

UNI ACTIVATION & LIONMAIL

UNIVERSITY NETWORK ID (UNI)

Your UNI, consisting of your initials followed by a four-digit number, is the key to accessing computer services and electronic resources at Columbia. Your UNI serves as both your on-campus ID number and your columbia.edu email address.

Your UNI also allows you to gain access to all official University email messages, restricted Columbia University Libraries information and services, student grades, billing, and registration information.

If you have not yet activated your UNI, please do so by visiting uni.columbia.edu.

LIONMAIL

LionMail is a state-of-the-art email, contacts, and calendaring system for your University email account interface.

Some of the advantages of LionMail:

- 25 GB mail storage
- Log in with your UNI and password
- Desktop and mobile log-in ability
- Access to the Columbia directory from within LionMail
- Tag messages with multiple labels and choose from multiple importance markers
- Fast searching, including within the full message text

Please log in to set your preferences and explore the functionality of LionMail: lionmail.columbia.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the LionMail Help Team at askcuit@columbia.edu. You may also visit the CUIT website for additional information about using LionMail, including logging in for the first time, setting up access on your mobile device, and more: cuit.columbia.edu/lionmail.

ACADEMIC PLANNING SESSION

Dual BA Program students preparing to transition to their third and fourth years at Columbia must attend an online Academic Planning Session (APS). The APS is a mandatory small-group session led by your academic advisor that provides new students with an overview of academic requirements and information about course registration and GS policies. You may choose to attend any of the following sessions:

Monday, February 9
2 PM EST/ 8 PM CET

OR

Tuesday, February 10
2 PM EST/ 8 PM CET

OR

Wednesday, February 11
2 PM EST/ 8 PM CET

Your academic advisor will reach out in the coming weeks to invite you to register for the session that works best for your schedule.

You will not be able to register for fall courses if you do not attend this APS. If you have scheduling conflicts, please reach out to your GS Academic Advisor. Once you attend an APS, you will be able to register for classes.

Once you register for your preferred APS date, you will be emailed a link to participate in the Virtual Advising Session in advance of the session.

Before registering for one of the APS sessions above, please ensure that your login information is up-to-date by visiting: admissions.gs.columbia.edu/apply/status.

CONTACT

Columbia University School of General Studies
Office of the Dean of Students
403 Lewisohn Hall
Tel. (212) 854-2881

HOUSING APPLICATION

Students within the Dual BA Program with Sciences Po are guaranteed access to Columbia University housing as they prepare to make the transition to New York. The city's many and diverse neighborhoods combined with an extensive public transportation system offer a variety of housing options that are convenient to the Columbia campus.

COLUMBIA HOUSING

School of General Studies students are housed in facilities operated by Columbia Residential. Since few studio apartments are available, GS students are usually accommodated in multiple-bedroom apartments or dormitory-style suites shared by other Columbia students; typically each student has their own bedroom while sharing kitchen and bath facilities.

VIRTUAL DUAL BA HOUSING Q&A SESSION

Date TBD; more information to be sent in the coming weeks

Join GS Housing and Columbia Residential for an overview of housing for GS International Dual Degree Program students interested in Columbia Residential housing for the fall 2026 semester. We will provide information about policies and procedures, including housing selection, move-in, and residential policies, and answer any questions. The Zoom link to participate will be emailed to registrants prior to the start of the event. If you have not received the Zoom link by the event start time, please email gs-housing@columbia.edu.

HOUSING ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for University housing you must be a full-time student (meaning you must register for and complete at least 12 points each term). Full-time student status is also a requirement for maintaining your student visa, if applicable. Please note that students who choose not to apply for housing leading up to their arrival in New York will not be guaranteed GS housing at a later date; while every effort is made to offer housing to all GS students who express an interest in living in Columbia Residential housing, this guarantee for Dual BA Program students is limited to the period of time before they arrive on campus.

