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LIVING THE OPEN CURRICULUM, AND ADVISING STUDENTS AS THEY NAVIGATE IT

OPEN CURRICULUM 101
Brown’s “New Curriculum” was adopted by the faculty in 1969, after a year of collaborative study and debate — led by approximately 80 students and 15 faculty — about the need for educational reform. The key components remain in place to this day: no distribution requirements across traditional fields of knowledge, a simplified grading system without grade point averages and ranking, the option to take a course without a letter grade (for Satisfactory/No Credit) and inviting students to “concentrate” rather than “major” in broad, often interdisciplinary fields of study. Additionally, the faculty institutionalized the opportunity for students to design their own independent concentrations and independent studies for academic credit.

LIBERAL LEARNING GOALS AND CORE COMPETENCIES
Despite the freedom students have to focus their studies narrowly, our enrollment data reveal that the majority of Brown undergraduates distribute their courses across the curriculum; year after year, they actively choose to pursue Brown’s Liberal Learning Goals.

As students study areas broadly across the disciplines, and deeply within a selected concentration, they become competent in a group of academic skills that enable them to examine knowledge critically, produce scholarship of their own, and use these transferable skills as they set out on a career pathway and connect learning to life outside the classroom. These core competencies — reading, public speaking, critical reading, data analysis, problem solving and research — are skills students practice and hone as part of coursework, research and other co-curricular opportunities. The College provides students with an array of programs and opportunities to practice these skills, and resources to support the development of them through the Learning Collaborative.

YOUR ROLE AS AN ADVISOR: TEACHING STUDENTS HOW TO BECOME ARCHITECTS OF THEIR EDUCATION
Within Brown’s Open Curriculum today, students choose between over 80 concentration programs and from hundreds of courses. Students have the opportunity to study abroad or take a semester off, engage in research within or outside of their concentration, and take advantage of summer programs and internships across the globe. The curriculum ensures great freedom in directing the course of their education, which means that students often feel both excited and overwhelmed by the range of these choices.
The process of making these choices will require that students develop a capacity for ongoing reflection about their learning process, build a community of advisors, and adopt a “growth mindset” that encourages an openness to people, ideas and experiences that may be entirely new. With your support in cultivating such openness, students begin to learn how to make the most of the freedom they have and to chart a meaningful intellectual journey, not just during the first semester but throughout their undergraduate career. Indeed, many students will be charting new academic territory, and many will face unexpected challenges as they work to determine the best path for them.

Becoming an architect of their own education can feel daunting, especially because most incoming students were schooled in a highly structured environment. They will begin to ponder life after college, and likely encounter tests to their assumptions and goals. Additionally, given the current diversity of the student body — which includes students from foreign countries, those who are the first in their family to attend college and students in the process of exploring aspects of their identity — it is essential that we provide a strong advising system that supports a variety of needs. Your role as one of their first academic advisors is to take an interest in your advisees’ current academic plans; listen to their preferences and guide them in making their choices about courses and other academic decisions; see possibilities they have not yet considered; refer them to other resources; and encourage them to begin building a team of support.

The 1stYear@Brown online course gives incoming students a chance to think critically about Brown’s philosophy of education, introduces them to how to build an advising network and provides a space for reflection, as they prepare to begin college and join the Brown community. As students participate in the course and review the other advising materials they receive over the summer, we suggest that they consider these questions about their academic interests, which will help them as they begin to introduce themselves to you and their other advisors:

- What are you particularly curious about, and how do you want to build on that curiosity?
- What are some of the hopes, values and goals guiding your choices for what you study during the first year and beyond?

Later in this handbook, you will see references to various online tools that will help you as an advisor, a schedule of meetings in the first and sophomore years and topics to discuss in these meetings. Experienced advisors will tell you that building a rapport with your advisees takes time. As a baseline, the list of scheduled meetings will ensure that your advisees have the fundamentals they need. Providing your students with your office hours and a chance to email or meet with you for impromptu questions or concerns can help further enhance the relationship you develop with them.

**Advising in the First Year**

To ensure that students have the guidance and support they need to make informed choices, the University assigns each first-year student two advising partners: an academic advisor who is a Brown faculty member or administrator and a Meiklejohn peer advisor. As an academic advisor, you have the ability to provide a broad institutional perspective while informing, encouraging and challenging your students. The Meiklejohn peer advisor provides a student perspective on the ins and outs of course registration, prerequisites and the like.

**Advising in the Second Year**

At the end of their first year, students are encouraged to stay with their first-year advisors so that they can benefit from the continuity of a two-year advising relationship. Most do this, although some students choose a different faculty member or administrator for their sophomore year. The efforts of sophomore advisors are augmented by Randall advisors and sophomore deans in the College. These advising resources constitute the foundation of sophomore advising at Brown and help students navigate the critical second year.
Your Meiklejohn's Responsibilities

Meiklejohn peer advisors are sophomores, juniors and seniors who can help you and your first-year students navigate the Brown curriculum. Meiklejohns undergo comprehensive training on advising principles, the Brown curriculum and student services on campus. They also attend group advising meetings during Orientation and throughout the year. You and your Meiklejohn peer advisor — together with your first-year students — form the foundation of the advising partnership at Brown, a collaboration of many individuals and offices aimed at building a responsive, individual curriculum for each undergraduate student.

The advantage of this approach is that advisees can ask a single question and receive an immediate answer from two experienced individuals. Such an exchange frequently leads to spirited conversation and sets the tone for a cooperative approach throughout the year. Meiklejohns provide a valuable student perspective on course selection and may have knowledge of curricular areas unfamiliar to you. You should make sure they share their experiences. Remember, too, that you are a mentor to your Meiklejohn, who is gaining valuable leadership experience from working as a partner with you.

During the year, Meiklejohns can track down advisees who are reluctant to make or keep an appointment with an academic advisor. Meiklejohns can also help set up social interactions with advisees, such as lunch or a study break. Don't forget: You must be present at such in-person events if you anticipate any cost being incurred and you wish to be reimbursed by the College. For information on setting up such an event, please call x3-2315.

Why Meiklejohn?

Brown’s academic peer advisors are named for Alexander Meiklejohn, who was professor of philosophy and dean of the college at Brown before becoming the first non-clergyman to be named president of Amherst College in 1912. His radical changes to Amherst’s curriculum led to his being fired in 1923. He then moved to the University of Wisconsin, where he created an experimental college at which students studied only two subjects during their first two years: fifth-century Athens and modern America. Once again, conflicts with faculty led to his dismissal. He went on to become a founder of the American Civil Liberties Union, president of the American Philosophical Association and an inspiration for some of the student reform movements of the 1960s.

Meiklejohn’s championing of free speech and self-government applies directly to the practice of peer advising at Brown. Meiklejohns embody Brown’s commitment to student-centered and student-directed learning. As students who work to strengthen the University community’s collective knowledge of Brown’s Open Curriculum, Meiklejohn peer advisors fulfill the primary intellectual and civic duty of Brown students.

