

# ADMISSIONS

## First-Year Admission

An applicant for admission as a beginning student in the first-year class must meet the minimum requirements for admission to degree candidacy prior to the time of matriculation. All offers of admission are conditional until these requirements have been met.

Each applicant is evaluated on the basis of a holistic assessment. Admission decisions are made on the basis of this holistic assessment in relation to the requested area of enrollment (academic program), space availability, the quality of the credentials presented by other applicants, and such other academically relevant information deemed appropriate by the Undergraduate Admissions Office and approved by the Senate Committee on Admission, Records, Scheduling, and Student Aid.

When openings at the requested location or in the requested program of the University are filled, qualified applicants will be offered admission to their alternate choice of program or location or notified of campuses where openings still exist.

## College Entrance Tests

Applicants for first-year admission to the University are required to submit scores of the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) of the College Entrance Examination Board or the American College Test (ACT). SAT or ACT results of the junior-year testing periods are recommended. Exceptions to the requirement for scholastic assessment test scores will be granted to adult learners who have been out of high school for five or more years or are veterans with four or more years of service. Exceptions to the required courses completed also may be granted. Adults may be requested to submit a statement of personal goals or to participate in an interview.

## Selection of the Area of Enrollment

It is necessary for an applicant to indicate one of the academic units of the University in which they want to study. If an applicant is undecided about the choice of an academic unit, they may seek enrollment in the Division of Undergraduate Studies.

## Changing the Area of Enrollment

An applicant who has been admitted to an academic college or unit of the University may not change to another without satisfying entrance requirements of the college or other academic unit of the University.

## Previous Attendance at Another College

An applicant must state on their application whether they have ever attended any other college or university. Failure to indicate, at the time of application, previous registration at another college or university may result in refusal or cancellation of admission. An applicant who has attempted fewer than 18 semester credits at another regionally accredited college or university will be considered as a first-year applicant. An applicant who has attempted 18 or more semester credits at another regionally accredited college or university subsequent to high school graduation will be evaluated as an advanced standing applicant.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT APPLYING FOR ADMISSION TO PENN STATE (<https://admissions.psu.edu/apply/>)

## Advanced Standing (Transfer) Admission

An applicant who has attended any regionally accredited college or institution on the college level and attempted 18 or more semester credits subsequent to high school graduation may be considered for admission with advanced standing. Attendance at any and all other institutions must be reported at the time of application. Failure to indicate, at the time of application, previous registration at another college or university can result in refusal or cancellation of admission.

An applicant for admission with advanced standing must meet the minimum secondary school requirements for admission to degree candidacy prior to the time of matriculation. Advanced standing applicants are considered for admission on the basis of the applicant's requested academic program, space availability, and the academic quality of their work at the previously attended institution(s). A minimum cumulative grade-point average of at least 2.00 (C) out of 4.00, as computed for Penn State students, is required, although certain areas of study may have additional requirements. In addition, an applicant must be in good academic and nonacademic standing. An applicant whose overall grade-point average is less than 2.00 (on a 4.00 scale) but has a grade-point average of at least 2.00 (on a 4.00 scale) at all institutions attended in the four years prior to the requested enrollment semester may apply for admission as an advanced standing student with forgiveness. An applicant who has not attempted any collegiate level course work four years prior to the requested enrollment semester may also apply for advanced standing with forgiveness. An applicant who does not meet the minimum requirement of a grade-point average of at least 2.00 and does not meet the criteria for advanced standing with forgiveness may enroll in credit courses as a non-degree student in accordance with applicable policies and procedures.

Advanced standing credits may be awarded for college-level work taken at regionally accredited institutions provided Penn State offers a similar class and the course grade earned is equivalent to a grade of A, B, or C at this University. The credits also must be useful to the student's program of study. An academic adviser determines which of the transferable credits are applicable to the program of study at Penn State. Credits are transferred, but grades and grade-point average are not. Advanced standing students enter the University without an average and their average begins with the completion of their first semester of study at Penn State.

Under certain circumstances, the University may need to restrict advanced standing admissions to a particular college or school because of space limitations.

Entrance to a major is an additional step beyond admission to a college or school. It involves additional academic requirements and may be subject to additional restrictions because of space limitations.

## Application Procedure

In all cases where work has been taken at other institutions, an official transcript from each place of attendance must be submitted directly to the Undergraduate Admissions Office by the registrar of the institution attended. An applicant currently attending another institution also must provide a schedule of courses in progress or to be completed before enrollment at Penn State, including course name, number, description, and number of credits. The applicant's secondary school record must be submitted directly to the Undergraduate Admissions Office by the secondary school. The Undergraduate Admissions Office may require the applicant to send a description of the courses that they have taken at the

college previously attended. All credentials become part of the permanent records of the University.

