

Purdue First-Year FAQ

ACADEMICS

How many courses will I take?

The average course load is 14 to 17 credit hours, or about five classes. You and your advisor will develop a schedule that is right for you based on the courses and majors you would like to explore, so you may carry more or fewer classes.

When should I buy my books?

Both Purdue University and our local bookstores list books needed for each class, so you could buy your books ahead of time. You have a better chance of getting used books if you buy them early. Most professors do not expect students to have books on the first day of class. If you change classes or have books you don't need, bookstores will give a full refund if you have the receipt, have not marked in the book, or removed any shrink-wrap covering within a certain short period – usually the first or second weeks of classes.

To find course book requirements online, go to <http://www.purdue.edu/VPSS/textbooks/textbooks.php>. New and used pricing for these books can be found at the Follett's (<http://www.efollett.com>) or the University Bookstore (<http://www.purdueu.com>) sites. Students may also order books from www.amazon.com, www.barnesandnoble.com, or www.textbookx.com.

Will I need a personal computer?

Computers are not required, although many students find them helpful. Your residence hall manager can give you information about hooking up and securing your computer in the residence hall. In addition, ITaP's [Teaching and Learning Technologies](#) area supports and maintains over 60 instructional computing labs on campus. The computing labs range in size from 14 computers to over 100 computers. The computers in these labs provide an extensive software suite and a secure work environment.

If you are considering purchasing a computer, check out the ITaP store (Stewart Center, room G-65) or online at <http://www.itap.purdue.edu/shopping/>. This same site also allows you to pre-order discounted software, such as Microsoft Office 2007, for pick up at the Boiler Copy Maker Copy Center, located in Purdue Memorial Union, room 157.

Purdue also supports a wireless network called Purdue Air Link (PAL), with hot spots in most residence halls and major buildings. Set up information, videos, and a building coverage list are located at <http://www.itap.purdue.edu/airlink/>.

When will I find out where my classes are?

If you registered for classes during your STAR date, your schedule, including the days, times, and locations of the classes, will be visible immediately on myPurdue. Click on the Academic Tab → "Banner Self Service" → "Student" → "Registration" → "Registration Term" → click "Submit." To view your classes in a grid format, click on the "Week at a Glance" link. To view a text version of your schedule, click on the "Concise Schedule" link.

How much time should I spend studying?

A general guideline is about two hours of study for each hour you spend in class. You'll spend more time for some classes, especially those with laboratories, and less for others. Good study habits and reading skills will be necessary if you plan to continue earning A's and B's.

Where can I study on campus if I don't want to study in my room?

All [Purdue Libraries](#) have quiet spaces for studying. Some libraries, like the Hicks Undergraduate Library, feature café areas, like UnderGrounds, to study and eat. All residence halls have study rooms. Students can also study in the lounge areas of the Purdue Memorial Union and Stewart Center. Some departments also have study lounges. On nice days, there is plenty of green space to study outside too.

Which library can I use?

[Any of our 14 libraries](#) are available for you to use, though popular locations for first-year students tend to be the Hicks Undergraduate Library or the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education Library. All of the libraries have information desk staff available to assist students. If you need help, just ask.

Will my parents get or see my grades?

No. Grades will be available in myPurdue and will be accessible only by your username and password. However, we strongly recommend that you keep the lines of communication open with your parents about academics.

What if I need help in a class?

There are many ways to get help in a class. We recommend that you first talk with your instructor about your current grades and what steps you should take to improve them. Professors and Teaching Assistants (TA's) all have posted office hours usually located in the course syllabus. Some instructors hold periodic help sessions, so listen for these in class.

If you find you need individual assistance in a class, consider enlisting a paid or free tutor. Lists of tutors are available through the departments or the Office of the Dean of Students. Our students also recommend doing your homework in one of our department help rooms (Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Biology, etc.). That way, if you need help with a homework problem, you can get it right away. Help rooms also tend to have copies of practice exams and other materials to help you learn the subject.

Group study is also popular at Purdue. There is no service on campus to match you up with students in your classes, so be friendly and start building your study network early in the semester. Also, make sure that you have an outside expert for consultation should a problem stump you all.

Besides departmental help rooms, Purdue has various academic help facilities such as the Writing Lab (Heavilon Hall, room 226), the Academic Success Center (Beering Hall, room 3268), and the Chemistry Resource Center (Wetherill Laboratory of Chemistry, room 117). Above all, remember that college requires that you learn to recognize when you need help and then proactively seek it. If you don't know where to start, ask your advisor!

What if I am unsure of my major?

If you are unsure about your major, career counseling is available at the Center for Career Opportunities (Stewart Center, room 194), the Purdue Counseling & Guidance Center (Beering Hall, room 3202), and the Office of the Dean of Students Counseling Center (Schleman Hall, room 207).

