

Academic Advising: Quick Reference Guide

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This guide, along with other materials for faculty advisors, is available at:

<http://www.oxy.edu/advising-center/faculty-resources>

1. Degree Requirements

Students need the following to graduate:

- At least **128 units of credit** (no more than 64 can be transfer units)
- A cumulative **GPA for all classes of at least 2.0**
- A cumulative **major GPA of at least 2.0** (see below for more information on how to check this)
- Completion of all **Core Requirements**
- Completion of a **major** and its constituent requirements, including **comps**

All students can take up to 18 units per semester. Students who are sophomores and above with a GPA of at least 3.0 can register for an additional 2 units (for a total of 20) beginning on the first day of classes.

In order to make "normal progress" toward graduation, students should take at least 16 units each semester. The chart on the right shows the number of units a student would be expected to have at the beginning of each semester if they were registering for 16 units per semester and have no units from transfer, AP, or summer coursework. For students who are lagging behind, it is often helpful to have a discussion about their strategy for catching up (e.g. taking summer courses at another institution, enrolling in 1- and 2-unit classes in addition to four 4-unit courses, etc.)

Year	Semester	Units Earned*
1st	1	0
	2	16
2nd	3	32
	4	48
3rd	5	64
	6	80
4th	7	96
	8	112
Completed Degree		128

Enrolling in at least 12-units is required to maintain full-time status; dropping below 12-units can affect eligibility for financial aid, athletics, and more. Maintaining "normal progress" is particularly important for students receiving financial aid, which is generally awarded for no more than 8 semesters.

*Number of units earned at beginning of each semester, assuming 16 units per semester and no summer or transfer coursework.

2. Core & Writing Requirements

The College requires students to complete all Core Requirements by the end of their third year. In general, we recommend that students fulfill most of their Core Requirements during their first two years to allow them to focus on their major(s) during their final two years at the college.

Fall FYS Course	Spring FYS Course	<i>First-year student must take these courses. This requirement is waived for transfer students.</i>	
CPUD U.S. Diversity	CPRF Regional Focus	CPGC Global Connections	<i>Some courses satisfy both a blue requirement and a red requirement.</i>
CPFA Arts	CPPE Pre-1800		
CPMS Math or Science (1)	CPMS Math or Science (2)	<i>Lab Science (CPLS) courses can also be used to fulfill one or both of the CPMS requirements</i>	
CPLS Lab Science			
LANG Language Proficiency		<i>Student must have proficiency in a non-English language equivalent to having completed a 102-level course.</i>	

Students who are unfamiliar with the Core Requirements may benefit from reading the *Core Requirements Worksheet* and viewing the "Intro to Advising, Part 2: Core Requirements" video. Both are available at <http://www.oxy.edu/advising-center/student-resources>.

Advisors should encourage their advisees to check their progress during advising sessions. You can do so by logging into <http://my.oxy.edu>, going to the "Academic Info and Advising" tab, and clicking **Advisee List/Advising Transcript** in the "Advising Links" box.

Once you have selected a student from your list of advisees, click the "Core Requirements" link. A new display will appear at the bottom of the screen showing a green check mark next to the requirements that have already been completed and a red "X" next to requirements that have yet to be fulfilled. *Please note that requirements that will be satisfied by the courses currently in progress will still be marked with an "X."*

First-Stage & Second-Stage Writing Requirements

Information about the college-wide writing requirements is available here:

<https://www.oxy.edu/academics/writing-program-requirements>

Important note: Sophomores who have not passed the First-Stage Writing Requirement must enroll in WRD 201 in order to fulfill the requirement.

3. Declaring/Adding/Changing a Major

Students must declare a major by the end of their sophomore year and are encouraged to do so prior to Registration Week of their fourth semester. (Students who transfer to college as juniors should declare a major as soon as it is practicable.) When a student declares a major they must also choose a faculty advisor affiliated with that major. They can stay with their current faculty advisor if they happen to be in the major department.

To declare a major, student should fill out a Major Declaration form (available at the Registrar, Advising Center, and on [the Registrar's webpage](#)) and get signatures from their major advisor and the chair of the relevant department. The form can then be submitted to the Registrar. Some majors have an additional form on their web page that should be filled out prior to meeting with the Department Chair.

Students can double major, but they must complete all requirements for each major *and must complete separate comps*. Students with two majors may decide to drop one major up until the beginning of the senior year and often replace it with the corresponding minor (when available).

4. Declaring a Minor

Students are not required to declare a minor. Those who elect to declare a minor must do so no later than the last day of classes of a student's penultimate semester. The Minor Declaration form (available at the Registrar, Advising Center, and on [the Registrar's webpage](#)) requires only the signature of the chair of the respective department.

Students may declare multiple minors, however if it becomes apparent that the requirements will not be complete by the student's final semester, the minor may be dropped in order to clear a student for graduation and participation in the commencement ceremony.

5. Requirements for Participating in Commencement

To fully participate in the commencement ceremony, a student must have met all requirements to graduate. A student who has completed all core requirements (including foreign language proficiency), all major requirements, the writing proficiency requirements, successfully completed the senior comprehensive requirement, and has completed a minimum of 124 units, or who will have completed at least these requirements upon completion of courses for which a grade of CIP has been recorded at the time senior grades are submitted, may walk in the commencement ceremony without receiving their diploma.

A student who does not meet the requirements to walk in the commencement ceremony may submit a petition for special consideration to the Registrar to walk in the ceremony without receiving their diploma. These petitions will be accepted no later than the last day of classes, and are approved only in rare cases in which extenuating circumstances can be demonstrated.