## Entrance to a Major

An advanced standing degree candidate may be admitted to a college or school of the University. To be eligible for entrance to a major, a student must meet the entrance-to-major requirements of the University, of the college or school, and of the program area. Under certain circumstances, further restrictions or exceptions on entrance to majors may be required because of space limitations. Students are expected to work with advisers and to utilize current information about entrance requirements and restrictions when exploring academic program alternatives and making program and course selections.

## Changing the Area of Enrollment

An applicant who has been admitted to an academic college, school, or major of the University may not change to another without satisfying entrance requirements of the college/school and major to which they want to transfer.

## Degree-Seeking Student Conditionally Enrolled in Division of Undergraduate Studies

An applicant seeking to pursue a degree program and holding a high school diploma or its equivalent may be admitted to enroll in credit courses at the University as a degree-seeking student conditionally enrolled in the Division of Undergraduate Studies (DUS). A degree-seeking student in DUS with conditions is considered a regular student for registration and academic advising and is entitled to all services provided to all students of the University. A degree-seeking student conditionally enrolled in DUS who is admissible to the University may enroll in credit courses if the following criteria are met:

1. The applicant provides evidence of academic success based on credentials submitted with the application; however, does not meet all criteria specified in Senate Policies 05-00 and 06-00: Degree Candidates (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/05-00-and-06-00-degree-candidates/>).
2. The applicant has not been dismissed for unsatisfactory scholarship from any other college or university previously attended.
3. The applicant has not been dismissed or suspended for nonacademic reasons from any college or university.
  - a. An applicant who has any criminal or disciplinary issues and is not in good standing at another accredited college or university must have received clearance from the Office of Student Conduct.

## Nondegree Students

A person enrolled in a course who is not a degree candidate or degree-seeking student conditionally enrolled in DUS is classified as a nondegree student. A nondegree student must either hold a high school diploma or its equivalent to take undergraduate courses. Exceptions may be made by the Undergraduate Admissions Office for students currently enrolled in high school (dual-enrollment students).

A nondegree student who has not been academically suspended or dismissed may enroll in any number of credits, not to exceed the typical semester credit load of a full-time student if criteria 1, 2, and 3 are met. Nondegree students who change from degree candidates to nondegree or who intend to become degree candidates must also meet criterion 4.

1. The student has completed the prerequisites for the courses to be scheduled or has obtained permission from the instructor to schedule the course.
2. Space is available after degree candidates have been accommodated.
3. The student has not been dismissed or suspended for nonacademic reasons from any college or university. An applicant not in good standing at another accredited college or university for disciplinary reasons must consult with the director of the Office of Student Conduct for admissions clearance.
4. The student has obtained academic advising/counseling from an adviser/counselor designated by the academic unit to which admission, or reinstatement and re-enrollment, is desired.

Note: A student must be admitted, or reinstated and re-enrolled, as a degree candidate to apply the credits earned as a nondegree student toward fulfilling the requirements for a degree. The dean of the college of enrollment shall decide which credits may be used to fulfill the degree requirements.

## Limitations to Enrollment as a Nondegree Student

A student in nondegree status may remain in that status for a maximum of 30 credits, at which time the student must be accepted into a degree program to continue taking credit courses at Penn State. If a student in nondegree status is not eligible for a degree program after completing 30 credits in that status, s/he may continue to take credit courses at Penn State only as long as a semester grade point average of more than 2.00 continues to be earned and the student has the written support of the major s/he intends to enter or re-enter. In this situation, the student must enter a degree program immediately upon reaching eligibility. Nondegree students whose cumulative grade point average is below 2.00, who have reached the 30-credit limit, are not eligible for a degree program and will be dismissed from the University at the end of the semester and may only re-enter the University through academic renewal (as defined by Senate Policy 54-90: Academic Renewal (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/54-00-academic-progress/#54-90>)). Nondegree students who have reached the 30-credit limit, are in good academic standing (defined as at least a 2.00 cumulative grade point average), and do not intend to earn a degree may self-identify and continue taking credit courses at Penn State as an "enrichment course taker" for as long as a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 is maintained.

A student must be admitted or re-enrolled as a degree candidate to apply the credits earned as a nondegree student toward fulfilling the requirements for a degree. The dean of the college or school of enrollment shall decide which credits may be used to fulfill the degree requirements.

A nondegree application can be obtained on the Office of the University Registrar website (<https://registrar.psu.edu>).

## Admission of Nondegree Student as a Degree Candidate

A nondegree student may apply for admission as a baccalaureate degree candidate with advanced standing to a college or school of the University, or to the Division of Undergraduate Studies, upon completion of at least 18 credits earned at this University with at least a 2.00 cumulative grade-point average. An applicant who has completed at least the equivalent of two years of baccalaureate degree work before applying for admission as a baccalaureate degree candidate must have the approval of either the dean of the college or school in which enrollment is desired or of the

director of the Division of Undergraduate Studies if the student wants to enroll in that division. To be eligible for degree admission, the nondegree student must meet the academic requirements of the University and the college or school in effect at the time of application.