

Richmond University  
Student Academic Advising Guide  
Fall 2009

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## Introduction

Academic Advising is designed to help you, the Richmond student, effectively and successfully plan and develop your academic path from undergraduate entry through to graduation. Please read through this guide to understand how this can be achieved.

At several stages in the semester you will receive emails from Academic Advising at Richmond:

Mrs. Bette Allen

Office 10, Third Floor, Taylor Library

allenb@richmond.ac.uk                      020 8332 8283

or

Mrs. Elizabeth Long

Adjunct Office and Resource Center, Second Floor, Taylor Library

[longe@richmond.ac.uk](mailto:longe@richmond.ac.uk)                      020 8332 8310

Please feel free to contact Mrs. Allen or Mrs. Long with any queries you may have, or with any problems that may need to be resolved.

## Email

You will receive emails regularly that will contain notifications and important information, and paper copies of critical emails will be placed in your file. It is therefore essential that you check your university Outlook email account on a daily basis during the working week.

## Your academic adviser

You will be assigned an adviser who will offer you guidance when you need to choose courses each semester. The choice of courses and their sequencing play a

crucial role in your ability to achieve academic success and complete your graduation requirements as efficiently as possible. Your adviser will help you with this process, and will consult you on your own plans for employment or postgraduate studies, as these may also impact the courses for which you register. You will also be able to discuss with your adviser taking a minor, an internship or an independent study project. If you have come to Richmond with a set of goals in mind, your academic adviser will help you decide on the best academic route to achieving those goals. Should you need help in identifying where your academic path may lead, your adviser is there to help you too. Please do not hesitate to discuss any concerns or queries you may have with your adviser. You may also contact Mrs. Allen or Mrs. Long. Your adviser will also provide guidance on matters dealing with academic policies and procedures, and will direct you to the appropriate source of information should the need arise.

### **How do you know who your adviser is?**

When you first enroll at Richmond, you will normally be registered in a First Year Seminar (FYS) course. The tutor of that course will be your academic adviser throughout your first year at Richmond, for two consecutive semesters. If you are exempt from taking the FYS course, your adviser allocation will be communicated to you via email shortly after Add/Drop Week.

During your second year, you may be assigned a new adviser, one who teaches in your major. If your adviser changes, you will be notified via email.

It is a very good idea not to delete important emails, such as the one in which you are told who your adviser is. Nevertheless, should you at any stage NOT know who your adviser is, please email Mrs. Allen or Mrs. Long.

## The academic year

At Richmond, this consists of the Fall semester, the Spring semester and two intensive summer sessions: Summer I and Summer II. The dates that are important to Academic Advising are:

- Orientation Week  
the week before courses start
- Add/Drop Week  
the first week of the teaching in the semester during which you may add and drop courses
- Priority Registration Week  
the week during which you should be registering for the next semester
- The sending out of 'Below C' notices  
when students who have achieved poorly in a course so far are notified
- Last day to withdraw  
the last day in a semester when students can withdraw from a course

These dates will be clearly communicated to you, and can also be found in the Catalog and are available online. Please note that summer sessions run slightly differently.

## When should you see your adviser?

You should see your adviser regularly, especially when you are choosing courses to register in.

During Orientation Week, you may not necessarily see your own adviser to register in a course. New students who are exempt from the FYS course may not have an adviser assigned during their first Add/Drop Week, so may not be able to see their

own adviser to add or drop a course. During that period, new FYS exempt students will find several advisers available to help.

At all other times, students should be seeing their own advisers.

So, if you want to change a course during Add/Drop Week, just pick up an *Add/Drop Form* from the Registrar's Office, or download it from the website, fill it in, sign it and then go to your own adviser who will counter-sign it and collect it from you for filing. In most cases, your adviser will be able to make the changes online. If online registration is not possible, you will need to take the form back to the Registrar's Office, where the changes will be made for you.

If, later on in the semester, you have to withdraw from a course, you will also need to see your adviser, because your adviser has to sign a *Course Withdrawal Form*. If you really cannot find your own adviser for a signature, you must contact him/her via email to agree to the course withdrawal and to be directed to whomever can provide a substitute signature. Please note the following two restrictions:

1. There is a deadline after which you cannot withdraw from a course.
2. You are not withdrawn from a course until you have submitted the signed *Course Withdrawal Form* to a member of staff in the Registrar's Office.

