



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
Weatherhead East Asian Institute



Master of Arts in Regional Studies East Asia (MARSEA)

STUDENT HANDBOOK
2025 – 2026

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About the Weatherhead East Asian Institute

Since its establishment in 1949, Columbia University's East Asian Institute has been a major center for research, teaching, and publishing on modern and contemporary East and Southeast Asia. In January 2003, the East Asian Institute was renamed the Weatherhead East Asian Institute (WEAI) to honor the generosity of the Weatherhead Foundation.

The Institute brings together over 50 full-time faculty, a diverse group of visiting scholars and professionals, and students from the United States and abroad to serve its mission of training new generations of East Asia experts in the humanities and social sciences and to enhance understanding of East Asia in the wider community.

The importance of East Asian Studies at Columbia has been recognized by a wide variety of funding sources, including the U.S. Department of Education, which, since 1960, has designated Columbia University as an East Asian National Resource Center. Through its many programs, conferences, seminars, and publications, the Institute creates an international forum for discussion about cultural, economic, historical, and political issues involving the Asia Pacific region.

Columbia University
Weatherhead East Asian Institute

<https://weai.columbia.edu>

weai@columbia.edu

The Master of Arts in Regional Studies - East Asia (MARSEA) Program

Under the leadership of Director Madeleine Zelin, the WEAI launched the Master of Arts in Regional Studies - East Asia (MARSEA) program in 1998 to provide students with intensive graduate training in the social scientific study of modern and contemporary East, Inner, and Southeast Asia. Since its founding over 20 years ago, the MARSEA program has helped train hundreds of entry-level and mid-career professionals: diplomats, military professionals, educators, lawyers, and journalists, among others. These alumni are part of a vast network that spans continents and disciplines.

The Institute administers the MARSEA program through the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. The degree program requires completion of a minimum of 30 credits and a master's thesis. In addition, students must demonstrate proficiency in an East Asian language equivalent to 3 years of modern Chinese, Japanese, or Korean language, or 2 years of modern Tibetan and Vietnamese language, in accordance with their chosen region of specialization.

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MARSEA Degree Requirements

For reference, please see the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences' MA degree requirements: <https://gsas.columbia.edu/student-guide/policy-handbook/requirements-ma-degree>.

Regional Specialization

All MARSEA students choose to specialize in one of the following: **China, Japan, Korea, Tibet, or Vietnam**. You will have to show language proficiency, take a modern history course, and write your master's thesis in accordance with your chosen specialization (see below for more information).

Coursework

**Please note that requirements have changed as of Fall 2024. MARSEA students are no longer required to take 2 graduate-level modern history courses; instead, they are required to take 1 modern history course and 4 graduate-level regional courses.*

Course Requirements

- **2 semesters** of the MARSEA core seminar (fall and spring)
- **1 graduate-level modern history course** (1850-present) on the region of specialization.
- **4 graduate-level regional courses**
 - At least one course must be a colloquium and/or seminar (not a lecture)

- At least one of the courses must focus on an Asia Pacific region other than one's region of specialization (courses dealing with the Asia Pacific region as a whole or dealing with relations between the Asia Pacific and other world regions may count)
- 1 language course at the 4th-year level or above may be counted toward this requirement
- These can be chosen from a wide range of disciplines, e.g. Anthropology, Economics, History, International Affairs, Literature and Film, Law, Political Science, Religion, Sociology, and more
- **1 graduate-level elective course**, which may focus on any topic of the student's choice and does not have to relate to East Asia
- Students must take at least **30 credits minimum**; each graduate-level course is 3-4 credits

Courses That Do Not Count

- No credits from an outside institution will be counted toward degree requirements
- No undergraduate level courses will be counted toward degree requirements (must be 4000-level and above)
- No courses counting toward the degree may be taken for R credit or Pass/Fail (P/F)

Language Proficiency

MARSEA students must show language proficiency equivalent to having completed Columbia University's third-year level of Chinese, Japanese, or Korean, or second-year level of Tibetan or Vietnamese in their chosen specialization. This requirement may be met in one of three ways:

- By providing proof that the language was a substantive part of their previous education (e.g., in high school, undergraduate degree, or prior graduate degree).
- By passing the Columbia University Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures (EALAC) language proficiency exam and receiving a three-year or higher certificate (which is the equivalent of completing two third-year language courses at Columbia). Incoming students should take the language placement examination at the beginning of the Fall semester (see below for more information).
- By achieving a grade of B or better in Third Year Level II (Second Year Level II for Tibetan and Vietnamese) language course at EALAC.

Language Placement Examinations

The Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures (EALAC), a department separate from WEAL, houses Columbia's programs in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Tibetan, and Vietnamese languages. EALAC offers language placement exams for students to determine their language proficiency. Exam dates are listed below, but please check the EALAC site links provided for the most up-to-date information.

