The Gateway Program
An introduction for students
So you’re in a Gateway course in the School of Arts & Sciences – congratulations!

What does it mean to be in these special courses and sections?

It means that you’ve been identified as someone with a high potential to succeed in college, based on your strong performance in high school – even though you haven’t done as well as we’d like on all the Rutgers placement tests in mathematics, reading, and/or writing.

You need some refresher work in order to get completely up to speed for the college success that relies on those skills. But you’re also ready to take on some of the challenging foundational courses that are gateways to many of our most popular majors, across the SAS and the University.

Your place in the Gateway Program is our acknowledgement of your readiness to move forward assertively in your studies.

By providing you with the support of the Gateway courses, we’re making a commitment to help you successfully complete your first-year curriculum – including some of our most demanding introductory classes - so you don’t waste time and effort repeating courses, and so you achieve the grades that reflect your true abilities.

You’re not alone, by the way: last year, the U.S. Department of Education reported that one in every three students entering postsecondary education needs at least one preparatory course to fill gaps in their high school preparation.
We know that when students find themselves placed in such prep courses, they sometimes feel as if they’re going backwards, not forward, in their studies.

For students like you, with a history of being academically successful, the idea of doing what might be perceived as “catch-up work” can be frustrating.

We know it’s hard to see this as an important step along the way to the majors and courses you care about, but it can really make a difference in how well you’re likely to do in those future courses – especially in the sciences.

We also know that frustration is a big reason some students in this position think of dropping out - or transferring to a less challenging school - after the first year of college.

But the Gateway Program is our way of ensuring that we don’t lose you and your high potential. We want to keep you at Rutgers, on the track to superior academic success – and timely graduation – in the degree program that’s right for you.

That’s why you’re in this Gateway course.

It’s part of a carefully crafted first-year schedule that will allow you to complete important foundational courses that apply toward your graduation requirements, while reinforcing the learning strategies that will be so valuable for your success across the entire SAS curriculum.
Gateway is designed to help you get up to running speed, and at the same time, to open the way to the subjects and the majors you want.

It’s based on years of research here and elsewhere that tells us students really develop their college learning strategies more quickly and effectively in courses they care about – in areas they find interesting or important.

Gateway courses are led by highly experienced faculty who are deeply dedicated to undergraduate teaching, and who will actively promote your learning as you work through the content of the coursework.

You’re not “just a number” on the class roster to them. They want you to improve your learning skills as well as build your knowledge base – to become even more effective at mastering new and more challenging materials as you progress through your degree.

And they have the expertise to help you do this. They’re also supported by experienced teaching assistants - and by the academic services offices of the School of Arts & Sciences.

In fact, students who haven’t been placed in Gateway often express an interest in joining Gateway sections because of the advantages of this instructor-student interaction. Unfortunately, due to limited resources, we’ve never been able to offer as many Gateway sections as we’d like to, so we can’t meet all the demand.

[some of the Gateway faculty: Asbed Vassilian, Chemistry & Chemical Biology; Suzanne White Brahmia, Physics; Gary Brill, Psychology; Baki Brahmia, Physics; Nancy Hewitt, History]
Gateway features challenging introductory courses that are vital entry ways to a broad range of our most desirable majors: biology, chemistry, physics & psychology; sociology, political science, and history.

And these are not easy, watered-down versions of our courses. Expectations and standards are not relaxed in Gateway courses.

Gateway sections are designed to include a wider variety of written and in-class learning activities than is typical in ‘traditional’ courses, however - with more direct, ongoing interaction between students and instructors throughout the semester.

This approach allows the faculty to help you develop effective college-level learning strategies as you’re gaining mastery of the subject matter and course content.

Most students find that the Gateway course design also helps them keep on track with the work in a more productive way than ever before.

Of course, grades in Gateway classes are also based on the wider range of learning activities and assignments - so your success will depend on being actively engaged in and well prepared for all the elements of the course.

Our expectations for you and your fellow Gateway students are high – but realistic, as the history of this program’s success makes clear.

