Pre-Orientation at Harvard
A note from the Dean of Freshmen

As you think about the opportunities ahead for you, I hope that you will give serious consideration to the programs described in this brochure. We set aside the better part of a week for orientation for all new freshmen before classes begin at Harvard. But our experience is that students who get an even earlier start in one of our pre-orientation programs feel especially well-prepared for the challenges of college life, and look back on their participation in the Freshman Arts Program, First-Year International Program, First-Year Outdoor Program, First-Year Urban Program and Fall Clean-Up with tremendous gratitude. As you will notice, some programs have a fee. However, significant financial aid is available for those programs and we hope the cost will not deter you from participating.

In recent years, over half of the entering class has participated in a pre-orientation program. When we have surveyed participants regarding the value of pre-orientation, they have reported most enthusiastically. I quote from the survey findings:

- I made amazing friends and learned so much from the upperclassmen.
- I quickly felt more comfortable with my decision to attend Harvard and more confident about my ability to contribute.
- When regular move-in day arrived, I felt “connected” and ready to go.
- It was awesome: really fun, low-key, and supportive.
- Our group still gets together (it’s now December), both to ask the “big questions” and to laugh.
- The physical and mental challenges put me in the right frame [of mind] for Harvard challenges.

Whatever you decide, we look forward to seeing you in August and hope that your senior year in high school will be most enjoyable.

Sincerely,
Thomas A. Dingman
Dean of Freshmen

Financial aid

Substantial financial assistance is available for students who participate in FAP and FOP, the two programs that charge a fee. Last year, over 40 percent of FOP and 50 percent FAP participants received financial assistance to make the program more affordable. Aid amounts vary based on financial need. The financial costs of FOP can also be offset by renting equipment for a modest fee (this fee is waived for anyone eligible for Harvard College financial aid). The bottom line - cost should not be a barrier to participating!
Fall Clean-Up is run by Dorm Crew, a student-managed division of Facilities Maintenance Operations, and one of the largest student employers at Harvard. During the week preceding freshman move-in, Fall Clean-Up employs approximately 300 freshmen and 50 upperclass students to clean the dorms and prepare them for students.

The work during Fall Clean-Up is demanding, but the camaraderie makes the experience fun. We offer a variety of social events during the week of Fall Clean-Up that provide an opportunity for students to get to know one another before other students arrive in Cambridge. Everyone gets to know classmates with whom they can enjoy their first meals at Annenberg and attend Opening Days activities.

Fall Clean-Up workers get to know their way around the campus. Fall Clean-Up workers become familiar with the upperclass Houses, freshman dorms, academic buildings, Harvard Yard, and Harvard Square. Freshmen also enjoy the opportunity to meet and talk with upperclassmen about life at Harvard, classes, and the transition to college.

“There is no other pre-orientation program that will prepare you for life at Harvard like Fall Clean-Up. When you arrive as a freshman still brimming with confidence from high school, Dorm Crew immediately breaks you down, then builds you back up with real skills and accomplishments, not to mention a big paycheck. Not only will you gain a new appreciation of hard work and perseverance, but friendships formed during Dorm Crew are some of the most genuine I’ve made in my time here. No name game is as good at bonding as cleaning toilets with someone for 8 hours a day, then devouring burritos afterward. Plus, there’s always the indescribable yet deep satisfaction of a sink polished to perfection.”

— Ivan Levingston ’17

Fall Clean-Up is the only pre-orientation program in which you can earn a paycheck! Earn the money for your first semester’s book bills before the semester even begins.
The Freshman Arts Program (FAP) is a week-long, multidisciplinary introduction to the arts at Harvard and beyond. FAP brings together 70 incoming freshmen who are passionately involved in various aspects of art, enthusiastic about sharing their interests, and eager to learn about the experiences of their peers. The week centers around workshops and master classes given by resident and visiting artists - working professionals from around the country - in drama, music, theater design, studio arts, visual arts/film, dance, and creative writing. FAP week culminates in a collaborative presentation of entirely original student work. Fondly known as “The FAP Pageant,” this presentation is never the same twice! No formal training is required for FAP, just an enthusiasm for all forms of artistic collaboration. Get ready for a week unlike any other!