*****IMPORTANT:** Please note that students can take a placement test for free at the beginning of each semester. Taking the test on a date outside of the designated dates will incur a USD\$50 fee.***

<p>Mandarin Chinese http://ealac.columbia.edu/program/language-programs/chinese/clp-placement/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall registration period: July 21, 2025 – August 25, 2025 • Writing/multiple-choice exam (in person): August 28, 2025 (9:00am - 12:00pm) • 10-minute speaking exam (via Zoom): August 29, 2025
<p>Japanese http://ealac.columbia.edu/program/language-programs/japanese/jlp-placement/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall Registration period: 9:00 a.m. (EST) on Monday, June 30, 2025 - 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, August 24, 2025 • Online Exam period: 9:00 a.m. (EST) on Saturday August 16 - 11:59 p.m. (EST) on Monday, August 25, 2025
<p>Korean http://ealac.columbia.edu/program/language-programs/korean/klp-placement/</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No registration required • Online multiple-choice exam: Available on CourseWorks 8/11–8/26/2025 • Writing and speaking exam: 8/28/2025, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m, location TBD
<p>Modern Tibetan http://ealac.columbia.edu/program/language-programs/tibetan/tlp-placement/</p>	<p>To register, please contact Prof. Sonam Tsering <st2931@columbia.edu> and EALAC administrator Nicole Roldan <nr2746@columbia.edu></p>
<p>Vietnamese http://ealac.columbia.edu/program/language-programs/vietnamese/vlp-placement/</p>	<p>To register, please contact cô Chung Nguyen <cn2496@columbia.edu> and EALAC administrator Nicole Roldan <nr2746@columbia.edu></p>

MARSEA Thesis

Requirements

The MARSEA master's thesis must be at least 35 pages in length (not including the bibliography) and deal with a modern or contemporary topic in the social sciences that focuses on the Asia Pacific region. It must substantially incorporate discussion of the student's region of specialization, although other countries and regions may be treated in the paper. The use of primary source material is strongly encouraged.

A Thesis Proposal, together with a signed Advisor Form, must be submitted one semester before the student submits his or her thesis (i.e. to submit a thesis in the Spring semester, students should submit a proposal in the preceding Fall semester). *See deadlines on next page.*

Thesis Advisor

Each student works with a faculty member who serves as their Thesis Advisor. As many students choose to expand on a paper written for a seminar course into their MARSEA thesis, the instructor of the course often serves as the Thesis Advisor. Students may, however, work with any faculty member of the Institute, or another Columbia University faculty member or course instructor.

Students submit an Advisor Form with their advisor's signature along with their Thesis Proposal. Download the form on <http://marsea.weai.columbia.edu> > **Resources** > **For Current Students**.

Thesis Proposal

The MARSEA thesis proposal, due in the semester prior to the student's desired semester of graduation (see next page for deadlines), should include the following:

- Title
- 500-word description of the topic, research methodology, and conceptual framework
- Preliminary bibliography

Formatting

- The final PDF of your thesis should be in 12-point font size (choose a classic Serif font, such as Times New Roman)
- Number all pages
- Double-space all lines, but do not add extra line-space between paragraphs
- Indent the first line of each paragraph by 0.5"
- Alignment: flush left margin (jagged right margin)
- Follow the Chicago Manual of Style. For references, you may use footnotes OR endnotes; alternatively, you may use in-text citations in combination with footnotes or endnotes
- Include full Chicago-style bibliography
- Include a cover page according to the following format:

[Thesis Title]

By [Full Name]

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts Regional Studies: East Asia (MARSEA)

Columbia University
Weatherhead East Asian Institute
[Month] [Year]

Submission and Review

A **PDF** of the final thesis must be submitted to the Thesis Advisor and to the Student Affairs Coordinator via email by the appropriate deadline (see below).

Once a student's Thesis Advisor has had time to review the submitted thesis, the advisor will send any comments and the final letter grade to the Student Affairs Coordinator, who, after confirming that the student has satisfied all their degree requirements, will pass the grade and comments to the students and clear the student for graduation.

Thesis & Graduation Deadlines

Graduation Date	Thesis Proposal & Advisor Form	Application for Degree (University Registrar)	Final Thesis
October 2025	March 7, 2025 (Fri)	September 1, 2025	September 5, 2025 (Fri)
February 2026	May 2, 2025 (Fri)	November 1, 2025	December 8, 2025 (Mon)
May 2026	November 7, 2025 (Fri)	December 1, 2025	April 24, 2026 (Fri)
October 2026	March 6, 2026 (Fri)	September 1, 2026	September 4, 2026 (Fri)

For the Application for Degree form, please see Vergil/SSOL.

