The Lantern: Illuminating Your First Year is a guide to the ins and outs of academic life at Bryn Mawr College. While classes will be only part of your college experience, they will be the anchor each semester. This first issue of The Lantern focuses on helping you get started on planning your fall semester. Our aim is to help you explore pre-existing interests and discover some new ones. Think of this booklet as containing the basics. But the basics are only the beginning. The most important source of more detailed information can be found at moodle.brynmawr.edu. Just click on Dean’s Office Advising 2024. You won’t register for classes until later in the summer, but the learning and planning can start now!
DEAR STUDENTS IN THE CLASS OF 2024,

I am delighted to welcome you to Bryn Mawr! This is a friendly and stimulating community which will demand a great deal of you and will give you much in return. Your classmates are talented students from all over the world who, like you, are eager for all that a liberal arts college offers.

The College is deeply engaged in planning for the fall. Like most schools and colleges this spring, Bryn Mawr shifted to remote learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope to return to in-person learning this fall. President Cassidy will announce our plans later in June. In the meantime, I hope you will give The Lantern your careful attention this summer. It will “illuminate” your path for the first year and help you understand your summer “to-do” list, explore the course catalog, and select courses for the fall semester.

Your dean will be an important guide and companion throughout your time at Bryn Mawr, academically and personally. You will hear from your dean this summer and then meet together at scheduled intervals to discuss academic planning and other questions you have. They are also available for check-ins anytime and will help you work through personal and academic snags, advise about college policies, and guide you to other resources.

Of course, your college experience is not just about what happens in the classroom. A Bryn Mawr education endeavors to nourish habits of mind and heart that will serve you well for your whole life. As you explore intellectual interests, we expect that you will be drawn to activities that feed your soul, give you joy, and connect you to others here at the College and beyond. There are dozens of student clubs and organizations as well as opportunities for leadership, research, activism, community service, and internships here and at our partner colleges.

For now, as you prepare for this adventure, I hope that you find opportunities for refreshment this summer. When you arrive at Bryn Mawr, we hope you will be ready to greet the new community that awaits you. All of us here are eager to meet you and to get to know you.

Best wishes,

Jennifer L. Walters
Dean of the Undergraduate College
SUMMER OVERVIEW

We can’t wait to welcome you to the Bryn Mawr family! You can begin preparing for your first semester now. Here’s an overview of how the summer works:

- **Set up your @brynmawr.edu email address.** This is how we will contact you all summer (and throughout your time at BMC). Hint: there’s an Outlook 365 app you can use on your phone to make it easy to access. Each week during the summer, we’ll send important info via the Tuesday Newsletter and the Monday Morning Minute, so make sure you’re checking your BMC email regularly!

- **Log on to Moodle,** the online learning platform you’ll use throughout your time at Bryn Mawr. Click on Dean’s Office Advising 2024—This is where you’ll access and complete many of the items on your summer to-do list, including placement exams, information on choosing courses, and schedules and sign-ups for webinars and summer advising appointments.

- **Fill out your Advising Questionnaire on Moodle by June 17.** This will give your advisor a chance to get to know you better and steer you in the right direction for your fall planning.

- **June 22–26 is Webinar Week!** We’d like each of you to attend one webinar during this week to learn more about how to prepare for the start of your college career and to get answers to any questions you may have.

- **Additional Wednesday Webinars** will happen throughout the summer, focusing on varying subjects (from placement exams to financial aid and more). Information on times and how to register for all webinars will be announced in the Tuesday Newsletter and on Moodle.

- **Take any necessary placement exams between June 22–July 15.**

- **Have a Zoom or phone advising appointment to discuss your course selection for the fall.** You’ll receive information on available times shortly.

- **Preregister for classes via BiONiC in August.**

- **Along the way, keep an eye out for deadlines and complete all the other things on your to-do list to make sure you’re prepared for the start of the semester.**

**Still have questions? You can post a question to the discussion forum on the Dean’s Office 2024 Moodle page or send an email to welcomebmc@brynmawr.edu!**

**MOODLE:** An online learning platform that you will use throughout your time at Bryn Mawr to see course syllabi and readings, participate in discussion forums, and view some grades. You’ll also have a page hosted by the Dean’s Office to help manage your advising. Log on at moodle.brynmawr.edu using your College username and the same password you use for your BMC email.
ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Bryn Mawr’s college-wide requirements are designed to engage you in a variety of fields, expose you to emerging areas of scholarship, and prepare you to live in a global society and within diverse communities. **You have until the end of your junior year to fulfill most requirements.** We want you to be aware of them now, but not to worry about fitting them all in your first year!

