

Academic Enhancement Programs



ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMS

Academic Advising

Full-time freshmen are assigned an advisor from their particular program: Academic Incentive Program (AIP), English as a Second Language (ESL), Honors Program (HP) and/or Newcomer (NC), until they formally declare a major. (See listings below.)

Once a major is chosen, students are assigned an academic advisor in their major field. The faculty member works with the student to map out a sequence of the required courses for completion of the degree. In addition, the advisor suggests elective courses that will best serve the student's needs. Some courses require pre-authorization from the advisor or the instructor before registration. Pre-professional students are also assigned an additional advisor for their pre-professional program.

Academic Incentive Program (AIP)

The Academic Incentive Program provides the highly motivated, academically underprepared student entering a full-time undergraduate program of study at Sacred Heart University with the academic and personal support necessary to ensure success at college. Students are identified for the program by their high school record, including grade point average (GPA) and class rank, as well as their SAT scores. The English placement test given prior to registration is also used as an indicator.

The program includes:

- placement testing;
- registration interview and college orientation;
- a personal advisor to provide academic counseling on a weekly basis; and

- individual and small-group tutoring at the Jandrisevits Learning Center in reading, writing and study skills.

First-semester freshmen are assigned to an AIP team of 30 students representing two English classes, with two English professors who also serve as faculty advisors and a core curriculum professor. Students register for the following courses:

- EN 011 Introduction to Rhetoric (3 credits)
- FS 101 Freshman Seminar (1 credit)
- Mathematics (according to placement test results)
- A core curriculum course (3–4 credits)
- Electives (3–6 credits)

Second-semester AIP freshmen register for a traditional program of study, with the guidance of an advisor, and continue to study with the 30-student team and faculty advisors.

At the end of the freshman year, the student is encouraged to declare a major and transfer to a faculty advisor within that field of study. Students who remain undeclared continue to work with the freshman advisors.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

The ESL program is designed for students whose native language is not English and who wish to study English either full or part-time. Its purpose is to help students improve their oral and written communication skills in English, preparing them for successful study in an American academic institution.

The program offers six levels of English language courses, from beginning to advanced. The first four levels are pre-academic, intensive courses. The full-time ESL student enrolls in eight-week sessions, taking a cluster of oral communication, written communication and an elective, totaling 20 hours per week. In addition, students work in

the multimedia language lab and on computers with audio, video, software and online learning programs.

Levels 5 and 6 are academic levels and are credit-bearing, semester-long courses that focus on college reading and writing. Students in one of these levels may take University classes while they complete their language training. Thus, the full-time, upper-level ESL student takes a combination of ESL and University courses, carefully planned by his or her academic advisor. Whereas, the completion of level five satisfies the English language requirement for graduate study at this University, students may be advised to take level six as well. For further support, tutoring is also available at the University Learning Center.

Placement in the ESL program depends on TOEFL or SAT scores, University placement tests, an oral interview and the student's language profile. For more information regarding the program, contact the director at 203-371-7837.

Freshman Seminar Program

As part of the freshman advising system and as the cornerstone of the freshman year experience, all entering freshmen are required to take Freshman Seminar (FS 101), a one-credit course, during their first semester. In an interactive and varied classroom environment designed to promote class identity and peer support, new students learn to manage the transition from the directed learning of secondary school to the independent learning of college. Guided by a faculty/staff instructor, who is also the student's freshman academic advisor, and supported by upper-class Junior Mentors, each new student can develop relevant college study skills and discuss pertinent social, moral and personal issues. The goal is to offer the skills, support and motivation needed for success in college.

FS 101 Freshman Seminar 1 CR
Freshman Seminar assists new students in

developing the skills and habits needed to succeed in college. This course, in an interactive and varied environment, introduces new students to pertinent college learning skills and to important social and personal issues. FS 101 is a pass/fail course required of all full-time freshmen.