International Students: All MARSEA international students should have received a three-semester I-20 upon enrollment. If you wish to take four semesters to graduate, please consult with ISSO as soon as possible.

CPT Fieldwork Option

The MARSEA program offers a course called EARS GR5555: Fieldwork in Modern Asia-Pacific Studies. This course provides an opportunity for students to engage in off-campus internships for academic credit that will count towards their degree.

Students who have secured internships are eligible to apply for CPT (Curricular Practical Training). As such, EARS GR5555 provides an excellent opportunity for international students, such as those on F-1 visas, to participate in these internships while continuing to work towards their degree. More detailed information on employment requirements can be found [here, on the ISSO website](#).

General requirements for EARS GR5555 include, but are not limited to:

- Open only to MARSEA students, and only with prior written approval of the program director or academic director.
- Completion of both semesters of the MARSEA Core Seminar. This course is not open to first-year students.

IMPORTANT: Students who have completed all requirements for the MARSEA degree may not take EARS GR5555. Because this course is an elective, this means **you must not have taken an elective in your first year**, because only one elective is required for the degree. If you are interested in doing an internship in your second year, plan accordingly!

If you are interested in doing an internship through EARS GR5555, please email the Student Affairs Coordinator for more information.

Additional information for EARS GR5555 is listed below:

- The course is taken for a letter grade only, counting as 1 credit. May not be taken Pass/Fail or for R credit.

- Students may only take the course once, and only if they have not already taken an elective.
- The student is responsible for securing an appropriate internship, and should expect to write a report to submit to the MARSEA program upon completion of the internship, which will serve as the basis for grading.
- Unpaid internships cannot be approved for the course.

Residence Units

Students are required to complete 2 “residence units” (RU) at Columbia University. 1 full RU is equivalent to full-time registration for 1 semester. More information on residence units is available here: <<http://gsas.columbia.edu/content/residence-unit-and-other-registration-categories>>.

MARSEA students can choose to complete their program in one academic year (2 full-time semesters, or 2 full RU), 3 semesters (fall, spring, and fall, or 2 full RUs and 1 Extended Residence), or a maximum of 4 semesters (two academic years, or 2 full Rus and 2 ERs). All students will discuss their graduation timeline with the MARSEA Academic Director at the beginning of their program.

To register for a Residence Unit (or any course), you will need a “call number” to find the course. See “*Course Selection and Registration*” section below for more information on call numbers.

- Full Residence Unit (RESI0001GR): 12006
- Extended Residence (EXRS0001GR): 11830

Application for Degree

To have your degree conferred on time, students must submit an Application for Degree or Certificate. To do so, go to **Vergil** <<http://vergil.columbia.edu>> and see Student Records. See “*Thesis and Graduation Deadlines*” table above for dates.

Course Selection and Registration

“Registration” is the formal process of securing a seat in a class. Before a student may be certified as enrolled in good standing, he or she must also satisfy administrative obligations such as paying prior term bills and demonstrating compliance with New York State's public health law requiring immunity from measles, mumps, and rubella. Please review your pre-orientation emails from GSAS and MARSEA for more information on registration requirements.

You can only register during one of your appointed times. Your registration times can be viewed online on **Vergil/SSOL** (more information below) and will be assigned prior to registration.

A late fee is charged for those who register for the first time during the first two weeks of the semester. See the Registrar’s website for information on late fees: <<http://registrar.columbia.edu>>.

Please note: Registration is a time for you to familiarize yourself with course offerings and plan potential schedules. Some courses will already be full with continuing students, and in such cases,

you should add yourself to the Wait List. In most cases, your schedule on the first day of classes will not be your final schedule.

Course Selection

All incoming students are required to meet one-on-one with the MARSEA Academic Director, Sau-yi Fong, at the beginning of their first and second semesters to discuss course selection, registration, and their graduation timeline.

Students can change their course schedules during the Add/Drop Period, which lasts until the end of the second week of classes (see the Registrar's Office for the most updated schedule).

Course Information

As of 2023, Columbia has been updating the Course Planner tool on **Vergil** <<https://vergil.columbia.edu>> for user-friendly viewing and selection of courses. Information includes each course's "call number" (which is required for registration), the instructor, date, time, and location, the number of points/credits, whether instructor approval is required for registering, and the department(s) offering the course, among other information.

In the past, the **Directory of Classes** <<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/bulletin/uwb>> has been the most comprehensive database for courses. It continues to be updated with the latest courses while the new Vergil system gets phased in.

For a list of graduate-level courses with a focus on East Asia across Columbia's departments, see WEAI's **East Asia Graduate Course Bulletin**: <<https://weai.columbia.edu/content/east-asian-courses-graduate-level>>.

