IMPORTANT PLACEMENT INFORMATION

Students come to Yale from a variety of high school backgrounds, and they inevitably arrive with different levels of preparation. Although all students may pursue any subject of study at Yale, they will have a more successful and rewarding experience if they begin at the appropriate level. To assist you with course selection, information about the most common first year courses is provided in the First Year tabs found within each departmental listing in the online Yale College Programs of Study, published in early June. Please read this information carefully.

Proper placement is particularly important for courses with quantitative reasoning components and for courses that require knowledge of specific scientific concepts, such as biology, chemistry, economics, mathematics, and physics. A very large percentage of Yale students take at least one course in one of these departments, so we ask all incoming students, regardless of their intended major or what courses they plan to take in their first year, to complete the High School Math and Science Survey during the summer. Some departments use this information—along with scores from standardized or Yale-administered placement tests—to advise students about which courses to take. This process is an inexact estimate, but these initial placements are useful and accurate for most students. If you have any questions, you will have an opportunity to review and discuss your placements with faculty advisers after you arrive on campus.

Departments that use information from the High School Math and Science Survey may also have program-specific placement examinations that students must take to enroll in or place out of introductory courses. See under Special Programs, Placement, and Preregistration for details.

In addition to the subjects listed above, some fields of study in the humanities, such as foreign languages, literature, and music theory, also have specific prerequisites and placement exams. Typical placements for commonly taught foreign languages are illustrated in the Foreign Language Requirement chart and are described in further detail in each department’s listing under Programs of Study.

For additional details about placement examinations and procedures, see under Special Programs, Placement, and Preregistration.