Failure to do so will result in you receiving an 'F' grade for that course.

During Priority Registration Week, students register for the next semester and possibly for the summer sessions. From the start of the semester, up to Priority Registration Week, you would have had plenty of time to consider the courses you would like to take for the next semester and contact your adviser about this.

### **How do you know if your adviser is changed?**

Should your academic adviser be changed, you will be informed by an email from Academic Advising.

## How do you find your adviser?

If you forget where your adviser's office is, just email your adviser, Mrs. Allen or Mrs. Long for this information. Office hours are posted on each adviser's office door at both campuses. All you have to do is drop in during those hours. Of course, your adviser may be busy with another student, so you may want to make an appointment either in person or via email to make sure that s/he can see you. If your adviser's office hours clash with a course you are taking, you can email for a special appointment outside office hours.

## What if you would like to change your adviser?

You can, of course, request to change your adviser. You should complete the *Request to Change Academic Adviser Form* which is available from the Registrar's Office or the Office of Academic Affairs, and return it to that office or to Mrs. Allen.

## Declaring or changing a major and/or a minor

If you wish to declare or change your major or a minor, please fill in and sign the *Major and Minor Declaration and Change Form*. It is available at the Registrar's Office, and also online for downloading. You will also need your adviser's signature before submitting it to the Registrar's Office or the Office of Academic Affairs, and the changes will be made for you.

Once you declare your major, you will be assigned an adviser who teaches in your area – unless of course you are with your FYS adviser. Please make sure that the university has the correct major for you listed in its records. You can ask your adviser to provide you with your *Advisement Report* to do this.

## Your Degree Planning Document

The *Degree Planning Document* or *Degree Planner* is a document that charts your progress. It lists the required courses for your major, for the Core Curriculum and

for the Basic Skills. As you complete a course, you should enter the semester of completion onto the planner. Planners can be downloaded from the website, but note that you must use the version that coincides with the date you were admitted to Richmond, and not the date when you declared your major. Please make sure you bring your updated planner each time you meet your adviser to discuss the courses that you wish to take in the next semester. Both you and your adviser need to keep an updated copy of your planner. If at any time you lose this document, your adviser can provide you with an up-to-date *Advisement Report* to help you fill out a new *Degree Planner*.

### **Liberal arts and the Core Curriculum**

Richmond is a liberal arts university, which means that you are required to take a certain number of Basic Skills and Core Curriculum courses that are outside your major area of study. These courses are carefully selected and specifically designed to help you develop an understanding of other disciplines. Upon completion of your degree, you therefore will be proficient not only in your own major field, but also have exposure to other fields. You may not appreciate this now, but such an additional broad academic understanding of other fields may well provide you with a significant advantage when applying for employment positions or for postgraduate study.

### **Minors**

Within the context of a liberal arts education, you will find it easy to complete a suitable minor and may be advised to consider this. The full list of minors is available in the Catalog and on the website. When you decide on a minor that falls outside your major area, you may want to talk to an adviser from that area. You will find advisers at Richmond approachable and willing to share their expertise.

## Guidelines for choosing courses

It is primarily your responsibility to make sure that you are registered in the right courses. Here are some general guidelines for helping you select courses before you go to see your adviser to register. Your adviser will carefully check your choices, and either approve them or suggest alternatives. It is also useful to note some alternative courses, as at times, a course may already be full when you come to register. Here are some of the main points to consider:

1. Your English Placement Test will determine if you start as a Foundations student or not. If you are placed in the Foundations Program, you will be able to take credit-bearing courses that count as electives towards your degree. This gives you specific support in the development of essential English language and academic skills that underpin all degree work. Some of Richmond's top graduates started in this program. Your adviser will lay out the details for you, and register you in courses that are carefully selected.
2. Your English Placement Test will determine which English course you must start with.

If you test into ENG 115, Principles of Academic Writing, you have only four semesters to complete both this course and also the second course ENG 215, Principles of Academic Research, or you risk dismissal from the university.

If you have transfer credits for ENG 115 or your test result places you into ENG215, then you have only two semesters to pass the course, or, again, you risk dismissal from the university.