Your Advisees’ Responsibilities

As the primary architects of their education, students at Brown are expected to assume responsibility for their own educational choices, but they also are expected to keep an open mind and listen to many points of view. They receive a wealth of information from the College about academic life at Brown, both before and after they arrive on campus. Beginning with “Brown and You” which is sent to students on their acceptance of admission, and continuing with summer mailings and weekly email communications, they learn how to plan their course of study. They also learn about Brown’s philosophy of advising in “Designing Your Brown Education,” which reminds them to present their academic plans to you and to articulate reasons for their choices. Another resource for students is the online workshop 1stYear@Brown. The purpose of this online course is to introduce students to the Open Curriculum, the values and norms of a liberal education, and the importance of accessing the available advising and resource opportunities at Brown.

Sophomores are generally more experienced and so their responsibilities in an advising relationship are different. Advisors can assist first-semester sophomores by encouraging them to make connections between their first-year and second-year courses, so that they can begin to develop an intellectual focus. Sophomores also are expected to maintain and build on the relationships they developed in their first year of study. As a useful exercise for the first sophomore advising meeting, you might begin by asking your advisees to write down the names of faculty members, deans or others who made a difference to them in their first year. Then encourage them to contact these people sometime during the semester. The connections they build with faculty and campus administrators will help them
foster communities of support and identify unique opportunities in areas of their interests. They will also have an easier time approaching a faculty member for a letter of recommendation later in their career if they have stayed in touch along the way.

**Special Cohorts of Advisors**
A number of special advising programs complement and extend the work of first- and second-year advisors. Some of these programs are offered exclusively to first-years or sophomores; other programs provide advising support to the entire student population. Information about these programs is provided here so that academic advisors understand the range of advising options available to first-year and sophomore students.

**Peer Advising Programs**
In addition to the Meiklejohn Peer Advising Program, Brown supports several other student-directed support systems on campus. Athletic Peer Liaisons, Minority Peer Counselors (MPCs), Residential Peer Counselors (RPCs) and Women Peer Counselors all serve to orient first-year students to life on campus both in and out of the residence halls. They also provide valuable leadership opportunities for sophomores, juniors and seniors.

**Sophomore Deans**
All academic deans are happy to work with sophomores, but several people in the College have special responsibilities in this area. They are available during open hours and by appointment (virtual or in-person). They can also serve as a useful resource to you if you have concerns about your sophomore students.

Yolanda Rome x3-2315
Associate Dean of the College

Carol Cohen x3-2676
Senior Associate Dean of the College

Peggy Chang x3-2324
Associate Dean of the College

**Matched Advising Program for Sophomores (MAPS)**
Second-year students are paired with junior and senior mentors for advising support and assistance in navigating concentration declarations, research opportunities and other sophomore concerns. The MAPS program also organizes group events, panel presentations and focus groups that are open to all sophomores.

**For All Years**
**Faculty Advising Fellows (FAFs)**
Faculty Advising Fellows are experienced academic advisors who interact with students in informal settings. Events are generally organized around a topic or speaker and are often class-specific. These gatherings offer an opportunity for students to get to know faculty outside the classroom or laboratory. The FAF program is a collaboration between the College and the Division of Campus Life.

**Deans of the College and Student Life**
Academic deans are available for virtual drop-in consultations with students and advisors every weekday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Students also may make appointments with individual deans according to their interests and needs. If you have a question about first-year or sophomore advising, we encourage you to contact Dean Yolanda Rome.

If you have concerns about a student’s health or well-being, or if you know one of your advisees is having an issue of a non-academic nature, you should contact Student Support Services (x3-3145), located at 42 Charlesfield St., or Counseling and Psychological Services (x3-3476), located on the fifth floor of Page-Robinson Hall.

**Departmental Undergraduate Groups (DUGs)**
A DUG is a group of concentrators that aim to create a sense of community within an academic department. DUGs help students make and strengthen connections with other concentrators, professors and concentrator alumni; provide a means for first- and second-year students to explore various concentrations; and enable concentrators to explore potential career opportunities related to their disciplines.
ADVISING FUNDAMENTALS

ADVISOR ORIENTATION SESSIONS

We will be offering two virtual orientation sessions to help you prepare for your first advising meeting; one of these sessions is geared to new advisors. Details about Advisor Orientation Sessions will be sent by email.

Dean Yolanda Rome leads these sessions, along with select faculty and staff. You will be able to ask questions and share advising tips with other faculty. Although Dean Rome is the primary contact for first-year and sophomore advising, all of the academic deans are available for consultation as needed.

All of your advising materials are digital and can be found in the online Advising Sidekick, or ASK, including the Academic Advisor Handbook.

ADVISING TOOLS

Advisors are provided with a number of advising tools to help them in their conversations with advisees. Some of these tools will be important in every advising meeting; others are designed to enhance your ability to access other kinds of information. We encourage you to browse through these sources of information and contact any of the academic deans with questions.

ASK: Brown’s Electronic Advising Tool

ASK is an electronic advising tool that allows you to access a wealth of student information. Advisors can view their advisees’ admission essays, high school transcripts, standardized test scores and course preferences as well as the introduction they wrote to you over the summer. (*Advisees will not write introductions until Fall 2020 in this revised year). As your advisees progress, you will be able to see their internal record and read examples of work they have uploaded. Sophomores also declare their concentrations through ASK.

ADVISING SIDEKICK

ask.brown.edu

Alternate PIN (alt-PIN)

First-year and sophomore students will not need an alt-PIN to register for Fall 2020 courses. Our office will be in touch regarding registration details for the spring and summer terms.

Concentrations

Students and advisors can use Undergraduate Programs, an interactive web tool, to explore the many intellectual paths undergraduates can take at Brown. The site helps students investigate specific concentrations and explore how their varied interests might take academic shape.

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

brown.edu/go/concentrations

Courses @ Brown

Courses @ Brown is the best place to browse Brown’s general course offerings.
You can search by a specific term or the full year. Enter a subject or keyword and click "Find Courses" to initiate a search.

In the search results for a course, you can view details, including: description; registration restrictions; links to the class syllabus and Critical Review; final exam date and time (and location when scheduled); meeting time and location; and instructor email address. The instructor name is linked to the course offerings; if you click it, all courses taught by that instructor will display. If a course has been canceled, the time will have a strike-through that can be seen in the search results or in the details.

If you scroll down on the details panel, you can see the book information for the offering when available through the Bookstore. Select "Reset Search" to begin again or change your search criteria.

Using the advanced search options allows a search by meeting time, department or curricular program — such as DIAP courses on race, gender and inequality; Writing-Designated; or First-Year/Sophomore Seminars.

The “Add to Cart” button allows students to build a registration cart that you can view, and to register for their courses.

**Key Terms in Courses @ Brown**

- **Primary meeting:** The main section of a course.
- **Conference:** Some courses include a discussion section or “conference” for which students will also need to register if they elect to enroll in the course.
- **Meeting:** Some courses in engineering and chemistry have a common meeting of several primary meetings or sections.
- **Lab, Filming/Screening:** Other types of class meetings.

**Advising for Course Selection:**

**Some Rules of Thumb**

- Students should be advised to take four courses — not five, not three. Four courses per semester is the expected normal load, even for juniors and seniors. Students should drop a course only in unusual circumstances and after full use of the advising network. They should be advised not to strive for five courses unless there is a good reason to do so and the courses are carefully chosen. Some students may receive approval from a dean or Student Accessibility Services to take fewer than four courses.

