Important Information About Expos 10 and 20 for BFA Advisers

Fall 2015

The Harvard College Writing Program has prepared the following document to provide you with information about its Expos courses and writing resources as you advise your freshmen advisees.

If after reading this guide you have any questions, please do not hesitate to e-mail Karen Heath, the Writing Program’s Senior Preceptor, at KLHeath@fas.harvard.edu or call her at 5-9809.

What Is Expos?
Descriptions of the Writing Program's Expos 10 and 20 courses and the philosophy behind its curriculum and pedagogy can be found on our website: http://writingprogram.fas.harvard.edu/

Please look at our website to find out about the many resources we offer to support our freshman writers.

Where Is the Writing Program?
The Program is located on the second floor of One Bow Street. Bow Street meets Mass Ave behind Lamont Library. Students must use their Harvard IDs to gain entry into One Bow and take an elevator to the second floor.

The Registration Process
In the fall, your advisees will be paying attention to three things regarding Expos:

• term assignment
• sectioning
• course choice: Expos 10, Expos 20, and Humanities 10a/10b
1. **Term assignment.** Students will see their term assignment – which semester they are assigned to take Expos – listed in my.harvard.

- *If students ask, “What if I want to take Expos in the other semester?”* please tell them to come to our One Bow Street offices on August 29, August 31, or September 1 to fill out a request form. Students can access the Registration Calendar on our website here:  
  [http://writingprogram.fas.harvard.edu/pages/registration](http://writingprogram.fas.harvard.edu/pages/registration)

- We will do our best to accommodate students’ requests, but it’s worth pointing out to students that we can only move students from one term to another if there’s space. Please encourage them to be clear on their request forms about why they want to change terms.

2. **Section assignment.** If students have been assigned to take Expos in the fall, they will need to register for a section of Expos.

- Students have from September 4-6 to submit sectioning preferences online. For Expos 20, we ask them to list their top 8 choices. Sectioning is NOT first come, first served. If they change their minds before September 6, they can resubmit information.

- Students are submitting their section preferences as they're figuring out the rest of their academic schedules, so they have the best possible sense of which class hours they do not want to take Expos. They can avoid choosing an Expos section that meets at the same time as, say, a particular Gen Ed class they just shopped.

- The Writing Program will email students their section assignments on Monday, September 7.

- Our Expos 10 and Expos 20 classes start on Wednesday, September 9, one week after the rest of the College.

- *After sections are assigned, if students ask, “What if I really want to be in a different Expos course, or what if I now can’t meet at that section time?”* please tell them to come to our One Bow Street offices to submit section change requests on September 8, 9, and 10. Please encourage students to provide us as much information as possible on their section change request form. **Class size is strictly limited to 15, so we can only move a student into a class if another student is moving out.**
3. **Course choice: Expos 10, Expos 20 and Humanities 10a/10b.**

In 2015-16, students who were recommended for Expos 20 also have the option of meeting the Expository Writing requirement by taking Humanities 10a/b, a two-semester reading- and writing-intensive course. Students must take both semesters during freshman year to meet the requirement.

- Humanities 10a/10b will be a lotteried course. Any students hoping to take the class who are not accepted must enroll in Expos 20 in the term to which they were assigned. Humanities 10a will inform students of their status on Friday, September 4. Sectioning for Fall Term Expos 20 closes on Saturday, September 5.

Some students will be recommended for Expos 10 on the basis of their Writing Test taken this summer.

- A student’s “Recommended for Expos 10” status will be listed on my.harvard. The recommendation is also communicated directly to students via email from the Writing Program on August 25. These students will need to decide whether to take Expos 10 and will need to sign up for a 15-minute advising meeting with one of our Expos 10 advisers.

- Students who were flagged for Expos 10 and who end up not taking Expos 10 must enroll for a fall Expos 20 section.

- You don’t have to figure out who’s right for 10. Our team of Expos 10 faculty members who serve as Expos 10 advisers will do that. Please do talk with your advisees about how Expos fits into their larger course schedule, about the information they get from Expos 10 advising, about their level of confidence, etc. But Expos 10 advisers will tackle the issue of deciphering the kinds of papers they’ve written before Harvard and how ready they might be to start with Expos 20.

- If your advisee’s my.harvard reads “Missing Test,” it means that the student did not take the Writing Test over the summer and will need to take the on-campus make-up test. (For a few students, it may mean that they took the summer WT so late that the recommendation did not make it into the system; we will email placement recommendations to them.) The Writing Program takes care of emailing information about the make-up test to students who did not take the WT over the summer.

- **Who takes 10?**
  - A wide range of students: students who don’t consider themselves strong writers, or whose high schools taught mostly the standardized test essay, or who haven't written analytical essays, or who went to high school outside of the US, or who are ESL. None of those qualities predicts students for 10, but they may be issues you want to be aware of.
  - Typically we flag between 170-190 students for Expos 10 advising sessions. Last year our enrollment was 163 students, and more than twenty students chose to take the class without being recommended. We continue to welcome walk-ins as long as we have spaces available in the class. Please encourage interested students who were not already recommended to come see the Writing Program as soon as possible. Students need the approval of an Expos 10 adviser to sign up for the class.
The Three Questions Your Advisees Are Most Likely to Ask You About Expos 10

A. Do I have to take Expos 10? Students are not placed—just recommended. We help them make that decision with individual advising conversations, discussing their Writing Test and their broader writing background.

Students who have been flagged for an Expos 10 advising session must come to the Writing Program offices on the second floor of One Bow Street to sign up for that session. Please urge your advisees to come in early during the four-day advising period, even if they think they have already decided about the course. Please encourage your advisees to attend the session with an open mind. Our Expos 10 faculty advisers will help them sort out the decision.

All students who are recommended must have an Expos 10 advising session. (Likewise, any student who wants to take the course without being recommended needs to come in for Expos 10 advising.)

B. If I don’t like writing, why should I take a whole year of it? The course evaluations for Expos 10 are extremely strong, and the preparation that students receive in 10 makes a big difference to their success in other classes at Harvard. Expos 10 focuses even more than Expos 20 on breaking down the writing process into individual steps so students can practice each step with feedback.

Sections are smaller, so students leave Expos 10 having had a great deal of individual attention, and tend to gain more confidence as writers, as contributors to class discussions beyond Expos, and as members of the Harvard undergraduate community.

C. Can’t I just take 20 and work really hard? For the students who truly need 10, this isn’t really a strategy that works. Expos 20 moves fast and assumes a basic familiarity with analytical writing. For less prepared writers, the background that Expos 10 offers is an invaluable stepping stone to Expos 20. Expos 10 provides students not only with more opportunities to practice their writing but also the greater attention to their intellectual development that comes from learning in small classes and frequent one-on-one conferences with their instructors. You can tell your advisee that Expos 10 is a great fall-term introduction to writing for less prepared writers.