BRIERCREST

First Year Course Tips and Recommendations

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Academic Service: Admissions and Academic Advising

Updated March 2026

Understanding Class Schedule

If this is your first time to college, you may be surprised to find out how different the schedule is from high-school or homeschool. Here is a visual guide to help you be

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.	Example: ENG 100		Example: ENG 100		
9:50 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Chapel	Chapel	Chapel	Chapel	
10:40 a.m. - 11:55 a.m.	Example: CM 101		Example: CM 101		
12:25 p.m. - 1:40 p.m.					
1:50 p.m. - 3:05 p.m.		Example: THEO 112		Example: THEO 112	
3:15 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.					
4:40 p.m. - 6:10 p.m.					
6:30 p.m.— 9:30 p.m.	Example: YM 100				

Classes are typically 75 minutes long and occur 2x/week (e.g., Mon & Wed or Tues & Thurs).

We gather together for chapel 4x/week.

Be sure to plan time for lunch!

There is typically a 10-minute break between classes.

You may have long gaps in your day. **Tip**: Set a routine to make the most of your time---plan homework time, workout, etc.

Some classes are 3 hours long but only occur once a week.

Friday morning classes usually run from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (Not advised if you anticipate travel on weekends as part of a team or ensemble.)

You can expect to spend as much as 3-6 hours per week outside of each class on reading and assign-ments.

Athletes be sure to check with your coach when prac-tice times are scheduled.

Other classes or tutorials may occur in the evenings (e.g., dance class, English tutorials).

Choosing Courses

Start here!

Do you know what program you are interested in?

Yes

Review the Program Tip Sheet
provided by your Admissions Advisor.

Check out the course list
to see which courses are currently being offered that fit in your program and use the course timetable to decide what section to choose.

Now register for classes
that you need and that work with your schedule. Register through Briercrest Live. Contact your Admissions Advisor for assistance.

No

Book an appointment with an Academic Advisor
Email admissions@briercrest.ca

How many courses to sign-up for:

To be full time, students must register for 4—5 3 credit hour (c.h.) classes each semester. To complete a program within the 1-, 2-, or 4-year time frame., register for 5.

Heavy involvement in extra-curricular activities or employment **usually result in fewer classes per semester** and an additional semester or two of classes later on.

Some first years will also start with four classes to allow space to adjust to college life and the responsibilities of young adulthood.

How to read course codes

Example: BLST 109 A Intro to New Testament

Course Discipline
In this example: Biblical Studies

Course Number
The first number is the level of study 1=1st year, 2 = 2nd year

Section or type of class
Not all courses will have this but if it does there are multiple sections of this course (choose 1) or it has a different delivery mode

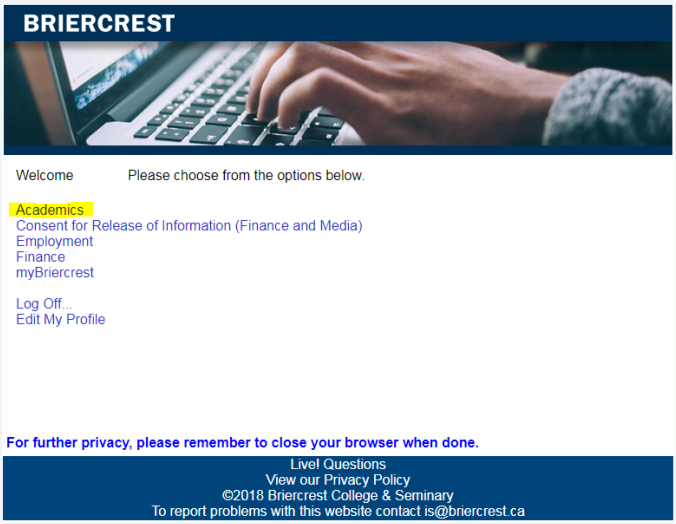
Course Name

Note: Freshmen with no prior college education are limited to 100 and 200 level courses only

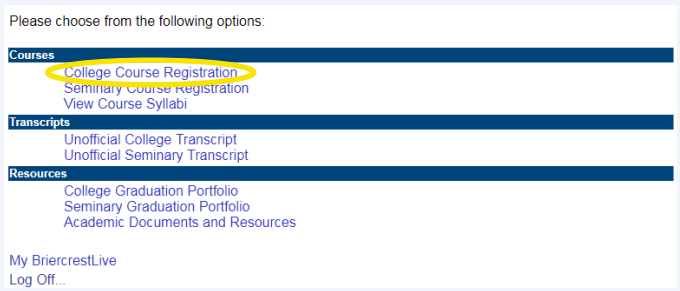
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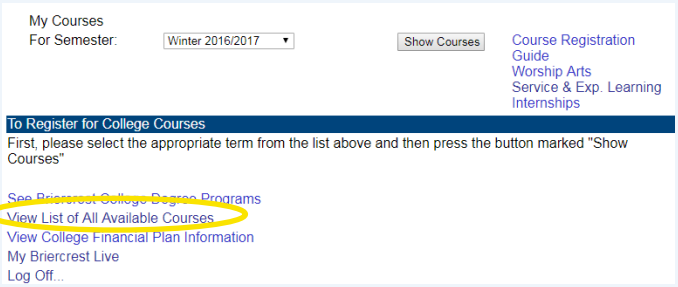
Registering for Courses

