



SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
Assistant Dean of Student Affairs
Dean of Student Affairs Office

February 2019

Dear Parents and Families,

I hope this finds you well. I am the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs for the Schools of Arts and Sciences and Engineering at Tufts, and part of my role is to support our sophomore students. As a “double Jumbo” myself, I feel a deep sense of excitement whenever I get to work with current students and help them find their place, discover their passion, or figure out what their next steps might be after college. Sophomore year can be both exciting and overwhelming for many students. Some feel like they’ve already found their place; others feel like they might still be searching. Either experience is perfectly okay and, in fact, feeling a little bit of both is often a vital part of sophomore year. Whether you’re the parent or family member of a current sophomore or your student is busy enjoying another part of their time at college, understanding the pivot point that is the second year of a student’s undergraduate education can be a great way to begin identifying the particular resources and opportunities your Jumbo might use to get the very most out of their entire Tufts experience.

Sophomore year is full of key decisions for most students. Do they stick with the co-curriculars they were engaged in during their first year, or should they look to new activities outside the classroom? Should they study abroad and, if so, where? Should your sophomore find a summer internship, or should they do research? And, for Liberal Arts BA/BS students, what major should they declare? (The deadline for that is coming up on March 1!) As you think about how to support your student in their second year, I want to highlight a couple of themes and identify a few resources for both you and your student to consider:

1. Internships

Our [Career Center](#) has a number of resources geared towards sophomore students thinking about applying for [internships](#). They offer [resume workshops](#), [drop-in hours](#) for career advising, and [one-on-one appointments](#) -- all with an eye to helping students identify interests, build skills, and find internships and fellowships. Many sophomores find internships to be hugely informative and a key part of both their major exploration in college and career trajectory after graduation. Ask your

student if they have an interest in an internship or fellowship for this summer, and if they've connected with the Career Center to find out what opportunities might be available.

2. Study Abroad

Many students in their sophomore spring are trying to decide whether or not a study abroad experience is right for them. Students often choose their junior year to study abroad, either for one semester or a full year. At Tufts, we have a number of different options to study abroad with [Tufts Programs](#), and students can also receive support finding approved [Non-Tufts Programs](#). As someone who studied abroad myself while an undergraduate at Tufts, I can promise that taking a semester or year away is a truly transformative experience. While the application deadline for the 2019-2020 Tufts Programs Abroad has just past, it's never too late to start a conversation with your student about whether this experience might be right for them. And for those of you with sophomores planning to study abroad next year, it's never too early to ask them what they're hoping to get from their time away.

3. Major Declaration

Sophomore year is when Liberal Arts BA/BS students decide on and declare a major. One great question for you to ask your student is what excites them most academically, and how have their academic interests evolved over the past year? Our [Student Success Advisors](#) are here to assist all first- and second-year students with major declaration. They are happy to meet with both Liberal Arts and Engineering students and have that conversation. Students can also attend Majors Week (February 25 – March 1) to help them explore majors and find a Major Advisor. Engineering students declare their major in their first year, but sophomore year can still be a great time for them to delve deeper into their chosen discipline. The Student Success Advisors can help with that process as well.

Lastly, we celebrate all of our sophomore students with a [Sophomore Halfway There](#) event each year. This year, we're holding it on March 27 at 4 p.m. in Alumnae Lounge. It's a great opportunity for sophomores to connect with each other, reflect on their time in college thus far, and have a little fun! Please encourage your sophomore to attend. And please also let them know that they can be in contact with me at any point if I can connect them with resources or help them explore opportunities at Tufts.

Sincerely,

Nandi Bynoe
Assistant Dean of Student Affairs