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 plan your coursework for the 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 2025.

You won’t register until later in the summer, but the learning and planning can start now!
DEAR BRYN MAWR COLLEGE CLASS OF 2025,

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 give you much in return. Your classmates are talented and curious students from all over the world who, like you, are eager for all that a compelling liberal arts education offers.

We’re proud of what our community has been able to accomplish together during these two historic years of the COVID-19 pandemic and are looking forward to coming together again as a fully residential campus in the Fall.

To prepare for that, please give this first issue of The Lantern your careful attention. It will help you plan your fall course schedule and “illuminate” your path for the first year. In addition, each week the Tuesday Newsletter will offer insights and information about what you can expect campus life to be like, what to bring (and not bring) with you to campus, how to explore the course catalog and other resources, and how to tackle your summer “to-do” list.

Your dean will be an important guide throughout your time at Bryn Mawr as you navigate the challenges and opportunities ahead. You will get a message from your dean this summer and then meet at scheduled intervals throughout the year to discuss academic planning and other questions that come up. Deans are available for check-ins anytime and can be a resource and guide for you throughout your Bryn Mawr career.

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 engagement, 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. All of us here are eager to greet you and to get to know you in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,
Jennifer L. Walters
Dean of the Undergraduate College
SUMMER OVERVIEW

We can’t wait to welcome you on campus in August! In the meantime, here’s an overview of how the summer works:

• We’ll be sending out a Tuesday Newsletter each week (on Tuesday!) to your brynmawr.edu email address. Make sure you get your email set up now (following the instructions sent by Admissions) and get in the habit of checking it regularly.

• More detailed information will be found on the Dean’s Office Advising 2025 Moodle site. 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.

• June 14 - June 18 is Webinar Week! We will be offering a few different webinars covering topics related to placement, advising, and course exploration. We’ll post recordings, but try to attend in real time if you can, and bring your questions.

• Throughout the summer, we’ll hold additional webinars on a wide range of subjects, some relevant to all, some aimed at specific audiences, including international students, first-generation college students, BIPOC, and more.

• You will take any necessary placement exams and submit your choices for your ESEM (first-year writing seminar) by July 12.

• Between July 6 and July 30, you’ll have an advising appointment with your dean via Zoom to talk about goals and plans and discuss possible courses for the fall.

• Customs New Student Orientation Virtual Summer Program begins July 19. This will provide more information around many aspects of life at Bryn Mawr, and lead to some more to-do items.

• You will preregister for classes via BiONiC between August 2 and August 13.

• We’ll see you on August 25 (August 24 for international students)!

In the meantime, check out our Frequently Asked Questions at www.brynmawr.edu/welcome/incoming-students, post a question to the discussion forum on Moodle, or send an email to welcomebmc@brynmawr.edu!

HOW TO WORK WITH YOUR DEAN

You will be assigned a dean whom you can look to as a partner and resource for academic and non-academic issues throughout your time at Bryn Mawr. Your dean will be your primary adviser for your first two years and will meet with you at least once a semester to discuss course selection and help you reflect on your journey and plan for the future. You may make additional appointments with your dean at any time to discuss anything from homesickness to time management to extra-curricular activities. Your dean is not only interested in helping you through difficulties, but is also eager to cheer on your accomplishments, both large and small.

Before you even arrive, you’ll get a chance to speak with your dean this summer via Zoom. We’ll post links and instructions on the Dean’s Office Advising Moodle page.

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. 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

MAJOR

34%

REQUIREMENTS

25%

ELECTIVES*

41%

MAJOR

Most majors require between 10–12 courses in that field. Double majors are possible as well!

REQUIREMENTS

• 1 Emily Balch Seminar
• The Quantitative Requirement
  • Demonstrate Quantitative Readiness through standardized test scores, passing the Q Test or taking QSem this fall. More info in Moodle!
  • One 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. Only courses in which you earn a 2.0 (C) or better will satisfy the requirements.

2. The four Approaches to Inquiry (CI, CC, IP, and SI), must be completed through courses in four different departments.

3. Only one of the four Approaches to Inquiry courses may count toward your major.

4. No one course can be used to satisfy more than one requirement.

5. 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 by July 12.

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 should not take 300-level courses in their first semester, even if no prerequisite is listed.

Which Departments Have Placement Exams? Only Mathematics and the Foreign Languages have placement exams.

• The Math department has three placement exams to place students into Calculus 1, Calculus 2, or Multivariable Calculus. If you are considering taking any of these classes, make sure you read the information provided in the Advising Center.

• Most foreign language departments require placement exams to help students with previous knowledge of the language find the appropriate level course.* Even if you have AP or IB credits, you must 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 take the placement exam.
  • If you plan to continue with a language you studied before, but do not plan to take courses in it your first year, you should take the placement exam so you’ll be ready for next year.

• 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 see the Advising Center in Moodle for more information.

*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 during Customs Week.

Confused? Check out the more detailed information about placement and about math and foreign languages on the Advising Center in Moodle.
HOW TO START BUILDING YOUR FALL SCHEDULE

• There are two required courses everyone will take in the fall of their first year: The Emily Balch Seminar (a.k.a. ESEM) and THRIVE.

• **ESEM** is a small seminar where you will learn critical reading, thinking, and writing skills along with other first-year students. Each ESEM has a theme and earns one unit of academic credit. Read about the different choices at https://www.brynmawr.edu/academics/emily-balch-seminars and make your selections by Monday July 12.

• **THRIVE** is a required 10-week non-academic “intro to college” course that earns you 2 PE credits. It introduces you to college resources through an anti-racist lens and encourages self-reflection and community-building.

