Welcome to Pitt!

Congratulations on your acceptance to the University of Pittsburgh and the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences! We invite you to enroll in one of our Academic Communities for your first term.

Academic Communities are thematic blocks of first-year courses that can help to make your transition to college life smoother in many ways. They provide you with more opportunities to interact with faculty; to learn alongside other first-term students with similar interests; to engage in focused intellectual inquiry; and to enhance your academic, social, and leadership skills.

Each Academic Community contains an Academic Foundations course, which is a small class taught in an interactive learning environment. The Academic Communities have no residential component.

When applying to a community, please consider any Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and/or transfer credits you may be bringing with you, as enrolling in an Academic Community means that you must enroll in all of the courses in that particular community. To confirm the days and times of classes and to view the course descriptions, visit asundergrad.pitt.edu/ac and click on List of Academic Communities.

First-Year Programs is committed to ensuring an inclusive, fun, and academically enriching environment for you. We hope to connect with you and be an important part of your first-year experience.

Hail to Pitt!

Bianca DeJesus
Director, First-Year Programs

Russ Maiers
Assistant Director, First-Year Programs

Rachel Clites
Program Coordinator, First-Year Programs

Why Choose an Academic Community?

Meet People
Academic Communities offer built-in social opportunities as you quickly develop a sense of community within your small group. It’s a network that’s sure to serve you well in future classes.

Connect with Pitt’s Faculty
Focused groups allow for more personal interaction with faculty members and teaching assistants.

Develop Strong Academic Skills
You’ll have peer support for studying and for writing, and you’ll develop the habits needed for academic success.

Make the Most of Your Academic Experience
Education doesn’t only occur in the classroom. Academic Communities introduce you to real-world experiences and a range of other academic opportunities at Pitt.

Cultivate Leadership Skills
Many Academic Community students go on to serve as undergraduate teaching assistants in First-Year Programs courses. All students who complete any fall-term First-Year Programs class are eligible to apply to become a First-Year Programs Undergraduate Teaching Assistant.

How to Apply
Go to asundergrad.pitt.edu/ac.

Academic Communities is one program offered by the Dietrich School’s First-Year Programs. (Additional programs can be found on page 5.)

If you have additional questions about Academic Communities, please call 412-624-9100.

Some photos in this publication were taken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and may not reflect current health and safety guidelines.
Academic Communities

1. International Studies: Asia
Learn more about Asian culture and language and the history of Asian art with other students who share your interest. Find out about study abroad opportunities and explore the Hillman Library’s extensive collection of materials on Asian studies. Participate in campus events and visit important sites relevant to Asian culture and religion. This community provides 4 credits plus language credits in your first-term schedule.

To be a member of this Academic Community, students also must enroll in any level of one of the following languages: Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, or Vietnamese.

2. International Studies: Mediterranean
This Academic Community allows for an interdisciplinary and comparative exploration of the history, politics, societies, and cultures of southern Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East. It serves as a starting point for more focused interests, such as ancient civilizations, art and architecture, religious studies, peace and conflict studies, immigration policy, and international affairs, to name just a few. This community will help you to evaluate any interests and plans you may have in Mediterranean and international studies and introduce you to courses, resources, and opportunities on campus. This community provides 4 credits plus language credits in your first-term schedule.

To be a member of this Academic Community, students also must enroll in any level of one of the following languages: Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian, Greek, Serbian/Croatian, Turkish, Hebrew, or Arabic (Levantine, Maghrebi, or Egyptian/central). Other languages may be taken with approval.

3. International Studies: Global
This Academic Community is for students who want to lead lives of impact in their own community or abroad, who desire a deeper understanding of social and economic inequality in transnational context, and who seek a broader understanding of the dominant political and economic trends. Students will learn about resources at Pitt and in the community as well as study abroad opportunities and participate in campus and local events centered on global studies themes. This community provides 7 credits in your first-term schedule.

4. International Studies: Quebec
While studying French, you will learn about the rich linguistic, cultural, and geographical landscape of our French-speaking neighbors to the north in Quebec and other French-speaking areas of Canada. This Academic Community will introduce you to courses and opportunities, both on and off campus, that will allow you to enrich your knowledge of French and international studies. This community provides 4 credits plus language credits in your first-term schedule.

To be a member of this Academic Community, students also must enroll in one of the following French classes: FR 0103, 0104, 0220, 0221, 0227, 0255, or 0256 or any three-credit 1000-level course taught in French.

5. Inside the Theater
Study the evolution of modern theater as a cultural mirror and gain insight into the different perspectives of actors, directors, and designers. Practice your own acting skills and explore productions by Pitt’s Department of Theatre Arts and professional theater troupes in the city. This community provides 7 credits in your first-term schedule.
6. In the Museum
What role do museums play in society? What role should they play? As collectors of objects from different historic periods, peoples, and places, museums are essential to the way that we understand past cultures and our world. Because of their rich and yet sometimes controversial origins, can museums still spark wonder and curiosity? And, what purposes should museums serve now and in the future? Understanding the origins and complexities of cultures and their artifacts will enhance the exploration of museums near and far as these questions are explored. This community provides 7 credits in your first-term schedule.