- Students should aim for balance. Advise them to seek a balance between science and non-science courses, large lecture courses and seminars, and courses that meet on M/W/F versus T/TH. Heavy reading courses should be balanced with other offerings.

- Brown requires all students to work formally on their writing twice — once in their first two years of study and again in their junior or senior year. Students meet the first part of this requirement by completing any English, comparative literature or literary arts course, or any of the hundreds of courses across the curriculum marked as Writing-Designated Courses. First-year students are strongly advised to enroll in one or more of these courses in their first year of study. All students must finish part one of the writing requirement no later than semester four and part two beginning in semester five, but no later than semester seven.

- It is usually advisable for students to take at least one small class in any given semester. Brown’s First-Year Seminar (FYS) Program was designed to meet this need for first-year students. Enrolling in an FYS is one of the best ways to get to know a Brown faculty member in a curricular setting.

- Aim for breadth. Urge students to explore the various areas of the curriculum: humanities, sciences, social sciences and multidisciplinary courses. Students should be encouraged to study outside of their comfort zone, including courses that challenge traditional perspectives or approaches. They can experiment with less risk by taking courses S/NC or by auditing or vagabonding. (See page 28-29.)

- Help students identify common threads in the courses they’ve been taking. Students who enjoy a particular area of study should be encouraged to explore different aspects of that subject, perhaps in other disciplines. For example, a student who enjoys an 18th-century art course might benefit from continued study of the same period in music, politics or literature. It can be helpful for first-year students to have at least two of their eight
courses relate to each other in some way, so that they may begin to discover which areas of the curriculum they find most attractive.

- Emphasize the value of language study to their education. Language proficiency is integral to the exploration of human societies and has multiple cognitive benefits. Students should pursue language study in the first year to optimize their choices for study abroad opportunities. Since language courses are small and interactive, they provide an ideal choice for integrating new students in a receptive setting where their study of language also introduces them to cultural, literary and historical aspects of another community. Students who will be continuing rather than beginning language should take a placement test. Course and placement information can be found on the Center for Language Studies website.

- Although it is fine for first-year students to contemplate their choice of concentration, they should be urged to consider courses in all divisions of the College (life sciences, humanities, physical sciences and social sciences). Many students — and their families — will have clear and set expectations for what the concentration will be, even though they may be unaware of entire segments of the Brown curriculum. As an advisor, try to strike a balance between encouraging exploration and a broad program of liberal study, and proposing courses leading to various concentrations. As your advisees approach their sophomore year, they will of course need to think in more focused ways about possible concentrations and related course choices. Undergraduate Programs is a good tool to help students explore concentrations. (See page 8 for more information.)

- Students concerned with career prospects may be reluctant to explore the curriculum broadly. Advisors can help point out the value of skills and knowledge learned in many areas, and the importance of finding one’s passion. A wide range of skills and analytical abilities are highly valued by employers, and Brown’s curriculum offers many opportunities to develop these types of abilities.

- A handful of concentrations do require early commitment: Sc.B. degrees in general, and engineering degrees in particular, require special planning. For this reason, students who indicated an interest in engineering have been paired with advisors in the engineering department. Students planning to pursue Sc.B. degrees should consult with an advisor in the appropriate department.

- Students interested in concentrations in the sciences, including the social sciences, should consider a mathematics course. Most sciences require at least two semesters of calculus (e.g., through Math 0100, 0170 or 0190). Over the summer, incoming students will be prompted to fill out an online questionnaire about their math background. The website math.brown.edu/~calcplacement has comprehensive information on determining appropriate math placement for a student.

- Students interested in pursuing a pre-medical sequence should consult the Health Careers Advising website brown.edu/academics/college/advising/health-careers, and in particular the information for First-Years and Sophomore Students, to determine which pre-med courses they will take in the first and second years.

- Advise students about the grade option for each course. The founders of Brown’s Open Curriculum implemented the S/NC option to encourage students to take academic risks, particularly in curricular areas they would otherwise avoid if concern about earning an “A” is paramount. Experience has shown that taking one course each semester under the S/NC option has no discernible effect on admission to graduate or professional programs.

- Advise students to check for final exam conflicts when designing a semester schedule. Students should speak to a dean immediately if they wish to take courses with exam conflicts. Students should be aware that they will not be excused from taking final exams at scheduled times because of travel plans or other commitments.
FIRST-YEAR ADVISING:
SCHEDULED MEETINGS

PREPARING FOR YOUR ADVISING MEETINGS

The basics:

- Advising meetings will take place virtually this year via Zoom. Detailed information on how and when to set up these appointments will be sent out via email.

- Review advisee information, also in ASK. Look at the self-introduction (written or digital) each of them prepared for you and skim their admission essays to get a sense of who they are and why they wanted to come to Brown.

• Write brief notes on individual students in preparation for meetings:
  • Academic interests, strengths and possible areas of challenge
  • Significant life experiences, background, circumstances
  • Extracurricular interests and involvements

We’ve also asked your advisees to reflect on these elements and how they might inform their Brown experience, so any of these topics should be good starting points for discussion.

Pre-admit Tests and Scores:

SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) Reading/Math: The average SAT scores at Brown range from 650 to 760 reading and from 670 to 770 math. While no course decisions should be based solely on SAT scores, they do provide useful information in some cases when counseling a student about course selection. For example, a student with a low English Achievement Test should probably be advised to take a writing course in the first semester. A student with a particularly high SAT math score might be encouraged to try a more advanced version of introductory physics (i.e., Physics 0050 or 0070 rather than 0030). A student with a low math SAT score should be cautious about taking several math-related courses in the first semester.

ACT (American College Testing) English, Math, etc: Some of our applicants, particularly those in the Midwest, take ACT exams rather than SAT exams. The highest score on the ACT exams is 36.

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language): Students from other countries whose first language is not English must take this exam. The minimum score Brown allows on the TOEFL is 600 on the written version of the test or 250 on the digital version of the test.

AAT Achievement: These are the SAT II tests, formerly called SAT Achievement tests.
MEETING WITH YOUR MEIKLEJOHN AND FIRST-YEAR ADVISEES

Meeting with Meiklejohn Peer Advisor
WHEN: The time will be determined with your Meiklejohn.

Meet with your Meiklejohn Peer Advisor and discuss your plans, policies and styles for working together.

Group Meeting with Advisees and Meiklejohn
WHEN: To be held at a time that works for your advising group.
WHERE: Virtual meeting

Goals:
1. For everyone in the group to begin to get to know one another.

2. To introduce the notion of building an advising team, starting with the “advising triad”: the academic advisor, the Meiklejohn student advisor, and the advisee. Explain each person’s role in the advising relationship.

3. To orient students to the concept of a liberal arts education, and in particular to the values and opportunities of the Open Curriculum.

4. To introduce the notion of a growth mindset: e.g., that everyone will struggle at some point in their undergraduate career, but that struggle and failure are essential elements of progress and growth. Let your advisees know that students who access help and guidance along the way are by far the most engaged and ultimately successful.