1. Sign-in to your Briercrest Live account

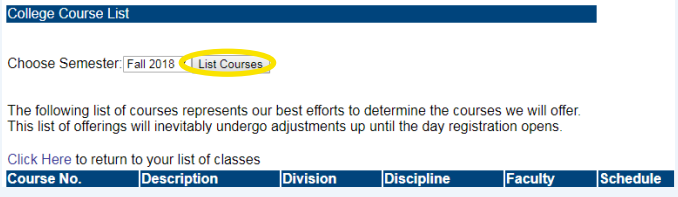


2. Select "Academics"





3. Select "College Course Registration"



Need help navigating Briercrest Live?
Contact your Admissions Advisor

My desired course is full. What can I do?

If the course you want is full, try registering again later to see if a spot has opened up.

If you are planning to drop a class, please do so as soon as possible to allow others who need the course to have your seat.

What is a prerequisite?

A prerequisite is a requirement you need to meet before you can take certain courses. Be sure to plan ahead.

How to tell if a prerequisite needed:

1. A pop-up note will appear when you are registering for courses with pre-requisites.
2. Check the College Calendar under "Course Descriptions"
3. Ask your Admissions/Academic Advisor.

Note: Be sure to check out Program Info Sessions during Week of Welcome

Changes can be made up to the Add/Drop date –usually the firs t week of school.

Athletes and Music Students

Briercrest Athletes

are advised to sign up for four 3 c.h. courses (**12 credit hours total**) **per semester**. Be sure to choose courses that will not conflict with your practice and travel times.

Check with your coach to find out when your practice times will be (typically they are scheduled for afternoons or evenings Monday to Thursday).

Friday classes are not recommended as your team may be travelling for weekend games.

Due to heavy team commitments, most athletes take an extra semester (AA) or year (BA) to complete their degrees.

If desired, it is still possible to complete your program within 2 or 4 years by taking online classes (in the summer only) or taking "mod" classes in the off-season.

It is **incredibly important** to practice time-management and self-discipline as a student-athlete or music student.

Tip: use a paper calendar to keep track of due dates, game days, performance days, etc. and ask someone to be your accountability partner to help keep you on schedule.

Visit the Academic Resource Centre (ARC) for more resources.

Music Students

are required to take a number of **one-credit hour** ensembles and private music lessons for credit **in addition to their 3 credit hour academic courses**.

It is recommended that freshmen music students **start with four courses** rather than five 3 c.h. classes in their first semester.

See Program Tip Sheet specific course advising for year one..

Signing up for Ensembles and Music Lessons

For **Ensembles**, you will audition during the first week of school in September. Be sure to check in with the Performing Arts Department to know when these auditions will be held.

For **Private Music lessons** (Voice, Piano, or other instruments), submit the Performing & Worship Arts Private Lesson Registration Form and the Performing Arts Department will contact you to confirm the details of your private music lessons.

For **private dance lessons**, visit the Performing and Worship Arts office.

Road Map to Program Completion

Understanding the Program Sheet

Program sheets outline which courses you need to take in order to complete your program of study. You can find them on https://www.briercrestcollege.ca/current-students/documents/program-sheets. It can seem a bit daunting at first, so here's a simple overview. (For more questions, ask your Academic Advisor.)

There are **four main components** that make up a program at Briercrest:

Core courses	**Core courses** are a part of every degree at Briercrest So if you decide to change programs, at Briercrest these required courses can easily be applied to your new program of study. Likewise, if you complete a two-year Associate of Arts degree at Briercrest, these core courses can easily transfer into any Briercrest Bachelor of Arts degree.
+	
Major requirements	**Major requirements** are courses that are specifically required for your program of study. These requirements will vary from program to program.
+	
Free electives	**Free electives** are open to any courses you would like to take. The number of free electives that you will need depends on how many credit hours remain in your program after fulfilling credit hours from the Core and your Major requirements.
+	
Service Learning (non-credit)	**Service and Experiential Learning (SEL)** units are non-credit requirements. This is an opportunity to develop hands-on, out-of-the-classroom experience. Check the Service Learning webpage for more information or email servicelearning@briercrest.ca
Optional: Minors	**Minors** are an add-on to your program. You can earn a minor by taking specific courses in another area of study that interests you. You can use your free electives to work towards a minor. Talk to your program coordinator or academic Advisor. Also, remember to let Academic Services know if you want to pursue a minor.