OTHER THAN THOSE, EVERYONE’S SCHEDULE WILL LOOK DIFFERENT.

• Some students will take Writing 120, a course for multilingual writers that provides extra guidance and practice in American academic writing. Based on information available in your applications to Bryn Mawr (such as where you grew up, first language/language spoken at home/high school), you may be asked to take a writing assessment this summer. The writing assessment along with other information will guide the Writing Program faculty in making their recommendations to you. The Writing Program faculty will contact students in July with more information.

• Some students will take Qsem to fulfill the College’s Quantitative Readiness requirement and to be fully prepared for other science and math-oriented courses (whether for general college requirements or for academic or career interests). For more information on the Quantitative Readiness requirement and the ways to fulfill it, see the Dean’s Office Advising 2025 Moodle.

• Most students will take a foreign language to continue a language they have begun to study or to start a new language. These classes are designed to build community and cross-cultural understanding, making them a great fit for first-year students. Taking language this year would allow you to achieve your language goals (whether to fulfill the language requirement, achieve fluency in one or more language, or somewhere in between.)

• As you make some preliminary plans for your remaining slots, your goal should be to explore existing interests and discover new ones by trying new subjects. In addition to familiar subjects like history, English, and physics, check out all the new areas you could explore like comparative literature, gender and sexuality studies, geology, neuroscience, Russian, and many more!

YOU CAN START LEARNING NOW ABOUT COURSES OFFERED THIS FALL AT WWW.BRYNMAWR.EDU/ ACADEMICS/EXPLORE-COURSES.
WE KNOW YOU HAVE QUESTIONS!

Some philosophical (how can I know I’m interested in something that I’ve never studied before?), some logistical (how much time do I need between classes?). Questions like these are why we have the Advising Site in Moodle, webinars with deans and other experts, and individual advising appointments. Still we have the space to tackle a few more common topics here:

WHAT ABOUT THE PERFORMING ARTS?

You can study dance and theater at Bryn Mawr and music at Haverford. All three offer auditions to determine membership in various ensembles. Music also offers private instruction for credit. Check out the departmental websites and follow the instructions there (keeping in mind that updates may not be posted until later in the summer).

Some students study the performing arts for academic credit, but some pursue their interests as an extracurricular activity (or sometimes Phys Ed credit) instead through the official Bi-Co programs, or through student clubs, both at Bryn Mawr and in the Tri-Co, some by audition, some open to all. Check out the student activities website and look on social media for more information.

WHAT ABOUT STUDIO ART?

Fine arts classes are offered at Haverford in a range of media. These courses are very popular and sadly, they don’t hold spots for entering students in the fall semester. Plan to take one of these courses another semester. In the meantime, check out Art Club and other activities. What about things like med school, or a combined engineering program? Aren’t there a lot of specific things I have to take?

If you are thinking about attending medical school or preparing for some other health profession or interested in engineering, you’ll want to check out the detailed information in Moodle. Knowing about the requirements for programs like these will guide your selection of courses, but remember you don’t have to do everything at once.

SAMPLE SCHEDULES:

Arabic 001: Introduction to Modern Standard Arabic
Growth and Structure of Cities 185: Urban Culture and Society
Emily Balch Seminar 001:
History of Art 240: The Global Baroque
Thrive

Spanish 102: Advanced Language Through Culture
Chemistry 103: General Chemistry I
Math 102: Calculus II
Emily Balch Seminar
Thrive

MORE SCHEDULES AND MORE DETAILS ON MOODLE!
SUMMER TO-DOS

Fundamental: Make sure your Bryn Mawr email is set up AND check it at least once a week! We’ll be sending out a Tuesday Newsletter each week just for entering students to give you the info and reminders you need.

The following list has many of the most important to-do items. The Tuesday Newsletter will give you more information and links. But mark these on the calendar now to structure your summer.

Request Academic or Residential Accommodations, if Applicable

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing Form</td>
<td>June 14</td>
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<td>Webinar Week Planning for your time at Bryn Mawr</td>
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<td>Health forms</td>
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<td>Individual Advising Appointments (via Zoom)</td>
<td>July 6-30</td>
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<td>Placement Tests (as needed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emily Balch Seminar Registration</td>
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<td>Submit your OneCard Photo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Customs New Student Orientation Virtual Summer Program begins</td>
<td>July 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall College Bill Due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preregistration for Classes</td>
<td>August 3-13</td>
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ACADEMIC AND/OR RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:

The Access Services office at Bryn Mawr provides support and reasonable accommodations when necessary to ensure **equal access for students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities**. Decisions about appropriate accommodations are made on an individual basis. Since previous accommodations (e.g. those informally given and/or via an IEP or 504 Plan) do not automatically carry over to college, the process to arrange for your accommodations at your new institution does take some time, so start now to ensure everything is in place for your arrival!

If you have a diagnosis, have had an IEP or a 504 Plan in high school and/or for any reason think you might be eligible for academic and/or housing modifications at Bryn Mawr, please contact Deb Alder, Director of Access Services **as soon as possible** at (610) 526-7351 or dalder@brynmawr.edu. For additional information – including eligibility criteria and documentation requirements – please visit the Access Services web page at [www.brynmawr.edu/access_services](http://www.brynmawr.edu/access_services).

ARRIVAL DATES!

**AUGUST 24**: Arrival for students on J-1 or F-1 visa

**AUGUST 25**: Arrival for all other new students

**AUGUST 30**: first day of classes, Fall 2021