It is easier to be assigned to Columbia Residential housing as a student who is new to the university than as a continuing student. If you plan to apply for housing, **it is best to do so now, as the timeliness of your application will impact your housing allocation.** You may decline an offer if you decide you do not want Columbia Residential Housing.

APPLYING FOR HOUSING

Note: Only students who have accepted their offer of admission, paid their deposit, and activated their UNI will be able to access the Housing Portal and apply for housing. To apply for housing, please follow these steps:

1. Review the Columbia Residential Overview and Essentials and Types of Accommodations located at residential.columbia.edu/content/students
2. Sign up for a [My Housing Portal](#) account log-in and complete the housing application at residential.columbia.edu/content/students/apply



You will need your **Columbia University ID (CUID/PID)** for this application. Your CUID is noted in your letter from your academic advisor.

The application for housing for the 2026-2027 academic year will open on **March 20, 2026**. To be considered for housing for the coming term, your Columbia Residential application must be received by **April 15, 2026**. A Columbia Residential application is not binding, so if you are assigned an apartment you may decline the offer. There is a \$20 administrative processing fee for all applications. **Please note that while housing is guaranteed for Dual BA Program students, you should not assume you have housing until you receive an offer letter or email from Columbia Residential.**

CONTACT

Columbia University School of General Studies
Housing Liaison
gs-housing@columbia.edu

IMMUNIZATION COMPLIANCE

Prerequisite: University Network ID (UNI)*

Timeline: 15-30 days once documentation has been submitted.*

***Though documentation cannot be submitted until you have a UNI, we recommend you begin reviewing requirements and compiling information as soon as possible.**

New York State public health law and University policy require that all students complete several immunization requirements and submit documentation for review and clearance prior to registering for their first term. These requirements include measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) and meningitis. The flu vaccine is also strongly recommended. The completion of these requirements uses your UNI and password, though you should begin collecting necessary documentation immediately, as the process can take some time. **Once you've submitted documentation for review, final clearance can take up to 30 days. You cannot register for classes until your documents have been reviewed and accepted.**

For additional information regarding immunization requirements, please visit <https://www.health.columbia.edu/content/immunization-compliance-overview>.

For document submission instructions, please visit: [health.columbia.edu/content/how-submit-immunizations](https://www.health.columbia.edu/content/how-submit-immunizations).

CHECK YOUR COMPLIANCE STATUS

The best way for students to understand their compliance with current requirements is to log into the Patient Portal (secure.health.columbia.edu) and select Medical Clearances on the left menu. This will display all required items, current status, provide opportunities to review past entries, and more.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE

Having health insurance is key to helping ensure predictable health care costs and to supporting students in the achievement of their personal and academic goals. In an effort to reinforce this aim, Columbia requires most students to have comprehensive health insurance as part of their enrollment in the University. All full-time domestic students and all international students are automatically enrolled in the Columbia University Student Health Insurance Plan.

For more information on the Columbia University Student Health Insurance Plan, please visit: <https://www.health.columbia.edu/content/about-student-health-insurance-plan-benefits-and-coverage>.

DOMESTIC STUDENTS

Domestic full-time students may request a waiver from enrollment in the Columbia University Student Health Insurance Plan by submitting a request online before the open enrollment deadline. All requests are considered but approval is not guaranteed. Students may be asked to provide documentation of alternate coverage under a comparable plan. Please note that requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and approval is not guaranteed.

Columbia University reserves the right to verify the health insurance information you have provided. If your plan does not meet the University requirements, you will be enrolled in the Columbia University Student Health Insurance Plan.

Students who wish to request a waiver should review their alternate coverage to determine whether it meets all of the following criteria:

- The plan must meet the requirements of the Affordable Care Act, including coverage for routine, urgent, and emergent care for all of the act's Essential Health Benefits in New York State. For a description of the act's Essential Health Benefits, read Compare Your Coverage.
- The plan must be licensed to do business in the United States.
- The plan must be effective and remain in force for the duration of the academic year (August 15, 2026 – August 14, 2027 for the upcoming academic year)

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students are not permitted to waive the Columbia University Student Health Insurance Plan unless covered by a U.S.-based, Affordable Care Act-compliant, employer-sponsored plan that meets all of the waiver criteria above. International students are defined as any enrolled student that is not a U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident. All international students, regardless of the number of enrolled credits, will be enrolled in the Columbia University Student Health Insurance Plan.