Vergil / Student Services Online (SSOL)

Traditionally, students have registered for classes by means of an interactive online system called **Student Services Online (SSOL)** <<https://ssol.columbia.edu>>. In Spring 2023, Columbia introduced the "new" **Vergil** <<https://vergil.columbia.edu>> as an updated system that will gradually replace SSOL in these functions; however, some links on Vergil still redirect users to SSOL.

Students are assigned registration appointments on Vergil/SSOL. You can also use Vergil/SSOL to view your grades, schedule, billing information, and to update your personal information.

Registration Checklist

Before Registration

- Get the "call number" for the courses for which you wish to register on either the Directory of Classes or Vergil Course Planner.
- Check to make sure that you have not selected a course that is below 4000, as no undergraduate courses can be used to satisfy your MARSEA course requirements.
- Contact the relevant department with any questions about courses.
- You may need to obtain signatures from the department or course instructors requiring special approval. Please contact the Student Affairs Coordinator if you need assistance with this.

During Registration

- Go online to <<https://ssol.columbia.edu>> during your appointment times.
- Enter your University Network ID (UNI) and Password.
- If you log on before your appointment time, the system will remind you of your next appointment.
- Register for your classes.
- Register in a billing category by specifying a Full Residence Unit if you are a full-time student in your 1st or 2nd semester of the program. Register for Extended Residency if you have fulfilled the 2 Residence Unit requirement and are entering your 3rd or 4th semester. See "Residence Units" section on p.8-9 for more information.

Topics Related to Registration

Approvals

To register for courses that require special approval, complete a registration form from the Registrar's Office <<https://www.registrar.columbia.edu/content/registration-adjustment-form-add-drop-classes>> and then contact the course instructor for signed approval. If you have any questions about this process, particularly about cross-enrollment in professional schools such as the Business or Law School, please contact the Student Affairs Coordinator.

Registration Changes

You may make changes to your course schedule during the first two weeks of classes.

Full Classes

It is not possible for the Weatherhead East Asian Institute or the Columbia University Registrar to register a student in a fully enrolled class without the permission of the department and instructor. Students may contact the instructor to be added to the wait list.

Holds

The University permits many offices to place a "hold" against a student's enrollment. The reasons for holds vary from office to office. Financial holds, library holds, and deans' holds are most common.

Non-Online Registration Courses

Most courses are eligible for online registration. Some seminars or independent study courses, which require department or instructor approval, may not be eligible for online registration. To register for these courses you should contact the department and/or course instructor for the proper registration procedure.

Time Conflicts

You cannot take two or more classes whose scheduled times are the same and/or overlap by as little as one minute without the written permission of a Dean and the MARSEA Academic Director.

CourseWorks

After registration and enrollment, students can view instructor posts and syllabi on CourseWorks, which is also the platform through which assignments are sometimes submitted. You can log on at <https://courseworks.columbia.edu>.

Cross-Registration

REQUIRED FOR MOST NON-GSAS COURSES

Students interested in registering for courses outside of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS) may do so through a process called cross-registration. This process varies based on the school, but most often requires seeking approval from the instructor and school and submitting a Registration Adjustment Form (see below) to WEAI for signature, then to the Registrar's Office. See below for further instructions.

A Registration Adjustment Form is required to add any outside course to your GSAS registration. Please submit this form once you have been accepted into your requested course.

1. Complete the following form: <http://registrar.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/reg-adjustment.pdf>.
2. Send the completed Registration Adjustment Form to the WEAI Student Affairs Coordinator (Lin Hsu) for review and signature (if unavailable, to Professor Sau-yi Fong).
3. Submit the signed form via email to registrar@columbia.edu.

In addition to the Registration Adjustment Form, every Columbia school requires you to formally register for their school's courses by following these steps:

School of Business

1. A list of available courses and the online Cross-Registration Application is available at: <https://www8.gsb.columbia.edu/programs/mba/academics/classes/cross-registration>.
2. Business School courses are offered as A-Term, B-Term, and Full-Term courses. Fall 2023 A-Term, B-Term, and Full-Term cross-registration applications will open in September.

School of Journalism

1. See a list of available courses and submit the Cross-Registration Request Form here: <https://journalism.columbia.edu/cross-registration>.
2. For the most part, spots in J-School classes are assigned to non-Journalism graduate students on a space available basis (with top priority given to SIPA students).

School of Law

1. The Law School will accept requests for cross-registration towards the end of their add/drop period, which is when the application will become available. For more information: <https://www.law.columbia.edu/academics/registration-services/course-selection-registration/cross-registration>.
2. All applications require the instructor's approval. To request approval, please email the course instructor and request permission to join the course. We suggest you mention you

are in the M.A. in Regional Studies - East Asia, plus a summary of your relevant qualifications for the course.

