaching out later this summer to ask you about your preferences regarding FYE and PE.

The rest of your courses on your Fall 2026 schedule can include classes that help you explore a major or that satisfy a requirement for the Foundations Curriculum. You must take a minimum of 12 credits and no more than 19 credits. Academic courses are typically three to four credits. PE classes are worth one credit, and Dance technique classes (which can also satisfy the PE requirement) are worth two.

In your first year, with few exceptions, all of

your classes must be taken at Barnard College. In your sophomore, junior, and senior years, you will have the option to take classes offered at Columbia. Only classes taken at Barnard College, with Barnard faculty, will satisfy the Modes of Thinking requirements.

Can a class count towards more than one of the requirements listed above?

A class can count for up to two categories, but not twice within the same category. For example, Caribbean Cultures and Societies (AFRS BC 2005) is an Arts & Humanities class that can satisfy the “Thinking About Social Difference” Requirement OR the “Thinking Through Global Inquiry” Requirement. This class will cover an Arts & Humanities Requirement and one of your thinking requirements. Similarly, a class can count towards your Major (once you declare it) and one other category (i.e., Modes of Thinking or Distributional Requirements).

How can I keep track of my degree requirements during my time at Barnard?

The **degree audit program** (accessible through [Vergil](#) or the [Barnard Portal](#)) is a way to keep track of First-Year Experience, Modes of Thinking, and Distributional Requirements, and how they overlap throughout your time at Barnard.

Registration for Fall 2026

Registration for the Fall 2026 semester will open on Monday, July 20, and run through Friday, July 24.

What should I do in advance of registration?

- By Friday, July 17, please meet with a summer adviser to discuss your plans for the fall, and to ask any questions about academics and life at Barnard that may be on your mind. We highly recommend that you attend (or watch a recording of) the departmental information sessions focusing on specific programs (for example, majors in STEM, the humanities, the prehealth track) that take place the week of June 22.
- Keep your eye on your Barnard email and the [First-Year Blog](#) for more detailed information and reminders about Registration from the First-Year Team
- Before you register, fill out the [First Year Course Preference Forms](#), which we have sent you along with this Guide, and which are linked in the text that follows. These two forms are due (along with the [Pre-Major Adviser Questionnaire](#)) on Friday, June 12 by 5:00 PM EDT:

1. Please submit the [First-Year Experience Course Preference Form](#) to indicate whether you prefer to take First-Year Writing/Writing Workshop or First-Year Seminar in your first semester. Please see page 12 of the Guide for more information about these requirements.
2. Please submit the [Physical Education Requirement Preference Form](#) to indicate whether you prefer to take PE in the Fall 2026 or Spring 2027 term – further information about the PE requirement follows below (and on page 14).

How do I know which classes to sign up for?

Prior to registration, the First-Year Team will write back with your FYE and PE assignments. They will also provide a list of courses available for registration that are geared specifically for first-year students.

You should aim to sign up for three or four classes in addition to PE and your FYE course, for a minimum of 12 credits. You may not take more than 19 credits. Note that classes are typically worth 3 or 4 credits.

How do I sign up for classes?

During registration week, you will choose a section of First-Year Writing or First-Year Seminar, and you will register for a section of PE if you opted to take it in the fall. Registration takes place on [Vergil](#), which is the interface you will use throughout your time at Barnard to browse and register for classes, see your grades, make changes to your schedule, etc. Please refer to these [Instruction Videos](#) to explore the program before your registration window opens on July 20. The First-Year Team will also provide an overview of how to use Vergil in their summer emails and on the blog.

IMPORTANT: Registration is first-come, first-served, so we strongly recommend that you be ready to register at 10:00 AM EDT on **Monday, July 20**. Feel free to reach out to us via first-year@barnard.edu for advice on what to register for.

What if I need help during registration?

If you are having technical issues during registration, take a screenshot and reach out directly to the Registrar's Office at registrar@barnard.edu. They are your best resource for quick support.

