

Special Student Status

The Special Student Program in Oberlin's College of Arts and Sciences is designed for individuals who normally wish to take one or two courses to further their education. Students enrolled in the program are not considered degree candidates at Oberlin; however, should a special student ultimately apply and be accepted as a full time student at Oberlin, courses taken as a special student would be counted toward the degree. Most other liberal arts colleges and universities will also accept Oberlin credits toward the completion of a bachelor's degree.

The Special Student Program has been found valuable by members of the community who wish to take a course relevant to their employment or who wish to satisfy an intellectual curiosity. The program has also been used successfully by high school students in the Oberlin area who have exhausted their school's offerings in a particular academic area. Occasionally, an individual who leaves college before completing a degree finds it valuable to take a course or two at Oberlin in preparation for re-entry into a full time college program.

It is important to distinguish the Special Student Program from Oberlin's Visiting Student Program. The Visiting Student Program is designed for students who are currently enrolled at another college or university and wish to spend a semester or two at Oberlin on a "temporary" basis before returning to complete their degree at their original college or university. Generally, visiting students take a full course load of twelve to fifteen credits for each semester they are enrolled at Oberlin. If the visiting student program seems more appropriate, please write to us for further information. Please note that we are unable to offer on-campus housing to students who are not degree candidates at Oberlin or who are not attending Oberlin through the Visiting Student Program.

The cost of attending Oberlin as a special student is the cost per credit hour as stated in the current course catalog. A typical course at Oberlin offers from three to five hours of credit. ***Unfortunately, we are unable to offer financial assistance to special students.***

While enrolled at Oberlin, special students will have the same privileges and obligations as any regular undergraduate student. Special students may find it difficult to take courses in which enrollment is limited. For these courses, enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor who may choose to give priority for enrollment in the course to current Oberlin undergraduates. For this reason, you may wish to consult the course catalog and contact a specific department for information as to the pre-requisites or limits placed upon enrollment in a given class.

Once we have received your completed special student application and all accompanying credentials, we will attempt to make a decision within one month.

For further information about the Special Student Program, please feel free to contact The Office of Admissions at 1-800-622-6243 or email us at college.admissions@oberlin.edu

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