3. If the instructor has granted you approval to join the course, complete the online Cross-Registration Application for Non-Law Students Form. It is required that you upload a copy of the email or any other documentation from the instructor indicating their approval to add you to the course.
4. Registration Services will email you during the Decision Notification period with the results of your application.

Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation (GSAPP)

1. View the list of open GSAPP courses posted online at: <https://www.arch.columbia.edu/cross-registration>. Please note that open courses will not be posted until the first week of classes.
2. Complete the GSAPP add/drop form here: <https://apply.gsapp.columbia.edu/register/add-drop>. Please forward an email stating you have permission from the department/instructor to studentaffairs@arch.columbia.edu along with this form.

Mailman School of Public Health

1. Complete the Cross-Registration Application found on this webpage: <https://www.mailman.columbia.edu/people/current-students/academics/policy-and-procedures>.
2. Obtain permission from the Public Health department(s) that offers the course(s) for which you are cross-registering. It is important to note that the process of obtaining permission to enroll in a course as a cross-registrant is approved first by the department then by the Office of Enrollment Management (OEM).
3. Forward your completed Cross-Registration Form, as well as any other email correspondence used in lieu of signatures, to the Columbia Public Health OEM team at: msph-enrollment@columbia.edu.

School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA)

1. View SIPA's list of approved cross-registration courses here: <https://bulletin.columbia.edu/sipa/registration/#crossregistrationtext>. Any course listed here may be added per usual via Vergil/SSOL.
2. SIPA Fall 2023 course registration for non-SIPA students will be available from Monday, September 11 - Friday, September 15, 2023.
3. Courses not listed on this site are NOT available for cross-registration. Unfortunately, there are no exceptions.

School of Social Work

1. See a list of available courses and submit the Cross-Registration Add/Drop Form for Non-CSSW Students here: <https://socialwork.columbia.edu/current-students/forms-documents-library/cssw-cross-registration-adddrop-form-noncssw-students/>.

School of the Arts

1. Please email the course instructor and request permission to join the course. We suggest you mention you are in the M.A. in Regional Studies - East Asia, plus a brief description of your relevant qualifications for the course.

2. The School of the Arts instructor or academic department administrators must sign the Registration Adjustment Form used by GSAS:
<http://registrar.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/reg-adjustment.pdf>.
3. After securing the appropriate signatures email the Registration Adjustment Form to registrar@columbia.edu.

Teachers College

1. Please email the course instructor and request permission to join the course. We suggest you mention you are in the M.A. in Regional Studies - East Asia, plus a brief summary of your relevant qualifications for the course.
2. The Teacher's College instructor or academic department administrators must sign the Registration Adjustment Form used by GSAS:
<http://registrar.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/reg-adjustment.pdf>.
3. After securing the appropriate signatures email the Registration Adjustment Form to registrar@columbia.edu.
4. After your registration adjustment form is processed, the Office of the University Registrar will forward your registration data to TC electronically so it is registered in TC's Student Information System (Banner).

Policies and Procedures

Changes in Programs of Study

Students are permitted to make no-fee changes in their schedules during the first two weeks of the Fall and Spring semesters. Any schedule changes after the first two weeks will carry a fee and, in most cases, tuition refunds will not be granted.

A student who wishes to drop courses after the first two weeks of classes or make changes to his or her program of study must obtain written approval from the Academic Director on a special registration form issued by the Registrar. Failure to attend classes or unofficial notification to the instructor does not constitute dropping a course and will result in a failing grade in the course. Students who drop courses will remain responsible for all tuition charges and related late fees.

For more information about the GSAS academic calendar, please visit the Registrar's website: <https://registrar.columbia.edu>.

Immunization Requirements

All incoming students are required to submit documentation either upon admission or 30 days before registration. Students whose immunization records are not compliant will not be able to register for classes. For more information about the following and other vaccination requirements and recommendations, please visit Columbia Health's Immunization Requirements page: <https://health.columbia.edu/content/immunization-requirements>.

For the most up-to-date information on Columbia University's vaccine requirements, see [https:// health.columbia.edu/immunization-compliance-office](https://health.columbia.edu/immunization-compliance-office).

Religious and medical exemptions to vaccination will be provided in accordance with New York State public health laws. Students who are seeking such exemptions should complete the request form available on the Columbia Health Immunization page:

<<https://health.columbia.edu/content/immunization-requirements>>.

Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR)

New York State requires that all college and university students enrolled for 6 or more points be adequately protected against measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR). Students born on or after January 1, 1957, must provide documentation of immunity. (Students born before January 1, 1957, are assumed to have had exposure and need not take further action.) For more information regarding the state law, students should contact the Health and Related Services Immunization Line at (212) 854-7210. Details on methods of documenting immunity are provided on the Columbia Health website, <<http://health.columbia.edu>>.