5. To review critical academic rules and regulations, including the academic code. Please take a few minutes in your group meeting to discuss the principles of academic integrity. It’s important for students to know that ignorance or misunderstanding of Brown’s academic code is not an excuse for violations, and that the penalties for code violations range from reprimand to expulsion from the University. Students should consult their course instructors or an academic dean if they do not understand the rules on citation, collaboration, etc. Full text of the code: brown.edu/go/academic-code.

6. To tell students how they can contact you throughout the year (e.g., by email, during office hours, by appointment, etc.) and to encourage them to use you and your Meiklejohn early and often.

Individual Advising Appointments
Make sure that you schedule individual appointments with your advisees.

Individual Meeting with Advisees and Meiklejohn (same day)
Course selection for Semester I, 2020-21
WHEN: TBD
WHERE: Virtual meeting

Suggested Agenda
I. Get Acquainted
Talk about the student’s background and interests. What are the student’s initial feelings about coming to Brown? What hopes and expectations does the student have for the first semester? The self-introduction the student provided over the summer (see ask.brown.edu) should also provide good prompts for this conversation. We hope you will feel free to share something about your own experiences and background, especially where you may have struggled or experienced difficulty or uncertainty.

II. Liberal Learning and the Open Curriculum
Use students’ self-introductions and their admission essays (also in ASK) to open a discussion about their educational goals and their thoughts about first-semester courses. Most students will need some help or encouragement thinking beyond the standard structure and content of high school curricula/course offerings.
**FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS**

**Individual Meeting with Advisees**

**Early Semester I check-in**

WHEN: TBD  
WHERE: Virtual meeting

It’s important to reach out to your advisees early in the semester to reinforce that you and your Meiklejohn are there to help them with their transition to Brown, specific issues with their classes, academic and personal support resources, etc. The second individual advising meeting should take place during this time, but we also encourage you to check in with your advisees by email and to maintain contact with your Meiklejohn, who may be communicating with your advisees more frequently and informally.

If an advisee does not respond to you or your Meiklejohn when you reach out, the student could be insufficiently engaged with coursework or struggling in other ways. Homesickness, too much social or extracurricular involvement, or difficulties adjusting to college-level work are common problems at this time, and early intervention is crucial. If you have concerns about an advisee, please contact Yolanda Rome or Carol Cohen; one of us will follow up with the student and connect them with appropriate sources of academic and personal support.

**Suggested Agenda**

I. **Discuss courses, encourage contact with faculty.**

- Make sure that each student is enrolled in four courses, unless the student is on an approved workload reduction. You can see your advisees’ internal academic record in ASK. For the rare student who is enrolled in five courses, ask about the progress in each and about balancing academic work with overall adjustment and engagement in extracurricular activities. Note: If a student passes only three courses in the fall and is not on a reduced course load, the student must pass four in the spring to remain in good standing.

- Ask your advisees how their courses are going. Do they measure up to their expectations? How is the level of rigor and workload — i.e., does the student feel under- or over-challenged? Suggest enrollment changes as necessary and/or consult with our office. If an advisee is having trouble coping with the volume or level of work, with their amount of free time or with a particular issue such as note-taking or reading speed, you might also suggest the following: academic coaching, group tutoring, a conversation with someone at Student Accessibility Services, or other forms of academic support. Contact information for these programs is on page 34 of this handbook.

- New students are often reluctant to talk with their instructors. Encourage them to use professors’ office hours and give them suggestions about how to engage in those conversations.

- Discuss grade options (ABC/No Credit or Satisfactory/No Credit) and remind students that changes to grade options may be made through the fourth week of classes.

- Explain the purpose of Course Performance Reports and the desirability of requesting them before the end of the semester.

II. **Review registration deadlines and policies related to late add/drops.**

For all advising-related deadlines, consult the 2020-21 Academic Calendar on the Registrar’s website: brown.edu/about/administration/registrar/academic-calendar

Students may add courses online in weeks 3 and 4 of the semester for a fee of $15 for each change. Grade-option changes may be made online through the fourth week of classes. No fee is charged for grade option changes.

**Individual Meeting with Advisees**

**Course Registration for Semester II**

WHEN: TBD  
WHERE: Virtual meeting

*Advising tip:* Schedule a few extra office hours during the Semester I “advising period” so you can meet with each of your advisees. Remember that your Meiklejohn partner can help schedule meetings by calling or emailing your advisees and arranging times for them to see you. Keep notes on your students so you can follow up on topics that were raised in earlier meetings and review your notes before students come in to discuss their Semester II course selection.
Suggested Agenda

I. Review current courses and midterm work.
   - Check in with your advisees about how their courses are going, including midterm exams and coursework. Students who are running into unexpected difficulty should do one or several of the following: 1. consult their professors; 2. attend group tutoring or group study sessions; 3. request an academic coach. (See the discussion of academic support services on p. 34.)

   - If a student is struggling to stay afloat in one or several courses, you might discuss the possibility of dropping down to three courses—bearing in mind that the consequences of completing only three courses in a semester can be significant. (If a first-year student completes only three courses in the first term, they must pass four courses in the second term to remain in good standing. Overall, a student has only one chance in the first four semesters of study to pass three courses without being placed on Academic Warning. Bottom line: When feasible, it is ideal to pass four courses in both semesters of the first year.)

   - If you think an advisee may have special medical, personal or learning circumstances that affect the student’s ability to succeed in full-time coursework, please refer the student to the College, SAS or Student Support Services. If the circumstances warrant doing so, a workload reduction for one or more semesters may be approved.

   - Students having the most academic difficulties are sometimes the least willing to discuss them. Often coming from the top of their secondary school classes and communities, most first-year students at Brown have never had academic problems and find the experience unsettling and even shameful. Remind your advisees that difficulty and even failure are common in college, and that many students experience early roadblocks and go on to very successful careers at Brown and beyond.

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CALENDAR OF ADVISING MEETINGS AND DEADLINES FOR INCOMING FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

**August 25–September 2**
Initial advising meeting via Zoom with advisees

**September 9**
Classes begin for the fall term.

**September 9–September 21**
Individual meeting with advisees

**September 22**
Last day to add a course without a fee

**October 6**
Last day to add a course, change from audit to credit or change a grade option

**October 16**
Mid-semester deadline: Last day to change from credit to audit in a course

**November 1–15**
Individual meeting with advisees

**January 20**
Classes begin for the spring term.

**TBD**
Individual meeting with advisees

**February 2**
Last day to add a course without a fee

**February 17**
Last day to add a course, change from audit to credit or change a grade option

**March 5**
Mid-semester deadline: Last day to change from credit to audit in a course

**Late March**
Individual meeting with advisees to discuss courses for summer term
II. Discuss course selection for Semester II and provide students with alt-PINs to register.

- Help your students think about how the current semester might inform their thinking about the next. Which courses are working well and which aren’t? How do the student’s mid- or long-range goals factor into their second semester choices? While many students feel pressed to enter into concentration- or career-oriented course choices, Semester II is still early in the academic career, so encourage a balance between pursuing a focal area and continuing to explore.

