I am Martin Warner, your registrar.

What is a registrar? My office and I are in charge of Registration and Grades. We write letters of enrollment certification, and we manage and advise on the Graduation Requirements. In brief, my job is to help you register for courses and eventually, to graduate on time.

Today we’re going to talk about registration

Let’s start on the college homepage, then go to the “Campus Community” aka the “Dash”: http://www.swarthmore.edu/ https://dash.swarthmore.edu/

On the Dash, scroll down to A-to-Z Listing, open that, click on registrar http://www.swarthmore.edu/registrar
Click on Registration then New Students http://www.swarthmore.edu/registrar/registration http://www.swarthmore.edu/new-students/registration

This is the New Student Registration Website

This page -- has all the answers -- to all the questions -- I’ve ever heard about pre-registration – really.

To start, a few general things:

The catalog and the course schedule.

Importantly there are two separate systems, catalog and schedule. They point to each other, but please always keep in mind they are different.

Here is the difference: The catalog is a list of courses with full course descriptions. The schedule is a list of courses for a semester with meeting days and times indicated. That’s how to tell them apart. I’ll demo them both.

Demo the catalog.
The catalog is also called the bulletin. At Swarthmore catalog and bulletin are the same thing.
The catalog has lots of course information including full course descriptions. The catalog is basically for all time. Importantly, the catalog also has information about graduation requirements and many other academic rules. Please read the catalog when you want to deeply examine the academic rules.

We have paper copies of the catalog available at the Registrar’s Office in Parrish. Come pick one up if you want one, but the online catalog is always the most up to date.

But for today, the catalog is the list of courses with full course descriptions.

Demo the Course schedule.

The Course Schedule is a semester list of which courses are actually being taught this semester. Importantly, the Schedule indicates days and times.

For registration, you need to use the catalog for full course descriptions, and the course schedule to know actually when something is taught.

Let’s look at Registration at a Glance
Day by day recommendations and key content.

Wednesday – today

Review the catalog and the Course Schedule.

Notice other content: AP score information, the helpful Buzzfeed from the SAMS.

Thursday

You must meet with your Academic Advisor Thursday afternoon or Friday morning. Select 6 to 8 courses you would actually like to take, plus several PE options, using the Course Schedule.

Why 6-8? Especially when you’re only going to actually take 4?
Because I want you to have good alternates ready to go. These should be courses you might actually like to take in case you can’t take your first choice four.
The key to happiness is good alternates and having the flexibility to use them.

Use the green form as a guide to manage your time. When you pre-register, the computer does not prevent time conflicts, so you have to manage your own time.
Go to the Advising Fair Thursday morning.
Go to your Advisor’s Office after the Advising Fair to set up a time to meet individually. Meet with your Advisor Thursday afternoon. When you meet your Advisor individually, be prepared to discuss several courses of interest.

Friday

As needed, finish getting advised in the morning.

At 11:00AM sharp, pre-register online using mySwarthmore. Login at about 11:00am. Be near a SAM when you do this. Try to get done by 11:30 even though pre-registration goes until noon. If you have any problems, ask a SAM.

There is a 4.5 credit fairness limit during pre-registration so that everyone can pre-register for at least four courses. Most Swarthmore courses are one credit. After pre-registration, you can register for additional courses up to five credits if your advisor approves.

For courses with a lab, register for the pairing of lecture and lab at the same time. If you don't get a part of the pair, you have to register for another lecture and lab pair.

After Pre-registration

Most of you will simply get the courses you pre-register for.

However, for some courses, there are lotteries after pre-registration to manage over-enrollment if the course needs to have a limit. I’ll talk more about lotteries in a minute.

But first, a few courses or labs use first come first served. These are listed on my webpage. If you don’t get your first choice, move on to your second choice and so on. Be flexible.

To get a first come first served course or lab, you should start logging in to mySwarthmore at 11:00am sharp. It will probably take over a minute to log in at 11:00 because of so many other students trying at the same time. That minute will feel like a long time. Be patient, and when you do get in, try to register for your top priority immediately. After you are done pre-registering for first come first serve choices, then add the other no-rush choices. Think of it as two steps, first take care of first come first served courses, then take care of the rest.

About Lotteries.
Understand the Lottery System

{Read the bullets.}

- Swarthmore uses what we call "lotteries" to manage course enrollment in the few classes that have enrollment limits. Lotteries are not just random. Department policies ensure that students get what they need, even if not their first choice.
- The lottery system makes most pre-registrations equal, regardless of when during pre-registration you register, thus eliminating first-come-first-serve stress. This is true for everything except the very few courses or labs which use "first-come, first-served" to fill the multiple sections (or multiple labs) of their large courses. This is still no reason to stress -- just be prepared to be flexible.
- Departments each have their own different lottery rules and procedures, but in general, students should ...

