Planning Your Academic Career

Although your academic advisor can help you select courses and catch problems in your proposed schedule, your academic career is ultimately your responsibility. The best way to ensure that you can complete your degree within your desired time frame is to develop a plan as early as possible.

If you have chosen your major, start by consulting the Curriculum Planning Guide for the academic year you entered Plymouth State University. These guides can be found at http://www.plymouth.edu/undergrad/curriculum/. Obviously it is impossible to plan your academic career completely if you have not chosen a major, but even so, it may be useful to consult the Curriculum Planning Guides for any majors you are considering.

As a general rule, in the first two years of your career you will take introductory courses to your major, courses that are prerequisites for upper-level classes, and a number of General Education Courses, including Composition (EN1200), First Year Seminar (IS1111), a Mathematics course, and Directions courses. (For further information on the General Education program, see the "Academic Catalog" (http://www.plymouth.edu/academics/programs/search.html) or the General Education homepage (http://www.plymouth.edu/undergrad/general_ed/). In your last two years, you will focus mostly on upper-level courses in your major. Therefore, it is imperative that you have taken the prerequisite courses for these upper-level classes by the time you need them in your Junior or Senior year.

The best way to plan your academic career is to start at the end and work backwards. Consult the Curriculum Planning Guide and the Academic Catalog to find the required upper-level courses in your major and ask two questions of each course:

1. What are the prereqs for the course?
2. When is the course offered? (note that many courses are not offered every semester. The may only be offered in even or odd years, or in the spring or fall semester)

Use the "Blank Course Schedule" (http://oz.plymouth.edu/~jsduncan/BlockPlan-blank.pdf) to plan when you will take your upper-level courses. Work backwards from there to make sure you will have the prereqs needed for those courses.

LIST OF UPPER-LEVEL COURSES			
Course	CRN	Prereqs	Semester / years offered