- Suggest a visit to the dean’s virtual drop-in hours or the Curricular Resource Center (peer advisors) to get a different point of view on course selection and curricular options.

- When finished discussing, don’t forget to give the alt-PIN. Giving advisees their registration alt-PINs indicates that you have discussed their course selection and are satisfied that they have followed a thoughtful process in choosing courses. While you may not agree with the courses selected, the larger goal at hand is to help advisees develop a well-considered approach to selecting courses. Additional information regarding alt-PINs for the spring and summer terms will be sent via email.

Individual Meeting with Advisees

Early Semester II check-in

WHEN: TBD
WHERE: Virtual or in-person meeting

Suggested Agenda

I. Review progress in Semester I.
- Before meeting with your advisees, take a look at how they did during the first term. You will be able to review your advisees’ grades online in ASK as soon as they are available. At the start of the semester we’ll communicate with you about any of your advisees who are experiencing academic difficulties.

- Students who have passed four or three courses in their first semester remain in good standing. However, it’s still important to talk with each student about what did or didn’t go well in the first semester, so that they can make adjustments for the second. First-year students must pass seven courses in their first two semesters to remain in good standing.

Students who pass two courses in the first semester are placed on Academic Warning. Students who pass one course are placed on Serious Warning, as are any returning first-year students who passed no courses in their first semester. Advisees on Warning or Serious Warning will be paired with an academic dean for additional support; these students will need your help to set a realistic plan for returning to good standing, including taking four well-balanced courses in the second semester.

Please consult “Advisees on Warning and Serious Warning” on pages 30-31 of this handbook for suggestions on how to approach conversations with students in academic difficulty. The Academic Rules and Regulations on pages 28-33 of this handbook summarize the options students have for restoring themselves to good standing. Please refer students to campus resources for help in dealing with problems that impede academic success; see pages 34-38 for academic and personal support services on campus.

Note: It is important to know, and to tell your students, that academic standing notations are internal only.

II. Discuss Semester II courses.
- Compare preregistration choices with courses in which the student has actually enrolled; discuss changes and the reasons for them.

- Consider their course schedule in light of balance, breadth and class size. Students should have at least one course that is a small-class meeting (First-Year Seminars are ideal), so that they feel someone knows them. Encourage students who have yet to take a course that required a paper to enroll in a writing course.

- Remember that in qualifying circumstances (medical, personal or learning-related), administrators in the College, Student Support Services or Student Accessibility Services can approve a reduced course load. Otherwise the normal course load is four credits.

- Discuss grade options (ABC/NC or S/NC) and the possibility of requesting Course Performance Reports, especially for courses taken S/NC.
III. Remind students of registration deadlines.
For all advising-related deadlines, consult the 2020-21 Academic Calendar on the Registrar’s website: brown.edu/about/administration/registrar/academic-calendar

Students may add courses online in weeks 3 and 4 of the semester for a fee of $15 for each change. Grade-option changes may be made online through the fourth week of classes. No fee is charged for grade option changes.

**Individual Meeting with Advisees**

**Review of year, registration for fall semester**
WHEN: TBD
WHERE: Virtual or in-person meeting

**Advising tip:** Remember that your Meiklejohn partner can help schedule meetings by calling or emailing your advisees and arranging times for them to meet with you. Keep notes on your students so you can follow up on topics that were raised in earlier meetings and review your notes before students meet with you to discuss their fall course selection.

**Suggested Agenda**

I. **Assess academic progress thus far.**
- Ask about the student’s experience thus far in Semester II. How did midterms go? Is the student on track to complete at least seven courses in the first two semesters (unless the student has an approved course load reduction)?

- Review rules for academic progress on pages 29-31 of this handbook. If a student in academic difficulty is not on an approved workload reduction, discuss the implications of not passing four courses in the second term or seven courses in the first year (Warning, Serious Warning, Suspension).

- Refer students to the College if they are in danger of being placed on Warning or suspended after Semester II. We will identify sources of support and help the student develop a plan for making satisfactory academic progress.

II. **Refer to academic resources on campus.**
- Academic coaching and group tutoring in all major areas of the curriculum are available to students. Focused support for science, math and writing is available at the Science Center, Math Center and Writing Center, respectively. See pages 34-35 in this handbook for more information about these and other resources.

III. **Look to the future.**
- Discuss sophomore course selection, especially the fall term, in relation to potential concentrations and other areas of interest. Consider options beyond traditional classroom courses — Group Independent Study Projects, internships, independent study and study abroad — and refer students to the appropriate offices for more information about these opportunities. If students are beginning to think about career prospects, talk with them about the ways in which a Brown education can open up a broad range of career opportunities. The Undergraduate Programs page is a great online resource for this conversation.

- Begin to discuss and make explicit the “core competencies” students are developing as they study broadly across the disciplines and deeply within a selected concentration: reading, public speaking, critical reading, data analysis, problem solving and research. These are skills students are acquiring as part of their coursework, research and other co-curricular opportunities, and they will become the transferable skills students need for pursuing career pathways and connecting their Brown education to life outside the classroom. The College provides students with a variety of programs and opportunities to practice these skills and resources to support the development of them via the Learning Collaborative.

- When you feel confident that your advisees have a solid plan for the fall semester, give them their alt-PIN for registration.

IV. **Discuss advising for next year.**
- First-year students are asked to consider advising preferences for their sophomore year. Most choose to remain with their current advisor, but some decide they would rather have an advisor in a field more closely related to their emerging academic interests. You can help students think about their academic interests and the advisor(s) who would be most helpful in guiding those interests in the coming year.

- Remind students of additional advising resources for sophomores: Randall advisors, MAPS peer mentors, concentration advisors and academic deans.
SOPHOMORE ADVISING

Advising second-year students mirrors the work of advising first-year students in many ways. Sophomores should remain attentive to breadth and balance in their studies; explore beyond their comfort zones; improve their writing; consider studying a language or other symbolic system; and continually evaluate their own curricular choices and decisions.

At the same time, sophomores present a set of issues that first-year students are less likely to experience. While some sophomores are eager to focus on their intended concentration, others may have difficulty identifying an academic focus and feel anxious about their future. This wide range of experiences makes sophomore advising a delicate balance between reaching in and sitting back. Your role as an advisor is to guide students along their path, probing into whether they have thought about different opportunities available to enhance their education.

SOPHOMORE ADVISING

Because the sophomore year is a pivotal one, sophomores are required to meet with an advisor during preregistration periods for their fourth and fifth semesters of study. Sophomores are encouraged to stay with their first-year advisors so that they can benefit from the continuity and depth of a two-year advising relationship.

One aspect of this continuity has to do with a student’s general education at Brown. The beginning of the sophomore year is a good time to take stock and look back over the courses taken in the first year to see emerging interests. Encourage your students to reflect on the Liberal Learning Goals, to discover which capacities they have begun to develop through their course choices so far and which they should continue to develop. Students should continue exploring the curriculum during their third and fourth semesters.

Students are required to complete the concentration declaration process electronically in ASK in their fourth term, before preregistration opens for the fifth term. As a sophomore advisor, you can encourage students to begin the process early in the fourth semester, rather than waiting until the last minute. You might want to peruse the Undergraduate Programs webpage with your advisees, or offer to read a draft of their essays.

