

Important information about course enrollment AY2026-27

Dear Prospective Visiting Exchange Students and their home university partners,

This information is provided to ensure that the visiting exchange students' academic experience at SMU is enjoyable and complementary to their home university requirements. The student and their home university should consider the following factors before applying to SMU, so that we can all ensure that the exchange program at Saint Mary's University meets the academic requirements and expectations.

- Visiting Exchange students need to maintain a full-time load throughout the semester. A full-time load is defined as a minimum of 9 credit hours (3 courses) and a maximum of 15 credit hours (5 courses) per semester.
- Saint Mary's University uses "credit hours" to measure a course load. A 3-credit-hour course is one that meets for 3 hours per week for one term. This totals 36-39 contact hours for the term. It is anticipated that for every hour spent in class, a student spends 2 hours outside class reading, doing assignments, etc. This equates to an expected workload of approximately 45 hours per week when a student takes 5 courses.
- As a rule, visiting exchange students are invited to take courses at the undergraduate level only (numbered from 1000's to 4000's on banner). If there are inquiries in this regard, please email Miyuki.arai@smu.ca, SMU Global Learning Services.
- Admitted students should activate their banner account and start registering in courses online through a system called **Self Service Banner (or "Banner" for short)** on **June 16, 2026**, or soon thereafter, whether they are attending the Fall term of 2026 or the Winter term of 2027. Courses will close for registration once seats in the course become full, and students who wait longer to register will face more closed courses.
- Students are expected to be present on campus on the first day of classes (**September 9, 2026**, for the fall term and **January 7, 2027**, for the winter term – and ideally earlier to attend orientation activities). Due to availability of flight tickets and/or other issues, some students have asked in the past if they could arrive later, but it is never recommended that students miss classes.
- Students can continue to add or drop courses until **September 18, 2026**, in the fall term and **January 15, 2027**, in the winter term, pending availability of seats.
- It is required that students remain present on campus until all final on-campus assessments are completed. The exam period runs at the end of the semester from **December 12 – December 21, 2026**, for the fall term (subject to change) and from **April 10 – April 21, 2027**, for the winter term (subject to change). The exam schedule for each course is published on banner mid-semester (thus, until then, students will not know when their last day of their own exams will be).

- All courses are taught in English; therefore, it is important that the visiting student has a good command of English in an academic setting. See the [language requirements](#).
- Visiting students who try to register in courses with pre-requisites will receive an error message from the banner system, since the system is set up in such a way that visiting students need to email a SMU academic advisor of the subject area and satisfy that the pre-requisites are met, before they are permitted to register in those courses. Not all times, such permission will be granted, and since SMU advisors are not familiar with the student's degree requirements, they do not advise students on what alternative courses they should consider taking instead – it will be up to the student, in consultation with the student's home university, to request permission for additional courses.
- We do not recommend the SMU exchange program, if the student is required to validate a specific set of courses during the exchange program. Due to course cancellations, closed sections, schedule conflicts, lack of pre-requisites, lack of seats, incompatibility of subject areas between the student's home university and SMU, etc., study plans with limited options will be fraught with too many issues and uncertainties. The SMU exchange program is best suited for students who are permitted to choose courses from a variety of options to complement elective-type requirements of their home university degree. We hope that this understanding will help make the student's Canadian academic experience more positive and less stressful.
- All courses that have been taught at SMU are found [here](#), but only a selection of them are offered in any given term. After March 2026, go to <http://selfservice.smu.ca/>, select a term (September-December 2026 or January-April 2027), academic level (“undergraduate”), course subject, and campus (“Main”) to see course offerings by term.
- There are hundreds of courses across many departments which visiting students can take depending on their prerequisites (inside or outside their major areas). When students create their study plan, they sometimes feel “lost” seeing too many options and can't decide on which courses to take. Since we are not familiar with the student's degree requirements, we do not advise students on which courses they should take. The home university advisor should assist the student in these instances and ensure that the student is aware of what types of courses will be recognized by their home university.
- There are many ways in which SMU classes are delivered, and courses of all delivery modes are open to visiting exchange students. This said, we recommend that visiting students enroll in on-campus courses to take advantage of Canadian academic experiences in person. All delivery modes are explained at the end of this document, and admitted students can check the instructional method on banner.
- The final grade for a course will be based on the quality of a student's work. See [here](#).
- The undergraduate student's performance is graded on a 4.30 scale. See [here](#). If the student needs to attain a certain grade point for the credit to be accepted in their home university degree, the home university advisor should inform the student in advance.

Beginning May 1, 2026, SMU courses are delivered via the following instructional methods:

1. **In-Person Learning (ONCA)** - In-Person Learning means all instruction takes place in an in-person setting. Classes are held on-campus at the regular weekly times listed on Banner. Timed assessments may be held on-campus or online. Final exam is completed at a specific scheduled time during the final exam period and may be held on-campus or online.
2. **Hybrid (HYBR)** - Hybrid Learning means a blend of online and in-person instruction. Assessments may also be a blend of online and on-campus formats. Regular presence at the Saint Mary's campus is required: some classes occur on-campus, while some classes occur online. Classes are held at scheduled times as listed on Banner. Timed assessments may be held on-campus or online. Final exam is completed at a specific scheduled time during the final exam period and may be held on-campus or online.
3. **Hyflex Learning (HYFL)** - Hyflex Learning means instruction is available online and in-person, and students can move between online and in-person. On-campus classes are held at scheduled times as listed on Banner. Students have the choice of whether to attend classes on- campus or online. All timed assessments, including the final exam, may be completed online. Final exams are completed at a specific scheduled time, or within a specific time range, during the final exam period and may be held on-campus or online.
4. **Hyflex Learning with On-Campus Assessments (HYOC)** - Hyflex Learning means instruction is available online and in-person, and students can move between online and in-person. Classes are held at scheduled times as listed on Banner. Students have the choice of whether to attend classes on- campus or online. Online options are available in an asynchronous format. Timed assessments may be held on-campus or online. Final exam is completed on- campus at a specific scheduled time during the final exam period.
5. **Synchronous Online (SYNC)** - Synchronous Learning means instruction takes place in real-time and requires student presence. Entire course completed online, including all assessments. Classes are held at scheduled times as listed on Banner. Final exam is completed online at a specific scheduled time during the final exam period.
6. **Synchronous Online with On-Campus Assessments (SYOC)** - Synchronous Learning means instruction takes place in real-time and requires student presence. Classes are held online at scheduled times as listed on Banner. Students are required to complete on-campus tests during the teaching period, and/or a Final Exam during the final exam period.
7. **Asynchronous Online (ASYN)** - Asynchronous Learning means instruction is available for students to access at a time that works best for them. Entire course completed online, including all assessments. No scheduled class times— students undertake weekly learning within their own schedules and set deadlines. Timed assessments within the teaching period (e.g. quizzes, tests) are available for completion within defined time ranges. Final exam is completed online at a specific scheduled time, or within a specific time range, during the final exam period.
8. **Asynchronous Online with On-Campus Assessments (AYOC)** - Asynchronous Learning means instruction is available for students to access at a time that works best for them. No scheduled class times— students undertake learning following their own schedule. Students are required to complete on-campus tests during the teaching period, and/or a Final Exam during the final exam period.