Intersession 2026
Proposal Guidelines

INTERSESSION PURPOSES

Intersession provides students the opportunity to:

- Engage in experiential learning opportunities
- Investigate questions of interest
- Explore new topics and disciplines
- Explore concepts in different ways
- Engage and build relationships with IMSA Faculty, Staff, Alumni, guests, and partners
- Engage in intensive study with limited distractions
- Receive additional support in academic areas of need

INTERSESSION DATES

Intersession 2026 will be held between **Monday, January 5th and Friday, January 16th**. Teaching days will be Tuesday-Friday 5th-9th and Monday 12th-Thursday 15th. Monday 5th and Friday 16th will be reserved for whole-community opening and closing events and celebrations respectively.

INTERSESSION MODALITIES

Course proposals will be accepted in the following categories:

- **Core** courses are structured; they take a deep dive into a field of inquiry; and they have learning outcomes that are subject to a simple evaluation (pass/fail). They run daily, Tuesday through Friday in Week One, and Monday through Thursday in Week Two. Each Core course may last for one week or two, and they may run from 9:00 AM until 12:30 PM, or from 9:00 AM until 4:00 PM (with lunch being held between 12:30 PM and 1:30 PM).
- **Explore** courses are free-flowing, fun, and out-of-the-box; they are not necessarily connected to an academic subject area; and they are not subject to learning outcomes or

evaluation. They run daily, Tuesday through Friday in Week One, and Monday through Thursday in Week Two. Explore courses run from 1:30 PM until 4:00 PM.

- **Core** and **Explore** courses are **both** held onsite at IMSA, and **both** may involve local travel. **Neither** may be held remotely.
- **Lecture Series:** Lectures will be held in-person on IMSA's campus in Aurora from 1:00 PM until 4:00 PM on Monday, January 5th. The Lectures will be delivered to larger audiences, and will be primarily speaker-focused, like a TED Talk.
- **Expo**: An Expo will be held on Friday, January 16th, from 1:00pm until 4:00pm. During this time, students will present outcomes from their Core programs to their peers, faculty, and staff.

Note: Travel Study proposals are closed for 2026. A Call for Proposals for Travel Study programs during the 2026-2027 academic year will go out during the Spring 2026 semester.

RECOMMENDATIONS

IMSA Faculty, Staff, Alumni, families, and partners are encouraged to recommend external facilitators and speakers for Intersession 2026. The Intersession Committee will reach out to recommended individuals / groups.

INTERSESSION TIMES / DURATIONS

Proposals should select the course option that is most appropriate for their content and goals. Either way, course facilitators will be expected to engage and monitor students for the course's duration. For monitoring, attendance will be taken at the start of each session and reported to the attendance office. Even if students are allowed time to work / collaborate, it must be in a proctored environment with the facilitator(s). (ie: Facilitators cannot release students to go back to the Halls to work independently.)

All students must select either one full-day Core course, OR one morning Core course PLUS an Explore course, each week. (Click here for a bird's-eye-view timetable.)

Core
Half-day, 9:00 AM - 12:30 PM; or full-day, 9:00 AM - 12:30 PM plus 1:30 PM - 4:00 PM; Core courses may be one week or two

Lunch
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM

Explore
1:30 PM - 4:00 PM; Explore courses are one week only

INTERSESSION EXPO

All proposals for Core courses are required to participate in the Intersession Expo on Friday, January 16th, between 1:00pm and 4:00pm. The Expo is an opportunity for the IMSA community to experience the outcomes of Intersession.

Each Core course proposal must identify a tentative plan for what could be shared at the Expo. Each course will have a table at the Expo, or a space/classroom to set up and showcase their outcomes. Students and facilitators are expected to spend at least some time viewing other courses' displays. A rotation system will be used to ensure that all students have the opportunity to present their own work and to view the work of others.

Examples of what may be showcased include, but are not limited to:

- Research poster(s)
- Art exhibit
- Filmed performances (music, dance, sketch comedy, etc.)
- Video / film screening showing
- Filmed presentations
- Food samples
- Micro-experiences (ie: allowing those outside the course to participate in a small sample of what the enrolled students completed)

PROPOSAL DEADLINE & ACCEPTANCE NOTIFICATION

Proposals are due no later than **Friday, September 19th, 2025** at 11:59 PM. Primary Facilitators will be notified of their proposal's status by no later than 11:59 PM on Friday, October 3rd, 2025.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

All students must be on-site and engaged in Intersession from 9:00 AM until 4:00 PM each day. They may select either one full-day Core course, OR one morning Core course PLUS an Explore course, per week. Travel Study and Grade Recovery both count as Core courses. All students who are on-site at IMSA are expected to attend the Lecture Series and the Expo.