Once a sophomore declares, the concentration advisor becomes the advisor of record, although many students choose to stay in touch with their sophomore advisors.

Randall advisors and deans in the College complement the efforts of sophomore advisors, and students can access them during virtual drop-in hours. Students also can opt in to MAPS, which pairs second-year students with junior and senior mentors for one-on-one and group-advising support related to concentration declaration, research opportunities, internships, academics and other sophomore concerns.

CHOOSING A CONCENTRATION

Students are required to choose a concentration toward the end of their sophomore year. Although the choice of concentration is by no means the sole issue of significance in the second year, it is a defining one, and it may be a factor in other decisions that students make throughout the year.

Many students face the task of choosing a concentration with some trepidation, feeling that they are making an irrevocable life decision. As an advisor, you can remind your students that their concentration choice does not determine the rest of their lives. For instance, majoring in biology now does not eliminate the option of law school or social work at some point in the future.
Exploring different concentrations

Encourage your sophomores to research potential concentrations. Students can learn about concentrations through careful course selection, conversations with juniors and seniors in those fields and discussions with course instructors and concentration advisors. Students may also connect with members of a concentration’s DUG (Departmental Undergraduate Group, see p. 5) to explore different concentrations. Finally, the Undergraduate Programs webpage allows students to learn about Brown’s various concentration offerings in one central location.

After students have explored the concentrations they are interested in, you may want to offer to look at the concentration declaration form with them, available in ASK. The declaration consists of three parts. The first is an essay representing the intellectual rationale for the concentration. It should articulate the student’s goals in the concentration in relation to the broader learning objectives of a Brown education, including the goal of improved writing skills. The second part is a list of courses already taken and those that will be taken in the future, to realize these learning goals. The list should be realistic: Although students are not obliged to take every course on the list, they do need to have a reasonable plan for completing all required courses by the end of the eighth semester. The final section allows students to discuss additional academic goals outside the concentration and projects or research they hope to accomplish.

One concentration or two?

Many students believe that two concentrations are better than one. An advisor can correct this misperception. Ask questions to determine why a student wants to double concentrate. Often, students want to complete two concentrations to impress potential employers and graduate school admission committees. In such cases, tell advisees that most employers and graduate schools pay more attention to the actual courses they take than to the concentrations listed at the top of their transcripts. Students can complete one concentration and take courses in a second area of the curriculum without actually completing a second concentration. If the transcript demonstrates sustained interest in a second academic discipline, well-written application letters and statements of purpose can help students shape how employers and admission committees view their academic records.

If a student’s intellectual interests justify the possibility of double concentrating, declaring two concentrations may be appropriate. Still, double concentrating restricts students’ freedom to explore the curriculum and thus may diminish the “liberal” part of a Brown education. Often the best course of action for such students is to take courses that meet requirements for a second concentration while delaying an actual declaration. Students often find that their desire to explore the curriculum in their final year outweighs their interest in a second concentration. If a student remains interested in declaring a second concentration, he or she can do so after a primary concentration has been approved. The deadline for having a second concentration approved in ASK is the end of a student’s seventh semester.

CURRICULAR AND CO-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Sophomore year is the time when students can begin to take full advantage of Brown’s many opportunities for innovative and independent learning experiences. Sophomores should be prompted to consider how they might incorporate independent study, international study, research or fellowship opportunities into their educational plans. At the same time, sophomores should be looking ahead to the summer, to the junior year and even to the senior year and life beyond Brown. The most common time for students to complete internships is in the summer after their sophomore year, and approximately one-third of the junior class studies abroad for one or two semesters. Sophomore students are eligible to apply for Undergraduate Teaching and Research Awards (UTRAs) and for special fellowships, such as the Mellon Mays fellowship. They might even begin to think about the possibilities of a future Fulbright, or a Rhodes or a Marshall. As an advisor, you can plant this seed.

You can direct your advisees to the wealth of information on the website for the College, which includes pages or special sites.

CURRICULAR RESOURCE CENTER
brown.edu/go/crc
Independent Study and Independent Concentration

Brown places a high value on independent learning experiences for undergraduates. Brown alums report that one-on-one work with faculty was the most satisfying experience of their college careers. Students’ educational plans should incorporate at least one independent learning experience, whether it be research with a faculty member, a directed reading course or an individual or group independent study course. Suggest that your advisees visit the Curricular Resource Center in the Stephen Robert ’62 Campus Center to learn how to propose a Group Independent Study Project (GISP) through the College. Many departments also offer independent studies; students should consult a department’s website or drop in to chat with the department manager about how to go about arranging an independent study experience.

Independent Concentrations

Although Brown offers more than 80 undergraduate concentrations, students have the option of creating and designing their own. Independent concentrations — usually focusing on a broad problem, theme or question, rather than a discipline — must be sponsored by at least one faculty member. Proposals must be reviewed and approved by the College Curriculum Council. Students wishing to complete an independent concentration should visit the independent concentrations website www.brown.edu/go/ic, attend an information session at the Curricular Resource Center or speak with one of the center’s independent concentration student coordinators, and consult the dean for the independent concentration program.

Research and Fellowships

Sophomore year is an important time for students to explore opportunities to pursue their intellectual passions beyond the classroom. Brown offers many funded research and/or internships awards, and we support students who seek funding through external awards as well. The process of applying for such opportunities teaches sophomores to begin to identify and articulate their values, commitments and future direction.

Internal research and internship funding opportunities include the Royce Fellowship, the Social Innovation Fellowship, the UTRA, Linking Internships and Knowledge (LINK) Award Program and the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship. While all of these programs are great for sophomores, there are a few that we especially encourage second-year students to consider. The Mellon Mays Fellowship supports sophomores from certain racial and ethnic minority groups interested in graduate school and ultimately teaching at universities. The UTRA program provides a compelling opportunity for sophomores because it supports various types of research and course revision work, and Brown offers well over 200 awards each year.

External awards for sophomores include the National Science Foundation undergraduate awards, the Udall Scholarship for students who have demonstrated a commitment to the environment and the Barry Goldwater Scholarship, which recognizes young scholars committed to research careers.

Study Abroad and Home Country Study Away

Most students who study away from Brown for a term or a year do so during their junior year. The time to plan for that time away is during the sophomore year.

To explore study abroad options, students can start with the website of the Office of International Programs (OIP). They can also stop by the OIP office (fourth floor, Page-Robinson Hall) to make an appointment with an OIP staff member or to speak with students who have returned from studying in another country.

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS
brown.edu/oip

THE COLLEGE
brown.edu/go/study-away

U.S. students have the option to study away for one or more semesters at another U.S. college or university. International students may apply to study at a university
in their home country. The rules governing transfer credit for Home Country Study Away are fairly complicated so students considering this option must consult with the College and the appropriate academic departments to obtain pre-approval for their study away plans.

