

**Dear Colleagues,**

Now that Dean Gay has announced plans for Fall 2020, we can give more specific guidance and information about the timeline for Canvas sites, Early Shopping, Controlled Enrollment, and Course Registration.

Before we present a more detailed timeline, let me reiterate some of the points we mentioned in our previous letter, just so it's all in one place.

A significant number of our students will not be on campus this fall. Yet all students, be they in Cambridge or not, need to have the time to obtain their course materials. Scheduling of sections, labs, and other live course events will present additional challenges as we try to accommodate students in different time zones. Finally, instructional staff, such as TFs and CAs, will need time to be ready to teach courses online.

Since we are starting classes in early September, we have a bit of breathing room between now and the various events leading up to Shopping and Course Registration. The Key Dates:

- Monday, August 10: Canvas Sites populated with key information
- Monday, August 17: Early Shopping Begins
- Wednesday, August 26: Course Registration Deadline.
- Wednesday, September 2: First Day of Classes

## Timeline

**August 10 (Mon):** Canvas Sites populated with Key Information and Published (see below for suggestions about what information to include).

**August 17 (Mon):** Shopping Week begins. Information about additional course information resources such as videos, as well as links for real-time events should be included on the Canvas Site.

**August 21 (Fri):** Shopping Week ends. This is the deadline for students to “throw their hat in the ring,” i.e., the deadline for them to enter any controlled enrollment processes for courses. (For more on controlled enrollment, see below.)

**August 21-26 (Wed):** Course heads (or others designated by course heads) run controlled enrollment processes and notify students. This is important enough to warrant more detail:

We want to make sure that there is enough time to determine who will be given permission to enroll in courses that are lotteried or require an interview, essay, or other application process, and that staff need not work over the weekend.

Some courses may want to move in stages, where they run their process (lottery, interview, audition, etc.) and offer spots in the course to a first cohort of “winning” students. Should any of these students decline the offer, the course offers spots to students on a waitlist. In that case, the controlled enrollment process will likely have to look like this.

August 24: Controlled Enrollment Processes are run and first round winners are notified by end of day. Students then have 24 hours to accept the offer.

August 25: Waitlists are accessed and waitlisted students are offered spots at the end of day. Students then have 24 hours to accept the offer.

August 26: Students enroll in courses.

**August 27 (Thur):** OUE begins reviewing instructional support allocations, based on enrollment numbers.  
Add/Drop period begins. Students can adjust their course schedule, but the ability to add courses may be constrained by the availability of additional instructional support staff.  
Instructors, together with any appropriate support, begin scheduling sections and any other class sessions that had to wait for firm enrollment numbers.

**September 2 (Wed):** Classes Start.

## Items to Consider Including on your Canvas Site by August 10, 2020

- Course syllabus
- Course description
- Course materials (note that students on financial aid receive a course materials budget of \$100 per course)
- Course meeting schedule (including all required components, such as labs, sections, screenings, etc.)
  - What are the live attendance requirements for your course? How will you manage scheduling to support students in various time-zones? What are your expectations for section/lab attendance?
  - If you'll only know how many sections you'll be able to offer once enrollments are set, describe as best you can how these sections will be scheduled.
- Assignments (type and schedule)
- Grading Structure
- Course policies (particularly information about extensions and absences)
- Registration information (lotteries, applications, sectioning, pre-requisites)
- In person vs. remote – articulation of what is different about the remote offering of this course
- Study Groups, Office Hours, and other academic support that will be offered as part of the course

## Additional Elements to Consider for Shopping Week

### Course Videos (Please note that Videos are Optional)

- Instructor video – a short video of the course instructor talking about the course. In contrast to course trailers, these would not necessarily have high production value, but would simply be a chance for students to hear from the instructor about the course.
- Lecture video – a video of a previous lecture from the course offering insight into how the course sessions are structured.

- Course trailer – a specially designed, short video highlighting the course.

### Office Hours or drop in Q&A sessions

Synchronous opportunities for students to talk with the instructor individually or in small groups to address specific questions about the course. These can be held on demand or at a pre-scheduled time.

### Shopping Period Lecture/Course Preview (Synchronous)

If you choose to give a live lecture or presentation during shopping week, we recommend that you either plan to repeat it so that students have more than one chance to participate, or that you record it so that students who were unable to attend live can review it after the fact.

Potential topics:

- Review and discussion of the course syllabus
- Example activity to demonstrate how students might engage with the course remotely
- Articulation of what students will learn in the course
- Contextualization of the course – An articulation of how this course will fit into the unique student background and experience as well as the student's future academic trajectory

### Lotteries and controlled-enrollment courses

Most undergraduate courses require permission to enroll, whether by random lottery, partially random selection, or a systematic application or interview process. It is our hope that the necessary changes to registration this year will include more transparent and coordinated methods to make this process less confusing for students, advisers, and instructors.

Below is an overview of the available tools and how they might be used in our new circumstances:

- Lottery systems can be used to manage large numbers of student requests to enroll (General Education has managed ca. 4000 enrollments this spring through a coordinated lottery).
- Batch enrollment can be used by catalogue coordinators to enroll concentrators in required courses prior to shopping week. Some concentrations may want to use this tool to register students for tutorials or other required courses.
- Requisites can be established in my.harvard to grant automatic permission to enroll to students who meet a set of criteria, such as concentration, class year, pre-requisite or co-requisite course enrollment, etc. Some faculty may want to use requisites to manage enrollment, knowing that permission of instructor can override requisites to make an exception.
- Enrollment caps can be set in my.harvard to limit enrollment for pedagogical reasons. Since registration will take place before classes begin this year, some courses might not need a selection process, allowing open enrollment while space is available and utilizing a waitlist to manage the order in which available spots will be offered to students.

Instructor permission is the most common tool, but unfortunately it is also the most cumbersome. Instructor permission can override requisites and enrollment caps, so we recommend using it in concert with other tools to manage enrollment more efficiently.

No matter what system you choose to manage enrollment in your courses, we ask that you please include registration instructions on my.harvard in the course description and Canvas course website to

give students equal access to information about the process for requesting permission to enroll in your course.

*Important Note:* The College does not intend to coordinate how instructors handle controlled enrollment, whether by interview, lotteries, etc. We only hope to be able to coordinate the *timing* of how students are notified of the results.

## Advising Holds

As in previous terms, advising holds need to be lifted in order for students to be able to enroll in classes by the deadline. In order to ensure that students can smoothly enroll after shopping week, we recommend that all advising holds be lifted by the end of Early Shopping (August 21).

Juniors and Seniors—who already have advisers—can have their advising holds lifted beginning August 10. This will allow advisers to alleviate the advising crunch during shopping week.

First Years and Sophomores can have their advising holds lifted beginning on August 17. They will have advisers assigned by August 10 and can use the week between August 10 and the beginning of shopping to get to know their advisers and devise a plan for Early Shopping.

On Behalf of the Committee on Course Registration

Bernhard Nickel