32 UNITS TOTAL REQUIRED TO GRADUATE

![Pie chart showing the distribution of units]

**MAJOR**
Most majors require between 10–12 courses in that field. Double majors are possible as well, but only a small percentage of students choose that option.

**REQUIREMENTS**
- 1 Emily Balch Seminar
- 1 course in Quantitative Methods
- 2 courses in Foreign Language
- 4 courses to fulfill the Approaches to Inquiry (see box)

**ELECTIVES**
Whatever slots are left over outside of your major and requirements are courses you can take just for fun. Explore a new topic, learn something new...take risks!

*MINOR*
You can use some of your electives to complete a minor. Most minors require 6 courses. While a major is required, minors are optional.

APPROACHES TO INQUIRY

Students must complete one course each in the following four approaches:

- **Critical Interpretation (CI):** Critically interpreting works, such as texts, objects, artistic creations and performances, through a process of close-reading. Courses in English, History of Art, Philosophy, and many others often meet CI.
- **Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC):** Analyzing the variety of societal systems and patterns of behavior across space. CC courses are found throughout many departments, but are particularly common within Sociology, Anthropology, and Education.
- **Inquiry into the Past (IP):** Inquiring into the development and transformation of human experience over time. Besides the History department, you may find IP courses in departments such as Archaeology, Growth and Structure of Cities, and many others.
- **Scientific Investigation (SI):** Understanding the natural world by testing hypotheses against observational evidence. SI courses are found not only in Biology, Chemistry, Geology, and Physics, but occasionally in Anthropology, Computer Science, and Psychology.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO NOTE ABOUT COLLEGE-WIDE REQUIREMENTS

1. All students must demonstrate Quantitative Readiness before enrolling in a Quantitative Methods course. See Moodle for more information.
2. Only courses in which you earn a 2.0 (C) or better will satisfy the requirements.
3. The four Approaches to Inquiry (CI, CC, IP, and SI) must be completed through courses in four different departments.
4. Only one of the four Approaches to Inquiry courses may count toward your major.
5. No one course can be used to satisfy more than one requirement.
6. Your dean is happy to help answer questions about the requirements and to help you plan how you will complete them!
PLACEMENT EXAMS: HOW, WHEN, AND WHY?

We want you to have a positive experience in your classes, so that means making sure you are not taking a class at a level that is too advanced or too introductory for your particular experience. Making sure you’re in the right level class is what we mean by “placement.” Placement exams (and more detailed information about them) are available on Moodle and must be completed between **June 22–July 15**.

What Courses Am I Ready to Take? It depends on the field of study! First of all, in many fields, entering students can take classes at the 100-level and 200-level. Just look at the course descriptions in BiONiC to see whether any prerequisites are listed. If none are listed, you are eligible to take that class. If there are prerequisites, you may meet them through placement exams, AP/IB scores, or (in rare cases) a conversation with the professor. First-year students are not usually allowed to take 300-level courses.

Which Departments Have Placement Exams? Only Mathematics and the Foreign Languages have placement exams, which means that not everyone will need to take them.

- The Math department has three placement exams to place students into Calculus 1, Calculus 2, or Multivariable Calculus. If you do not intend to take any of these courses or don’t have any previous Calculus experience, you do not have to take a placement exam at all.

- Each foreign language department offers a placement exam to help students find the appropriate level course.* Even if you have AP or IB credits, most language departments still require you to take a placement exam if you plan to study that language at Bryn Mawr.
  - If you are starting a new language, you simply begin at the beginner level and do not have to take the placement exam.

- The Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics, Psychology, and Physics departments may consider AP, IB, or A-level scores in placement. If you are interested in exploring this, please consult with faculty at the Academic Fair (more info to come on what/when that is).

*Russian and Greek do not have formal placement exams at this time, but if you have prior experience with these languages, you should speak to one of the professors at the Academic Fair.

Confused? Check out the more detailed information about math and foreign languages on the Dean’s office advising page in Moodle.