

The LAS Insider

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Academic Timeline: What To Do In The First Two Years

Freshman

Check out the college website and read the undergraduate catalog. Make sure you know the college rules, requirements, and deadlines.

See an LAS Academic Advisor regarding course selection for spring (October) and fall (March) registration. When choosing your courses, be sure that they fulfill your requirements and keep an eye toward a potential major.

Visit Career Services or Counseling Center to explore your interests and career options.

Sophomore

Fall:

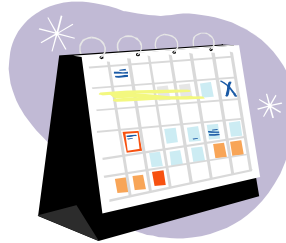
Make an appointment with your academic advisor to get a DARS (Degree Audit Report) and to dis-

cuss progress towards fulfilling your degree requirements, selecting a major and exploring academic options such as minors or double majors.

Investigate study abroad options for junior year.

Spring:

Meet with an advisor in the major department in which you are interested,



and discuss your course of study.

Formally declare your major. Remember you may change your major or add a second major later on.

Continue researching your career path.

What to Do Junior Year...

Before selecting your classes, meet with an LAS Academic Advisor to get a DARS and also with a major advisor.

Investigate research or independent study opportunities.

Participate in an internship or cooperative education experience that compliments your major and career plans.

Begin writing cover letters and resumes.

Attend career fairs to start making contacts and learn what employers in your field are looking for in a new employee.

If you are interested in attending graduate school, begin researching different schools.

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What to do Senior Year...

Prepare for and take a graduate school entrance exam; begin the graduate school application process.

Participate in career services workshops and career fairs to help you refine your interviewing skills and conduct a job search.

Continue refining your resume.

Meet with an advisor to get a DARS and check your progress toward fulfilling your degree requirements.

Meet with your department advisor to make sure that you will complete the major.

Be sure you know and meet all graduation deadlines. Submit an "intent to graduate" form the semester prior to your graduation.

Look at the LAS website for information about the college graduation ceremony.



Myths & Misperceptions About Choosing a Major

#1: Most students enter college "decided" about their major.

Reality: Studies at colleges and universities nationwide have revealed that many students begin their college careers unsure about their major, with 20-50% of entering students declaring themselves as "undecided". Nearly 60% of students change their major at least one time.

#2: There is only one major that will allow me to reach my goal.

Reality: There are many majors available in LAS. While there are occupations that require specific degrees, such as nursing, most do not. Many similar majors can enable you to develop the necessary skills to prepare you for similar work environments or graduate programs. A liberal arts education provides students with highly transferable skills in communication, critical thinking, and problem solving. The specific skills that you develop may be more important than particular degrees. Pick a major that you love, and make sure you gain relevant experience from internships that match your career goals.

#3: Choosing one major means giving up all the others.

Reality: There are a variety of ways for students to combine their interests in more than one major. It is possible for students to complete a double major or two degrees. UIC also offers many different minors. Sometimes students decide instead of combining undergraduate majors to complete just one undergraduate degree and then go on for a master's degree. Post-baccalaureate degrees do not always have to be in the same area as undergraduate degrees.

#4: I'll just take all of my General Education Requirements first.

Reality: While UIC General Education Requirements allow students to explore a variety of fields and disciplines, it is not recommended that students solely concentrate on completing these requirements first. Not every course listed can be used in every major. Here are just a few examples:

- The courses that a student should take to fulfill the Quantitative Reasoning or Natural Science requirements depend on a student's major.
- In general, students are not permitted to use courses from their major department to meet General Education requirements.

You can see that while you are exploring majors, you should select your General Education courses very carefully and consult with an advisor.

#5: The major I pick now will determine my lifelong career.

Reality: Picking a major and a career is not the same thing. Choosing a major does not limit you to only one career choice; choosing a career does not limit you to only one major. Studies have shown that within ten years after graduation most people are working in careers that are not directly connected to their undergraduate major. Jobs also change over time and many jobs that exist today will be performed in very different ways five years from now or may even be obsolete.

Note: A new general education program will be implemented in Fall '07 for new students and those continuing students wishing to follow it. More information will be given in a future issue of the newsletter.

Reality Check: Are You in the Right Major?

You are in the Right major when...

- You can't wait to go to classes in your major.
- You can't stop thinking about the ideas brought up in lecture. The material you study is fun and interesting.
- You have trouble picking which major classes to take because you want to take everything that is offered.
- You pursue opportunities outside of class (research, field trips, additional assignments) in your major field of study.
- You do well in your major classes.



You may be in the Wrong major if...

- You dislike your major and are bored to tears in your current major classes. The books required do not appeal to you.
- You choose your major without much thought or have lost sight of why you chose the major in the first place.
- Your major makes your family happy, but **your** true interests lie elsewhere.
- You feel sick thinking about your classes and assignments in your major. The thought of going to your major classes is scary.
- Your other grades are fine, but your major GPA is lower than it should be. You can't get a handle on the academic work within your current major. You spend hours and hours studying and preparing for exams, but you still aren't getting the results you want.

