

The Combined Plan Program at Columbia University

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is there guaranteed admission for students from affiliate institutions?

For students attending an affiliate institution who enrolled in college prior to Fall 2019, guaranteed admission is available for students who have met requirements outlined in their respective Curriculum Guide. Students who meet or exceed the recommendations outlined in their respective Curriculum Guide will be most competitive in the admissions process. We will additionally consider overall academic preparation, community engagement and fit to Columbia. Columbia will review all applications in a holistic review process.

Note that all references to "guaranteed admission" in the document are applicable only to students who enrolled in an affiliate institution prior to Fall 2019.

Should I apply after three years or after four? Should I pursue this program or a master's degree?

Your liaison can best advise you on your appropriate course of study based on your educational and career goals. You may apply in either your third or fourth year and be considered for admission.

If I have already graduated from an affiliate, am I still eligible for guaranteed admission?

Only students who apply within one year of graduation from their affiliate institution are eligible for guaranteed admission, provided that they have fulfilled all other requirements for eligibility. Students applying to the Combined Plan Program more than one year after graduation from their home institution are not eligible for guaranteed admission.

Does studying abroad impact whether I am considered to be a full-time student at my home institution?

Please speak with the liaison at your school, who should be familiar with your school's policies. If the courses you take while abroad appear on your home institution's transcript, you are a full-time student and your liaison approves by noting this in the recommendation letter, your time abroad will be counted as residency at your home institution.

What are your admissions statistics? Are there quotas for the number of Combined Plan students admitted?

We do not release any admissions statistics for the Combined Plan Program. There are no quotas, as each application is reviewed individually. There are approximately 275 students currently on campus as part of the program.

Are applicant fee waivers available for prospective Combined Plan Applicants?

Yes. If paying the application fee is a significant financial burden for your family, we encourage you to request an automatic fee waiver through your admission application. You can determine your fee waiver eligibility today using this form found at: <https://apply.college.columbia.edu/register/feewaiver>. You will also be asked to confirm your eligibility within the Combined Plan Program application. Fee waivers will be automatically applied to applications of eligible candidates

May I reapply to the Combined Plan program?

Yes. You will need to resubmit a new application with an updated transcript and materials. Please note that students reapplying will be considered in a competitive and holistic review process.

What courses are used to calculate my GPA?

Your overall GPA includes all postsecondary courses towards the degree at your affiliate institution. Your pre-engineering GPA includes all of the science and mathematics Foundational and Major-Specific courses listed in the appropriate Pre-Combined Plan Curriculum Guide.

What if a prerequisite course is not offered at my school?

Please speak with your liaison to determine how you will fulfill this course. Depending on the course, you may be able to take the class at another institution or through independent study.

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Columbia University
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Undergraduate Admissions
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Will any advanced credits I earned in high school (e.g. AP or IB courses) fulfill my prerequisites? Will classes I've taken elsewhere (at other institutions and/or through study abroad) fulfill my prerequisites?

Please speak with your liaison. If the course appears on your home institution's transcript and if your liaison approves by noting this in the recommendation letter, we will accept credit taken at other institutions. Official transcripts from all institutions attended are required. Please note that additional information on your school's credit policies may be required as part of your application.

How many classes will I take in a typical Columbia Engineering semester? Will I be able to take non-technical liberal arts electives at Columbia?

Most students will take five or six classes per semester. All enrolled students will speak with an academic advising dean in the Center for Student Advising to plan out their courses. Depending on your department, you may be able to take non-technical elective courses.

Can I apply to the Financial Engineering major?

Students must have completed at least one semester at Columbia prior to applying to the Financial Engineering major within the Industrial Engineering and Operations Research department. Admission is managed by the department and is most competitive.

Can I double major in two engineering subjects while at Columbia?

Depending on your department and schedule, you may be able to take non-technical elective courses or complete a minor, but a second major is not available for Combined Plan students.

What major should I declare? When do I declare a major? Can I change my major?

All students must declare an engineering major at the time of application to Columbia. Change of major is not guaranteed and is unlikely after an admissions decision is rendered. Students attending a college or university in New York State must declare a Combined Plan major that is different from the major(s) they are currently studying at their home institution. All other students may declare any Combined Plan major.

What counts as a non-technical class?

Non-technical credit hours should help a student to learn perspectives and principles of the humanities and social sciences through reading, writing and discussion. Please note that non-technical electives are subject to the review of Undergraduate Admissions. Examples of these courses can be found on our website (<https://bulletin.engineering.Columbia.edu/b-elective-nontechnical-courses>).

My institution moved to Pass/Fail marks for the Spring 2020 semester as a result of COVID-19. How will these courses be viewed by Columbia?

Columbia will not expect Combined Plan applicants to have earned letter grades in their classes taken in Spring 2020 if their home school either moved all classes to Pass/Fail, or some variant in which students were allowed to take some classes for a letter grade and others for Pass/Fail marks. This only applies if your school moved to online instruction during the Spring 2020 semester.

My home institution moved my Fall 2020 and/or Spring 2021 courses to an online or partially online model. Will these courses be accepted by Columbia?

For the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 terms, Columbia will accept prerequisite courses completed at a student's home institution in the format offered, whether online, in-person, or a hybrid model. These courses must be completed for a letter grade.

Will online courses taken before Spring 2020 or after Spring 2021 be accepted by Columbia?

Columbia will not accept prerequisite classes taken online before Spring 2020 or after Spring 2021. These classes must also be completed for a letter grade.

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