Enter only one lottery per department.
  - For example, for English Literature First-year Seminars, the department limits students to only one lottery submission per semester.
  - Rules for lotteries are not enforced automatically during online pre-registration, but are enforced by departments when they lottery courses after pre-registration.
  - Departments that have specific Lottery Procedures usually list them under the "Courses" section of their departmental home pages. If you can't find them there, please ask the department directly.
  - Otherwise, departments use a random lottery.
- Always have good alternates ready and be flexible enough to use them.
  - You can't always get your first choice, but as you progress through Swarthmore, you will find that the curriculum is flexible enough that if you remain flexible, you will get what you need.

Lotteries happen all Friday afternoon.
After pre-registration, be patient during Lotteries.

Saturday

Check mySwarthmore to see what you are registered in.
If you got lotteried out of anything Friday afternoon, on Saturday morning go to the Registration Follow-up meeting.
Be prompt! The follow up meeting only lasts no more than 30 minutes. It doesn’t take long, so you need to be there at the beginning.
A word about technology for Saturday. We use paper add drop forms on Saturday only. Paper forms will be available at the meeting.

After the follow-up meeting, decide how you are going to get your books, and get books.

Monday and the first week of classes
You must attend the first class meeting to confirm your registration.

Weird question: What if you can’t stand one of your courses?
Drop/Add is the great safety net.
If you realize you need to change a class after classes have started, you can make a change during drop/add.
Please get any new class added during the first week of school. The second week of drop/add is not a good time to add something new.
A word about the technology of drop/add. Drops are done on mySwarthmore the same way as pre-registration, but! During Drop/add, adds are done using an “e-form” available on mySwarthmore under e-forms. Any questions, ask a SAM.

Now, some Course recommendations for the first year.
{Read the bullets.}

Course Recommendations for First Year

- **Take introductory courses**
  - Read the "Academic Program" link on departmental webpages to learn about introductory courses
  - Lower-numbered courses are much more likely to be appropriate for first-year students
    - Courses numbered 1-20 are generally introductory
    - Courses numbered 21-99 are intermediate or advanced. Some of these courses are not open to first-year students or sophomores.
    - Courses numbered 100 or over are normally only for juniors and seniors
- **Take a variety of subjects in at least two divisions each semester**
  - Over the year, take courses all three divisions
- **Take at least one Writing course per semester**
  - Many Writing courses are introductory in nature
    - This is a good year to take them
  - Writing courses include an emphasis on teaching and learning writing
  - Approved Writing courses are labeled to help you find them
    - "Writing Course" in the catalog
    - "W" in the Course Schedule
• **Take at least one PE unit per semester**
  o Until your PE requirement is done
  o The requirement must be completed by the end of the sophomore year
• **Take one First-Year Seminar [pdf]**
  o only available to first-year students
  o not required, but highly recommended
• **Explore prospective majors**
  o Try to take 1 course per semester in each subject in which you might major
• **Consider an NSEP - a science lab course**
  o You only need one to graduate, but try to take it in the first year
• **Take Four Full Courses plus PE or PE Dance**
  o Half credit courses are additional to the normal load of four

Now, some thoughts about the Credit No Credit semester.
{Read the bullets.}

Understand the Credit/No Credit semester

• Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) is Swarthmore's version of pass/fail.
  o "Credit" (CR) means pass. "No Credit" (NC) means fail.
  o More information about grades and shadow grades
• Importantly: ignore the bad advice -- follow the good advice for the Credit/No Credit semester
  o The bad advice goes along these lines:
    ▪ Take an over-load just to get those courses out of the way.
    ▪ Take courses you don't want to get them out of the way.
    ▪ Take hard courses without having to work hard on them.
  o The good advice goes along these lines:
    ▪ Always value your time and learn all you can from your courses
    ▪ Keep in mind there will be shadow letter grades, even in the CR/NC semester.
    ▪ The CR/NC semester allows you to learn from your courses and also adjust to all the rest of college life without having to worry about getting A grades in all your courses. B grades are okay in the CR/NC semester.
    ▪ Many of your first semester courses are preparation or pre-requisite for other courses you will want or need to take. First semester courses deserve your good effort, regardless of the CR/NC grading.
    ▪ Take an intellectual risk -- try a new subject
    ▪ Take the recommended normal load of four courses. Expect your courses to be harder than you've seen before.
• Work hard in all your courses every semester. If you have trouble, seek out the academic support resources available to improve your success.

• First semester CR/NC is permanent on your official transcript
  o You will have access to your shadow letter grades, but they will **never** appear on your official transcript.

And then, in my “More helpful stuff” section, see the link to the registrar’s Recommendations for the first two years, which is the same thing as my Guide to the degree requirements:  
[http://www.swarthmore.edu/registrar/degree-requirements](http://www.swarthmore.edu/registrar/degree-requirements)

Return to New Student Registration page  
[http://www.swarthmore.edu/new-students/registration](http://www.swarthmore.edu/new-students/registration)

There is much more content on this long web page, including registration explained in even more detail. Please briefly look it over and know what kind of content is here for you.

In conclusion, this website has all the answers to all the questions about pre-registration.

Please look it over, and best wishes class of 2021!