**Courses with Gateway sections:**

- Introduction to Chemistry 01:160:134
- General Chemistry 01:160:161
- General Chemistry (Extended) 01:160:162
- Extended Analytical Physics 01:750:115 & 116
- Extended General Physics 01:750:201 & 202
- General Psychology 01:830:101
- Introduction to Sociology 01:920:101
- American Government 01:790:104
- Law & Politics 01:790:106
- Development of U.S. To 1877 01:512:107
We have over 25 years of evidence that Gateway helps students achieve their goals. Thousands of highly-motivated students have closed the gap between where they were when they came to Rutgers and where they wanted to go in their studies.

When we review grade distributions, earned credits, and cumulative GPAs, we consistently find that Gateway-assisted students match their classmates as a whole. By the end of the sophomore year, Gateway students also are making satisfying progress toward their majors and minors.

**But Gateway only works if you do.** The courses have been designed to help you achieve the high standard of performance that we know you’re capable of - but only if you are an active participant, and devote attention to both the subject matter and the enhanced *strategies for learning* that your Gateway instructors will be helping you develop.

Remember that you want to be successful the first time through. You don’t want to waste time by repeating courses at the college level.

For many students this is even more important because of recent changes in the Federal student loan programs. In the new rules for making *satisfactory academic progress* – required to remain eligible for any of these loans or grants - repeating courses has a more negative impact than before.

Getting it right the first time is more important than ever now.

And the Gateway program is designed to help you make responsible decisions about your readiness to persist – or not – in these courses, and to move ahead with your college studies at a reasonable pace.

If you struggle in any of your coursework, your instructors - and the deans of the First-Year Students Office - are ready to provide guidance. Take advantage of that support to navigate through this first year of college.
Finally, a few words about the Core Curriculum.

It’s based on the learning goals that define a modern liberal arts and sciences education at a leading 21st century public research university. These are the crucial abilities and skills that are sought after by employers and graduate programs.

The Core learning goals define what you will be able to do upon completing the Core courses – solid foundational skills that you’ll put to work, and develop further, in the courses of your major and minor… and beyond.

Only a special, limited set of courses are in the Core Curriculum: they have been identified as having specific Core learning goals front and center in their design, and student learning outcomes are assessed using state-of-the-art methods.

As you progress beyond the Core, you’ll be all the more successful in your studies because of this strong emphasis on student learning, right at the heart of every course in the Core Curriculum.

It shouldn’t surprise you, now, to learn that almost every Gateway course is certified as satisfying some Core learning goals – in addition to all the benefits we’ve already mentioned.

The Gateway Program’s powerful focus on developing student learning strategies is a perfect match with the principles of the new Core Curriculum.

So, once again: congratulations on being part of the select group of students in a Gateway course in the School of Arts & Sciences. You’re on your way to the kind of college career you’re capable of achieving, and we’re committed to helping you.

Good luck in all your work this year – and throughout your studies at Rutgers!
Before we go, though…. a few useful pieces of information.

This series of videos on studying at the college level comes with strong recommendations from our faculty - it would be worth you time to review them:

**How to Get the Most Out of Studying: A Video Series -**
[http://www.samford.edu/how-to-study/default.aspx](http://www.samford.edu/how-to-study/default.aspx)

And take full advantage of the **First-Year Deans in the SAS Office of Academic Services**.

You’ll hear from them from time to time during the term, but active use of advising resources, especially in your first year, can make a big difference in your successful navigation through your college experience.

Don’t be shy about your questions!

- e-mail: [frosh@sas.rutgers.edu](mailto:frosh@sas.rutgers.edu)
- website: [http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/current-students/first-years](http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/current-students/first-years)
  (or see them on Twitter, Facebook, Blogger...)

**Office of Academic Services phone number** (to reach all advisors): **848-445-8888**

The main office is in the Busch Campus Center, but the First-Year Office has an active presence on all four campuses - in residence halls, commuter programs, Learning Communities and so on – and the other advising centers:

- **College Avenue Campus** - Milledoler Hall, Room 103
- **Cook/Douglass Campus** - College Hall, Room 104
- **Livingston Campus** - Lucy Stone Hall, Room A-216
Gateway at Rutgers – some references