In very rare cases, a student may be granted exemption from the MMR requirements if he or she submits documentation about a medical diagnosis or religious orientation that precludes further immunization. All letters will be carefully reviewed and considered by the medical director of Health and Related Services. Please note: If you cannot provide evidence that you are immune to measles, mumps, and rubella, you will not be permitted to register for classes at Columbia University and may be charged a fine.

Meningitis

New York State public health law and University policy requires that students must also document that they either have received the meningococcal meningitis vaccine or have declined to receive it. This requirement applies before a student is permitted to register for their first term at Columbia.

Strongly Recommended Vaccines

COVID-19 and Seasonal Influenza Vaccines are strongly recommended but not required by Columbia University for Academic Year 2025-2026. Check the above Columbia Health website for the most up-to-date information. More information on COVID-19 measures can be found on the University's FAQ page: <<https://covid19.columbia.edu/content/faqs-regarding-covid-19-vaccination>>.

Academic Standards

Academic progress is determined by the successful completion of courses. MARSEA degree candidates must maintain a B average or higher and a Grade Point Average of 3.0 to remain in good standing. All courses must be taken for credit. No audited courses or courses taken for R credit or Pass/Fail may be counted toward completion of the degree requirements. Students desiring any of these marks must have written permission from the MARSEA Academic Director. Academic records are reviewed each term to determine whether candidates are making satisfactory progress. Those who do not maintain a satisfactory average may be asked to discontinue their studies.

Academic Integrity

Columbia's intellectual community relies on academic integrity and responsibility as the cornerstone of its work. Graduate students are expected to exhibit the highest level of personal and academic honesty as they engage in scholarly discourse and research. In practical terms, you must be responsible for the full and accurate attribution of the ideas of others in all your research papers and projects; you must be honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet source. Graduate students are responsible for knowing and correctly utilizing referencing and bibliographical guidelines. When in doubt, consult your professor. Citation and plagiarism-prevention resources can be found at the GSAS page on Academic Integrity and Responsible Conduct of Research <<https://gsas.columbia.edu/content/academic-integrity-and-responsible-conduct-research>>.

Failure to observe these rules of conduct will have serious academic consequences, up to and including dismissal from the university. If a faculty member suspects a breach of academic honesty, appropriate investigative and disciplinary action will be taken following Dean's Discipline procedures <<https://gsas.columbia.edu/content/deans-discipline>>.

For the Columbia University Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity please see here: <<https://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/integrity-statement>>

Leaves of Absence

Many reasons may compel students to discontinue their studies temporarily. Students requiring leaves of absence should work with the Student Affairs Coordinator and Academic Director to submit a formal request to WEAI explaining why leave is required. If the request is approved then a GSAS Leave of Absence Form <<https://www.gsas.columbia.edu/content/leaves-absence>> must be completed, signed by the Academic Director, and submitted to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. When ready to return, a student must notify the Student Affairs Coordinator. A returning candidate may be asked for an explanatory statement about the leave.

If a student's absence from GSAS has been less than 6 Fall/Spring semesters, the student may apply for re-enrollment by completing an application and submitting it to the Student Affairs Coordinator at least 6 weeks before the beginning of classes of the semester in which they intend to return. If a student's absence has been 6 or more Fall/Spring semesters, the student must also submit an update to their admissions statement indicating what they have done during their time away from Columbia, a description of their continued interest in the program, and a proposed timeline for accomplishing the remaining requirements of the MARSEA degree.

Withdrawal and Fees

A student in good academic standing who is not subject to discipline may withdraw formally from Columbia University, if necessary. Withdrawal is defined as the dropping of one's entire program as opposed to dropping a portion of one's program (i.e. taking a leave of absence).

Formal withdrawal is ordinarily allowed only prior to the examination period. Withdrawal means that courses and grades are not listed on the student's record and that the student does not receive any credit.

Any student withdrawing must notify the Student Affairs Coordinator and Academic Director in writing. Approval from WEAI is required for all withdrawals. Once approval has been granted, the

student must submit a Withdrawal Form to the GSAS Office of Student Affairs at <gsas-studentaffairs@columbia.edu>. For more information about withdrawal policies and procedures, see the GSAS Office of Student Affairs website <<https://gsas.columbia.edu/content/withdrawals>>.

Until students are notified by GSAS that the withdrawal has been processed, they should assume that they are registered and expected to fulfill their academic and/or financial responsibilities, including completing course work. Please note that Columbia University's health service fee, health insurance premium, application fees, late fees, and special health fees are not refundable.