Please note that you need to achieve a minimum 'C - ' grade in ENG 115 to be allowed to take ENG 215. If you want to take ENG 215 in an intensive summer session, you need to achieve a minimum 'B-' in ENG 115. This is particularly important to note if you are registering for a summer session and you do not yet have your ENG 115 grade.

Students without the minimum grade in ENG 115 will automatically be de-registered from ENG 215, and if it does not involve changes in the timetable, be re-

registered into ENG 115. It remains the student's responsibility to ensure completion of ENG 115 / ENG 215 in the required time.

3. Your Maths Placement Test will indicate which Maths course you should be taking first.

If you test into Category 1, you have to take the Maths course listed under Basic Skills, MTH 100, as soon as possible. Only after successful completion of this course, can you proceed to the next level Maths course to satisfy the Level I Numerical requirement of the Core Curriculum.

If you test into Category 2, you are eligible to take any one of: MTH 105, MTH 112, MTH 117, MTH 118, MTH 119, MTH 212 and MTH/SCL 219.

If you test into Category 3, you may take any one of MTH 114, MTH 115 and MTH 218.

If you test into Category 4, you may choose to take any course above MTH 100.

Please note that credits can be awarded for only one of the courses: MTH 118, MTH 212 and MTH/SCL 219, as they have very similar content. The same applies for MTH 114 and MTH 115 where a student may receive credits for only one of the two courses. It is also important to note that some majors are required to take a specific course. In the first instance, therefore, you should take the course listed on your *Degree Planner*. If it is necessary to make a substitution, please consult with your adviser.

Students who fail MTH 100 and are registered in a Maths course that has MTH 100 as a prerequisite, will automatically be dropped from that Maths course, and if it does not involve changes to the timetable, be registered in MTH 100 to re-take the course. It remains the student's responsibility to ensure s/he has an adequate timetable.

4. You should aim to complete your Basic Skills courses, especially the English and Maths courses as soon as possible.

5. A normal academic load is five courses per semester. If you are taking a science course with a lab, then, extraordinarily, you will be taking 6 courses, but the

lab course will only have one credit. Please note that you cannot take a science course without taking the relevant lab section in the same semester.

During a summer session you may take one or two courses at most.

If your Grade Point Average (GPA) is 3.4 or higher after one semester at Richmond, you are permitted to take six courses. You will need to pay for the extra credits before registering, and a sixth course may only be added during Add/Drop Week.

6. You should complete your lower division courses (levels 100 and 200) for both the major and Core Curriculum requirements, before starting to take upper division courses (levels 300 and 400). For many courses this is necessary because lower division pre-requisite courses have to be completed before key upper division courses can be taken, and because there is a general requirement to complete 45 credits before registering for upper division courses.

7. Aim for a mix of major and Core Curriculum and Basic Skills courses during your first two years of study.

8. Plan ahead by looking for courses that satisfy both the Core Curriculum and your major required courses at Level I and Level II. This is referred to as 'double-dipping'. For example, PSY 150 satisfies the Level I Behavioral requirement in the Core Curriculum and is a required course for Psychology majors. Another example is ECN 210 which satisfies a Core Curriculum Level II requirement and is also a required course for Business majors and Economics majors. You should also consider such 'double-dipping' to satisfy the requirements of a minor you may have chosen.

9. The 'double-dipping' rule does NOT apply to the Level III course of the Core Curriculum. This course has to be one that does not appear anywhere under 'Major Requirements' in your planner.

10. In some instances, a Level III course from the Core Curriculum can be used as a substitute for a Level II course in the Core Curriculum, even within the major area. For example, SCL/MSL 395 may be used as a substitute for MSL 252 to satisfy one Level II Humanities course in the Core Curriculum.

11. If you are taking courses at both the Richmond and the Kensington campuses in any one semester, you must make sure you have sufficient transport time (1.5 hours) between classes.

Course descriptions can be found in the Catalog and on the website. Please take the time to read this before choosing a course.

## Special Courses

Here are two special courses that you may want to discuss with your adviser:

1. Full-time 3-credit internships can be offered to degree students who have completed 75 credits and have a minimum GPA of 2.75. Some companies, especially in the finance sector, require a minimum GPA of 3.0. An internship can provide both valuable work experience and professional contacts for future career options. Internships are available in the Fall and Spring semesters and also over the summer, and comprise full-time work experience for 11 weeks. You can contact Dr. Francesca Kazan and Elizabeth Robertson for further information.

