

HOW TO CHOOSE COURSES FOR YOUR NEXT TERM

An SDS degree provides both structure and flexibility to pursue a variety of courses. Students are responsible for creating their own academic schedule each term and picking courses can sometimes seem overwhelming.

STEP ONE: GET PREPARED

The following questions may inform your course choices:

WHAT IS MY PLAN AND PROGRAM YEAR?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you started your BA can impact what requirements you have to follow for the SDS major and overall degree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Check with your academic advisor to confirm! • See our SDS Degree Requirements page for up-to-date checklists
WHAT IS MY COURSE LOAD?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part-time = 1 or 2 courses per term • Full-time = 3, 4 or 5 courses per term (5 is a full load) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you are registered with AccessAbility, please confirm with a consultant directly to clarify questions on course load and funding.
WHAT IS MY TERM LEVEL?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out here: https://ugradcalendar.uwaterloo.ca/page/Acad-Regs-Level-and-Term-of-Study • Determined by the number of courses you have completed. • Some courses have a specific term level as a pre-requisite
IS THIS THE FIRST TERM I AM PICKING COURSES?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a direct-entry student, this will be Winter term. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You'll be automatically enrolled in some required options and are responsible for picking an elective and an Arts First option • If a non-direct entry student in Honours Arts, this would be Fall or Winter. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be sure to have at least TWO courses that count for SDS to declare the major later on. • If a transfer student, this could be either Fall, Winter or Spring term. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Depending on your admission timeline, your first term might need to be flexible if required courses are already full. Take this time to get interesting electives or Arts Breadth options!

If you have any questions at all about your degree, check-in with your academic advisor.

<p>WHAT DO I NEED TO TAKE?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anything missing for your major <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Core or elective courses ○ 50% total courses with final grades • Anything missing from your BA degree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ARTS 130 or 140 ○ Arts Breadth courses ○ At least 16 courses at/over the 200-level ○ 50% total courses with final grades • Anything missing for other plans you're following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SDS Specializations ○ Other minors or majors ○ Other certifications (e.g. EDGE, GEC)
<p>WHAT DO I WANT TO TAKE?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you combine your interests with remaining requirements? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E.g. If you really like Harry Potter and still need a Humanities breadth course, consider <i>ENGL 108P: Popular Potter</i> • Do you want to focus your learning? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Try tracking a SDS Specialization or minor • Is the course you want to take in a different faculty? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Check with the department's advisor and/or confirm if you can take it via the Undergraduate Calendar.
<p>IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I AM MISSING?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses to declare a new or additional undergraduate plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ e.g. other major, minor, etc. • Courses for post-graduate plans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ e.g. graduate school, college, entrance tests, etc. • Courses that can benefit your future career path <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ e.g. PD courses, career development options, experiential certificates, etc.
<p>ARE THERE OTHER FACTORS THAT MAY IMPACT MY CHOICES?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are you only able to take online courses? On exchange or a co-op term? Do you need to commute to campus? • Finances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Tuition, OSAP, scholarships/awards/bursaries, living expenses, etc. • Work or Volunteering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a lower course load may help you balance extra work/volunteering hours

If you have any questions at all about your degree, check-in with your academic advisor.

STEP TWO: INDICATE INTEREST IN COURSES **DURING “COURSE SELECTION”**

“Course Selection” is the **first chance** to indicate what courses you want. It normally runs for 1 week.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF DOING COURSE SELECTION?

- **Gives you first dibs on getting into a course, though enrolment is not 100% guaranteed**
 - SDS students are encouraged to pick at this time, as our courses are very small – they often fill-up from course selection period alone!
- **Helps you build your class schedule early**
 - You’ll know if a course is online or on-campus
 - Adjustments can then be made (if needed) during the Add/Drop period (see Step Four)
- **Allows departments to determine enrolment demand**
 - Low demand may mean the course offering will be cancelled

WHY ISN’T ENROLMENT GUARANTEED?

- Course selection occurs BEFORE students know time, location and instructor information
- This information is updated internally right before students are filtered into their courses
- If students are placed into a course they selected, they will see it listed on their future schedule. If you do not see it in your schedule (check both calendar and list views), enrolment was unsuccessful

WHY DIDN’T I GET IN?

- You might not yet have a pre-requisite completed (e.g. another course, term-level, etc.)
- The course or section may be reserved for students in a different program
- There may be a time conflict between your courses
- The course filled up too quickly
- Enrolment demand may have been so low that the course was cancelled

HOW DO I PARTICIPATE IN THE “COURSE SELECTION” PERIOD?

1. **If you are a returning student, make sure you do not have any “holds” on your account** (e.g. owing tuition for the previous term). Learn how to [Remove a Hold from your Account](#)
2. **Determine when the course selection period happens for the next term**
 - Exact dates should be confirmed on a term-by-term basis from the [Important Dates](#) website
 - It normally runs for one week at the end of the first month in the *prior* term (e.g. Fall course selection happens late May or early June)
 - The period starts at 12:01am (EST) on the first day and ends at 11:59pm (EST) on the last day
3. **Log into Quest ON A COMPUTER anytime within the period and follow this guideline:**
<https://uwaterloo.ca/quest/help/students/how-do-i/select-courses-future-term>
 - You can pick courses at anytime during the selection period. It is NOT first-pick/first-placed
 - This process CANNOT be completed properly on your phone
 - **You can indicate preferences by prioritizing courses**
 - Each number must be unique; 0 or 1 = highest priority, followed by 2, 3, etc.
 - Required courses should be prioritized over electives

STEP THREE: CONFIRM YOUR SCHEDULE

If you participated in course selection, you will be placed into as many chosen courses as possible and end up with a “class schedule” for the next term.

