Advice From
Your Registrar

CHOOSING YOUR COURSES

The first principle: it's your choice because it’s your education. You would plan and explore if you were renovating your house; in the next 3 or 4 years, you will essentially be renovating your mind, so do it deliberately and carefully, not by accident. **Take charge of your own education!**

First, read through the materials: the New Student Guide gives a useful overview. The Faculty’s New Students Website is a good place to get started. The Calendar and Registration Handbook & Timetable give the full details. You might also want to consult departmental or program websites, where they often provide even more detail and advice.

Second, sort out which programs interest you. Students in Arts & Science do not enter programs until second year, so you’ll want to choose courses in first year that make programs available for second year. Some programs prefer but do not require an introductory course (e.g. Philosophy), some require everyone to take a single particular course (e.g. Psychology), others require a matrix of courses (e.g. Commerce, most Life Science programs), and yet other programs allow you to choose a set from among alternatives (e.g. International Relations, Ethics, Society & Law).

In first year you can often pursue varied interests. You may take any course for which you have the required preparation. Some courses have enrolment priority for certain admission categories, but this merely means you must wait until August to enrol if you are not in the priority group. You might want to explore new subjects not taught in high school, such as Psychology or Anthropology. Consider enrolling in a First Year (199) Seminar or applying to UC One: Engaging Toronto. These courses may count as one of your Breadth Requirements so you can satisfy your curiosity and the requirement.

You should keep in mind that none of the courses or programs in Arts & Science provide direct job training – but you knew that already. Our courses provide the education you will blend with your experience and other personal skills for later opportunities. Keep an open mind: the course that may looks less practical could provide you with the analytical, writing or presentation skills you’ll need in a future career.

**The most important advice is to choose courses you think you will find interesting.**

This is especially true if you intend to apply eventually to another faculty such as Dentistry, Medicine, Pharmacy or Law. Look into their requirements, but remember that you are much more likely to do well and achieve your goals if you are interested in what you are studying. Those faculties advise you to follow a good, sensible Arts & Science plan, and then apply when you become eligible. It seldom helps to distort your choices trying to gain some minute or illusory advantage.

Finally, once you’ve read the materials and have a preliminary set of courses and even a preliminary timetable, come to one of our Course Enrolment & Registration Workshops, a small group planning session with an academic advisor. After a workshop, you should be ready to enrol in courses over the web when your turn comes up in July.

Yours,
Glenn A. Loney, Registrar 1983-2006
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(2) An Academic Skills Inventory