Preparing for Pittstart

A Pre-Pittstart Guide for First-Year Engineering Students



Welcome to Pitt!

Your Pittstart is the first step toward getting your Freshman Year started off right. Please read this PowerPoint presentation carefully so that you are fully prepared for your time with us at Pittstart.

To advance the slides, just hit the Enter key on your keyboard. If you'd like to go back, just hit the Backspace button.

See you soon!

Step 1: Placement Exams

You must complete your online placement exams prior to your arrival at Pittstart. If you have not taken your exams yet, please do so ASAP! Placement exams must be taken one week prior to your first day of Pittstart.

All Freshman Engineers must take the ALEKS (Math) Placement Exam, regardless of SAT scores or AP scores.

For information on how to take your exams and which exams you need to take, please look <u>here</u>.

Step 2: Advanced Standing

Do you have AP credit, IB credit, or have you taken classes at another college or university?

- •If you have taken AP or IB tests, be sure to contact the College Board (for AP) or the International Baccalaureate Organization (for IB) and have your scores sent to Pitt.

 Registration for advanced courses will not be possible until we receive and process your scores in mid-July.
- •If you have college credit from another institution, have the transcript sent to the <u>Freshman Engineering Program</u>.

We may not receive this information until after your Pittstart. If that's the case, **don't worry!** We'll help you change your schedule, if you so choose, once your scores do arrive at Pitt. Keep in mind, however, that the scores must be received before 9/5 to make changes to your schedule.

Step 3: Review the Curriculum

Take a good look at the freshman engineering curriculum, found here.

Most freshman engineers will take this set of courses. Taking advanced courses depends on many factors, but simply "opting" into advanced courses is, in many cases, not possible. Things like advanced standing (see previous slide), placement exams, and your comfort level with the curriculum will all factor into your placements.

Most students are NOT encouraged to take a full set of honors courses, even though nearly all of our students had done so in high school. We'll talk more about this at Pittstart.

Step 4: Review Elective Rules

Most freshman engineers will take a humanities or social science elective in their first term at Pitt. Look at the rules surrounding the humanities/social science classes that engineers take and think about which of these subject areas or courses might be of interest to you.

Swanson School of Engineering Humanities/Social Science Elective Rules may be found here. Please read this web page before you move on to the next slide.

Once you review Step 6, you will search for the days/times of some of the electives you like using Peoplesoft, our student information system. (You'll be glad you did this! It can be time consuming at Pittstart!) Keep in mind that not all of the electives on the approved elective list are offered every semester.

Some of the most popular and historically available electives taken by freshmen are:

PSY 0010 (Intro to Psychology) ECON 0110 (Intro to Macroecon.) RUSS 0090 (Russian Fairy Tales) ANTH 0582 (Intro to Archaeology)

ANTH 0780 (Intro to Cultural Anth.)

ECON 0100 (Intro to Microecon.)

ANTH 0680 (Intro to Physical Anth.)

HAA 0040 (Intro to Western Architecture)

MUSIC 0211 (Intro to Western Art Music)

SLAV 0880 (Vampires: Blood and Empire)

Step 5: Review Seminars

All freshman engineers take a Freshman Engineering Seminar in the first year. In addition to the Seminar Lecture, students will also sign up for a Seminar Recitation—a small class that will help you adjust to college.

These Seminar Recitations are based on various interest topics. Look at the <u>Seminar Recitation Catalog</u> and pick 4 or 5 seminars that are intersting to you. When you get to Pittstart, you can see which of the Seminars you picked best fit into your schedule. (When you get to the above web page, scroll to Freshman Seminar Selection, and click on "in this catalog" at the bottom of the page.)

When you come to Pittstart, you will use Pitt's student information system to enroll yourself in classes. Our self-enrollment process isn't hard, but it can take some getting used to. Although we'll have some students available at Pittstart to help you use Peoplesoft, you *will* find it helpful if you log into the system and "play" with it a bit before your Pittstart.

www.my.pitt.edu is your ticket in!
Use your Pitt username and password to log in.

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First, read a bit about using Peoplesoft. Once you get into it, it will be rather intuitive, but your first glance at the system will probably feel foreign.