Majors and Minors

What is the deadline to declare a major?

For those of you who aren't entirely sure what you're most interested in coming to Barnard, the Curriculum allows you time to explore. Major Declarations aren't expected of you until Sophomore Spring, and they can be altered all the way through your second-to-last semester (though this isn't recommended).

What is the deadline to declare a minor (should I choose to pursue one)?

The deadline to declare a minor is March 1 of your senior year. Note that minors (unlike majors) are optional.

What does a major or minor involve?

Most majors require at least ten courses for a minimum of 35 credits, and students must earn at least a C- in each course. Most minors require at least five courses for a minimum of 15 credits, and students must earn at least a C- in each course. For further information, please refer to each [department's website](#) for specific requirements or to these [departmental program planning documents](#) (available in the [Barnard Portal](#)).

How do I get started thinking about which major to pursue?

Don't be surprised if you end up picking a major that has nothing to do with what interested you when you first arrived on campus. Your time at Barnard will introduce you to new fields of study that excite you. With support from your adviser, you'll decide on a major that will anchor your remaining studies at Barnard. Each of the College's 50-plus majors and programs engages you in a thorough analysis of your subject and high-level content.

We advise you to browse Areas of Study and visit Departmental websites to look for foundational classes in a prospective major. During your required 1:1 advising appointment this summer, a premajor adviser can help you brainstorm about majors. Please also consider attending or viewing the recordings of the departmental information sessions, which will take place the week of June 22.

The Prehealth and Prelaw Tracks

What classes should I take if I want to apply to medical or dental school?

For students looking to apply to medical or dental school on the Prehealth Track, there are quite a few things to keep in mind; however, for this guide, we will aim to answer the academic preparation questions. Barnard advises students to take the following (14-15) courses:

- 2 semesters of general chemistry with lab(s)
- 2 semesters of organic chemistry with lab(s)
- 2 semesters of biology with labs
- 2 semesters of physics with labs
- 2 semesters of writing and/or English
- 2 semesters of math (calculus and statistics)*
- 1 semester of biochemistry*†
- 1-2 courses in social or behavioral sciences†

* Not always required, but may be recommended by schools

† Recommended for MCAT Preparation

What grades do I need to earn if I am applying to medical school?

All prehealth requirements must be taken for a letter grade, and, for the majority of professional schools, you must receive a grade of C or better. A grade of P is not sufficient for prehealth prerequisite courses.

Does AP/IB credit count for prehealth requirements?

Typically, these credits are not accepted by professional schools for science requirements, but it is possible for math.

What should I major in if I want to go to medical school?

Majoring in a natural science is not a requirement for admission to health professions programs, nor does it confer a special advantage in the admissions process. Prehealth students should choose majors that reflect their genuine academic interests.

Can I study abroad and still complete the prehealth requirements?

With advanced planning, it is possible to study

abroad and be a prehealth student. Please note that prehealth courses (including the prerequisites listed above) should not be taken abroad. We encourage you to discuss your options early with your adviser and a study abroad adviser.

What classes should I take in my first year if I am considering the prehealth track?

Students at Barnard typically take the following within their first year: a) General Chemistry: CHEM BC 2001 (5 credits with lab) and/or b) Intro Organismal/Evolutionary Biology: BIOL BC 1500 (5 credits with lab). Some students take both of these courses, but that may not be right for every student. If you are deciding between the two, keep in mind that the chemistry course sequence for prehealth includes five courses, so if your priority is to finish your coursework as soon as you can, it makes sense to prioritize General Chemistry.

What resources are available for prehealth advising?

One of the summer departmental information sessions during the week of June 22 will be devoted to prehealth advising. To stay informed before stepping on campus, incoming First Years are welcome to reference the [Prehealth Blog](#). The labels on the right-hand side are especially useful if you're looking for something specific. Once you arrive on campus, [Prehealth Advising at Beyond Barnard](#) is the authoritative office for prehealth advising. All new prehealth students should plan to attend a Prehealth Overview session during their first year; these sessions are offered monthly, on different days of the week and at different times to accommodate as many schedules as possible. Prehealth Overview sessions are small-group, highly Q&A focused discussions that cover coursework, building a strong portfolio, and long-term application planning. Students may RSVP for their preferred session via Handshake once the fall semester begins.