What do I need to do to change majors?

At Purdue, the process of changing majors is called CODO'ing (Change of Degree Objective). To CODO, first check with your advisor about the CODO process for your desired major. Most college/schools require a set of minimum grades, courses, and documents before a CODO can take place. In addition, most colleges/schools will require that you attend a CODO meeting.

After you have met all of the CODO requirements, you will need to file CODO paperwork. To do this, take your Purdue ID to the desk in front of Hovde Hall, room 45 (Office of the Registrar) and pick up a set of CODO papers (you will have two copies). Make an appointment with your current advisor to sign these

papers. Then make an appointment (or sign up for a CODO meeting) with the college/school you want to enter. Depending on several factors, the college/school may either sign the papers right away or hold them until the end of the semester (pending your grades). After the CODO papers are signed by both schools (and you), one copy of the CODO papers will either be mailed or carried back by you to Hovde Hall, room 45. Once the Registrar puts your new college/school information into myPurdue, you will officially and successfully have CODO'd!

Do professors take attendance?

Individual professors have different policies. It is to your advantage to attend class even if the professor does not take attendance, because you are ultimately responsible for learning the material presented in class. Extended class absences due to serious illness, accident, or other situations beyond your control should be reported to your residence hall counselor and to the Office of the Dean of Students (Schleman Hall, room 207).

What do I do if I need to change my schedule?

Students can add, drop, and modify the times of courses themselves using myPurdue through the first week of classes. However, we recommend they consult with an advisor first to discuss the consequences of any changes. We also strongly recommend that students make any changes to their schedule before the first day of classes to avoid schedule problems. Students should pay attention to their Purdue e-mail for notices from their advisors, as the rules to modify courses changes depending on which week it is in the semester. Schedule Revision calendars highlighting drop, add, and modification dates are available on the Registrar's website at http://www.purdue.edu/Registrar/Calendars/Schedule_Revision_Ca.html.

Will I get the same grades I did in high school?

Student can expect that college classes will be more challenging, faster paced, and require more studying, reading, and problem-solving. Students may experience a slight drop in grades the first semester while adjusting to a new, more independent learning style. Good study habits and a proactive and positive attitude toward learning can help prevent grade slumps.

STUDENT LIFE

What will the weather be like?

The old saying goes that if you don't like the weather in Indiana, just wait a few minutes. Late summer weather is often hot, humid, and stormy. Early fall weather varies between hot and humid and cold and rainy. Students can count on rain, snow, ice, and cold in the winter, starting in mid-November and lasting into mid-March. Winter daytime temperatures average around 30°F, but can dip to sub-zero levels mid-winter. Spring weather can be nice, with highs between 50°F -70°F, but it is often rainy. Students usually bring a jacket, umbrella, and rain boots in August, and then bring their snow boots and winter coats back with them after October or Thanksgiving Break. Layering your clothing works best in Indiana weather.

Purdue has lots of plant life, including flowers, grasses, trees, ferns, and mushrooms. Students should consider stocking up on necessary medications in late fall and early spring to contend with pollen or mold allergies.

Our area does experience occasional severe weather, mainly in the form of thunderstorms, high winds, hail, flooding, and very rarely, tornados. Tippecanoe County and Purdue have excellent procedures in place to keep students and the surrounding community informed and safe.

Should I bring my bike?

Biking is a popular form of transportation around Purdue's campus, but you might want to keep several things in mind. First of all, only outside storage is available (bikes cannot be stored in dorm rooms). Secondly, bike thefts do happen (about 100/year), so bring a sturdy lock and learn how to effectively secure your bicycle. As added security, engrave identification onto your bike. You should register your bike with the Purdue Police at <http://www.purdue.edu/police/programs/types/bikeregistration.htm>.

Should I bring my car?

Freshmen are not allowed to have cars unless they live a long distance from campus (30 minutes or more), making them eligible for a commuter parking permit. Parking space on or near campus is limited. Most campus parking is reserved for staff with permits, for visitors, or for upper classmen in the residence halls. Most off-campus street parking has time limitations set by the city. Students usually get around campus by walking, bicycling, or by CityBus (free with your Purdue ID). Shopping areas, bookstores, and restaurants are within walking distance of campus. Taxi service is also available. If you need a car permit for a special circumstance and live in a residence hall, you should talk with your hall manager. If you live off-campus, contact the Visitor Information Center on Northwestern Avenue.

Should I insure my stereo and computer if I bring them?

It is a good idea to insure any valuable personal items you bring. Check your family's insurance policy as your belongings may already be covered. Keep your room locked when you leave it to prevent theft and make sure that your roommate locks it, too.

What is Fraternity Rush? Sorority Rush?