Transitioning to College

College jitters? Feeling overwhelmed?
Need some help organizing and planning your time?
Or help getting started with assignments? Or encouragement to keep going?

Connect with our Academic Resource Centre for support and resources. You can also email academicresourcecentre@briercrest.ca. Or check out one of these services:

ACADEMIC RESOURCE

Free

Tutoring, writing support, workshops, how-to guides, are available through the ARC.

Find us in the library and on Canvas

ACADEMIC COACHING

At cost

One-on-one academic support tailored to individual goals to develop your skills and potential

Visit the Academic Resource Centre

COUNSELLING CENTRE

At cost

Set up an appointment to meet with one of our counsellors

Visit the Counseling Centre

Academic Accommodations

Students with learning disabilities, mental health conditions, physical disabilities, chronic health conditions, etc. can qualify for academic accommodations.

Academic Accommodations will not modify course expectations,. Instead, they may adjust the format of how materials and examinations are delivered to you.

More information on academic accommodations can be found on the Briercrest website.

**Professional documentation of diagnosed disabilities that impact learning will be required to access learning accommodations. Contact the Academic Resource Centre for more information.*

*Professional documentation of diagnosed disabilities that impact learning will be required to access learning accommodations. Be sure to have a copy on hand.

Preparing for Briercrest College Academics

College at Briercrest is different than high school, homeschool, and in some cases other post-secondary education experiences. A word of advice: **focus on learning and growing**, and **ask when you are stuck**. A few other things to note:

High school	College
• School days are more structured.	⇒ College has a more flexible schedule. Note: with greater freedom comes greater responsibility.
• Teachers often give you class time to work on assignments.	⇒ You are responsible to prepare for class and complete assignments outside of class time. Students can expect to spend 3-6 hours outside of class on reading and assignments.
• Take-home assignments can be completed the night before.	⇒ Start early. College assignments often take more time than you think.
• Assignments can be handed in late with minimal to no penalty.	⇒ Late policies exist that can affect your grade. Check the syllabus.
• It might not matter how many classes you miss.	⇒ Attendance matters. Missing more than the allowable absences can lead to a fail. Check the syllabus.
• Parents/guardians can be your advocate in discussing academic concerns.	⇒ Time to practice ownership for your own learning. You are responsible to communicate with your instructors.
• A pass is 50%.	⇒ 50% will get you course credit, however a minimum of 63% average is needed to maintain good academic standing.
• Passing doesn't take that much effort. It's not too hard to catch up after slacking.	⇒ Be prepared for a grade drop, and be persistent in your effort. Slacking can cause major issues and stress.

ACADEMIC DICTIONARY

Fancy college terms to know

Syllabus	Each course has a syllabus that outlines what the professor is committed to teaching and what you will be responsible for doing. Late assignment, attendance, and other information is also included in the syllabus. Syllabi is the plural of syllabus.
Credit hour definition	The number of credits a course is worth is typically based on weekly instructional hours (i.e., hours of teaching you get from the instructors).
Credit hour details	Most courses are three credit hours, which involve three hours of instruction per week plus research, writing, study time, and examinations. Students should expect to invest 72-108 hours in total per three credit hour course
Modular Course	These are classes that typically run for four to five days. These classes often require pre— and post-course work.
Online Course	These are semester-long courses delivered through an online platform. Options are limited.
Prerequisite	Is a requirement you need to meet before you can take certain courses.
Full –time studies	Registered for 12-15 credit hours.
Part-time studies	Registered for less than 12 credit hours.
GPA	Grade Point Average. This can be by term (averaging just your term classes)or cumulative (average of all courses taken).
Program Specific::	At Briercrest all of our Bachelor programs are Arts except for the B
Core	A group of required courses from a variety of academic disciplines.
Major	A discipline chosen as a field of specialization typically requiring 36 or more credit hours of study.
Minor	An area of study that must be taken outside of one's major, involving 18-30 credit hours of student. Minor's are optional.
Concentration	An area of focus within a major.
Add/Drop Day	The last day to add or drop a course without any financial or grade penalty.

The transition to college has its challenges, both expected and unexpected. If you are feeling overwhelmed, don't worry. We're here to come alongside you. You can talk with your Admissions Advisor, your RA, your RD, your professors, our Counselling Centre staff, our Academic Resource Centre staff, our Academic Services and Student Finance staff, and a number of others.

We're looking forward to seeing you on campus!