What classes are required for other programs in the health professions (i.e., RN, NP, PA)?

Other health professions' coursework requirements can vary highly across programs. With this in mind, it is important to research prerequisites of individual schools of interest in order to create your prerequisite list.

[Prehealth Advising at Beyond Barnard](#) can provide profession-specific resources to help you get started with this research.

What classes should I take if I want to go to law school?

There is no designated set of courses that students need to take in order to be prepared for law school. Admission to schools of law depends on the quality of academic work rather than on the field of study. Your undergraduate program should include courses with substantial writing and reading components that strengthen analytical and research skills. [Beyond Barnard](#) offers advising for students considering law school, and we recommend that first-year students attend a Prelaw Overview event as their first step in advising. Students may register for their preferred session via Handshake once the fall semester begins.

Credit for AP, IB, and Other National Exams

AP and IB Credit: FAQs

How many credits can I receive from my AP/IB exams?

You may receive a maximum of 16 credits for upper-level scores in AP, IB, or other National Exams.

Can I use my AP or IB credits to satisfy College General Education Requirements?

While you may receive credit for AP/IB work (see the charts on the pages that follow), you cannot satisfy any General Education requirements using AP/IB credit.

Can I use my AP or IB exams to place into a higher level course?

Yes, an AP/IB score can determine placement into Barnard class sequences and/or exemptions from course requirements. If the AP credit is to be used as a substitute for a major requirement, students must take another course in its place. For specifics, see the chart below.

Can I receive credit for an AP/IB exam if I take the equivalent course at Barnard?

No, duplicate credit is not allowed. Credit may be granted either for AP/IB or for the equivalent college course, but not for both. Students who take a college class considered to be equivalent to AP credit will forfeit their AP credit in that subject.

For example:

- A student with a score of 4 or 5 in a foreign language cannot receive credit for elementary or intermediate courses in that language.
- A student with AP credit for AP Calculus cannot receive credit for Calculus I. (An exception: A student may receive credit for both AP Psychology and PSYC BC1001.)

How do I get my AP or IB credit on my Barnard record?

Advanced Placement exams: Incoming students should have the College Board send their official scores to the Barnard Registrar's Office. Please see the chart below for further information on subjects, scores and credits.

International Baccalaureate diploma: Incoming students should have their official diploma or exam scores sent to the Barnard Registrar's Office by the examiner of record. Please see the chart below for further information on subjects, scores and credits.

Do you accept other National Examinations and Diplomas?

Students who complete the French Baccalaureate, the German Abitur, or the Italian Maturità may receive up to 16 credits. We may grant similar credit for the Israeli Bagrut. Each GCE A-level or A2-level grade is individually evaluated for college credit. No credit is given for O-level or AS-level examinations. Barnard does not accept CLEP exams for credit. Credit for other national exams or diplomas will be evaluated for college credit on a case-by-case basis.

Credit for AP

Note: The chart below is intended for advising purposes. Students should consult the Registrar Office [webpage](#) for official policies.

AP CLASS	SCORE	# OF CREDITS	NOTES
African American Studies	4 or 5	3	Exemption from AFAS UN1001, credit available for both AP and the class.
Art History	4 or 5	3	
Biological Science	4 or 5	3	Cannot get credit for both AP and BIOL BC1001.
Chemistry	4 or 5	3	
Chinese Language	N/A	0	
Computer Science A	4 or 5	4 or 5	Exemption from COMS W1004, credit available for both AP and the class, but if you are planning on a major in computer science, another elective course must be taken.
Computer Science Principles	4 or 5	3	Exemption from COMS W1001, cannot receive credit for both AP and the class.
Economics: Macroeconomics or Microeconomics	4 or 5	3	Can only receive credit for one exam. If you are planning on a major in economics, refer to this website for more details.
English	4 or 5	3	Can receive credit for more than one exam in this subject.
Environmental Science	4 or 5	3	1.5 additional credits are possible upon review of lab notes.