At FAP you can:

• Compose original songs with Tony nominee Larry O’Keefe
• Create films and animations with former head of Skywalker Sound, Glenn Kiser
• Choreograph original pieces in whatever style you please, from salsa to Irish Dance
• Experience the arts and culture of the greater Boston area
• Interact with the key people and places who help students make art at Harvard, from the American Repertory Theater, to the Dance Center to the Art Museums
• Form friendships that last throughout your Harvard career, and beyond
• Take master classes in improv, comedic writing, print pressing, ballroom, lighting design, photography, acting, directing, poetry, modern dance, conducting, composition, oil painting, vocal performance, creative writing, scenic painting, charcoal drawing, filmmaking, hip hop, stage combat, ceramics, film scoring, and much, much more...!!

“FAP was 15263947801 times better than I expected, which is saying a lot because I was already expecting it to be pretty good.” Anonymous, FAP 18

“I had an amazing time, one that was greatly influenced me and that I will never forget.” Anonymous, FAP 18

“I was pretty intimidated about going to a new school, but this made everything so fun that I forgot about being nervous.” Anonymous, FAP 18

the basics
:: Live on campus; learn about the arts at Harvard.
:: Arrive Tue. Aug. 18
:: $425 fee; significant financial aid available.
:: Full scholarships available for students on full Harvard Financial Aid.
:: 70 first-years, 14 undergraduate proctors, 12 featured speakers, 20 guest artists, 7 resident artists.... 1 FAPulous program!
:: learn more at fap.fas.harvard.edu
:: Questions? email fap@fas.harvard.edu or call (617) 495-8727

freshman arts program
The First-Year International Program (FIP) is a four-day orientation program organized and run by the Woodbridge International Society, the Harvard International Office (HIO), and Freshman Dean’s Office (FDO). Thirty five students, called “FIP Leaders,” mentor the incoming freshmen and introduce them to Harvard life, providing participants with a platform to adjust to their new college environment in the United States. Incoming students are introduced to all the issues necessary for a happy, successful start at Harvard—from more practical discussions on the American classroom and how to set up a bank account, to more social topics such as culture, stereotypes, and homesickness. All these panels give international students a head start for the year. Most of all, though, FIP is a fun four days where internationals meet other freshmen and upperclassmen, some of whom will become their closest friends. Participants will also be placed into a “FIP Family,” with two (or three) FIP Leader parents, from whom they can hear about upperclassmen experiences. Other fun activities during the week include a Scavenger Hunt in downtown Boston, a karaoke night at the campus Pub on campus, and a dance party at the Student Organization Center at Hilles. At the end of the program “FIPpers” will find themselves already a part of the international community at Harvard—a home away from home!

International students and U.S. citizens who have studied most of their lives overseas are strongly encouraged to participate in FIP. There is no fee to attend. If you are eligible, you will receive an invitation and registration instructions in March or April 2015. If you did not receive an invitation but feel you should be eligible for the program, please contact the FIP Director at fip@fas.harvard.edu or the Freshman Dean’s Office at fdo@fas.harvard.edu. Please RSVP as soon as you can! It’s also worth noting that FIPpers may also participate in Fall Clean-Up, though they must register for each program separately. (see FIP invitation or Dorm Crew page for more details).

• Do you want to start off the school year getting to know more about Harvard?
• Do you want to get advice on excellent classes, how to buy a cellphone in America, how to set up a bank account, or what it takes to get that good GPA— all from people who have lots of Harvard experience?
• Do you want to make lifelong friendships with your fellow international students, and join a community that will help and support you in living thousands of miles away from home?

If you answered “Yes!” to any of the above questions, then join the First-Year International Program for the Harvard Class of 2019!
The First-Year Outdoor Program (FOP) is Harvard’s largest and oldest pre-orientation program. Since 1979, thousands of students have started their college experience with us. But FOP is not just a six day trip in the backcountry: it is also an opportunity for first-year students to build a sense of community and enter college with both confidence and a network of close friends. These relationships have, for many participants, been formative for the rest of their college careers.

First-years will spend the week hiking, canoeing or performing trail work in the wilderness of New England’s finest forests, summits, and lakes. FOP is an equal balance of laughter, ridiculosity, and constant engagement in thought-provoking conversations to frame the college experience.

