Choosing Courses: Guidelines and Advice for First-Year Students
for Fall 2018

How do I know what to take?

What do I need to know first?

• Students at Kalamazoo College take THREE courses each quarter. In fall quarter, you’ll take a First-Year Seminar and two other 1.0 or 1.2 credit courses. You can also take .2 credit courses, such as physical education activities or music ensembles in addition to your other three courses (but you cannot go above 3.9 total credits).

• Go to the online schedule in WebAdvisor for First-Year Seminar descriptions and a list of First-Year Friendly courses. The “Fall Course Registration” website has directions on how to search the course schedule.

How do I choose?

Choosing a First-Year Seminar:
• Read ALL of the Seminar descriptions. Even though the topics and course numbers vary widely, all Seminars focus on developing critical thinking and writing skills. No prior knowledge of the topic is required! Identify at least eight that interest you.

The #1 rule: Find courses that interest you
• Start exploring. Try something completely new – you might find out you like something you never thought you would. Take an introductory course in a potential major department. Since Kalamazoo is known for study abroad/away, think about courses with an international or intercultural focus. Look over ALL the First-Year Friendly courses on the online schedule. You never know what might grab your attention.

• Create a list of at least ten courses that sound interesting (in addition to your Seminar choices). Use the Preferred Course list feature in WebAdvisor to help you do this easily and efficiently. Directions are on the “Fall Course Registration” website.
If you are interested in a pre-med focus, or in biology, chemistry, computer science, math, or physics as an intended major, you need to start taking these courses in fall quarter to stay on track. Specific detailed information is provided in the “Science and Math Course Sequences” grid (on the “Fall Course Registration” website).

See the “Placement Exams” website for information on how to interpret your chemistry and/or math placement exam scores (scores will be posted in early July if you completed the exams before the June 15 deadline). Note that the course(s) you placed into might not be offered in fall quarter.

If you choose to CONTINUE a language you have previously studied, you MUST start with the course indicated by your placement exam score. If you completed the exam by June 15, scores will be posted in early July before registration. See the “Placement Exams” website for information on how to interpret your score. Note that the course you placed into might not be offered in fall quarter.

If you wish to study a NEW language, you must start with the beginning level 101 course. You do not need to take the placement exam if you are starting a new language. To allow yourself plenty of options for study abroad, don’t be afraid to start a completely new language!

101 course schedule
- Arabic, Chinese, German, Hebrew, Latin, and Japanese: 101 courses are ONLY offered in fall.
  - Therefore, if you plan to study one of the above languages at the 101 level, you will need to do that this fall or in the fall of your sophomore year.
- Ancient Greek: the 101 course is only offered in winter
- French: the 101 course is offered in fall and spring
- Spanish: the 101 course is offered in fall, winter, and spring

If you are interested in a potential business or economics major or in taking advanced courses in these departments, Calculus (MATH-112) is required for the major and is a pre-requisite for some courses. Make sure to take the Math placement exam because you won’t be able to sign-up for Calculus without a placement exam score!

REMEMBER: Proficiency in a second language through the Intermediate Level (i.e., the 103 course for Arabic, Chinese, Hebrew, and Japanese; the 201 course for French, German, Greek, Latin, and Spanish) is a graduation requirement at Kalamazoo College.
**Things to keep in mind**

- Take course registration seriously – but not TOO seriously. You are registering only for fall quarter at this time. Introductory courses in many departments will also be offered in winter and spring quarters.

- Being at a liberal arts institution, you will be encouraged to explore new areas, perspectives, and varied disciplines throughout your first year.

- Remember that there is no perfect set of courses that fits everyone. There’s a wide variety of what students choose: one student might take a Seminar, history, and Hebrew; another, a Seminar, chemistry, and biology.

- Every course offered counts toward graduation. Think broadly when identifying your list of potential courses for fall and don’t be afraid to try something new!

**Why do we do course registration this way?**

- Our new students have been registering online over the summer for quite some time. You really don’t have to have a one-on-one discussion with an academic advisor right now in order to make good decisions about courses for the fall. The “Fall Course Registration” websites are full of excellent information, and we are here to answer your questions and to help you. **Don’t worry!** You will be able to make good choices.

- During orientation you’ll meet with your academic advisor and be able to adjust your schedule if needed. However, note that First-Year Seminar placements are final after the registration period in July.

**One last thing!**

- Make sure you choose courses that **YOU** want to take. Listen to the advice of others, but make the final decisions yourself.

**Questions?**

- E-mail the advising help line – advising@kzoo.edu – or call us at (269) 337-5767. We are happy to talk with you about course selections.

Kalamazoo College  
Office of Academic Advising  
Lesley Clinard, Director

Now I know!