On your my.pitt.edu page, click on "Learn More" under "Student Service Center" on the right sidebar of the page.

This will link you to several PDF documents about using Peoplesoft. On the right side of this new page, read "Self-Enrollment: How to Prepare" and "Self-Enrollment: Add a Class".

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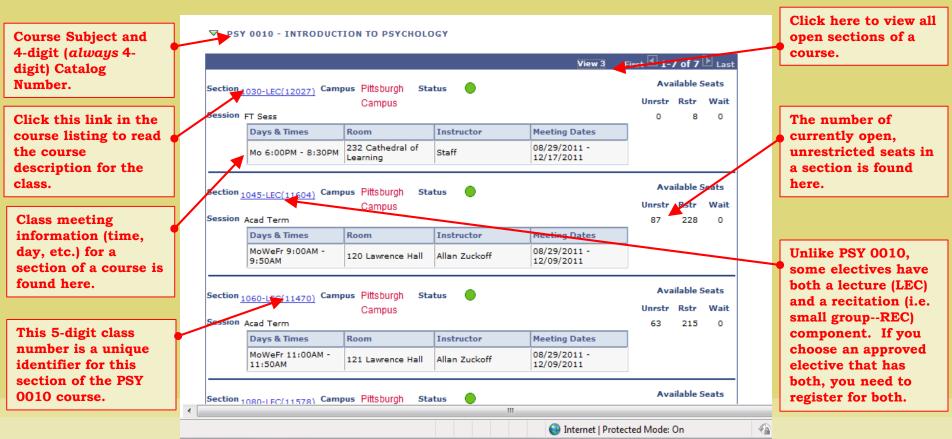
Now that you've looked over the tutorial documents, why not try adding your elective class? First, get yourself into Peoplesoft. Go back to www.my.pitt.edu. Click on "Student Center Login" on the right side of the page. Then click on "Self Service".

Using the Enrollment functions you just read about, use the "ADD A CLASS" feature to register yourself for an elective. So click "Enrollment", then "Enrollment: Add Classes". Mark the term you're working on (Fall Term 2014-2015) and click "Continue".

Pick an elective from the approved electives list (**see previous Step 4 slide**) like PSY 0010 (a popular choice among engineering students). Using the search information you have already learned, enroll yourself in an approved elective. For example, type in "PSY" for "Course Subject" and "0010" for "Course Number", scroll down and pick your campus – Pittsburgh – and then click "Search". If no results show for what you have chosen (and you have entered the information correctly!), then the class is either not offered or closed.

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This is what you might see in Peoplesoft if you search for a PSY 0010 elective. (PSY 0010 is just an *example* of an approved elective. But it's a good one to use for demonstration.) The first three offerings in the list for this course are shown below.



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Don't worry if the elective you picked doesn't fit with the schedule you will make at Pittstart. We can always change it! A good rule of thumb is that 11 AM and 4 PM classes on MWF tend to work well with the freshman engineering schedule. 12 PM, 1 PM, 2 PM, and 3 PM classes on MWF typically don't.

We want you to at least **TRY** to schedule your elective now, if you can manage it, because electives tend to be the most challenging and time-consuming part of registration as a first-term freshman. If you're able to read the help documents and work out an elective before Pittstart, you've already saved yourself some time!

Keep in mind that all of the upperclassmen at Pitt have registered before you and you are most likely to gain entrance into electives that are large, lower-division courses. For example, you're more likely to get a seat in HIST 0101 (Intro to Western Civilization 2), which is a large class offered every term, than you are in MUSIC 0844 (Music of the Beatles), which is a very small class seldom offered.

Step 7: See You at Pittstart!

Pittstart Day 1:

Accommodations check-in begins at 10 AM in the Litchfield Towers Lobby. Pittstart check in begins at 11 AM in the Ballroom at Alumni Hall.

Pittstart Day 2:

The Swanson School of Engineering advising group meeting begins at **8:30 AM** in 157 BNDM Hall. On day two, you will attend group meetings and an individual advising appointment. Students coming from the farthest distance will have the earliest appointment times. Appointment times range from noon until 6 PM.

We look forward to seeing you soon!