CONTACT

Columbia University Health Insurance Office
John Jay Hall, 3rd Floor
(P) 212-854-3286
studentinsurance@columbia.edu

VISA CERTIFICATION INFORMATION

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS OFFICE

The International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) offers many services for the international community of students, interns, and scholars at Columbia University.

APPLYING FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY (I-20)

International students at Columbia enter the United States on an F-1 student visa. You will need an I-20 form issued by Columbia's International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) before making your visa appointment at a U.S. consulate to apply for your F-1 visa. Watch ISSO's video on [How to Get a Visa](#) and visit the ISSO's website for instructions on [How to Apply for your I-20](#).

You will need to:

- Prepare your [supporting documents](#).
- Log in to Compass to [apply for your I-20 or DS-2019](#) using your PID or UNI. Refer to the [Compass User Guide](#) for additional information.
- Receive your I-20 electronically by email.
- [Apply for Your Visa](#) at a U.S. Consulate. The visa cannot be issued more than 120 days in advance of your program start date).

If you have any questions regarding the visa application process, please contact the ISSO at newintlstudent@columbia.edu.

CONTACT

Columbia University
International Students and Scholars Office
545 West 112th Street, Floor 4
New York, NY 10025
Tel. (212) 854-3587
Fax: (212) 854-3966
isso@columbia.edu / isso.columbia.edu

FINANCIAL PLANNING

As you prepare to begin your studies at Columbia later this year, our offices have created a variety of resources and tools to help you plan for your expenses.

E-BILLING, STUDENT ACCOUNTS, AND PAYMENT OPTIONS

The Columbia Student Financial Services website will help you understand your eventual bill. While e-bills will not be generated until the month preceding your entry semester (August for most students), it will be useful for you to familiarize yourself with our billing process. You will also find information regarding Columbia University's payment plan here.

The Student Financial Services website can be found by visiting: sfs.columbia.edu/content/bills-and-payments-getting-started.

EDUCATIONAL FINANCING PLANNER

To help students calculate their estimated cost of attendance at Columbia based on their proposed course load and living situation, the School of General Studies website offers a number of resources. Please visit gs.columbia.edu/content/cost-attendance for additional information on tuition and fees, estimating living expenses, and for an estimated cost of attendance calculator.

CONTACT

Columbia University School of General Studies
Office of Admission and Educational Financing
408 Lewisohn Hall
2970 Broadway
New York, NY 10027
(P) 212-854-5410
(F) 212-854-6316
spo-finaid@columbia.edu

MANDATORY NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION EVENTS

DUAL BA AND JOINT PROGRAM ORIENTATION

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28, 2026 (DATE TO BE CONFIRMED)

Incoming International Dual BA and Joint Bachelor's Degree Program students are invited to attend a social event to meet students from across all international programs, including current fourth year students, to learn more about the campus experience here at Columbia. The Dual BA and Joint Program Orientation schedule and further details will be available sent to all rising third year students over the summer.

GENERAL STUDIES NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION PROGRAM

MONDAY, AUGUST 31 & TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2026
8 A.M. - 4 P.M.

New Student Orientation is a mandatory event for new GS students. The meetings and events of the day will provide you with critical information relevant to the academic standards and policies of Columbia as well as the expectations of the School of General Studies undergraduate degree program. You will meet many new people and learn valuable information, all aimed at welcoming and acclimating you to this community of scholars.

Extended Orientation Events

Throughout the week of August 31, the School of General Studies hosts Extended Orientation events designed to help you acclimate to your new life as a Columbia student.