AP CLASS	SCORE	# OF CREDITS	NOTES
French Language	5	6	Exemption from the placement exam. Should begin with French courses BC3006 or higher.
French Language	4	3	Must take placement exam if you wish to continue studying French.
German Language	5	6	
German Language	4	3	
History: European	5	6	If you are planning on a major in history, refer to this website for more details.
History: European	4	3	If you are planning on a major in history, refer to this website for more details.
History: U.S.	5	6	If you are planning on a major in history, refer to this website for more details.
History: U.S.	4	3	If you are planning on a major in history, refer to this website for more details.
History: World	5	6	If you are planning on a major in history, refer to this website for more details.
History: World	4	3	If you are planning on a major in history, refer to this website for more details.
Human Geography	4 or 5	3	If you are planning on a major in history, refer to this website for more details.

AP CLASS	SCORE	# OF CREDITS	NOTES
Italian Language	5	3	Credits are contingent on completion of a 3000-level Italian course.
Latin	5	6	
Latin	4	3	
Mathematics: Calculus AB	4 or 5	3	Exemption from Calculus 1, and cannot receive credit for both the AP exam and this class. **Can only receive credit for AB or BC, not both**
Mathematics: Calculus BC	5	4	6 credits upon completion of Calculus III with C or higher. Exemption from Calculus 1 & 2, and cannot receive credit for both the AP exam and these classes. **Can only receive credit for AB or BC, not both**
Mathematics: Calculus BC	4	3	Exemption from Calculus 1, and cannot receive credit for both the AP exam and this class. **Can only receive credit for AB or BC, not both**
Music	4 or 5	3	
Physics: B or C	4 or 5	3	Can only receive credit for one exam. No credit is available for Physics 1 or 2 tests.

AP CLASS	SCORE	# OF CREDITS	NOTES
Political Science: Comparative	5	3	Exemption from POLS BC1510 or POLS UN 1501; you cannot get credit for both the class and exam. If you are planning on a major in political science, refer to this website for more details.
Political Science: U.S. Government	5	3	Exemption from POLS BC1210 or POLS UN 1201; you cannot get credit for both the class and the exam. If you are planning on a major in political science, refer to this website for more details.
Psychology	4 or 5	3	Exemption from PSYC BC1001. Students can receive credit for both AP Psychology and PSYC BC1001, but if you are planning on a major in psychology, refer to this website .
Spanish Language or Literature	5	3	All students must take a placement exam before registering for a Spanish course.
Statistics	5	3	Exemption from STAT W1111/UN1111, and cannot get credit for both AP and the class.

Credit for IB

Note: The chart below is intended for advising purposes. Students should consult the Registrar Office [webpage](#) for official policies.

SUBJECT	HIGHER LEVEL IB SCORE	CREDIT	NOTES
Biological Sciences	5, 6, or 7	3	Cannot get credit for both IB and BIOL-BC1001
Chemistry	5, 6, or 7	3	
Computer Science	5, 6, or 7	6	Exemption from COMS W1004, but if you are planning on a major in computer science, another elective course must be taken.
Economics	5, 6, or 7	3	If you are planning on a major in economics, refer to this website for more details.
English	5, 6, or 7	3	
French	7	6	Exemption from the placement exam. Should begin with French courses BC3006 or higher.
French	6	3	
German	5, 6, or 7	6	
History	6 or 7	3	
Italian	5, 6, or 7	6	
Mathematics	7	4	Exemption from Calculus I and II.
Mathematics	6	3	Exemption from Calculus I.
Physics	6 or 7	3	
Psychology	5, 6, or 7	3	Exemption from PSYC BC1101.
Spanish	7	6	All students must take a placement exam before registering for a Spanish course.