Honors Program (HP)

The Honors Program is organized around those ultimate questions about reality and human life that are an unavoidable part of the human experience and that are at the heart of the human puzzle. The program stands firm in the conviction that the Honors experience should offer gifted students the opportunity to confront these questions, to explore the answers that have been offered throughout the history of human thought and reflection, and to test these answers in the light of their own experiences. Honors students are then offered through the University's Honors Program the opportunity to confront, in a special way, the question of meaning and orientation, of suffering and the reality of death; of freedom, responsibility, morality, justice, hope, God, the nature of the physical world; and to understand and appreciate themselves as the historical beings that they are.

For details of the Honors Program and the opportunities and benefits it offers, please consult the Sacred Heart University web site.

Honors graduates will be designated as "University scholars," receive special recognition in the Commencement program, receive a special diploma and an Honors designation on their permanent transcript.

Independent Study and Individual Instruction

Independent study is available for the qualified student who wants more advanced or specialized work in a given academic area. Faculty members guide the student in the research needed for the

study. Only the student who has officially declared a major and who has successfully completed at least 15 credits will be able to enroll. A maximum of 6 credits will be permitted toward the baccalaureate degree.

Independent study courses are designated as course number 399 in the appropriate subject area (e.g., EN 399 Independent Study in English). Usually, an independent study course is awarded three credits.

Individual instruction is available for the student who needs a specific course to fulfill degree requirements but is unable to schedule the course for a valid reason (involvement in student teaching, field experience or unavailability of the course). The syllabus for individual instruction conforms to the usual requirements, including required assignments, for that course. Ordinarily, no student will be permitted to take more than one individual course per semester, and no more than two individual courses to fulfill degree requirements.

Instructional Technology and Student Mobile Computing Program

Recognizing the increasingly important role of technology in our society and in education, Sacred Heart University has made a commitment to, and a serious investment in, computers, networking and its supporting technologies. The University's network infrastructure provides connectivity to every facility on campus via a fiber-optic Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) and Gigabit Ethernet backbone. The network architecture is capable of supporting well over 5,000 simultaneous users at any given time.

Network services are provided to the student community via 10- and 100-megabit data jacks. These provide access to the University library, Internet

and student e-mail 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Wireless access is also provided in the Academic Buildings, library and most other indoor and outdoor locations where students gather on campus.

Virtual Private Networking (VPN) provides an alternate method for accessing Sacred Heart University's network from off campus. VPN, Citrix and terminal services are available to provide connectivity solutions for even the most sophisticated applications, from anywhere on the Internet. Outlook Web Access (OWA) is available through the web, for sending and receiving e-mail from any computer connected anywhere on the Internet.

In order to promote its "Anytime, Anywhere Learning" initiative, Sacred Heart University partnered with Symbol Technologies, Inc. in the summer of 2000 to create one of the first wireless network campuses in New England. This infrastructure allows students to use their laptops in nearly all outdoor areas on campus, and in most public areas indoors.

The current wireless standard is IEEE 802.11b, supporting 11Mbps, and is scheduled to migrate toward the faster 54Mbps IEEE 802.11a as the technology matures.

The students' computing laboratories are currently comprised of 300 desktop computers dispersed throughout several academic facilities. Six laboratories are used for computer-related instruction, and an additional lab, provides 24/7/365 access for Sacred Heart University students, faculty or staff. The University recently completed the installation of eight new "smart" classrooms with fixed multimedia capabilities that allow instructors to integrate technology in their classroom presentations. These rooms are equipped with LCD projectors, DVD, VCR, audio capabilities, and PC/laptop connections. All classrooms on campus are

equipped with an active data jack for instructors or students to access the network. Additionally, there are data/CATV connections in every room for use by the instructor. The network infrastructure is designed with future technologies in mind so that Sacred Heart University will be ready for Voice over IP, streaming media and hosted applications as the curriculum expands.

