

GENERAL INSTITUTE REQUIREMENTS

Communication Requirement

The Communication Requirement makes the development of effective writing and speaking an integral part of undergraduate education at the Institute. The Communication Requirement ensures that all undergraduates receive substantial instruction and practice in general expository writing and speaking and the forms of discourse common to their professional fields.

The Communication Requirement consists of four communication-intensive (CI) subjects sequenced throughout a student's undergraduate career. Students take two CI subjects in the humanities, arts, and social sciences (CI-H) and two CI subjects in their major program (CI-M). Students must maintain a minimum pace in completing their CI subjects in order to remain in good standing with the Communication Requirement. They must complete one of their CI subjects by the end of the first year, two by the end of the second year, three by the end of the third year, and four by graduation.

Only one CI-H subject per term may be counted toward completion of the Communication Requirement. However, students may receive credit for more than one CI-M subject in the same term or a CI-H and a CI-M completed concurrently.

More information on CI-H subjects is included in the section of the Bulletin on the HASS Requirement. Specifics on the CI-M subjects for each major appear in the descriptions of the individual undergraduate degree programs. Additional information can be found on the Communication Requirement website.

The general structure of the Requirement is described below.

First year. Students must pass one CI-H or CI-HW subject (<https://registrar.mit.edu/registration-academics/academic-requirements/communication-requirement/ci-hhw-subjects>) by the end of their second term at the Institute.

Before entering MIT, all students are asked to take the First-year Essay Evaluation (FEE). The FEE is a placement tool used to determine the best program for each undergraduate within the Communication Requirement. Students who receive a score of "CI-H/CI-HW Required" on the FEE or receive a score of 5 on either the Advanced Placement Language and Composition Test or the Advanced Placement Literature and Composition Test or receive a score of 7 on the English A or B Higher-Level International Baccalaureate (IB) exam have the option of taking any CI-H subject, including a writing-focused CI-H subject (CI-HW).

All other students must take one of the designated Communication Intensive in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences—Writing Focused (CI-HW) subjects as their first CI subject.

Second year. Students must pass at least two CI subjects by the end of their fourth term at the Institute. In most cases, these first two CI subjects will satisfy the CI-H portion of the requirement, providing a foundation in written and oral exposition.

Third year. Students must pass at least three of the four required CI subjects by the end of their sixth term. Most students will take their first CI-M subject as juniors and begin to develop the communication skills specific to the professional and academic culture of their discipline.

Before receiving an SB degree. Students must complete two CI-H subjects and the two CI-M subjects specified for their SB degree program prior to receiving their degree.

Noncompliance. Students who fall behind the minimum pace of completion for the Communication Requirement are in noncompliance. At the end of each term, the names of noncompliant students are forwarded to the Committee on Academic Performance, which may take further action to bring such students into good academic standing.

Double majors. Students who wish to complete two majors must pass two CI-H subjects and complete the CI-M subjects that fulfill the communication component of each major. Normally, these students will take four CI-M subjects, that is, two in each major program. In certain cases a CI-M subject may be common to both departments and may be used to fulfill the communication component of two majors simultaneously.

Information about the Communication Requirement. For more detailed information about CI subjects or for assistance with any aspect of the Communication Requirement, including petitions, visit the Communication Requirement webpage (<https://registrar.mit.edu/registration-academics/academic-requirements/communication-requirement>). Students may also contact the Office of the Communication Requirement (commreq@mit.edu) to discuss their individual circumstances.