Want to talk about it? Make an appointment with your major advisor and an LAS Academic Advisor.

Checklist for Essay Exams

- Do I really understand what the question asks me to do?
- Does the first sentence of my answer repeat the question and forcefully show the reader how I will develop my answer?
- Have I done preliminary planning of my major points?
- Do major points stand out?
- Are the major points supported with examples and facts?
- Are there clear transitions between major points?
- Would someone who had not taken this class be able to understand the concept being discussed in the way I explained it?
- Have I completely covered all major points needed to answer the question?
- Did I stick to the question?
- Have I concluded with a summary statement?
- Did I proofread for misspelled words, sentence fragments, run-on sentences, and other grammatical errors?
- Is my handwriting legible?



Study Tip...

Moving beyond Memorizing

Effective learners internalize, rather than memorize.

A lot of people think that learning is all about memorizing. In your courses there may be a few things that you need to memorize, but in general this is not really the best way to learn.

A more effective way is to internalize the information. This means understanding it, making it part of your thinking. Look for ways to make the information you are learning meaningful to you. Make connections between what you are learning and things you have observed. Ask yourself how the material for one course relates to something you are learning in another course.

You Can Do It!! Getting and Staying Motivated

We will all have those days when nothing is going right and things get tough. Days when we don't ace that Chem exam, or our paper on Greek Mythology comes back with more red ink on it than black. Or those times when your friends or family are telling you what to do with your education, and it seems easier to give in rather than to forge the path you want. How do YOU motivate YOU?? How do you stay motivated??

Get motivated

Whether you have kept up on your classes all semester, or you have found yourself falling behind, there are some things you can do right now to stay on track and survive the last few weeks of Fall.

- Set clear short-term and long-term goals
- Break your big assignments (research papers, final projects) into smaller chunks.
- Set small goals for each chunk, and reward yourself. Plan ahead, and include breaks in your studying. Most importantly, seek help when you need it.

Stay motivated

The key to success is staying motivated. We know that motivation changes: what works one day may not work the next, so you have to attack it from all angles.

- Use both internal and external motivation.
- Add variety to your study habits when you find yourself getting bored – take breaks, use different study methods to cover the material.
- Create and keep a schedule – time management will keep your momentum going.
- Use positive self-talk – when you find yourself thinking negative thoughts, stop yourself, and turn these doubts into positive thoughts, “I know this is hard work, but I can succeed on this next test.”

Revive motivation

What if you are already unmotivated?

- Think about what un-motivates you: procrastination, low self-confidence, bad study habits, stress, lack of interest.
- Reevaluate your goals, are they what you really want?
- Evaluate your choices – are you making the right ones? What good choices are you making?
- Relate your school-work to your life – connect your classes with who you are and what you want. The better you are at this, the more interesting your classes will be.
- Seek help if you need it, and don't hibernate!!
- Prioritize- write all the tasks you need to complete in order of what needs to be completed first, then tackle them!



**College of Liberal Arts and Sciences,
University of Illinois at Chicago**

LAS Academic Advising Center
3rd floor of University Hall
Phone: 312-996-3366

Appointments: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday
Hours: 8:30-4:45
Walk-ins: Tuesday 8:30-11:30, 1-3:30

We're on the Web!

www.las.uic.edu

How to Access DARSWeb for Student

Go to www.uic.edu

- Select "UIC Web for Student" from Quick Links, click go
- Scroll over "Degree Audit" from the menu bar at the top of the page and click on "Access an Unofficial Degree Audit"
- Click on "Login to DARSWeb for Student" and then login using your Enterprise ID and Password

To run an audit...

- Choose "Run Default Program" to run a DARS for your current major
- Or, choose "Run Selected Program" and choose any major
- Click on "Submit a New Audit"

Remember this is an unofficial DARS that has not been reviewed for accuracy. To get an official DARS you must see an LAS Academic Advisor.

Attention Freshmen...

We encourage you to participate in one of the First Year Experience programs offered in Spring 2007. Be part of an instant community of first-year peers and work with award-winning teachers. For information on registration visit www.las.uic.edu/info/fye.

Writing from the Core

Take your English 161 class paired with either Psch 100 or Soc 100. The courses will share a number of texts and concepts, so you'll grasp the material even better through reinforced learning between the two courses. You'll also have a powerful support network, including two Writing Center peer tutors, and a UIC librarian assigned specifically to your small writing section.



Gateway Lecture—Engl 107 Shakespeare in Film

In the spring of each first year, one of the College's highly accomplished and stimulating professors leads a class of 125 freshmen on a journey through an important intellectual question. For Spring 2007, Professor Alfred Thomas will lead the Gateway Lecture, English 107: Shakespeare in Film. This course asks how and why Shakespeare's plays have become popular as films in the United States, Europe, and Asia and explores the reasons for their enduring relevance in an era of increasing political and religious conflict.