ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS

This sheet of academic highlights will provide you with an overview of Albright’s curriculum. Registering for your first college courses could seem a little intimidating right now, but you’ll discover that it’s easy to understand and complete. Incoming fall freshmen will receive course registration materials by late June, including suggested course selections for particular majors. Students entering in the spring term will receive materials in January.

Our best overall academic planning advice is this: think long-term, get a first-hand familiarity with the curriculum and academic policies by studying the online Catalog, get to know your advisor when you come to campus, and ask all the questions you may have. When you and your advisor sit down to talk, use your time together to plan and discuss not just your next semester courses but also your longer term academic and personal goals as well. If you need more time to get questions answered than your first appointment provides, make another appointment. It’s important to use fully your faculty advisor’s time and expertise. You should see your advisor several times each semester, especially your first year, and it will be up to you make that happen.

Of course you’ll have many academic questions over the course of your four years at Albright, and in addition to your advisor you will have many additional resources: your professors, the registrar’s office, and the academic support staff. This entire team of professionals is there to help you maximize your academic success. We recommend that you read the advising pages on our web site for more information about the advising process, your relationship with your advisor, and how to get the most out of it. Just click on Academics from the home page, go to Academic Support, and select the Academic Advising link.

The Curriculum Structure

Albright uses a course unit system, which means that all courses are equal to one unit. To graduate from Albright, you will complete at least 32 courses (or course units).

Albright's curriculum consists of four components:

- General studies courses
- Major courses
- Elective courses

1. **General Studies:** The General Education sequence is a comprehensive, integrated set of dynamic courses and academic experiences that instill common, lifelong skills and approaches to knowledge in all students that complement more specialized study in a chosen field. For freshmen entering fall 2013, 11-13 courses are required, depending on placement. General studies requirements come from the following areas:

   - **First Year Seminar** – one seminar course that introduces you to college-level academic reading, writing, and discussion through different topics taught by our full-time faculty; not required for transfers designated as sophomores or above.
   - **English Composition** – two English composition courses. Certain students may be exempt from the first course based on their standardized test scores and high school English grades.
   - **Foundations Courses** – one course from each of five foundational areas, each of which explores its particular topic while introducing students to the approaches to knowledge characteristic of that area of study.
     - **Humanities:** literature, history, philosophy or religious studies
     - **Natural Science:** biology, chemistry, physics, geology or astronomy
     - **Quantitative Reasoning:** a course that involves numerical analysis, for example mathematics, statistics in a social science discipline, or some accounting or computer science courses. Some majors require a particular course from this area – ask your advisor or the registrar’s office if you are unsure if this applies to you.
     - **Social Science:** anthropology, economics, political science, psychology or sociology
• **Fine Arts**: art, music, or theatre; participation in the choir, orchestra or band for four semesters also satisfies this requirement.

• **Foreign Language** – one to three courses (depending on your years of high school language study and grades) in the same language. Albright offers Spanish, French, German, Chinese, Latin and Ancient Greek.

• **Connections Courses** – two courses chosen from a range of disciplines (at least one in the humanities and at least one with a global emphasis); these courses build on students’ learning in Foundations courses and ask them to study difference and interdependence within and across societies or the natural environment.

• **Synthesis Course** – one interdisciplinary course taken as a junior or senior that synthesizes at least two academic disciplines to move beyond disciplinary boundaries to a new understanding of a theme or topic; students are asked in the Synthesis course to reflect on the relations among academic disciplines, on their broad liberal arts learning, and on their own growing understanding of the world.

• **The Albright Cultural Experience** – a non-credit co-curricular requirement that promotes ongoing participation in the rich cultural and intellectual life available outside the classroom. Students attend 16 approved cultural events, usually by the end of their sophomore year (8 for sophomore transfers; junior transfers are exempt).

2. **Courses in the Major**: generally 13-14 courses are required for a major or two combined majors.

3. **Elective Courses**: These are other courses you choose to achieve the 32 required for graduation, whether to reinforce your major or to explore a different interest; the number needed in order to reach 32 will vary, depending on the number of courses required for your general education and major.

    **Typical Schedule**

Most students take four courses each semester. For a first-semester freshman, a typical schedule is:

• First Year Seminar
• English Composition
• Foreign Language course or a General Studies Foundations course
• One other General Studies Foundations course or an introductory course in your major

You may take no more than four courses a semester during your first year. (Note: choir, band, orchestra and music lessons do not carry academic credit, so you may register for these courses in addition to four others.)

    **Faculty Advisor**

You will be assigned a faculty advisor who will help you plan your immediate and long-term academic program and assist you with the registration process. You will meet with a faculty advisor if you attend a July orientation event and will meet with your assigned advisor during Welcome Weekend in August. You can ask advising questions at other times by calling the Registrar’s office, emailing advising@alb.edu, or visiting campus. If you enter in the spring term, you will consult with an advisor at the Transfer Orientation and be assigned a permanent advisor.

    **Disability Services**

The College makes reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities who make a request supported by appropriate documentation. You will find information about our disability policies at http://www.albright.edu/academics/alc-disabilities.htm. If you plan to seek disability accommodations, we urge you to begin the process as soon as possible by contacting the Academic Learning Center and asking for an accommodations packet (610-921-7662 or academiclearningcenter@albright.edu). Students who expect physical access issues because of disability should inform the Dean of Students office (610-921-7611 or dcoldren@alb.edu). If disability issues are relevant to you, please see the attached letter from the director of the Academic Learning Center.