7. How to Make a Movie
“Hollywood in Pittsburgh” is a common phrase here. Learn the important role Pittsburgh has had in the production and creation of films both past and present. Learn the processes of movie making by scripting, shooting, and editing your own film. Write about your own engagement with film and film production and discover where you fit in Pittsburgh's vibrant film community. This community provides 7 credits in your first-term schedule.

To enroll in this Academic Community, students must place into Seminar in Composition. ENGCMP 0205 fulfills the Seminar in Composition requirement.

8. Bytes & Pixels
Are you interested in learning more about visual arts, digital images, or social media? Take a hands-on approach to digital experimentation as you create visual and aural art using the open-source electronics platform, Arduino. Explore the history and development of various forms of digital media while also examining the changes they have produced in our society. This community provides 7 credits in your first-term schedule.

9. Who Are You?
How and when does a person develop a sense of one’s self? How do both psychology and philosophy help us to understand our natures and personalities? The courses in this community will provide a multifaceted approach to finding answers to these questions. This community provides 7 credits in your first-term schedule.

To enroll in this Academic Community, students should anticipate receiving either AP, IB, or transfer credit for Introduction to Psychology, which is a prerequisite for Psychology of Personality.

10. Faith and Doubt
This Academic Community will allow students to explore the role religion and spirituality play in their lives and in the lives of other members of society. Through journaling, reflection, and dialogue, students will explore the many facets of religion, mindfulness, and spirituality in modern-day societal institutions. This community provides 7 credits in your first-term schedule.

To enroll in this Academic Community, students must place into Seminar in Composition. FP 0006 fulfills the Seminar in Composition requirement.
11. Nature/Cities/Humans
How do humans live in harmony with each other and nature in urban areas? Pittsburgh is the perfect backdrop to explore how sustainability plays out in natural and built environments. Explore the tradeoffs, challenges, and opportunities of balancing equity, environment, and economics at the campus and city scale. This community provides 7 credits in your first-term schedule.

12. The Beautiful Mind
Like the father of neuroscience, Santiago Ramón y Cajal, you have the opportunity to examine the intersection of art and neuroscience by developing artistic talent while studying the brain. Consider the relationship between art and science and how they complement each other. Nothing demonstrates this like the human mind, truly beautiful in its neural structure and its propensity for creative expression. This community provides 7 credits in your first-term schedule.

13. Molecules and Morals
Explore ethical dilemmas in modern medicine—such as medical experimentation, resource allocation, and health care reform—in connection with modern chemistry, the advances of which have made medical miracles possible and have raised the question of ethics to a new level. This community provides 8 credits in your first-term schedule.

14. Cells and Society
Explore the relationship between medicine and society. Consider how the delivery of medical services can be dependent on a physician’s knowledge of social and biological systems. This community provides 7 credits in your first-term schedule.

   NOTE: All students intending to take BIOSC 0150 Foundations of Biology 1 must take the preassessment before they can enroll in the course. Information concerning the preassessment can be found at tinyurl.com/0150preassessment.

15. Neurons and Chemicals
Deepen your understanding of chemical structures and states of matter while learning about their wider application in psychopharmacology. Develop a better understanding of the basic structures of the brain and chemicals. This community provides 8 credits in your first-term schedule.

16. Science in a Gendered World
How does gender impact the study and practice of science in our world today? What can we learn from studying how science has been pursued, practiced, and promoted historically? Consider what the historical record reveals and how an awareness of it enhances your current academic studies in the sciences at the University level, and then afterwards, in a science career and in everyday life. This community provides 7 credits in your first-term schedule.

   NOTE: All students intending to take BIOSC 0150 Foundations of Biology 1 must take the preassessment before they can enroll in the course. Information concerning the preassessment can be found at tinyurl.com/0150preassessment.

17. Medical Humanities
Begin your pursuit of becoming a health care professional by exploring the fundamentals of biology while also discovering what literature can teach us about health care. This Academic Community will allow students to learn about important biological functions and discuss crucial topics that all health care providers should be aware of when treating patients. This community provides 7 credits in your first-term schedule.

   NOTE: All students intending to take BIOSC 0150 Foundations of Biology 1 must take the preassessment before they can enroll in the course. Information concerning the preassessment can be found at tinyurl.com/0150preassessment.
FP 0003 First-Year Seminar

Not interested in an Academic Community? Consider one of the interesting 4-credit First-Year Seminar (FP 0003) classes, which include Academic Foundations and fulfill the Seminar in Composition requirement.

Topics include:
- Capitalism: Do You Buy It?
- Doctoring the Story
- Fitness, Nutrition, & Wellness
- Idle Hands: Devil's Workshop?
- On a Quest
- Rereading Popular Culture
- Rock & Roll as Literature
- Who’s Watching Who?
- Writing the Body

For more information, visit [www.as.pitt.edu/fp](http://www.as.pitt.edu/fp) and click on First-Year Seminar Classes.

NOTE: Students must place into Seminar in Composition to enroll in First-Year Seminar.

FP 0001 Academic Foundations

If your schedule doesn’t allow for either an Academic Community or a First-Year Seminar, be sure to enroll in the 1-credit standalone Academic Foundations course. You’ll meet other first-year students in a small class setting; get an orientation to the campus and the community; and become knowledgeable about the workings of your new school.