**Engaged Scholars Program**

The Engaged Scholars Program (ESP) enables students who are passionate about communities and the challenges they face to design courses of study and action as part of their concentration requirements. Through guided coursework, advising and hands-on experience working with community partners, students in ESP are able to contextualize abstract theories, challenge assumptions and develop skills that prepare them for lives of effective action. Students who complete the program receive an academic transcript designation as Engaged Scholars.

ENGAGED SCHOLARS
brown.edu/go/engaged-scholars

**CareerLAB, Internships and BrownConnect**

Students can meet with career advisors on any topic requiring in-depth discussion. All appointments are for a half-hour, and students can schedule follow-up times as needed. Topics include decision-making about careers and concentrations, job/internship search strategies and resources, and practice interviewing. A conversation with a career advisor can be helpful for students feeling overwhelmed or uncertain about their future plans. Students can make individual appointments, come to open hours or attend workshops.

The University’s BrownConnect initiative links students to the Brown community for career success. Students can search for internships, research opportunities, funding and alumni connections. Throughout the year, CareerLAB will be hosting numerous workshops and alumni panels to inform students about professional opportunities and to help students build the skills they need to find, apply for and excel at their internships.

CAREER ADVISING
brown.edu/careerlab
brownconnect.brown.edu

**CALENDAR OF ADVISING SESSIONS FOR SOPHOMORE STUDENTS**

**September 9**
Classes begin.

**September 9-18**
Individual meeting with advisees

**September 22**
Last day to add a course without a fee

**October 6**
Last day to add a course, change from audit to credit or change a grade option

**October 13**
Students entering their fifth semester must file a concentration declaration.

**October 16**
Mid-semester deadline: Last day to change from credit to audit in a course

**TBD**
Third individual meeting with sophomore advisees

**January 20**
Classes begin for winter/spring

**TBD**
Fourth individual meeting with sophomore advisees

**February 2**
Last day to add a course without a fee

**February 17**
Last day to add a course, change from audit to credit or change a grade option

**March 5**
Mid-semester deadline: Last day to change from credit to audit in a course

**April 22**
Students entering their fifth semester must file a concentration declaration.
**OTHER CONCERNS**

**Sophomore “Slump”**

The “sophomore slump” is more than just a cliché. Many students experience a sense of aimlessness and anxiety at some point in their college education. This often occurs during their second year, when idealistic aspirations are abandoned but not yet replaced with more realistic plans for concentrations and careers. The Randall advisors, who have counseled hundreds of sophomores over the years, suggest that the best antidote to the sophomore slump is to help students move from a place of panic or helplessness to a place of action. Ask your students to assess their strengths and interests. Discuss how they can learn about different fields of study and potential careers. You might also reassure your advisees that any plans they make now can be changed and that they are not closing any doors by choosing one course of action over another.

**Leaves of Absence**

Sophomores who lack direction may also benefit from taking time off. A break from full-time studies can help students gain perspective and renewed energy for the rest of their undergraduate education. Approximately 15% of Brown students take a leave of absence that does not involve study elsewhere. The most common time for students to take such leaves is in the middle or at the end of the sophomore year.

Advisors can help students determine whether or not a leave of absence is warranted, but it is critical that students consult with an academic dean before making a decision. The deans can explain all of the ramifications of leave-taking to students, including how a leave will affect the date of degree completion.

**MEETINGS WITH YOUR SOPHOMORE ADVISEES**

Advisors are asked to meet at least three times with their sophomore advisees. The following schedule is intended to serve as a general guide.

**First Meeting with Sophomore Advisees**

**WHEN:** First/second week of classes, Semester I*

**WHERE:** Virtual or in-person meeting

**Suggested Agenda**

I. Overview

Get reacquainted, review how the first year went, identify central issues/concerns/goals for the coming year. Self-assessment questions can be a good place to start in this advising conversation: What did you learn about yourself during your first year and how does that shape what you want for your second year? What have emerged as your primary interests and goals, as opposed to when you first arrived? Who has been most helpful to you in an advising or mentoring capacity? Encourage students to re-establish contact with any faculty members and administrators who made a difference to them in their first year.

II. Course selection and academic plans

Review the student’s first-year courses and help them assess how they’re doing with the balance between breadth and focus. Which areas of the curriculum have they explored or avoided exploring? What are their primary areas of interest and potential concentration directions, and how do those relate to their tentative course selections? If important to the student, you could also discuss how course and concentration decisions relate to aspirations for life after Brown.

III. The Writing Requirement

Any sophomores who did not take an approved writing course in their first year must take one in their first or second term this year. Students may choose from courses in English, comparative literature or literary arts, or take one of the hundreds of Writing-Designated Courses. Students who have not met this requirement by the end of their fourth term will receive a writing check.
If one of your advisees has received a writing check (a check beside a course in which the instructor has found the student’s writing to be insufficient), that means the student is required to work on writing in the following term. Students who receive checks are referred to the Writing Center and Writing Fellows Program, which will assess their writing abilities and help them work out a program to fulfill the requirement. This could entail taking an English course, enrolling in a course with a writing fellow attached to it or working with a writing associate at the Writing Center. If you have concerns about any of your students’ written communication skills, please reach out to the director of the Writing Center.

* Be aware that students may contact you for their alt-PIN before classes begin, if they didn’t hold onto it following April pre-registration. It is okay to provide the alt-PIN via email as long as they are only making minor changes.

IV. Co-curricular possibilities

Is your advisee interested in studying abroad? Undergraduate research or fellowships? An internship? Leave-taking? If students express interest in one or more of these options, refer them to the appropriate office or dean.

V. Academic Standing (Good Standing, Warning and Serious Warning)

If you have an advisee who was placed on Academic Warning (one course down) or Serious Warning (two courses down) for the fall semester, it is important to discuss the circumstances that led to that status and help set a realistic plan for returning to Good Standing. Note that academic standing notations are internal only. Consult “Advisees on Warning and Serious Warning” on pages 30-31 of this handbook for suggestions on how to have this conversation. The Academic Rules and Regulations on pages 28-33 provide detailed information about academic progress rules, but feel free to consult with an academic dean if you would like to discuss any aspect of the rules.

Second Meeting with Sophomore Advisees

WHEN: Late October
WHERE: Virtual or in-person meeting

Suggested Agenda

I. Current semester

How are your classes going? Do you find them engaging/interesting? How is the workload? Help your student determine if their courses are moving them in the right direction and troubleshoot specific issues that might require additional support or resources.

II. Course selection for Semester IV and concentration possibilities

As students register for Semester IV courses, they should be focusing in on potential concentrations and planning to take two to three courses in areas of interest. Recommend that they utilize the Undergraduate Programs webpage, meet with concentration advisors and/or contact DUG leaders to help them clarify their direction.

Students who have already chosen a concentration should be encouraged to check in with the concentration advisor(s) in their area(s) to make sure they’re on the right track.

III. The Writing Requirement

If your advisees have not already done so, they must take an approved course in their fourth term. Students may choose from courses in English, comparative literature or literary arts, or take one of the hundreds of courses across the curriculum marked Writing-Designated. Students who have not met this requirement by the end of their fourth term will receive a writing check.