CU Student Email Policy

All students must create a Columbia email account even if they plan to use another email service as their main email provider. All formal correspondence from Columbia University and the WEAI will be sent to students' Columbia email accounts. Moreover, the University expects that every student will receive emails at his or her Columbia University email address and will read emails on a frequent and consistent basis. According to University policy, a student's failure to receive and read University communications in a timely manner does not absolve that student from knowing and complying with the content of such communications.

Columbia email addresses are linked to every student's University Network ID (UNI), Columbia University's primary identification granting access to digital services and resources across campus. For information about e-mail accounts and to activate your Columbia e-mail UNI, please visit <<https://www.cuit.columbia.edu/email>>.

Students should familiarize themselves with [Columbia's Student Email Communication Policies](#). Unauthorized attempts to gain access to any account or system not belonging to the student on any University system or on any system outside the University network are not permitted. No University system or network may be used for any purpose or in a manner that violates University statutes, policies, or federal, state, or local law.

University Offices and Contact Information

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS)

Academic Access and Engagement

107 Low Memorial Library, MC 4303
gsas-diversity@columbia.edu

<https://www.gsas.columbia.edu/access-and-engagement>

Admissions

107 Low Memorial Library, MC4303
gsas-admissions@columbia.edu
(212) 854-6729

<https://gsas.columbia.edu/degree-programs/admissions>

Financial Aid

107 Low Memorial Library, MC4303
gsas-finaid@columbia.edu
(212) 854-3808

<https://gsas.columbia.edu/student-guide/financing-your-education>

Graduate Career Development / GSAS Compass

106 Low Memorial Library
gsas-compass@columbia.edu

<https://gsas.columbia.edu/graduate-life/career-development>

GSAS Compass offers a variety of career development services tailored to graduate students, including career development workshops, employer events, networking opportunities, and one-on-one advising.

Student Affairs

107 Low Memorial Library, MC 4304
gsas-studentaffairs@columbia.edu
(212) 854-4932

<https://gsas.columbia.edu/graduate-life/student-life-well-being>

Writing Studio

219M Lehman Library, International Affairs Building

<https://gsas.columbia.edu/graduate-life/gsas-writing-studio>

Other Columbia University Offices

Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS)

Lerner Hall, 8th Floor

Appointments: (212) 854-2878

Clinician-On-Call (After-Hours Health Concerns): (212)854-2878, Press 1

Walk-In Counseling Hours and Locations:

<http://www.health.columbia.edu/cps>

*Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) offers short-term individual counseling, referrals for long-term therapy, student-life support groups, medication consultation, and emergency consultation. CPS services are offered at **no additional cost** to students enrolled in Columbia Health and adhere to strict standards of confidentiality.*

Disability Services

Main Office: Wein Hall, Main Floor, Suite 108A

(212) 854-2388

Virtual and in person (by appointment only)

<https://health.columbia.edu/content/disability-services>

Gay Health Advocacy Project

John Jay Hall, 3rd Floor, 519 W. 114th St.

New York, NY 10027 (Mail Code 3601)

212-854-6655

<https://health.columbia.edu/content/gay-health-advocacy-project>

Insurance Office

John Jay Hall, 3rd Floor

519 W. 114th St.

Insurance Office: 212-854-3286

Immunization Compliance Office: 212-854-7210

<https://www.health.columbia.edu/content/insurance-office>

Medical Services

John Jay Hall, 4th Floor

519 W. 114th St.

(212) 854-7426

<https://health.columbia.edu/content/medical-services>

Sexual Violence Response

Lerner Hall 700

(212) 854-3500

For urgent or after-hours support, please call the 24/7 helpline: (212) 854-HELP/4257

<https://health.columbia.edu/content/sexual-violence-response>

****For information about other offices and services available through Columbia Health, visit <https://health.columbia.edu>.****

Student Service Center / Office of the Registrar

210 Kent Hall

registrar@columbia.edu

(212) 854-4400

<https://ssc.columbia.edu/>

ID Center

204 Kent Hall
idcard@columbia.edu
(212) 854-4323

Financial Services

210 Kent Hall
sfs@columbia.edu
(212) 854-4206
<https://www.sfs.columbia.edu/>

International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO)

International House North, Ground Floor
524 Riverside Drive
(212)854-3587
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/isso>

*The International Students and Scholars Office (ISSO) advises on immigration-related needs, providing advisory and documentation services as well as information on **visas, employment, travel, and tax-filing obligations** that international students may have.*

The Writing Center

310 Philosophy Hall
uwp@columbia.edu
(212) 854-3886
<http://www.college.columbia.edu/core/uwp/writing-center>

The Writing Center provides writing assistance to all Columbia students. Students may call to set up an appointment or drop in.