STUDENT FEES & SUPPORT

Intersession proposals may have associated costs. These will differ greatly depending on the modality and proposal. For example, one Core course may have a $10 fee per student to cover supplies, while another may need to cover the cost of local transportation, tickets, and so on.

IMSA will provide some financial support to Tier 1 and Tier 2 students, as needed, to allow for equitable access to our programs.

INTERSESSION FACILITATOR TRAVEL, LODGING, & HONORARIUMS

IMSA does not provide funding for external facilitators (alumni, partners, guests) for travel and lodging, nor does IMSA provide honorariums for its Intersession facilitators.

WHO CAN SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

Intersession proposals are invited from current and alumni IMSA Faculty and staff; current and former IMSA Board members; current and alumni parents; alumni students; and other professional/academic IMSA partners. Current IMSA students may participate as Additional Facilitators, but not as Primary Facilitators submitting the proposal.

Individuals are welcome to submit multiple proposals, and/or be involved in multiple proposals. If the proposals are accepted, attempts will be made to schedule the programs without overlap.

No more than two (2) current IMSA Faculty / Staff can be listed as a Primary or Additional Sponsors on a single proposal.

INTERSESSION CORE COURSE PROPOSAL FORM

Course Title
Provide a title for your course that is 10 words or fewer. The title should be descriptive and align with the course's content. This title will be used for the Intersession catalog, unless the Intersession Committee accepts the proposal and determines an edited title is necessary.

Course Catalog Description
Provide a description of your course in 150 words or fewer. The description should accurately reflect the course's content, scope, and outcomes. It should also aim to provoke interest among current students. The description will be used for the Intersession catalog, unless the Intersession Committee accepts the proposal and determines an edited description is necessary.

Student Prerequisites
Identify any specific prerequisites students would need to meet in order to enroll in this particular course. Prerequisites may include prior course work, content knowledge, or club/org involvement that are foundational to each student's ability to participate and learn in the course.

Outcomes Assessment
Describe in detail the intended student learning outcomes of the course, and how the course's facilitator(s) intend to assess the learning outcomes. This information will be used by the Intersession Committee to evaluate and select the proposals; this information will also be used to assess graduation credit approval (if applicable). The Outcomes Assessment will not be published directly in the Intersession catalog.

Intersession Expo
Describe your tentative plan for what your students / course will share as part of the Intersession Expo.

Course Times / Durations
Select whether your Core Course will run from 9:00 AM until 12:30 PM or from 9:00 AM until 4:00 PM, and whether it will be one week or two.

Multiple Sections
A one-week Core course can run once in both Intersession weeks with two different groups of students. Offering multiple sections is optional, and multiple sections will be contingent upon student requests and scheduling.

Enrollment Request
Session enrollments will be capped at 29. If you would like to request a higher or lower enrollment cap, provide a target enrollment number and your rationale to support the adjusted cap. Your request will be evaluated by the Intersession Committee. Note that the Intersession Committee can determine to accept your proposal without the request adjustment to the enrollment cap. Courses may not be offered if they enroll fewer than 10 students, unless there is an approved enrollment request for a cap lower than 10.

Campus Space Needs
Identify the type of on-campus space that will be most appropriate for your course's needs. Multiple selections can be made if the facilitators are comfortable adapting their program to whatever space is assigned.

Student Resources (if applicable)
Will the students require any resources / supplies that would need to be purchased or provided in advance? If yes, identify the specific resources. Please do not list any resources that are free or can be shared remotely, like hyperlinks to videos or websites.

Facilitator Resources (if applicable)
Will the facilitator require any resources / supplies that would need to be purchased or provided in advance? If yes, identify the specific resources. Please do not list any resources that are free or can be shared remotely, like hyperlinks to videos or websites.