Fraternities and sororities usually have a callout early in the fall for all prospective members. Recruitment (sometimes called "rush") is explained at the callout, with most recruitment events following immediately afterwards. Students usually do not move into the house until the fall of their sophomore year. About 20 percent of Purdue undergraduates are in Greek organizations. Information about fraternities and sororities is available at <http://www.purduegrees.com/>. Greek recruitment can be a great social and networking experience, but students need to keep in mind that it may take up a lot of their time, if they let it. Balance is the key to success in both academics and Greek participation.

What is Co-op Housing?

Cooperative Housing life is much like Greek life, requiring recruitment and offering great social networking experiences. Recruitment occurs in January, but members are inducted year-round, depending on space. Contact the Office of the Dean of Students (Schleman Hall, room 250) for more information at (765) 494-1231. Information about cooperative housing is also available at <http://www.purduecooperatives.org/home>.

What if I don't get along with my roommate?

The best thing to do is to prevent roommate problems before they begin and to keep the lines of communication open throughout the "getting to know you" process. Early in the fall, establish ground rules that both you and your roommate can agree upon. Some roommates even draw up written and signed contracts! If problems do arise, talk to your floor's resident assistant immediately. If no solutions can be found, keep in mind that changing rooms is difficult early in the semester, but is often possible between semesters.

What is October Break?

October Break is a mid-semester break in classes (usually the second Monday and Tuesday in October) to give students time to catch up with (or unwind from) studies.

What is the policy concerning alcohol?

The legal age in Indiana for alcohol consumption or possession is 21. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed in University facilities, with certain exceptions, and violation will result in disciplinary action.

How can I meet people?

Talk with people who sit near you in class. Participate in activities at the Recreational Sports Center or join an intramural team. Join a musical organization. Contact your campus religious organization. Your residence hall counselor can tell you about programs and activities in your hall and on campus. Check out all of the wonderful activities and organizations Purdue has to offer at the Get Involved at Purdue website: <http://www.getinvolved.purdue.edu/>. Flyers for callouts are posted on the flyer board on the front page.

What types of clubs does Purdue have?

Purdue's large size equals huge diversity in activities, clubs, and organizations – over 800 in all. Furthermore, if we don't have a club for your favorite activity, you and a friend (and a faculty advisor) can start your own! Many clubs hold callouts or informational meetings early in the fall. These are announced in your Mortar Board, the *Exponent*, on the Get Involved at Purdue online flyer board (<http://www.getinvolved.purdue.edu/>), on posters around campus, and on table notices in the residence hall dining rooms.

How can I become involved in student government?

Purdue Student Government (PSG) welcomes new student involvement. Visit their offices in Stewart Center, Room G-6 or contact them via their website at <http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~psg/>. PSG frequently runs announcements in the *Exponent* about opportunities for involvement. You could also serve in student government within the residence hall or your college or school.

What do students do on the weekend?

We definitely encourage students to stay on-campus for most weekends to help them feel more established at Purdue. A variety of plays, intercollegiate athletics, lectures, concerts, intramural contests, and other University-sponsored events are always available. Clubs, organizations, and residence halls also arrange weekend activities. Students can visit many parks, museums, and other attractions locally. Indianapolis and Chicago are within 2 hours driving distance, as well. Finally, students even budget some weekend time for studying!

What religious activities are offered at Purdue?

Student religious foundations and organizations, in cooperation with the churches and synagogues of the Greater Lafayette area, offer creative and varied spiritual ministry and welcome your participation. Consult the Get Involved at Purdue site (<http://www.getinvolved.purdue.edu/>) for specific information and watch the *Exponent* for activity notices.

How can I become involved in recreational sports?

Sign up for your housing unit's athletic program. Off-campus students also have teams. You can sign up at the Recreational Sports Center, which coordinates a large intramural program. Non-competitive and individual activities also are available at the RSC. Group exercise classes abound. Pick up an information booklet while you are there or visit their website at <http://www.purdue.edu/recsports/>. If you are interested in varsity sports, contact the appropriate coach at Mackey Arena.

How can I get athletic tickets?

Information about purchasing football tickets will be mailed to you during the summer and about basketball tickets early in the fall. There is a charge for student tickets for all athletic events. If you have questions, or if your parents want to purchase tickets, contact the Athletic Ticket Office at (765) 494-3194 or toll free at (800) 497-7678. You can also visit their website at <http://www.purduesports.com/tickets/pur-tickets.html>. The VIP “All Sport” Card, which gives card holders access to all regular-season home games in all sports, is available in limited quantity at various points throughout the semester, and sells out fast!

How can I buy Purdue Musical Organizations (PMO) Christmas Show tickets?

