



Student Academic Support Services Center
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Dear Parents, Guardians, and Families of the Class of 2021:

The second year is upon us! We have enjoyed welcoming your students back for their continued journey through their Dartmouth experience. As participants in their journey, we value your role and our partnership with you. We also look forward to working together as we help students grow with purpose as well as 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 can declare their major during their fifth term in residence. Some students are more certain than others of their major choice. We encourage undecided students to work with the many resources available to make this initial decision about their major, knowing that their declaration can also be adjusted or even completely revised over the next few terms.
- 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. Our curriculum of distributive requirements provides breadth, while the major provides depth. We encourage students to choose an area of major study by exploring what interests and matters to them most: What courses do they find meaningful or purposeful? What are their strengths, passions, and challenges?
- There is no "wrong" major choice or one that is too limiting for students. Students are allowed to modify a major as they learn more, refine their interests, and connect with faculty. As their undergraduate deans, we remind students that learning is about evolving and changing; their passions may change over time based on their reflections and discussions with us, their faculty, and alumni, and through co-curricular experiences. We will urge your student to think of learning as a process that continues throughout their life; indeed, this is one of the benefits of Dartmouth's liberal arts curriculum.
- We encourage students to become responsible individuals who are actively engaged with their learning. A theory called "self-determination" highlights a sense of independence, competence, and connectedness as among the most important needs of students during the college years. These three areas provide a foundation to our work as we assist and support our students' academic success and personal development. An open line of communication and exchange of ideas between students; their professors; their parents, guardians, and families; and undergraduate deans is most helpful in developing these three areas. Students are encouraged to initiate these conversations and respond to our invitations to engage in dialogue. It is imperative that they demonstrate initiative in developing an advising network by engaging with all the College's resources to ensure a variety of perspectives.

It is with immense pleasure that we partner with the Class of 2021 on their continued success at Dartmouth. Throughout the year, students will receive frequent emails from us. Some of these emails will invite them to meet with us, while others will share academic deadlines; opportunities for research, grant, scholarship or leave term options; co-curricular events; and other important information. We look forward to a sustained partnership of growth and excellence with each student. Please feel free to visit our website for more information: <https://students.dartmouth.edu/undergraduate-deans/>.

Sincerely,
Teoby Gomez
Larissa Hopkins