Please note that the following degree programs do not accept internships to satisfy a major requirement: Communication, Economics, International Relations, Political Science, Psychology and Sociology.

2. Independent study projects can be offered to students who have completed 60 credits with a minimum GPA of 3.0. Such a course is normally taken in the Fall or Spring semester.

## Academic Probation

To ensure satisfactory completion of your studies at Richmond, you must achieve a required level of success in your courses. Here are the main problems that may arise:

1. If at any time after the first semester, a student's GPA falls below 2.00 (i.e., an average grade of 'C'), the student is placed on Academic Probation and is limited to four courses. The student risks dismissal from the university if, after two semesters, the GPA remains below 2.00.

2. If a student is placed on Probation and was registered in 5 courses, the student will automatically be dropped from a course. The student will normally be given a short time frame to select which course to drop.
3. An 'F' grade will have a significant effect on the GPA. Any course for which the student received an 'F' must be retaken as soon as possible to enable the student to come off Probation. If the course is not on offer, then this must be discussed with the adviser.
4. Students who do not achieve 18 credits (usually representing 6 courses) over two consecutive semesters, are placed on Academic Progress Probation. Again, if a student does not achieve the required 18 credits after two semesters, the student risks dismissal from the university.
5. Any student registered for only 2 courses is no longer a full-time student. Such a situation may arise if the student receives Attendance Failure Notices or drops/withdraws from courses. This may have serious implications for the student visa, University housing and financial aid.

## **Transfer Credits**

Transfer credits will be clearly indicated on your Advisement Report, first provided to you by the Registrar's Office, but also available from your adviser. If they are shown as provisional, then you must make sure that the institution from which you are transferring provides the Registrar's Office at Richmond with the original documents as soon as possible. Failure to do so will result in the transfer credits being dropped.

Provisional credits are not yet official credits and therefore are not counted towards your academic status. This may have a negative impact during Priority Registration. For instance, if you have 60 provisional transfer credits and have completed a year at Richmond (30 credits), you will be hoping to register as a Senior in the first timeslot. But if your 60 transfer credits are still provisional, you will only have Sophomore status, and will not have the advantage of early registration.

It is important for you to take full advantage of any transfer credits you may be entitled to. If a course that you have taken at another institution is equivalent to a course at Richmond, and you have passed the course with a satisfactory grade, then you will not need to re-take the course. If you do, then Richmond grade will override the previous grade. A course for which you receive transfer credits will either satisfy a major requirement, a Core Curriculum Requirement, a Basic Skills requirement, or, if it does not fit into any of these three categories, will be shown as an elective. The following illustrates the important points regarding transfer credits:

1. If a course that was taken elsewhere satisfies a Core Curriculum requirement, this will be noted in brackets underneath the course title. For instance, the advisement report might show:

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, SRI LANKA  
SPRING 2005 MAC 1105 COLLEGE ALGEBRA

(Equivalent: **MTH 105 / LI, 1**)

This means that the student has already fulfilled the requirement for the Core Curriculum Level I, section 1 (Numerical), and should not be taking MTH 105 at Richmond.

A Core Curriculum course that was taken elsewhere may also satisfy a major requirement, and the 'double-dip' rule will still apply. For example, a student may have transfer credit for PHL 203, which fulfills the Level II (Humanities) requirement and is also a required course for some majors. This means that, in this instance, the student should not be taking PHL 203 at Richmond, and the student has satisfied a Core Curriculum and also a major requirement.

2. A course that was taken elsewhere may not have the exact equivalent at Richmond, and is labeled an Elective. Transfer credits from such a course can be used to fulfill a core curriculum requirement, but if they do, it will be clearly indicated. For example:

BROWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
AUTUMN 2003 ARC1701 ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN I

(Equivalent: **ADM Elective / LI, 4**)

So even though this course does not have an exact equivalent at Richmond, it has still been judged to fulfill the Level I, section 4 (Expressive) requirement.