Program Fee Estimation (if applicable)
Any materials or supplies that are required for the course, for both the students and facilitators, that are not being paid for or provided by the facilitators must be funded through a program fee that will be paid by the students (families) that are enrolled. **Very important: your program fee estimation should be high!** For each step below, estimate at least 15% above what you think may be necessary, and round to the next whole dollar. IMSA and/or students will not cover excess beyond the initial program fee. To calculate your program fee:

1. Estimate the per student cost of student materials. This may be per individual materials (ie: every student needs a $10 book). For bulk materials, create your estimate based on enough materials for the enrollment maximum (29 students) but paid for by the enrollment minimum (10 students). (ex: A painting Core course needs paint. Enough paint to accommodate all of the students for the 29 enrollment max will cost $350. The enrollment minimum is 10. $350 divided by 10 is $35. An extra 15% and rounding to the whole dollar brings the per student cost to $41.)
2. Estimate the facilitator(s) cost of materials. This may be per item costs (ie: need a book for $10). The facilitator materials may be dependent upon the total number of students; in this case, follow the same bulk material estimation as the student materials.
3. Calculate the estimated program fee.
    a. Take your facilitator costs estimate and divide that by your enrollment minimum, rounding up to the whole dollar. (ex: facilitator costs are $50. The enrollment minimum is 10. That is $5 per student.)
    b. Add the distributed facilitator cost to the estimated per student costs. (ex: In the previous example, we determined the per student facilitator cost would be $5. If the estimate for per student cost of materials is $41, we would add $5 to $41.)
    c. Your estimated program fee is the distributed facilitator cost + per student costs. (ex: $5 + $41 = $46/student program fee)

Additional Notes, Comments, Requests
If there is any additional information you would like the Intersession Committee to know about while considering your proposal that does not fit into any of the other questions on the proposal form, please note it here.

Primary Facilitator Name, Email, Phone Number
The primary facilitator is the person who is submitting the proposal and will act as the primary contact and course facilitator. Provide your full name, your email (IMSA email, if applicable), and best phone number to reach you.

Primary Facilitator Relationship to IMSA
Identify the primary facilitator's relationship to IMSA among the available choices. The primary facilitator may not be a current IMSA student, though current students may serve as additional facilitators in collaboration with the primary facilitator.

> **IMPORTANT NOTE** for any Primary Facilitators who are **NOT** current IMSA employees: All Intersession proposals that are accepted and included in the program will need to have a current IMSA employee, staff or Faculty, as a Primary or Additional Facilitator. For any non-employees (parents, alumni, etc.), you may submit a proposal as a Primary Facilitator and either: A) Connect with a current employee to serve as an Additional Facilitator prior to submitting the proposal, or B) Submit the proposal and IMSA will help identify an Additional Facilitator if your proposal is accepted.

Primary Facilitator Qualifications
The primary facilitator should describe their qualifications that provide them the experience and/or knowledge to facilitate a course on the proposed topic. Qualifications may include academic degrees, professional experience, and personal experience. If credit is being proposed in the "Graduation Credit Request" section, the primary facilitator should make sure to articulate degree credentials here.

Additional Facilitator 1 & Additional Facilitator 2
If the course will include one or two additional facilitators, please complete these sections. Do note that current IMSA students may serve as an additional facilitator in collaboration with a primary facilitator; in this case, like with the primary facilitator, the student must have the requisite qualifications to assist in the facilitation of the course.

Additional Notes for Core Courses Involving Local Travel

Travel Destination(s)
Identify the off-campus location(s) that will be visited by the group as part of the course. Be specific. For example, do not list general destinations (ie: Chicago) but the location(s) to be visited (ie: Field Museum and Shedd Aquarium).

Travel Date(s)
Identify the date(s) that you intend to be off-campus. Be as specific as possible. If you have flexibility, please note that and provide a brief explanation. (ex: Flexible. The museum will be open Monday-Friday each week of Intersession, and we can travel on any one of those dates.)

Travel Destination Transportation
Identify how you plan to get students to your travel destination(s).

- IMSA Vehicles: **Please note that the course's facilitators are responsible for driving the vehicles or for finding a Faculty/staff member to drive.** IMSA's Principal's Office will not assign drivers for Intersession.
- External Transport: If external transport (bus company, etc.) is required, the Principal's Office will help book the transportation. However, the cost must be built into the student fees. Please note that bus rental can be expensive, and multiple days of rental can be costly for students unless the course secures its max enrollment.
- Other: If there is another way you intend to get students to the location, please describe how you intend to travel.

INTERSESSION EXPLORE COURSE PROPOSAL FORM

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Student Prerequisites & Assessment
Explore courses are not required to have specific student prerequisites or to describe the intended student learning outcomes of the course.

Intersession Expos
Explore courses are not included in the Intersession Expos.

Multiple Sections
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