In 1995, Sacred Heart University became the first university in Connecticut and the fourth in New England to require incoming freshmen to own a notebook computer that meets a specified standard (networking connectivity to access the Internet, e-mail, University library and other libraries across the country and other networked resources). By fall 1998, all of the University's full-time undergraduate students had notebook computers. In the fall of 2000 the laptop program was changed in order to replace every student used laptop after two years of use, thereby insuring that students have the latest hardware and most current software available. The Mobile Computing Program, and the universal nature of the program on this campus, makes integrating technology across the curriculum and into the daily lives of our students, a much easier process. In addition, Sacred Heart University provides all its full-time faculty members with a notebook computer. Faculty members are able to incorporate more online information into the curriculum and use computers as a key component of classroom instruction; faculty and students are able to communicate using Sacred Heart's Online Web-based Course Management System, "BLACKBOARD," for class content, assignments, questions and classroom discussion groups as well as virtual office hours.

Computer Facilities

Sacred Heart University offers a state-of-the-art campus network. The library, classrooms, on-campus residence facilities, health and recreation

center, and faculty and administrative offices are all networked. With its fiber-optic infrastructure, the University is positioned to support a wide range of emerging technologies.

The University has established itself as a pioneer in the implementation of technology across the curriculum.

A host of multi-processor campus servers supports the labs and educational programs. The University's Fractional T3 Internet connection and an ATM OC-12 backbone provide support to a combination of OC-3 155Mbps ATM and Fast Ethernet 100 Mbps segments. The ATM network also supports video, voice and data across the campus. State-of-the-art routers provide high-speed connectivity and security to Wide Area Network segments.

In support of the laptop program, the University has an on-site Notebook Service Center staffed by certified technicians and open 12 hours a day, Monday through Friday. This facility is specifically designed to service and troubleshoot problems with laptops. In addition, Sacred Heart University has a full-time trainer who provides basic, intermediate and advanced instructional courses on all supported applications included on the laptop. Through Sacred Heart's telephone support hotline, students, faculty and staff can dial a toll-free number to obtain technical assistance.

The library also provides a wide range of electronic resources, including Innovative Interfaces Online Catalog; Connecticut Digital Library; ProQuest Database (newspapers, general, business, medical and social sciences periodicals indexes); Encyclopedia Britannica Online; First Search database (includes World Cat, ERIC, Medline, Cinahl, MLA Bibliography, etc.); as well as many other electronic resources, including Psych Info. Access to these resources is available through the University's library homepage.

Jandrisevits Learning Center

Office of Academic Support

The Jandrisevits Learning Center (JLC) is located in the lower level of the Ryan-Matura Library. Staffed by highly experienced faculty tutors and well-trained peer assistants, the JLC provides a warm, friendly learning environment where the needs of students are our primary concern. The JLC offers the following support services to all undergraduate and graduate SHU students:

- individualized one-hour tutoring in all disciplines provided by a staff of 10 faculty tutors;
- monthly workshops on college-level learning skills such as note-taking, time management and test-taking;
- classroom learning assistants (70 peer tutors who provide academic support in disciplines across the curriculum);
- learning disability specialists in compliance with S 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act;
- adaptive technology instruction for learning and physically challenged students;
- an online writing service (!JLC.OWL) and an online math service (!JLC.MATH); and
- drop-in tutoring for selected courses and referrals for individualized tutoring.

The JLC is open 7 days a week: Monday–Thursday, 10a.m.–9p.m.; Friday, 10a.m.–3p.m.; and Saturday–Sunday, 2p.m.–6p.m.

Office of Special Services

Federally Mandated Services

Disclosure Letters. At the written request of students, the Director of Special Services writes letters to some or all of the students' professors that clearly states the nature of the disability and the appropriate classroom accommodations.

Extended-Time and Separate Environment Testing. Extended-time testing (usually time and a half or double time) takes place either

in classrooms designated by professors or in a separate, secluded environment within the JLC.

In-Class Notetaker. In-class notetakers are fellow students who are also taking the class. By agreement, these students make copies of their notes or allow students in need to duplicate notes on a copy machine paid for by the JLC Disabilities Office.