SUBJECT	HIGHER LEVEL IB SCORE	CREDIT	NOTES
Spanish	6	3	All students must take a placement exam before registering for a Spanish course.
Theatre Arts	5, 6, or 7	6	

Credit for College Work Prior to Barnard

First-year students with a record of prior coursework taken as non-matriculants at an accredited, degree-granting college or university may request up to 15 points of transfer credit. The courses must be intended primarily for college students and taught at the college by members of its faculty, and must be in excess of the courses required for the high school diploma.

Use [this form](#) to request credit.

Language Placement

The Language Requirement – FAQs

Can I place out of the language requirement?

No, all Barnard students must take two semester-long courses worth three or more credits in a language other than English. The two courses used for the language requirement must be in the same language.

Can I be placed into a higher level of language instruction?

Yes! In some instances an AP or IB score can determine placement for language instruction. Language departments also offer placement exams. Further information on placement follows below.

If a language is not offered at Barnard College, may I take it at Columbia?

Yes! Barnard students may enroll in language courses at Columbia University if the language or the appropriate level of language is not offered at Barnard. However, if in your first year you are starting at the elementary level in one of the seven languages offered at Barnard (see below) or if you have placed into a level of language that is offered at Barnard, you must take the course at Barnard.

Can I take a Columbia section of a language that is also offered at Barnard if that section works better with my schedule?

No. In your first year, you may take languages at Columbia only if the language or level of language is not taught at Barnard.

Can I take any level of a language at Columbia in my sophomore year?

Yes. The Barnard-only rule applies only to students in their first year. Students in their sophomore, junior, and senior years may take any language class at Columbia, even if there are Barnard equivalents.

Languages offered at Barnard College

If you have no background in the languages below, please enroll in the Elementary 1 section offered by Barnard faculty. If you have experience in these languages, read on for information about placement.

American Sign Language (ASL): Contact Professor Laurie Postlewaite at lpotlewaite@barnard.edu if you have a background in ASL and wish to continue studying it.

Chinese: Students who have prior experience with Chinese should complete the [Initial Placement form](#).

French: [Placement test](#) is online.

German: [Placement test](#) is online.

Italian: [Placement test](#) is online, but may not be available until Orientation.

Korean: Students who have prior experience with Korean should complete an [Initial Placement form](#).

Spanish: [Placement test](#) is online. Note: Any student who wishes to study Spanish at Barnard must take this exam.

Languages Offered at Columbia University

If you plan to study one of the languages below and you have no background in the language, please register for a section of Elementary 1; If you have experience in the language, read on for information and contacts regarding placement.

African Languages: By appointment. Please contact Mariame Sy at sms2168@columbia.edu. For more information, please visit [this site](#).

Arabic: Please contact Taoufik Ben Amor at tb46@columbia.edu. Students may register for the course that they estimate would fit their level pending the results of the exam. For more information, please visit [this site](#).

Armenian: By appointment. Please contact Charry Karamanoukian at ck2444@columbia.edu. For more information, please visit [this site](#).

Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian: Placement tests take place the week before the first day of classes in the fall. The test consists of written and oral parts. Students who wish to schedule the test before the start of the fall semester, or to take a BCS test at any other time in the fall to register for spring semester, or who have particular questions about placing, should contact Aleksandar Bošković ab3865@columbia.edu.

Greek: Contact Prof. Nancy Worman at nworman@barnard.edu to determine Greek placement.

Hebrew: Please contact Naama Harel at nh2508@columbia.edu. For more information, please visit [this site](#).

Hindi-Urdu: The Hindi-Urdu faculty will administer written Placement and Proficiency Tests in Hindi and Urdu in August. Please visit [this site](#) for the exact date and time. Hindi and Urdu tests are separate. Please contact Rakesh Ranjan at rr2574@columbia.edu for more information.

