

FIRST YEAR

During the first year at MIT, students lay the foundation for their college education and begin to explore the many academic pathways available to them. First-year students may accommodate their individual preparation and goals by choosing among a variety of ways to complete the core subjects, explore their interests in different fields, and prepare for further undergraduate study. Incoming first-year students are referred to the First Year at MIT website (<https://firstyear.mit.edu>) for detailed information on academics, the advisory system, and support services.

To begin fulfilling the General Institute Requirements (GIRs) (<https://catalog.mit.edu/mit/undergraduate-education/general-institute-requirements>), first-year students choose subjects in mathematics, chemistry, biology, and physics to fulfill the science core, and select from a wide range of subjects in the humanities, arts, and social sciences (HASS subjects). Students have various options for satisfying the first year of the Communication Requirement.

Although student class schedules vary significantly in the first year, a typical program includes completion of most of the six science core subjects in mathematics, physics, biology, and chemistry; two of the eight HASS subjects, including a Communication-Intensive subject; and one or more subjects that help them further explore their academic interests. Students may round out their programs with electives, often including first-year advising seminars (led by the students' advisors). Some first-year students also elect to become involved in the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program, described later in this section.

Entering students with degree credit for one or more of the science core requirements may substitute more advanced subjects or may take electives or Restricted Electives in Science and Technology (REST) Requirement subjects. Procedures for obtaining degree credit at entrance are described in the Admissions section.

Students may also enroll (space-limited) in one of the first-year learning communities: the Concourse Program, the Experimental Study Group, Design Plus, and Terrascope. These learning communities range in size from 25 to 65 students and have their own faculty, meeting places, and educational approaches. In these programs, students complete coursework comparable to that of other first-year students, but the manner in which individual Institute requirements are met varies from program to program and among students within each program. In all four programs there is an especially high level of student-faculty interaction.