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

As you think about the opportunities ahead for you, I hope you will give serious consideration to the programs described in this brochure. We set aside a week for orientation for all new freshmen before classes begin. 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 First-Year Arts, International, Outdoor, and Urban Programs, and Fall Clean-Up with tremendous gratitude. As you will notice, some programs have a fee, but significant financial aid is available.

In recent years, over half the entering class has participated in a pre-orientation program. Past participants responded enthusiastically when asked about the value of pre-orientation:

- 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 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), to ask the big questions and 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 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 of FAP participants received financial assistance to make the program more affordable. Aid amounts vary based on financial need. The financial cost 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). Cost should not be a barrier to participating!
Fall Clean-Up is a week-long pre-orientation program run by Dorm Crew that employs 350 incoming freshmen and 50 upperclass students to clean the dorms and houses in preparation for move-in. Even though Fall Clean-Up work is demanding, the camaraderie makes the experience fun.

Fall Clean-Up workers get to know their way around campus and Harvard Square, and enjoy the opportunity to meet and talk with upperclassmen about life at Harvard, classes, and the transition to college. Social events offered during Fall Clean-Up provide an opportunity for students to get to know one another before other students arrive in Cambridge. What’s more, Fall Clean-Up is the only pre-orientation program in which you can earn a paycheck! Earn money toward your first semester’s books.

Dorm Crew was founded in 1951 and is considered the largest and oldest student-run, fee-for-service organization in the world. We employ students for facilities work across Harvard College. In recent years, roughly 20 percent of undergraduates have worked for Dorm Crew at some point during their time at the Harvard.

“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 eight hours a day, then devouring burritos afterward.” — Ivan Levingston ’17

The Basics

- Live on campus; make money! ($13.25/hr, approx. 40 hrs of work)
- Accommodations will be made for religious observance
- 350 first-years, 40-50 upperclass leaders
- Learn more at dormcrew.harvard.edu
- Questions? email dormcrewfcu@harvard.edu or call (617) 495-5569

Fall Clean-Up with Dorm Crew
The First-Year 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. The week culminates in the “FAP Pageant,” a collaborative presentation of entirely original student work. No formal training is required for FAP. 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 that help students make art at Harvard
• Form friendships that last throughout your Harvard career, and beyond

“The FAP was 15,263,947,801 times better than I expected, which is saying a lot because I was already expecting it to be pretty good.” — Anonymous, FAP 18

“The FAP blew my expectations out of the water. It sounded cool, but this has been transformative.” — Anonymous, FAP 21

“I’ve done a lot of arts programs that try and facilitate multiple disciplines but I think FAP did the best job of any other program I’ve participated in.” — Anonymous, FAP 21
The First-Year International Program (FIP) is a four-day orientation program in which 35 FIP leaders mentor incoming freshmen and introduce them to Harvard life, providing participants a platform to adjust to their new college environment in the United States. Students are introduced to all the issues necessary for a happy, successful start at Harvard – including discussions of the American classroom, culture and stereotypes, how to set up a bank account, and homesickness. All sessions give international students a head start for the year.

Through FIP, 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 upperclassman experiences. In the end “FIPpers” will find themselves 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. If you are eligible, you will receive an invitation and registration instructions in April 2016. If you do not receive an invitation but feel you should, e-mail fip@fas.harvard.edu. Please RSVP as soon as you can! FIPpers may participate in Fall Clean-Up, though they must register for each program separately. There is no fee to attend.

- Do you want to start the school year getting to know more about Harvard?
- Do you want advice on classes, purchasing a cellphone in America, establishing a bank account, or the purpose of a liberal arts education – from people who have Harvard experience?
- Do you want to make lifelong friendships with 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 2020!
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, mountains, and lakes. FOP is an equal balance of laughter, ridiculousness, and constant engagement in thought-provoking conversations to frame the college experience.

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

FOP is committed to being open and accessible to all incoming freshmen. We offer significant financial aid that is at least proportional to that provided by Harvard. We are willing to work on an individual basis to make the program affordable for all, including lending outdoor gear to ensure access to all necessary equipment. We also offer accommodations for dietary needs and religious observances.

“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 catalyzes a commitment to public service, community advocacy and support, diversity, equity, and social justice work on campus, and introduces students to Boston and Cambridge. Whether you have prior experience or have absolutely no idea what any of these words mean, we welcome you!

Participants (lovingly known as FUPpies) go into the neighborhoods of Boston and Cambridge to work and learn about the unique histories of each. By day, FUPpies divide into worksite groups led by returning undergraduates (FUP leaders) to assist grassroots community organizations in their work. In the evening, discussion groups reflect on issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and equity, as well as how service groups can build meaningful partnerships with communities to create impactful social change. Workshops include sessions with alumni who work in public service, and community leaders who work throughout the year with Harvard public service programs. FUP does not charge a fee.

From the “welcome wagon” to the alumni panel, FUP is planned and led by current undergraduates, and gives first-years a great opportunity to learn about life at Harvard from their peers before the semester begins. In the evenings, fun programming – like ice cream outings and our annual talent show – helps first-years bond with one another and their leaders!

Previous FUP projects include: weeding and gardening for a community center, helping public and alternative schools get ready for the school year, painting a mural for a community outreach and advocacy agency, and cleaning and organizing summer materials for a college-readiness program.

If you want to know more about public service, community advocacy and support, and social change at Harvard – please join us!
How to Register

To access the applications and further information about the pre-orientation programs, please go to the Freshman Dean’s Office website (fdo.fas.harvard.edu), and choose “Pre-Orientation” under the “Incoming Students” tab. With the exception of Fall Clean-Up, applications are due by Friday, May 6.

- Fall Clean-Up: Registration accepted on a rolling basis throughout the summer. Spaces fill quickly, so register early. Visit the “Fall Clean-Up” tab at dormcrew.harvard.edu for details.
- FAP: 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: See fop.fas.harvard.edu for details.
- FUP: The application consists of short essays and a creative/interpretive self-portrait. See fup.fas.harvard.edu for more information.

Meet us in Person

We’d love to meet you! You’ll have a chance to speak with leaders from our programs, ask questions, and learn more about the exciting pre-orientation opportunities at Harvard during Visitas 2016!