Interpreting and/or Technical Services. Deaf or hard-of-hearing students can request either an oral interpreter or an American Sign Language interpreter. If they do not use interpreters, but have a significant hearing loss, technology can be requested to assist in understanding classroom lectures and obtaining notes.

Alternative Forms of Testing. Depending on the students' documentation and disabilities, the Special Services Office negotiates appropriate alternative testing methods on a case-by-case basis.

Course Substitutions when Appropriate. A course substitution policy enables physically and learning challenged students on a case-by-case basis to request previously approved alternatives in place of specific required courses, but only when it is clear that the required courses would severely disadvantage students' ability to successfully compete in those courses.

Classroom Learning Assistants Program. Tutoring in disciplines across the curriculum is provided for all Sacred Heart University students free of charge by graduates and undergraduates in the Classroom Learning Assistants Program (CLA). The CLAs are responsible for providing students with a full set of notes for the class, assisting them with tests, study or paper preparations.

Books on Tape. Students can be provided with recorded books either through Sacred Heart University's institutional membership with Reading for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D), or by

creating books on tape within the University's Adaptive Technology Lab.

Additional Billable Services

L.D. Trained Specialists. The Director of Special Services along with L.D. specialists, who collectively provide services day and evening for a total of 35 hours a week, assist students with special needs on a one-to-one basis. These tutors have expertise in specialized pedagogy for the learning disabled and, thus, provide services over and beyond those offered by the University's regular tutorial program.

Transcription of Taped Notes. Professional transcribers collect students' tapes on a regular basis and provide them with a complete set of typed notes.

Technical Services. A closed-caption note-taking system provides notes for students who choose to avail themselves of an additional academic accommodation beyond those required by law.

Content Tutors. Tutoring in disciplines across the curriculum is provided for all Sacred Heart students free of charge by graduates and undergraduates in the Classroom Learning Program. While students with disabilities may attend group CLA tutoring sessions, some also need the special expertise of faculty tutors—over and beyond what is provided by tutors in the Classroom Learning Assistants Program—to provide them with individual assistance on a regular basis.

Hired Scribes. An upperclass student not registered for the class who attends the class for the sole purpose of taking notes for the student requesting the service is available. Scribes are paid not only for taking class notes but also for assisting with homework assignments.

Academic Coaching. A personal service is available that assists learning and physically challenged students to develop organizational

life-skills that will foster independence and increase their opportunities for academic success.

Appointments: Call 203-371-7820, or come to the JLC, located in the lower level of the Ryan-Matura Library.

Internship and Co-op Programs

Sacred Heart University embraces the concept of experiential learning as a way of supplementing the classroom experience, exploring different career paths and enhancing the student's marketability when seeking post-graduate employment. Opportunities include both internships and co-ops.

Internships may be paid or unpaid and are completed by the student for academic credit. The length of the internship and the number of credits awarded vary. A typical placement lasts for one semester and involves 10 to 20 hours of work per week.

In co-op placements, the student works full-time for one or two semesters for a set hourly wage and 6–12 academic credits per semester. This allows the student to maintain full-time student status while earning a salary and gaining valuable experience.

The student works with his or her faculty advisor to gain approval for the content of an internship or co-op, and to determine the number of credits that will be awarded. The student must also complete the required documentation from the Office of the Registrar. The Office of Career Development assists the student in locating an appropriate position.

Internships and co-ops are available in all fields including the sciences, business, health care, media and government. Students interested in these programs should consult their faculty advisor as well as the Office of Career Development.

The Newcomer (NC) Program

The Newcomer program, the largest of Sacred Heart University's freshman advisory programs, provides academic advising for all "regular-admit" freshmen—those new students who are not members of the specialized programs. The Dean of Freshmen supervises the faculty advisors in the program as they guide students through their first year of college. Meeting regularly with advisees throughout freshman year, advisors provide academic advice and support, assist with course and program selection and make referrals to other University support services. Doubling as the instructor in the student's Freshman Seminar Class, the advisor remains a new student's primary advisor and first line of support through the entire first year.