Students receiving a failing grade required for a Core, major, writing proficiency, or comprehensive examination requirement at the end of the second semester of the senior year will not be eligible to participate in that year's ceremony.

6. When Faculty Advisors are on Leave/Sabbatical

When a faculty member is on leave or sabbatical, a designated alternate advisor should be arranged by the faculty member in consultation with their department chair. In some cases, faculty members who will continue to be on or near campus during their leave may decide to continue advising some or all of their advisees. *In all cases, declared majors should be assigned an advisor within the department.*

For non-declared students, the Advising Center can serve as the temporary advisor and will provide registration PINs after having a formal advising meeting. For students who have already declared a major, the Advising Center is available as a resource, but will *not* provide registration PINs unless there are extraordinary circumstances that have prevented the student from meeting with either their faculty advisor or department chair.

Faculty advisors can also contact the Advising Center or the Director of Advising to get a student's PIN in cases where a PIN Letter has been misplaced or a faculty member is advising on behalf of a colleague who is on leave or sabbatical.

7. Students Participating in Off-Campus Programs

Students who are currently studying abroad or participating in other off-campus program are expected to contact their advisors via email or other means during Advising Week to discuss course selection and get their PIN and registration time. Off-campus students will register online during their normal registration times. (Students studying in places with limited internet access should contact the International Programs Office for assistance.)

8. The Advising Center

While faculty advisors are always the primary source of academic advising for all students at Occidental, the Advising Center provides additional support for students on routine academic matters, including questions about academic policies and procedures. Resources for both students and faculty advisors are also available on the Advising Center website.

Located in **Johnson Student Center room 134**, the Advising Center is open weekdays from 10am to 3pm. (The schedule may vary slightly due to advisor availability.) While student drop-ins can often be accommodated, Advising Week is our busiest time, so making an appointment is strongly recommended. Students can make an appointment by following the "Schedule an Appointment" link on the Advising Center website: <http://www.oxy.edu/advising-center>

The Advising Center can also be reached by telephone (323-259-1341) or email (advisingcenter@oxy.edu)

9. Pre-Health, Pre-Law, and 3-2 Program

Pre-Health Advising

Director: Miao "Kat" Wang

Pre-Health Advisor: Cathreen Oracion

<http://www.oxy.edu/pre-health-advising/>

The Office of Pre-Health Advising provides support for pre-medical, pre-health, and STEM students to help them make well-informed career decisions and develop effective strategies for achieving their professional goals. The office provides resources to help students choose appropriate courses based on graduate-level program requirements, and also helps to connect students with co-curricular

activities such as research, volunteering and clinical patient interactions. They offer application review, practice interviews and step-by-step assistance for students ready to apply for graduate school. New students possibly interested in health-related professions are encouraged to connect with Pre-Health Advising early on and to join their mailing list.

Information about courses commonly required by medical programs can be found at:

Pre-Law Advising

Director: Thalia González

<http://www.oxy.edu/pre-law-advising/>

Pre-Law Advising includes advising for law-curious and law-bound students; information about the law school admissions process; LSAT advising; personal statement advising; and advice for securing letters of recommendation. Prof. Thalia González (Politics) serves as the College's pre-law advisor.

3-2 Program Advising

Occidental has a cooperative engineering program with Columbia University and the California Institute of Technology that allows well-qualified student to complete a B.A. at Occidental and a B.S. in Engineering from the partner school in five years: the first three years are spent at Oxy, followed by two years at the partner school. Students who are interested in this program should contact Prof. Alec Schramm (alec@oxy.edu), the 3-2 Program Liaison, during their first semester at Occidental.

10. FERPA

The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides college students with significant privacy protections. With very limited exceptions, FERPA prohibits educational institutions from sharing a student's educational records without specific written consent. Educational records include (but are not limited to) grades, transcripts, class lists, course schedules, and financial aid information. Even within an institution, FERPA states that educational records should only be shared with employees who have a "legitimate educational interest" in the information. If you have questions about FERPA, please contact the College Registrar or the Director of Advising.

11. Student Alerts

Occidental has two student alert systems. The **SEAN Academic Concern** system helps students know that an instructor or advisor is concerned about a student's academic performance. Instructors typically send a SEAN when a student does not turn in a major assignment by the deadline; receives a low exam score; has poor attendance in class; or due to other indications that a student may be struggling in the course. The SEAN alert is sent to the student and copied to the student's advisor. The student is then asked to respond by filling out a brief online form. Depending on the nature of the concerns and the student's response, administrators in Academic Affairs and Student Affairs may reach out to the student and/or faculty member to offer additional support. Faculty advisors and instructors are able to submit academic SEANs for students who they are currently enrolled in their course or assigned to them as an advisee. Questions about the SEAN Academic Concern system can be directed to the Director of Advising.

The **Oxy Care Report** (formerly "SEAN Personal Concern") allows faculty and staff to report non-academic concerns. *These alerts are NOT sent to the student.* Instead, the alert will be reviewed by members of the Student Success Team and appropriate support will be offered to the student. Oxy Care Report concerns

may include medical, behavioral, emotional, relationship, family, and other issues. Questions about the Oxy Care Report system can be directed to Dr. Vivian Garay Santiago (garaysantiago@oxy.edu)

12. Contact Information

Questions related to academic advising can be directed to Edmond Johnson (Director of Advising):

edmondjohnson@oxy.edu

Johnson Hall 108; 323-341-4139

Questions about the registration process should be directed to the Registrar's Office:

registrar@oxy.edu

AGC 101; 323-259-2686