Japanese: [Placement test](#) is online.

Latin: Contact Prof. Kristina Milnor at kmilnor@barnard.edu to determine Latin placement.

Persian: Please contact Saeed Honarmand at sh3468@columbia.edu. For more information, please visit [this site](#).

Portuguese: The Portuguese [placement test](#) is offered in the fall and spring semesters during the first week of classes. Please make an appointment with Ana Paula Huback at aph2129@columbia.edu to take this exam.

Russian: Please contact Maria Tsylyna at mt3750@columbia.edu. More information is available at [this site](#).

Sanskrit: Please contact Jay Ramesh at jr3203@columbia.edu. For more information, please visit [this site](#).

Tamil: Please contact Jay Ramesh at jr3203@columbia.edu. For more information, please visit [this site](#).

Turkish: Please contact Zuleyha Colak at zc2208@columbia.edu. For more information, please visit [this site](#).

Yiddish: Please contact Agnieszka Legutko at abl2109@columbia.edu.

What if I want to take a language other than the ones listed above?

Barnard students are permitted to study other languages offered by Columbia University's through the Language Resource Center. You can find the full list of languages [here](#).



Campus Resources

Key Contacts

Here are some key offices at Barnard to help you with academics, housing, financial aid, and more. Keep this list handy for when you need support.

Office of the First-Year Dean in Deans' Office for Advising and Support

Provides academic advising, course planning assistance, and personal support to help first-year students succeed. They also offer guidance on degree requirements, connect students with campus resources, and assist with any challenges students may face during their transition to college. Visit [here](#).

Email: first-year@barnard.edu

Location: 105 Milbank Hall

Phone number: +1 (212) 854-2024

Please note: Emails and phone calls are answered during business hours (Monday-Friday, 9AM-5PM EDT)

Registrar

Facilitates course registration, transcripts, enrollment verification, grade reporting, transfer credits, and other academic records. Visit [here](#).

Email: registrar@barnard.edu

Location: 105 Milbank Hall

Phone number: +1 (212) 854-2011

Bursar

Manages billing, tuition payments, financial aid disbursements, loan accounts, and other student financial services. Visit [here](#).

Email: bursar@barnard.edu

Location: Vagelos Alumnae Center (Entrance in NW Corner of Quad Courtyard)

Phone number: +1 (212) 854-2026

Access Barnard

Offers support, advocacy, and resources to first-generation, low-income, and international students, promoting an inclusive and supportive campus community. Visit [here](#).

Email: accessbarnard@barnard.edu

Location: 111 Milbank Hall

Phone number: +1 (212) 854-3583

Beyond Barnard

Offers advising and support for career exploration, internships, on- and off-campus employment, campus leadership opportunities, graduate and professional school preparation, and fellowship applications. Visit [here](#).

Email: beyondbarnard@barnard.edu

Location: Elliot Hall, 2nd Floor

Phone number: +1(212) 854-2033

BCIT

Barnard College Information Technology provides technical support and resources to help students with all their technology needs. Visit [here](#).

Access: BCIT Service Portal

Location: 011 Milbank Hall

Phone number: +1 (212) 854-7172

Residential Life & Housing

Assists students with housing assignments, manages the housing lottery, and supports a positive on-campus living experience. Visit [here](#).

Email: housing@barnard.edu

Location: 110 Sulzberger Hall

Phone number: +1 (212) 854-5561

Financial Aid

The Barnard Financial Aid Office offers guidance on scholarships, grants, loans, and work-study, providing personalized support for financial aid packages. Visit [here](#).

Email: finaid@barnard.edu

Location: Vagelos Alumnae Center (Entrance in NW corner of Quad Courtyard)

Phone number: +1 (212) 854-2154

International Student Services (ISS)

Provides services and needs of F-1 and J-1 visa students and self-identified new, continuing, and visiting international students. Visit [here](#).