To establish a peer support group and to create a supportive learning community, a freshman begins study in a cluster of about 20 students for three courses during his or her first semester. Typically, those courses are:

Introduction to Rhetoric (EN 011)	3 credits
Freshman Seminar (FS 101)	1 credit
Civilizations (HI 101)	3 credits
or	
Effective Communication (CA 021)	3 credits

The rest of the student's schedule includes courses from the University Core Curriculum and courses from the student's area of interest.

Pre-Professional Programs

Sacred Heart University offers pre-professional programs in Pre-Law, Pre-Medical/Pre-Dental, Pre-Optometry, Pre-Occupational Therapy, Pre-Physical Therapy and Pre-Veterinary.

Pre-Law Program

There is no prescribed pre-law course required

for admission to law school. The student interested in law as a career is advised to secure a strong education in the liberal arts. The Pre-Law advisor will help design a Pre-Law program and will aid in the law school admission process.

Pre-Medical/Pre-Dental, Pre-Optometry and Pre-Veterinary Programs

The Pre-Medical/Pre-Dental, Pre-Optometry and Pre-Veterinary programs give the student the required educational background to pursue a career in medicine, dentistry or related health professions at a professional college or university. The balanced curriculum for the program consists of studies in biology, chemistry, English, humanities, mathematics and the social sciences, and provides the student with the humanistic values and scientific background needed to pursue a career in the health care field.

Pre-Occupational Therapy and Pre-Physical Therapy Programs

For more information, please refer to the corresponding section under the College of Education and Health Professions.

Study Abroad

Sacred Heart University sponsors an undergraduate study-abroad program in Rome in partnership with the American University of Rome. This program, offered fall, spring, or summer, provides Sacred Heart University students an opportunity to participate in a global community of students and faculty from around the world. With the help of the coordinator of Study Abroad, students select courses from a wide variety of course offerings which will further their completion of their degree requirements. Students participating in this program pay the regular Sacred Heart University tuition rate plus a study-abroad fee. Federal and state financial assistance as well as Sacred Heart University grants may be applied to the Rome program.

Students may also participate during the fall and/or spring semester in a variety of study-abroad opportunities preapproved by the Office of Study Abroad. These preapproved programs are sponsored by a number of U.S. accredited institutions through the CCIS Consortium (College Consortium for International Studies) and through programs sponsored by Marist College. The coordinator of Study Abroad assists students in selecting and applying to these programs and facilitates the transfer of credits from these programs by clarifying prior to participation how these courses will be used in their Sacred Heart University degree programs. Students who participate in these programs are assessed a study-abroad fee. While federal and state financial assistance may be applied to these programs, Sacred Heart University grants will not.

Short-term programs of two to four weeks, led by Sacred Heart faculty, are also available. Recent short-term summer experiences include programs in Ireland and Amsterdam.

For more information, contact the coordinator of Study Abroad at 203-396-8022.

Women's Studies Program

Women's Studies is an academic, interdisciplinary program oriented to the study of women and gender roles. The program draws on the new scholarship about women from different cultures and socioeconomic backgrounds in order to examine and critique traditional models of thinking and to develop creative ways of exploring women and their experiences. Theoretical and critical debates that have influenced modern feminist thought are also an integral part of the curriculum. Students select courses cross-listed in Women's Studies and a variety of other disciplines including: Criminal Justice, Literature, Media Studies, Nursing, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Religious Studies and Sociology.

The Women's Studies program provides students with the opportunity to broaden their education by enriching their understanding of women through multiple fields of inquiry. The program supports critical thinking about women's and men's social, economic, cultural and political roles in the past, present and future. It challenges students to develop their intellectual understanding of the impact of gender as an organizing force in society. Students are encouraged to explore the meaning and application of this knowledge to their own lives.

Course requirements for a Women's Studies minor are currently under revision.