FOR MORE DETAILS

Additional orientation information is available at gs.columbia.edu/content/new-student-orientation.

CONTACT INFO

School of General Studies

Office of Student Life

Email: gsorientation@columbia.edu

Tel. (212) 854-2881

PEER SUPPORT FOR DUAL BA STUDENTS

There are a wide variety of Student Life initiatives to help your transition to Columbia. Your fellow students are committed to ensuring that you have a seamless transition, and are here to support you during your time on campus.

MENTORSHIP AND PEER ADVISING

In addition to the comprehensive advising offered by their GS academic advisors through all four years of the program, Dual BA students in years three and four also have access to the [GS Peer Advisors](#). Peer Advisors are undergraduate students who wish to provide support and advice for other GS undergrads about the opportunities and challenges at Columbia. Peer Advisors are available to discuss academics, campus resources, personal concerns, and the transition to the School of General Studies.

Peer Advisors are available to meet with students by appointment, and they also hold weekly walk-in hours in the GS Lounge.

Students also have access to the [GS Mentor Program](#), which pairs specially-trained continuing students from both the undergraduate and Postbaccalaureate Premedical programs with incoming students on the basis of several criteria including academic tracks, extracurricular interests, and personal backgrounds. Mentors meet with their mentees at regular intervals throughout their first semester.

DUAL BA PROGRAMMING AND EVENTS

Throughout the fall and spring semester, you will be informed of a variety of Dual BA and GS-specific events, focused on getting to know other students, stress and wellness, alumni and career engagement, fellowships and graduate school coaching, and more.

JUMPSTART & UNIVERSITY STUDIES

At GS, we understand that learning to navigate a new environment can be both exciting and challenging. This can be especially true for students in our dual and joint degree programs. The transition to New York offers an opportunity to immerse yourself in Columbia's community and academic culture, engaging with world-class faculty and a plethora of research and learning opportunities. At the same time, after spending two years learning to be successful on other campuses, stepping into the Columbia classroom can sometimes feel like the rules have changed and the foundation has shifted.

As you make your transition to campus, the GS Academic Resource Center (ARC) is here to support you. Our approach is centered around the belief that academic support is an important and necessary part of any learning process. Our goal is to be a resource for every student, at every point along the road to academic excellence. All of our programs and services have been designed based on the latest research in metacognition, educational psychology, and learning science, tailored to meet the needs of our returning student population and the Columbia classroom experience.

JUMPSTART

Jumpstart is a pre-Orientation Series that offers a preview of the Columbia undergraduate experience, including a combination of mock seminars, keynote faculty lectures, skill-building workshops, and community events. The series runs the week before Orientation and students are welcome to attend as many or as few events as work for your schedule.

UNIVERSITY STUDIES

Once classes begin, University Studies picks up where Jumpstart leaves off, offering a zero-credit, discussion-based course exploring together questions like what it means to be a student at an Ivy League university, what are our responsibilities as part of a research and learning community, and what are the University's responsibilities towards its students. University Studies also introduces the essential partners and resources at your disposal.

To learn more about Jumpstart and University Studies, and to register for either or both of these series, please visit the Academic Resource Center website: <https://www.gs.columbia.edu/content/academic-resource-center>.

Our team at the ARC looks forward to getting to know each of you and to supporting you on your GS journey. Please don't hesitate to be in touch with any questions, and we look forward to welcoming you to campus!

CONTACT

Columbia University School of General Studies
Academic Resource Center
gs-arc@columbia.edu

STUDENT LIFE AT COLUMBIA

GS Student Life, a division of the Office of the Dean of Students, is committed to enhancing the overall nontraditional student experience and empowering the nontraditional student population. We aim to provide GS students with opportunities for social and academic engagement while fostering a strong sense of community within GS, Columbia, and New York City.