Interested, but haven’t spent much time in the outdoors? Fear not! Many participants come to FOP without ANY prior outdoors experience. We offer trips designed for all levels of experience and fitness, ranging from campsite-based trips to more strenuous backcountry mountain traverses. Our leaders are well-trained in backcountry skills and are Wilderness First-Aid certified. They will teach you everything you need to know to be comfortable and safe in the outdoors.

Every year, participants and leaders hail from almost every state as well as from many different countries. FOP is committed to being open and accessible to all incoming freshman. We offer significant financial aid that is at least proportional to that provided by Harvard. We are also willing to work on an individual basis to try to find a way to make the program affordable for all participants. In addition, we lend outdoor gear and will work to ensure access to all necessary equipment. We also offer accommodations for dietary needs and religious observances.

Many seniors say that FOP was the best part of their college experience. So whether this is your first time in the outdoors or your fortieth, we hope to see you in August!

“I gained a family before even moving in at Harvard, and felt prepared for what lies ahead in a way I couldn’t have before. I know FOP was created for reasons like these, and I could write a book about how incredible the program is. But for now, I’ll just say that I am glad that I didn’t scroll past FOP. Because there is no other program like it.”

Alice Hu, ’18.
Harvard's First-Year Urban Program (FUP) is a student-run pre-orientation program that introduces, and facilitates a commitment to public service, advocacy, diversity, equity, and social justice work on this campus, as well as Boston and Cambridge. Whether you have experience with these issues and concepts or have absolutely no idea what any of these words mean, we would be thrilled to have you join us!

FUP is one of Harvard's pre-orientation programs that does not charge a fee. During FUP, participants (lovingly known as FUPpies) are in the neighborhoods working and learning about the unique personalities of each of Boston and Cambridge's communities. Every day, FUPpies divide up into worksite groups led by returning undergraduates (FUPLeaders) to assist grassroots community organizations in their work. In the evening, discussion groups meet to reflect on issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and equity, as well as how service groups can create reciprocal partnerships with communities to create genuine social change. Workshops include simulations, sessions with alumni who work in public service, and community leaders who work throughout the year with Harvard public service programs.

From the "welcome wagon" to the alumni panel, the entire program is planned and led by current undergraduates, which gives first years a great opportunity to learn about life at Harvard from their peers before the semester begins.

Previous FUP projects have included: painting a mural in a cooperative housing unit for formerly homeless individuals, reconstructing furniture for low-income families, weeding and planting in a community garden, constructing a deck for an AIDS hospice, and clearing an overgrown lot and constructing a playground for an alternative school/family center.

If you want to know more about public service and social change at Harvard—please join us!
how to register

To quickly access all the applications and further information about the five pre-orientation programs, please go to the Freshman Dean’s Office website (fdo.fas.harvard.edu), click on the tab “For the Class of 2019” and choose “Pre-Orientation.” The timing of the programs overlaps so you may only participate in one program, though you may choose to apply to multiple programs (exception: students participating in FIP may also participate in Fall Clean-Up; see the FIP invitation for more details).

- **FALL CLEAN-UP:** Registration is accepted on a rolling basis throughout the summer, but spaces fill quickly so it is recommended that you register early. Visit the “Fall Clean-Up” tab of the Dorm Crew website for more details.
- **FAP:** Applications should be postmarked by Monday, May 4. The application consists of both a simple written application form and an artistic supplement. See fap.fas.harvard.edu for more details and mailing information.
- **FIP:** The invitation to participate in FIP will explain how and when to register for a spot in the program.
- **FOP:** Registration is due online by Monday, May 4. See fop.fas.harvard.edu for more details.
- **FUP:** Applications should be postmarked by Monday, May 4. The application consists of short essays and a creative/interpretive self-portrait. See hcs.harvard.edu/~fup for more information.

meet us in person

As you are thinking about accepting your offer to come to Harvard, we’d love to meet you! You’ll have a chance to meet leaders from all of our programs, ask questions, and learn more about the exciting pre-orientation opportunities at Harvard during Visitas weekend in April 2015!