Email: iss@barnard.edu

Location: 119 Milbank Hall (unit within Access Barnard)

Phone number: +1 (212) 854-1777

Study Abroad

Advising and resources for students planning to study abroad (typically in the third year). Visit [here](#).

Email: studyabroad@barnard.edu

Location: 242 Barnard Hall

Phone number: +1 (212) 853-0275

Health Resources**Primary Care Health Services**

Comprehensive medical services, including primary care, preventive medicine, gynecologic care, and nutritional support. Visit [here](#).

Location: Brooks Hall, Lower Level (LL)

To schedule an appointment regardless of insurance (no walk-in appointments are available), call +1 (212) 854-2091

The Rosemary Furman Counseling Center

Therapy, group sessions, workshops, and medication management to help students maintain their mental health. Visit [here](#).

Location: 100 Hewitt Hall (First Floor)

To schedule an appointment for individual or group therapy, call +1 (212) 854-2092

Center for Accessibility Resources and Disability Services (CARDS)

Support for any student living with a disability. For more information on registering, visit [Register with Accessibility Resources & Disability Services](#). Website [here](#).

Email: cards@barnard.edu

Location: Diana Center, Room 307

Phone number: +1 (212) 854-4634

Additional Academic Support

Deans' Office for Advising and Support

Throughout the all four years at Barnard College, the Class Deans provide guidance for students seeking exceptions to academic policies, assistance in navigating academic difficulties, and supplementary advising and support. Visit [here](#).

Email: doas@barnard.edu

Location: 105 Milbank Hall

Phone number: +1 (212) 854-2024

Please note: Emails and phone calls are answered during business hours (Monday-Friday, 9AM-5PM EDT)

Help Rooms

A form of peer tutoring, available every semester for subjects such as math, sciences, economics, computer science, etc. Visit [here](#).

Peer to Peer Tutoring

Work as a peer tutor or request a tutor for any class in which you may be having difficulties. Visit [here](#).

Email: peertopeer@barnard.edu

Peer Coaching

Peer support for students who need assistance in time management, setting achievable goals, and getting things done. Visit [here](#).

Email: peertopeer@barnard.edu

Personal Librarians

A go-to person for all things library-related. Visit [here](#).

Speaking Fellows

Supports students as they practice and develop their verbal and non-verbal communication skills within and beyond academic spaces. Visit [here](#). [Make an appointment!](#)

Writing Fellows

Conference with students about written assignments to help clarify, organize, and strengthen content, so that a non-expert can understand the assignment. Visit [here](#). [Make an appointment!](#)

Health Insurance

Important message from Barnard's Primary Care Health Service

All registered students are required to have health insurance, either through a personal/family policy or through Aetna Student Health, while enrolled at Barnard. All Barnard students are automatically enrolled in the Aetna Student Health Insurance plan at the start of each academic year. If you have personal health insurance and would like to opt out of (waive) the Aetna Student Health Insurance plan, you must do so in June-August 2026 via an online waiver application at [this website](#). The Barnard Primary Care Health Services Insurance website will connect you to the online waiver application, the Aetna Student Health website, frequently asked questions about student health insurance, an insurance comparison chart, and further information about student health insurance. All students, regardless of whether they have personal/family insurance or Aetna Student Health insurance, can access the services at the Primary Care Health Service, Furman Counseling Center, Alcohol & Substance Awareness Program, Center for Accessibility Resources and Disability Services, Well Woman Health Promotion Program, and the Rape Crisis/Anti-Violence Support Center. These services are covered under the Barnard tuition, and there is no per-visit fee or co-pay.

Please note that students will not receive a housing assignment or be allowed to check in to the Residence Halls until their health information has been received and approved by PHRT (Public Health Response Team). Students who fail to submit the required forms will not be allowed access to the campus.

Questions about health forms should be directed to studenthealthforms@barnard.edu.

Questions regarding insurance matters should be directed to the Director of Operations of the Primary Care Health Service, Elliot Wasserman, by phone at (212) 854-8305 or by email at ewasserman@barnard.edu.