SUGGESTIONS AND POLICIES

Get to know your advisees by engaging them in dialogue. Some questions to ask:

- What were the subjects you found most interesting in high school?
- What are your hopes and possible goals at Mount Holyoke?
- What are your concerns about the transition from high school to college, from your country to the US, or from your part of the US to South Hadley?
- What questions do you have about expectations in courses here?

Address popular myths:

- "Students can't be ‘pre-med’ if they don't major in biology or chemistry"
- "Students should know their major within their first semester"
- "Choice of major will necessarily determine choice of career"
- "My advisor will have the answer to every question and not refer me to other sources"

Clarify distribution requirements:

- Remind students that distribution requirements help students discover new interests and align with the ethos of a liberal arts education
- Remind students that they have time to satisfy distribution requirements through the first two years, and to explore the curriculum before declaring their major and minor

Remind students if their goals require early planning:

- Some programs (e.g. some study abroad programs, engineering, some pre-health areas, physics, chemistry, biology) require early planning and very specific sequencing. Encourage students with questions in these areas to see the appropriate faculty members or department chairs.

Discuss Course Selection:

- Emphasize the flexibility of their course selection and programs at this stage
- Encourage them to be open to new suggestions and alternatives to their current schedules and to revisit their faculty advisor
- Discuss individual goals and concerns, and set up a follow-up meeting for the end of the first week of classes if possible.

Recommend a balanced program for first semester:

1. One course that is familiar;
2. One that is completely new (perhaps interdisciplinary);
3. Two that satisfy requirements (generally distribution and language);
4. A total of 16 credits. Some students will have 2 or 3 additional credits;
5. A PE course if possible;
6. Courses should span the curriculum, and span 5 days of the week

Clarify terms of advising and mutual responsibility:

- When and how should they get in touch with you (email, phone, a knock on the door?)
- What is their role in arranging to come to see you?
- What are the best times to call or email?
- What are your expectations and theirs and what are additional advising resources?
**FIRST-YEAR POLICIES**

- **Credits**: 16 credits recommended each semester; **128 credits** required to graduate.
  
  **Maximum**: 19 credits first semester; **20 credits** second semester
  **Minimum**: 12 credits

- **Exceptions**:
  
  - **Credit overloads**: require permission of a student’s faculty advisor and the Office of the Academic Deans and are generally discouraged; students with music performance study and dance on their schedules often have reason to request approval.
  
  - **Minimum program**: 12 credits are generally discouraged, unless there is a documented learning disability, in which case students should consult the AccessAbility Office (x2634).

- First-Year students are not allowed to register for Five College Courses in their first semester without the permission of the Class Advisor for First-Year Students.

- To keep in mind for **Non-Liberal Arts Courses**: Students may apply a maximum of 12 credits combined that are earned from Mount Holyoke curricular support courses and from any Mount Holyoke, Five College, or transferred non-liberal arts courses, whether taken before or after the student’s matriculation to the College.

**SCHEDULES**

- If students preregistered in November as requested, they should have a class schedule on ISIS. Registration instructions are online at [www.mtholyoke.edu/registrar/isis](http://www.mtholyoke.edu/registrar/isis). The Welcome Message on the home page of ISIS will be helpful for learning various search methods for classes to add, and for interpreting screens.

- If a student does **not** have a class schedule, she may register online after meeting with her advisor.

- Students can arrange for adds and drops to schedules on ISIS after they have met with their advisors. Advisors must "clear" their advisees online following the Registrar's instructions.

**PLACEMENT EXAMS AND ASSESSMENTS**

The First-Year Experience ([www.mtholyoke.edu/go/firstyear](http://www.mtholyoke.edu/go/firstyear)) contains information about placement. Students will find information about language placement exams and questionnaires, the chemistry placement exam, and the mathematics assessment under the Placement Exams section: [www.mtholyoke.edu/firstyear/placement.html](http://www.mtholyoke.edu/firstyear/placement.html).

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