Earl Hall: Religious Life Advisors (RLA)

Earl Hall 202
(212) 854-1493
<https://ouc.columbia.edu/>

Religious Life Advisors (RLA) are clergy and lay people appointed by the University Chaplain to represent different faith traditions at Columbia University. Religious Life Advisors provide pastoral counseling to Columbia University students. For a list of pastoral care office hours please see the Office of the University Chaplain website.

MARSEA Academic Calendar

* Please note that the following dates are subject to change. When unsure, always check with the WEAI Student Affairs staff or Professor Sau-yi Fong.

FALL 2025

Date	Event or Deadline	Details
Wednesday, August 6, 2025	Registration begins for incoming MA students	See Vergil/SSOL for registration appointments
Monday, August 25, 2025	Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Orientation (in person and online)	For more information, email gsas-studentaffairs@columbia.edu
Tuesday, August 26th, 2025	MARSEA New Student Orientation (in person only)	International Affairs Building, Room 918
Orientation week and first week of classes	Course Advising Appointments	Individual appointments with Prof. Sau-yi Fong (sign-up sheet will be emailed)
Monday, September 1, 2025	Application for Degree due to Registrar for October 2025 graduation	Submit via SSOL
Monday, September 1, 2025	Labor Day Holiday	
Tuesday, September 2, 2025	First Day of Classes	Students who are not registered for any courses by the first day of Fall classes will incur a late fee
Friday, September 5, 2025	Thesis deadline for October 2025 graduation	Submit to Thesis Advisor and Student Affairs Coordinator via email by 5PM ET
Friday, September 12, 2025	End of Add/Drop Period End of Change of Program Period	Last day to add a class, Last day to receive tuition refund for a dropped class
Tuesday, October 7, 2025	Course Drop Deadline	Last day to drop a class without a tuition refund
Wednesday, October 15, 2025	October Degrees Conferred	

Saturday, November 1, 2025	Application for Degree due to Registrar for February 2026 graduation	Submit via SSOL
Monday, November 3, 2025	Academic Holiday	Administrative offices open; no classes
Tuesday, November 4, 2025	Election Day	University Holiday: Administrative and academic offices closed; no classes
Friday, November 7, 2025	Thesis Proposal & Advisor Form due for May 2026 graduation	Submit to Student Affairs Coordinator via email by 5PM ET
Thursday, November 13, 2025	Last Day to Pass/Fail a course	
Monday, November 24 to Wednesday, November 26, 2025	Course Registration for Continuing Students in GSAS	Spring semester registration; make appointment with Prof. Fong to discuss
Wednesday, November 26, 2025	Academic Holiday	Administrative offices open; no classes
Thursday, November 27 to Friday, November 28, 2025	Thanksgiving Holiday	Administrative and academic offices closed; no classes held
Monday, December 1, 2025	Application for Degree due to Registrar for May 2026 graduation	Submit via SSOL
Monday, December 8, 2025	Last Day of Classes Thesis submission deadline for February 2026 graduates	Submit to Thesis Advisor and Student Affairs Coordinator via email by 5PM ET
TBD	End-of-Year MARSEA Celebration	Winter party for MARSEA students with WEAI faculty and staff
Tuesday, December 9 to Thursday, December 11, 2025	Study Days	
Friday, December 12 to Friday, December 19, 2025	Final Examinations	
Saturday, December 20, 2025	Winter Holiday Begins	

SPRING 2026

Date	Event or Deadline	Details
Tuesday, January 20, 2026	First Day of Classes	Students who are not registered for any courses by the first day of Spring classes will incur a late fee
Friday, January 30, 2026	End of Add/Drop Period End of Change of Program Period	Last day to add a class, Last day to receive tuition refund for a dropped class
TBD	WEAI Lunar New Year Party	
Wednesday, February 11, 2026	February Degrees Conferred	
Tuesday, February 24, 2026	Course Drop Deadline	Last day to drop a class without tuition refund
Friday, March 6, 2026	Thesis Proposals & Advisor Forms due for October 2026 graduation	Submit to Student Affairs Coordinator via email by 5PM ET
Monday, March 16 to Friday, March 20, 2026	Spring Recess	Administrative offices open; no classes held
Friday, April 24, 2026	Thesis submission deadline for May 2026 graduates	Submit to Thesis Advisor and Student Affairs Coordinator, via email by 5PM ET
Monday, May 4, 2026	Last Day of Classes	
Tuesday, May 5, 2026 - Thursday, May 7, 2026	Study Days	
Friday, May 8 to Friday, May 15, 2026	Final Examinations	
TBD	GSAS M.A. Convocation Ceremony	
Wednesday, May 20, 2026	Commencement WEAI Graduation Celebration	