

Academics

As an international student you should know that guiding your academics will be challenging as you may not have the freedom to choose a major or classes at the free will like domestic students. There is much more you will have to consider, however, you have the resources to make the right decisions! Just ask when you need advice or help!

First Year

Fall

- It is important to talk to your academic advisor as they can help guide you or they can help contact those who will be better equipped to help you. Do not feel shy to initiate a conversation with an advisor or a professor, they are always willing to help and advise.
- What is great about being in a liberal arts is that it gives you the freedom and flexibility to try other classes that are outside of your major.
 - Learn what General Education requirements are (GEs). This is very important to know what these are, what field a GE can be in. You can talk to upperclassmen, professors, or mostly all centers know what these are.

Interim

- This is a good opportunity to try out a different class. Interim holds fun and interesting classes that you as first years can explore. (knock off a GE)
- Start planning for Spring. Look at majors or fields of study. Interim is a good starting point for doing your research as you have time while just doing one class.
- If you know what field you want to go in this would be a good point to start a four year academic plan.

Spring

- Have a general idea of your major or field where you would like to study in e.g. STEM, Humanities, Arts to name a few. Look at your strengths and weaknesses and align them with a field. As an international student you should consider your passion but be realistic about your major/s. Different things affect our choices, where we come from, parents expectations, where we want to work in the future. There is much more pressure to pick the right major as an international student. If you start to think about this early on it makes it easier later on knowing that you are confident in your choice.
- If you know an area where you might want to go and take core classes. These will help in having the basics covered. E.g. an introduction class, math or statistics class. Just a class or classes that can create a foundation for your major. (if you want to do summer research or an internship these classes might help as well)
- Think about studying abroad in the near future. Reach out to the International and Off campus Studies office. Just to see what is offered.

Sophomore Year

Fall

- By now you should know what field you would like to go into. You still have time to change your major, however, having a solid foundation by this time will make it easier for you later on.
- This is the time you should either be taking more major classes or starting to take major classes. Sophomores are able to take core classes, these classes are classes that are required to be taken

before you can take any 300 level classes. By taking these classes you will be able to keep on track with your major without overloading classes on one major.

- Continue to take GEs. You should spread out your GEs. With your major and what fits in your schedule. Try and take GE classes that interest you as they will make the classes more fun.
- Connect with professors, visit office hours. You should always be doing this.

Interim

- Once again interim can be used to take a GE or a class that you want to just solely focus on or to take a different type of class. You are not a major that has lab classes, a lab class, (GE-SED) would be great to take.
- By now you should know what major/majors you want to take because in spring you will be declaring your major and after that it becomes difficult to change majors.
- Meet with your advisor to come up with a college plan.
- Want to study abroad. Interim is a great opportunity to do so!

Spring

- Major Declaration day!- This is the day that all Sophomore students declare their majors. You can still change your major later on if you are able to finish it with the time left at college.
- Take this semester to make/look at your four year plan and make adjustments. Think if you want to study abroad. Will it fit in your schedule? Does any program interest you? When do you want to go in your junior year (Fall, Interim, Spring)?
- Once again take core classes that you would need to take. If you have done so already then you may be able to take 300 level classes that would require core classes.
- Always keep in contact with your professors and academic advisors.
- Summer sessions are a way to do more classes if you need to.

Junior Year

Fall

- Junior year is a tricky year. You are not new or relatively new and may be expected to have most of your academic life sorted out. However, that is not always the case. You Still need to check in with your academic advisor and take a look at your degree path, to work out what GEs you need next and classes.
- By now you should have your major/s and/or concentrations well. You should be working on finishing off your 200 levels and core classes either now or by spring. Some of you who have done this can take 300 level classes.
- You may have the skills now to take on an independent study/research which can be done with a professor. This will give you skills and credit. Different majors have different requirements for independent studies so ask your professor or advisor for more information. This is where networking with professors comes in handy as it is great to work with professors that you have a close relationship with.
- Going abroad is a great time in your junior year.

Interim

- If you have been taking the full amount of classes through to Junior year Interim you are able to have a free interim or a semester with just three courses. Thus, you have several options; you could go home if you would like, do an academic internship, take a class that is low stress.

- Going abroad is a great time in your junior year.
- You should consider by now having most of your GEs done as you can focus on major classes. A good balance between major classes and GE classes is great, however, each person is different.
- Start to think about graduate school and taking the GREs if you want to continue to study in the States.

Spring

- Going abroad is a great time in your junior year.
- Wrap up your core classes and 200 level classes so that you are able to take the 300 level classes in senior year.
- Apply for internships and once you get one start on CPT and Piper Center funding as soon as you have decided to take on an internship. This will guarantee you starting your internship on time.
- Do you want to do graduate school in the US? Then start looking at Universities.
- If you need a capstone project then it is advised that you speak to a professor in that department, your advisor and the Piper Center to see what that would look like and when you should be doing it.

Senior Year

Fall

- By now everything should be calm academically speaking. You should have your major/s down and concentrations.
- In your senior year fall most of you will either be starting your first 300 level class or taking your last one.
- If you have not already done so, your capstone should be in the works of being completed.
- If you are thinking about graduate school then preparing for the GREs and taking them in the fall would be a good idea.

Interim

- The use of interim in your senior year is great, if you are on track with your major, have or plan to have all your GEs by the time you graduate and all your credits then interim can be a time to research. By research, when you can do it, take a class that you like and in the meantime look up universities, job opportunities and more.
- It is also a good time to take a GE that you could not get before or a class for your major.

Spring

- You should be taking or have taken your last 300 level course and should be doing your last GEs.

Tips and Resources

- **CAAS- The Center for Advising and Academic Support**
 - This is a great resource if you need help getting organized for a specific class or classes in general.
 - If you need help such as a tutor please use this resource as there are tutors ready to be used. Do not feel shy asking for help! It is what they are there for.
- **DAC-Disability and Access Center**
 - This service works with CAAS in helping students who may need extra help to succeed while at St. Olaf. They have resources such as a note taker for a class that you may be in.

- You can get extra time for assignments, tests and exams. Each person is different and DAC will adapt the classroom to help accommodate you.
- **The Writing Desk**
 - This resource is a great tool to help students who are struggling to write an essay. They need help developing ideas, themes and organizing their essays.
 - Writing tutors are designed to help students in these areas as they are trained in to help. Each tutor is specialized in a different field.
- **DISCO-Digital Scholarship Center**
 - Many people under-utilize this department. It is a great department if you want to gain some extra skills in a tech world. They can help with class projects, web design, video and audio recording and editing and much more.