Ticket information about the PMO Christmas Show will be available no later than the beginning of August 2009. Tickets can be purchased by visiting the box offices within Elliott Hall, Pao Hall, or Stewart Center, or by calling the Purdue Box Office at (765) 494-3933 or (800) 914-SHOW (7469) between 10am - 6pm, Monday through Friday. Student deals are also available: <http://www.pmojo.com/events/christmas-show/>.

Is public transportation available?

Along with privately-run taxi services, West Lafayette and Lafayette is served by CityBus of Greater Lafayette, which offers free bus service to Purdue students, staff, and faculty with a valid Purdue ID. The Campus Loops run a regular, convenient route around campus both day and night. City routes visit popular sites, including shopping centers, apartment complexes, and parks, in West Lafayette and Lafayette. For more information and maps of the routes, call CityBus at (765) 742-RIDE or visit <http://www.gocitybus.com/>.

How do I get home if I don't have a car?

Greater Lafayette is serviced by Amtrak, Greyhound, and private bus services to the Indianapolis and Chicago O'Hare airport, as well as rental cars. In 2009, Purdue began a free web service called Boiler Ride, which facilitates the arrangement of carpools to and from class and rides home: <http://www.purdue.edu/transportation/boilerride.htm>.

FINANCES**How much money will I need?**

The amount of money that you will need will vary, depending on your activities, where you live, and whether you will hold a job during the school year. We recommend that students and parents sit down in the summer and draw up a budget. Popular items that students like to or will need to spend money on include: books/textbooks, special items needed for classes, food/snacks, movies, clothes, laundry, grocery items, room decoration, concerts, and transportation home.

Your tuition, fees, and housing bill is now available only on myPurdue. Starting with the Summer 2009 session, paper invoices will no longer be sent. All information will be available through the Bursar's e-Bill service and is accessible by both students and parents: <http://www.purdue.edu/bursar/PDF/ebill.pdf>.

What happens if I am awarded financial aid?

When possible, your financial aid award will be credited against your Purdue bills. If aid funds remain after your account is paid, the bursar's office will issue a check. You should plan to pay your initial expenses (books, off-campus rent, etc.) from other resources and be reimbursed when your aid check becomes available. If you have questions, call the Division of Financial Aid, (765) 494-0998 or by e-mail at facontact@purdue.edu.

Should I have a checking account?

Most students find checking accounts convenient. Local merchants usually will accept your check from an out-of-town bank or credit union if you have a Purdue ID card. Several automatic teller machines are located in the Purdue Memorial Union and in the residence halls. The Union has a check cashing service, which will cash checks for a maximum of \$50 per day for a \$1 transaction fee with a Purdue ID card.

How can I find a part-time job?

Both Work-Study and non-Work-Study student job postings are available through the Division of Financial Aid's Student Employment Service: <http://www.purdue.edu/dfa/studentjobs.php>. The residence halls employ many students. Ask for an application at your hall's main office. Check the ads in the *Exponent* and the *Lafayette Journal and Courier*. Watch the bulletin boards in your academic area or an area in which you'd like to work. Often departments have jobs posted in their offices.

What if an emergency arises and I am short of cash?

The Office of the Dean of students has small emergency loans available for 30 days with no interest. Contact (765) 494-1747 or visit their website for more information: <http://www.purdue.edu/odos/elp/emergencyloans.htm>.

HEALTH AND SAFETY**What if I need medical attention?**

The Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) is a fully accredited, primary-care outpatient facility. Services are available by appointment or walk-in. The center offers a variety of services including medical, urgent care, diagnostic X-ray and laboratory, physical therapy, counseling and psychological services, and alcohol and other drug counseling. Most services are covered by your University fees; others such as laboratory tests, X-rays, and physical therapy are provided on a fee-for-service basis. The University recommends that every student be covered by health insurance, either through their parents or by purchasing Purdue-sponsored insurance.

How do I arrange for health services such as allergy shots or blood tests?

The Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) offers many services, including an Allergy & Immunization Clinic. Contact PUSH at (765) 494-6504 as soon as possible to work out the details for this or any other routine services you need.

What if I have to miss a class because of illness?

You might ask another student in the class for notes and assignments, but you need to contact the professor if you will miss a test. If you miss a class for an extended period, contact your residence hall counselor so your instructor can be notified. For extended absences (more than five days), contact the Dean of Students Office at (765) 494-1747.

What is the Safe Walk Program?

At Purdue, we encourage students to practice good safety habits. For example, we do not recommend that students go out alone at night. The Safe Walk Program is a service of the Purdue Student Security Patrol (PSSP), which provides an escort to and from university residences, the academic campus and the Chauncey Village area. The PSSP is staffed by students who are selected and trained by the Purdue Police Department. This free service is provided all year, 24 hours a day, and seven days a week. Contact the Safe Walk Program at (765) 494-SAFE (7233).