GETTING INVOLVED ON CAMPUS

These are various opportunities for you to become involved with GS Student Life:

- Become a GS Student Life Volunteer
- Join one of the 300+ [student organizations](#) on campus
- Volunteer on a committee or join the [General Studies Student Council](#)
- Become a member of a [Fraternity or Sorority](#)
- Become an [Orientation Leader](#) and share your experiences with incoming students
- Volunteer as a [Junior Marshal](#) to assist with the graduation ceremony at GS Class Day

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES DAY

Activities Day is a special event at the start of the fall semester where students have the opportunity to meet student leaders from over 500 clubs and organizations, including club sports, community service groups, cultural organizations, performing arts groups, religious and spiritual groups, political and activist organizations, pre-professional and recreational organizations, sororities, fraternities, and student government, to name a few. Student organizations and clubs fill College Walk, Low Plaza, and Butler Plaza with colorful banners, information for prospective new members, and giveaways for interested students.

CIVIC LEARNING PROGRAMME | CAPSTONE PROJECT

During their time at Columbia University, in year three of the Dual BA Program, students must complete the final element of the Civic Learning Programme: the Capstone Project. The Capstone Project is the final assignment for the Sciences Po Bachelor's programme and counts for 6 ECTS credits. The project asks students to demonstrate, using critical analysis, the links between their major coursework and field experiences conducted within the Civic Learning Programme. **Validation of the entire Civic Learning Programme, including the Capstone Project, is mandatory in order to be approved for graduation from both sides of the Dual BA Program**, and to successfully enter a Master's program at Sciences Po.

In order to best support you in writing your Capstone Project, the pedagogical team offers a range of methodological resources and specific tutorials, the majority of these within the [Online Civic Learning Programme Workspace](#). In the coming months, you will receive updates and reminders from the Civic Engagement team to your Sciences Po email address, so please continue to monitor this address regularly to ensure you do not miss any important communications.

COMPONENTS OF THE CAPSTONE PROJECT

Civic Learning Final Report (15,000 characters)

- Recall the meaning of the engagements chosen and discuss the most notable elements of each of the experiences within the Civic Learning Program;
- Draw links between courses taken, the choice of major, and each Civic Learning field experience;
- Provide critical analysis of the three years and, when possible, discuss future perspectives.

Position paper (30,000 characters)

This is a personal exercise that aims to answer a research question based on a specific situation or precise context encountered by the student during the Civic Learning Programme.

With the help of the academic mentor, students craft their research question and work to draft a detailed response that calls for some form of action. This text may be policy-oriented or academic-oriented in format. The more operational of the two, the policy-oriented position paper asks students to write to the attention of a decision-maker; whereas the academic-oriented position paper, which leads to writing a veritable research project, is advised for students seriously envisioning graduate or doctoral studies focused on academic research.

CAPSTONE PROJECT TIMELINE

Steps in Building the Project	Deadlines
Submission of the detailed Capstone Project plan in Moodle	Mid-November (date TBC)
Submission of the Capstone Project in Moodle	Mid-April (date TBC)

MAINTAINING YOUR SCIENCES PO STUDENT STATUS

Rising 3A are reminded to complete their Sciences Po administrative registration in order to maintain their Sciences Po student status, even during their time at Columbia. The compulsory administrative registration process must be completed during both years three and four and can be completed by visiting the Sciences Po Student Space. All administrative registrations must be completed no later than December 31 each year.

Failure to maintain your administrative registration in years three and four will result in delays in the conferral of both your Sciences Po and Columbia University diplomas. For specific questions or concerns regarding your administrative registration, please contact the *Accueil Administratif*, located on Sciences Po's Paris campus:

9, rue de la Chaise
75007, Paris

<https://www.sciencespo.fr/students/fr/contacts.html>

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Before arriving on campus in the fall, students should make sure their emergency contact information listed in SSOL is accurate and up-to-date. If your emergency contact information changes throughout the course of your time at Columbia, please be sure to keep SSOL (ssol.columbia.edu) updated to reflect these new details.