3. Upper-division numbered courses at other institutions do not always transfer as upper-division courses at Richmond. Not all course numbering systems are the same, and it should not be assumed, for example, that MGT 300 at the University of Ozarks transfers as upper-division credit at Richmond. If a transfer credit is upper-division, this will be made clear in one of two ways.

a. from the course equivalent such as

MARKHAM COLLEGE

SPRING 2005 CMM 306 SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE MEDIA

(Equivalent: **COM 316**)

b. an elective deserving upper-division credit, this will be specified such as

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

AUTUMN 2003 HIS 316 SOUTH AFRICAN HISTORY

(Equivalent: HST UPPER-DIVISION ELECTIVE)

When in doubt about the level of transfer credit awarded, please refer to your adviser who will be able to answer any queries you may have, or who will refer you to the Dean of Academic Affairs.

Ordinarily, an upper-division elective cannot be used to satisfy a major requirement, but will only count towards the total credits required for graduation.

## Your Graduation Requirements

There are four categories of graduation requirements, all of which have to be met. This excludes the requirements for a minor that you may have opted for.

### I. Overall Graduation Parameters

There are seven basic requirements for students to successfully complete their undergraduate studies at Richmond, and you will have to ensure that these are being met. The Richmond Catalog currently lists the following parameters for graduation:

1. The fulfillment of the Major degree requirements

2. The fulfillment of the Core Curriculum requirements
3. The fulfillment of the Basic Skills requirements
4. A minimum of 18 upper division courses, of which at least 15 courses have to be taken at Richmond, and at least 36 upper division credits must be taken at Richmond in the student's major
5. A minimum of 120 credits in total
6. A minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 for the major courses
7. A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0

**Important Notes:**

A course satisfying both a major and a Core Curriculum requirement can only be counted once when tallying the total number of credits

There is no 'double-dipping' (using a course to satisfy both a Major requirement and a Core Curriculum requirement) permitted at level III

**II. Major Requirements**

Students who are registered in a major degree program have a list of required lower and upper division courses and a list of elective courses from which they can choose in order to satisfy their graduation requirements. Lower division courses are at the 100 and 200 level, while upper division courses are at the 300 and 400 level.

Business majors need to select one of three upper division concentrations (Finance, International Business, Marketing).

Many courses have pre-requisites or co-requisites and these have to be taken into account when choosing courses to ensure a smooth progression. Course descriptions for each major can be found on the University website.

**III. Core Curriculum Requirements**

Richmond is a liberal arts university, and students are required to complete 10 courses in a range of disciplines, irrespective of their major. These courses are at three levels, and details of the courses you may choose from can be found in the Catalog and on the University website.

#### IV. Basic Skills Requirements

These cover academic writing and research skills, information literacy and mathematics. Again, all students without the relevant transfer credit, or exemption, are required to take these courses. The 'Guidelines for choosing courses' section above outlines the relevant details.

### Your Graduation Check List

When you have achieved approximately 90 credits or when you have completed Priority Registration for your final semester, you should meet with your adviser to finalize your graduation check list. The check list is in fact your *Degree Planning Document*, but with additional information shown to enable you and your adviser to establish whether you have satisfied the graduation requirements. It must show the course taken, when it was taken, and a mark to indicate, if applicable, that a course that was NOT taken at Richmond. It will also pencil in the final courses to be taken. This document is then signed and sent to The Dean of Academic Affairs for official verification. The Dean will send an email to both you and your adviser confirming that your graduation requirements will have been met upon completion of the final courses as indicated on the planner. If there is a problem, the Dean will provide you with an explanation of what is wrong. There is a deadline for the submission of the signed Graduation Checklist; students and advisers will be notified via email. It is important that you work from the document that is relevant to your start date at Richmond. Students who start one year, and do not declare a major until the next year will still use the document of the date they enter. Also note that you must satisfy a host of requirements, as described in the previous section.

### Finding out More

You should consult the University Catalog and access the University website for more detailed information about Academic Advising. You can download the forms referred to in this Guide from this link

<http://www.richmond.ac.uk/content/academic-affairs/forms-for-academic-procedures.aspx>

Again, please do not hesitate to contact your adviser, Mrs. Allen or Mrs. Long if you have any queries or concerns about points covered in this guide, or any other matter related to Academic Advising. You will find everyone accessible and helpful.