I MISSED COURSE SELECTION! Don’t panic! Many students may miss the selection window or choose not to participate. You have another chance to add courses to your schedule during the **Add/Drop period** (see Step Four)

HOW TO CHECK YOUR SCHEDULE

- **Check the exact date you can view this schedule on the [Important Dates website](#).** It is normally about 1.5 months after course selection period.
- **Follow this procedure to view your schedule in Quest** (best if viewed on a computer):
<https://uwaterloo.ca/quest/help/students/how-do-i/class-schedule>
- TIPS
 - Check the “list view” to see all the courses you got into.
 - Confirm if you didn’t get into a course by viewing your course selection results:
<https://uwaterloo.ca/quest/help/students/how-do-i/view-my-course-selection-results>
 - Online courses will not show in calendar format.

WHAT NOW?

If you want to make any changes to your schedule (e.g. swap courses, swap sections, etc.) OR if you didn’t get into the number of courses you wanted, proceed to Step Four.

If your schedule looks fine the way it is, congratulations! You’re set for the next term. Proceed to Step Five.

STEP FOUR: ADD/DROP PERIOD (OPTIONAL)

The **Add/Drop Period** is the **second chance** to pick courses for a future term. It normally last 1-2 months.

Adjust your schedule

- If you participated in the course selection period, you'll know what you got into by doing Step Three
- If changes are needed, you can now [swap](#) sections (e.g. on-campus to online, different on-campus times, etc.), [add](#) or [swap](#) courses (e.g. if you still have space and didn't get into something or what something different) or [drop](#) courses (if you want a course completely removed from your schedule)

Make your schedule

- If you **did not** participate in the course selection period, you need to make a new schedule!
- You can [add](#), [drop](#) or [swap](#) courses like above. During this period you'll have more course detail to work with (e.g. instructor, room, time, date and section type)

HOW DOES IT WORK?

- **Confirm when the Add/Drop period starts on the [Important Dates](#) website.** It's normally a few days after the date you can view your schedule.
- **Confirm your appointment time in Quest:** <https://uwaterloo.ca/quest/help/students/how-do-i/view-my-appointment-time-beginning-drop-add>
 - The first two days are by "appointment" only. This is not a traditional physical appointment with a person, but a designated time-period you're allowed to make changes on Quest.
 - This page will show how many courses you can add/take (e.g. 1.0 units = 2 courses)
 - This period IS first-pick/first-placed (unlike course selection). Aim to make your changes as early as you can within your window
 - Priority is given to upper-year students to ensure they meet graduation requirements
- **Follow whatever procedure is needed for your situation: [add](#), [swap](#) or [drop](#).**

THINGS TO KNOW

- **The Add/Drop period starts on the same day** (first appointment date), **but have different end-dates that are listed on the [Important Dates](#) website**
 - Add deadlines tend to be two weeks into the first month of a new term
 - Drop deadlines run throughout the term. **There are 3 results depending on the drop date:**
 - Course is removed from your transcript as if you never started it; full \$ back
 - Course is listed as "WD" (withdrawn, no credit granted); less \$ back & no final grade
 - Course is listed as "WF" (withdrawn, fail); no \$ back and 32% final grade
- **When you're changing your schedule, have the [Schedule of Classes](#) open in another tab.** It pulls information from Quest but displays it according to discipline type. You can search for the course code you want and instantly see all course details, including any reserved seats and/or spaces remaining in the class.
- **Trying to swap or add a course, but getting errors?** If a course is within the Faculty of Arts, confirm your next steps on the [Arts Enrolment Issues](#) website. Each department handles issues differently!
 - **NOTE:** Renison uses [waitlists](#) for courses that fill-up at ANY time (even if there appears to be space). Quest unfortunately doesn't mention them and it can be confusing for students. These waitlists will be on the right side of Renison's homepage as soon as Add/Drop starts.

NEXT STEPS

Congratulations! You have made a great class schedule and can rest easy knowing what courses you will be taking next term.

WHAT'S LEFT?

- **Pay your tuition through Quest**
 - Confirm deadlines → [Important Dates Website](#)
 - **Tuition** questions → [Student Financial Services](#)
 - **OSAP** questions → [Student Awards & Financial Aid](#)
 - *Not sure where to start? [Try The Centre!](#)*
 - Find other sources of funding (e.g. [work part-time](#), [Scholarships Canada](#), employer-specific scholarships, [UW Award Database](#), [Renison Awards/Bursaries/Scholarships](#), etc.)
- **Become familiar with LEARN**
 - Review [LEARN Help pages](#)
 - Bookmark LEARN in your browser for easy access
- **Confirm and purchase your textbooks**
 - [UW Bookstore](#) → search by class
 - [Feds Used Bookstore \(WUSA\)](#)
 - Search for Facebook selling groups (e.g. Waterloo Textbook Exchange)
 - Try Amazon or Indigo (be sure to get the right edition!)
- **Try using Portal to stay organized**
 - <https://uwaterloo.ca/arts-101-incoming-student-resource/how-use-portal>
- **Keep connected with your instructor**
 - Confirm who it is in the [Schedule of Classes](#) or on the syllabus
 - They normally provide their email, office hours and/or connect through discussion boards within LEARN
 - You don't know what you don't know – so ask 😊

Do your best and enjoy your classes!

