



Special Student Information Sheet

The Special Student option provides ALM degree candidates with the opportunity to enroll in a maximum of 2 pre-approved Harvard Graduate School of Arts and Sciences courses; all other course work for the degree must be completed through the Harvard Extension and Harvard Summer Schools. You can take one course per semester for one academic year or two courses in one semester. This option is only for courses not ordinarily offered at the Harvard Extension or Harvard Summer Schools. The deadlines for submitting the Special Student petition are listed online as well as the cost of tuition. The program will not accept courses toward a degree that are not preapproved.

In order to apply for Special Student status you must be an admitted ALM candidate who has completed a minimum of 16 credits toward your program at Harvard for a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher.

To begin the process, provide the answers to the following in an email to, sent to academic_advising@extension.harvard.edu. Please put "Special Student Application" in the subject line.

- Name
- Harvard ID Number
- ALM Field (i.e. English, Bioinformatics, Finance)
- Cumulative GPA
- Total Number of Extension School Credit Completed
- Employment status and number of hours worked per week
- Names of the two Harvard Extension School instructors who will be submitting letters of recommendation

You must also include a two page essay outlining the academic reasons for wanting to enroll as a Special Student and detailing how the course(s) will be of benefit to your academic and professional career. Be sure to include links to the GSAS course descriptions. Please attach it to this email as a PDF document. The deadlines are September 1 to enroll in the following spring term Harvard courses and February 1 for the following fall term courses.

Once received, you will be contacted by the ALM Advising Office to set up a meeting to discuss qualifications for admission and course selection and to request a recommendation letter. Please be aware that this is a formal interview and you should be prepared to make the case that you are a strong candidate for Special Student status. Approval is not guaranteed.

If your Special Student Petition is approved, this office will upload a letter of recommendation. The final decision on your application rests solely with the Special Student Office. The decision will be based on your overall academic history, previous coursework in the field, letters of recommendation, your application essay, and the letter of support from your program director.

Complete the Special Student online application for the Harvard University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at gsas.harvard.edu/programs-study/non-degree-programs. Visit their website for deadline dates.

Have two Extension School instructors upload their letters of recommendation to the online application form. These should be from faculty members who teach in the field(s) in which you propose to take courses.

Order an official Extension School transcript to be uploaded to the online form. In addition, you must upload official transcripts from your previous colleges or universities; contact each school directly.

Please note that once you are registered as a Special Student, you will need to provide the ALM Office with a transcript listing the courses in which you are registered and a transcript listing the courses with the final grades. Transcripts can be requested online from the FAS Registrar at registrar.fas.harvard.edu.

TAP eligible Harvard University employees do not go through the Special Student Office. Please contact your academic advisor for information on how to request permission to enroll in GSAS courses.