

DARTMOUTH

Undergraduate Deans Office

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Dear Parents and Supporters of the Class of 2026:

Greetings from Hanover! Welcome to our community. The purpose of this letter is to introduce our office and to enlist your help in preparing your student for the opportunities and decisions that lie ahead.

The [Undergraduate Deans Office](#) (UDO) serves as a key resource for academic, social, and personal advising. The initiatives, programs, personal advising, and communication of the UDO are all directed toward anchoring every student in the intellectual life of the College, supporting meaningful and inclusive interaction across difference, and maximizing each student's potential. We provide information about the College and its procedures and serve as a source of encouragement and guidance for students as they explore all that Dartmouth has to offer. The UDO collaborates closely with other offices, including the [First-Generation Office](#), [Academic Skills Center](#), [Student Accessibility Services](#), and [Office of Pluralism and Leadership](#) (OPAL), to provide a network of support for undergraduate students.

We are aware that students are not the only ones experiencing a significant change. Perhaps the most difficult adjustment for you is watching your student seek out or display an independent set of values and behaviors. You will not be able to regulate what they eat, when they sleep, which classes they attend, and how they study or recreate. For many students, learning to make these decisions independently is a significant part of the growth they will experience over the next year. We appreciate and know first-hand how exhilarating and challenging this transition can be for students, as well as for those who care about them. Our expectation is that each student will explore new personal and intellectual interests, engage fully as a scholar and community member, and seek to excel in all their endeavors. Undoubtedly, there will be some bumps along the way, but please know that they are not alone in this journey. We have a community of professionals who care deeply about your student's success and wellness and who work tirelessly to help each student realize their potential. If you are concerned about what you are hearing from your student regarding academic or personal challenges, including issues related to transition to college and their well-being, please reaffirm your love and concern and encourage them to seek advising and support from staff and student leaders.

It is our belief that students must demonstrate the same critical thinking in *all* aspects of their Dartmouth lives that they utilize in their academic lives. They must think for themselves and make choices that align with their values as an emerging adult who will be asked to lead in a complex and changing world. In our advising, we affirm education as a process of discovery, challenge, and perseverance. Students are strongly encouraged and empowered to take increasing responsibility for their experience, while engaging in critical reflection and synthesis.

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An additional key point of transition for parents and guardians is access to their student's information. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](#)) recognizes students in higher education as adults regardless of age. Therefore, we will require a student's permission to release any information to their parents or guardians.

The primary relationship will be between our office and your student. As mentioned above, the College considers your student to be an adult who is ready to assume responsibility for their own affairs; consequently, the relationship between our office and your student is considered confidential. We usually find that students are willing to share information with families, and the negotiation that leads to this transparency can often be quite rewarding. Please do not hesitate to broach the subject with your student.

Seeing your student off to college is a major milestone. All of us—new students, families, and undergraduate deans—possess our share of excitement and apprehension. Be aware that the Undergraduate Deans Office can provide the answers and support that students may need for a myriad of questions or concerns. We expect that you will receive a fair amount of phone calls, texts, and emails from your student this fall, and some may be in the form of a lament of one kind or another. When your student seems at a loss as to what to do, please encourage them to speak with their undergraduate dean or to stop by our office; it is our job and our pleasure not just to address the problems and concerns of students, but also to facilitate their achievements and growth.

Our phone number is (603) 646-2243; we are available from 8 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. For emergency situations, the Department of Safety and Security is available 24 hours per day, seven days a week. Their responsibility, like ours, is to assist students. Their phone number is (603) 646-4000.

The Class of 2026 is our 253rd entering class. Dartmouth continues to benefit from each unique individual who steps across the threshold. May the coming year be one of growth and understanding for us all.

On behalf of the entire staff of the Undergraduate Deans Office, we wish you and your family well.

Regards,

Class of 2026 Undergraduate Deans
Tawana Cabezas, Natalie Hoyt, and Katelyn McPherson