



Student Academic Support Services Center
Dartmouth College
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Dear Parents, Guardians, and Families of the Class of 2026:

We enjoyed welcoming your students back for their continued journey through their Dartmouth experience. Parents and families play a critical role in students' Dartmouth journeys, and we value our partnership with you. We look forward to working together as we help students grow with purpose and help them define and develop their passions for their academic studies.

With Dartmouth's fast-paced schedule of ten-week terms, it is easy for students to merely check boxes (e.g., D-Plan? Major? Research? Internship? Career?). However, we encourage your students to not just be box-checkers but to continue to explore the Dartmouth curriculum. Second-year students are eligible to declare their major during their fifth term in residence, which for many will be the winter term of 2024. We know that some students are confident about their major choice and may not require much direction. Others may be more a bit more undecided, and we encourage them to access the many resources available to assist them in making the most informed decision about their potential major.

At Dartmouth, the major course of study offers depth in an academic area of interest, requiring students to learn and think more critically and deeply about their chosen subject. The distributive and world culture requirements provide the breadth in our curriculum, which complements the major. We encourage students to choose an area of major study by exploring the subjects that are of highest interest and deepest value to them: Which courses do they find meaningful or purposeful? What are their strengths, passions, and areas of growth? What are their own personal learning objectives?

As their undergraduate deans, we remind students that learning is about growth. We recognize their passions may change over time based on their own self reflections through their co-curricular experiences or through reflexive dialog after connecting with us, their faculty, other professional staff and mentors, or even alumni. Dartmouth's liberal arts curriculum should inspire your students to engage in a process of active, life-long learning.

In this second year of learning, students are encouraged to expand their academic networks while also beginning to develop professional ones. To this end, we invite students to have conversations with campus professionals (including us, Center for Professional Development career coaches, Health Professions Program advisors), professors, their supporters, peers, and alumni. By accessing all of these valuable Dartmouth resources, students can best realize their most authentic and purposeful academic experience.

Please know that we are humbled by the opportunity to partner with the Class of 2026 on their continued journey at the College. You can expect that throughout the year, students will receive regular email communication from us. Some of this communication will be an invitation to meet with us, while others might share academic deadlines; opportunities for research, grant, scholarship or leave term options; co-curricular events; and other important information. We invite you to visit our website for more information.

Sincerely,

Katlyn McPherson Loren Bowley Dow
Assistant Deans of Undergraduate Students, Class of 2026