The Gen Ed Lottery: A Step-by-Step How-To

Step 1: Submit a petition for up to 3 Gen Ed courses you’d like to take.

a.) Add Gen Ed courses to your Crimson Cart.
b.) Click “Enroll/Validate/Delete.” A new screen will pop up displaying all courses; select your Gen Ed courses and click the “Validate” button. Once your courses are validated, a “Submit” button will appear in the Permissions column of your Crimson Cart.
c.) Click “Submit” to enter a petition to enroll in the course. After you click the button, you’ll still need to click through a few more screens. Once your petition is successfully submitted for a course, an orange clock icon will appear. That says that your petition is pending; once a decision is reached, your icon will update to reflect if your petition was approved or denied.
d.) NOTE: You don’t have to enter anything in the blank box that pops up when you submit a petition. It won’t improve your lottery chances, so feel free to click through the box.

Step 2: Enter the lottery.

Your first completed petition for a Gen Ed course tells my.harvard to put you in the group of students entering the Gen Ed enrollment process lottery. To move to the ranking part of the process, click “enter lottery.” Shortly, a lottery event banner will appear in my.harvard directly over your Crimson Cart. Please note that it can take up to 15 minutes for this “enter lottery” event box to appear in my.harvard.
Step 3: Add up to 3 courses to your lottery list.

You’re now in the lottery! Congrats! You’ll see all the Gen Ed courses with enrollment caps this term – not just the ones you’ve petitioned for. If a course has a plus sign next to it, that means you have successfully petitioned for it and may add it to your ranking list. Click the plus sign to move that course into your personalized ranking list. You may rank up to 3 courses in the lottery.

Step 4: Rank those courses!

Once you’ve added up to 3 courses to your personalized list and ranked them, click “submit.” Once your list is submitted, you can shuffle the order based on your preferences as much as you want – use the up and down arrows to move your choices up or down your list. Make sure to finalize your rankings by the lottery deadline listed in the course description. After that deadline passes, you can’t make any changes.

Step 5: Register for your chosen course(s).

Check my.harvard the afternoon after the lottery deadline to see which petitions have been approved and which have been denied. You’ll see a red X appear by courses you didn’t get into and a green check by courses in which you’re approved to enroll. Once you’re approved for a course, you may complete the registration process. Be sure to register by the course registration deadline – after that, you will forfeit your seat and it may be offered to someone else. Good luck!

NOTE: The red X will disappear after any update to your Crimson Cart (you validate it, you enroll in something, etc.), and it will be replaced by a "resubmit" option. This does not mean that you should resubmit for the lottery - it is just a function of the system. Therefore, if after the lottery has concluded (check for the update that the lottery is over on the term-specific Gen Ed page at https://gened.fas.harvard.edu/) you see anything other than a green check by your course in your Crimson Cart, you were not granted a seat in the course.