IV. Provide the alt-PIN!

Because your advisees are registering for a new semester, they will need a new alt-PIN. Alt-PINs and transcripts are available on your advising page in ASK ask.brown.edu. Additional information regarding alt-PINs for the spring and summer terms will be sent via email.
Third Meeting with Sophomore Advisees

WHEN: First/second week of classes in spring term
WHERE: Virtual or in-person meeting

Suggested Agenda

I. Take stock and review course selection.
Review how the student did in the first semester and consider their patterns of course selection over the first three semesters. You may be able to see an area of interest emerging that the student does not, or you may notice that the student has struggled with a particular set of courses. In the latter case, probe gently to determine the student’s willingness to modify the intended academic path and help make adjustments as needed.

II. Academic Warning or Serious Warning
If an advisee has been placed on Academic Warning or Serious Warning for Semester IV, it is imperative to discuss why the student is struggling and help set a realistic plan for returning to Good Standing. The second semester of the sophomore year is an especially critical time in this regard. More students are suspended after the fourth semester than at any other time. A focused intervention from an advisor can give students the support they need to make changes that will help them succeed.

III. The Writing Requirement
Remind any advisees who have not yet taken an approved writing course that they must do so THIS term. Students may choose from courses in English, comparative literature or literary arts, or take one of the hundreds of courses across the curriculum marked “WRIT.” Students who have not met this requirement by the end of their fourth term will receive a writing check.

IV. Concentration choice and deadline
Encourage your advisees to look at the concentration declaration interface in ASK and to meet with concentration advisors before drafting their declarations. Advisors’ names can be found on the Undergraduate Programs webpage or individual concentration pages. Offer to read a draft of the concentration essay before the student meets with his or her future concentration advisor.

Concentration declarations are due in ASK by March 22, 2021. For some of the larger concentrations, such as biology, computer science, history, international relations, economics and political science, it is important that students consult with concentration advisors early, to ensure that they will be able to file on time.

V. Relationships with faculty
Whom among the faculty can your advisees approach for a letter of recommendation? If students are unable to identify a single faculty member they know well enough to request a letter, consider this a red flag. You may advise students about how to build relationships with faculty; you can also refer students to an academic dean, who can have a more extended conversation with them about how to take charge of this aspect of their academic experience at Brown.

VI. What else?
Other than declaring a concentration, are there decisions your advisees need to make before the end of this semester? What are their plans for the coming summer and/or for the next academic year? Help them think about concrete steps they should take, including connecting with colleagues in other offices on campus.

Additional Meetings

You may wish to meet with your advisees at other times, such as the advising period leading up to Semester IV preregistration. Students should also consult with concentration advisors in their intended fields of concentration. After they have filed a declaration of concentration, students ought to primarily seek advice from their concentration advisor, who at that point becomes their advisor of record. If you are willing, you can encourage your advisees to stay in touch with you as well. Such check-ins provide important continuity for students, and it can also be very gratifying for advisors to watch their advisees grow and develop in their final two years at Brown.
ACADEMIC RULES AND REGULATIONS

Degree Requirements
At Brown, two baccalaureate degrees are awarded — the bachelor of arts (A.B.) and the bachelor of science (Sc.B). The degree awarded is determined by a student’s chosen concentration program.

In order to graduate with a Brown baccalaureate degree, a student must meet the following requirements:

1. Be in residence at Brown for four semesters of full-time study
2. Successfully complete a concentration (major)
3. Successfully complete at least 30 courses
4. Meet Brown’s writing requirement
5. Meet Brown’s 32-unit enrollment requirement

The Writing Requirement
To earn the baccalaureate degree, all Brown students must demonstrate an ability to write well. All students are required to formally work on their writing at least once during the first half of their college experience, in their first or second year, and again at least once in semesters five to seven. Brown students can meet this requirement by taking courses in English, comparative literature, literary arts or one of the hundreds of courses across the curriculum marked Writing-Designated Course in the bulletin. Sophomore advisors are asked to discuss the requirement, and writing more generally, with advisees as they complete phase one.

Course Load Policies
Brown students may enroll in three, four or five courses per semester. The normal expectation of enrollment is four. Registration for fewer than three courses requires special permission through consultation with an academic or student support dean. Banner now prevents first-year students from dropping below three courses until they consult with an academic dean. No student may take more than five credits in a semester, including audited courses, which do not count toward the 30-course requirement for graduation.

Auditing Courses
Auditing allows students to take a course without any grade notation on the transcript. An audit is a course registration at Brown, which means that it appears on the transcript and counts as one of the courses on record in any given semester. Regular tuition fees and enrollment policies apply. Students may switch a course from audit to credit or credit to audit until mid-semester. Audits are at the discretion of the instructor, and instructors also have the authority to require students to complete assignments for audited courses. Students are advised to consult with an academic dean about the desirability of auditing a course.

Vagabonding
Vagabonding a course involves attending a class without enrolling in the course. Unlike audited courses, which count toward the maximum five courses for which students enroll, vagabonded courses are “off the books”; there is no official record of enrollment and therefore no transcript notation. With the instructor’s permission, students may vagabond any course. Sometimes, when students say they want to “audit” a course, they mean “vagabond.”
Grade Options

When registering for courses, Brown students must indicate whether they are taking a course for a grade (G) or satisfactory/no credit (S/NC). A small number of courses are designated by their instructors as mandatory S/NC. Students may change their grade option for a course online during the first four weeks of the semester. No grade option changes are allowed after the first four weeks of any semester.

The founders of Brown’s Open Curriculum implemented the S/NC option to encourage students to sample all areas of the curriculum. Students use the S/NC option for a variety of reasons, some pedagogical or philosophical, some by the instructor’s request. Most students agree that S/NC allows for exploration of a particular topic without the stress and pressure that a graded evaluation may impart.

The guidelines below may help students decide whether or not to take a course S/NC.

- Taking one course per semester with the S/NC option will have little or no effect on post-graduation plans. Students will still have at least 22 courses taken for a grade.

- Concentration courses and pre-med requirements should generally be taken for a letter grade, particularly if a student intends to pursue graduate or professional school.

- No single course, whether taken for a grade or S/NC, will determine a student’s admission to a particular profession or graduate program. It is the overall academic record that matters.

- Students interested in earning academic honors such as magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa should be aware that these honors are awarded on the basis of the number of grades of “A” or “S with distinction” in a student’s record.

Course Performance Reports

In addition to the two grade options at Brown, students may request a narrative evaluation of their performance from their course instructors. These Course Performance Reports (CPRs) provide valuable information to students about their success in meeting course learning objectives, especially for courses graded S/NC.

Any student regularly enrolled in a course may request a CPR and, at the instructor’s discretion, receive one. Instructors of mandatory S/NC courses are obliged to honor such requests. For all other courses, instructors may decline to submit such a form if they believe they have inadequate information to do so. Students should try to submit CPR requests to their course instructors before the end of the semester.

CPRs are not part of a student’s official academic record or transcript, but a student may request that the University send one or more CPRs with their official transcripts. In such cases, students must provide the Office of the Registrar with copies of the CPRs when submitting their transcript requests.

Progress Toward Graduation

Brown’s rules regarding academic progress are the most critical piece of policy information we ask you to discuss with your advisees. Failure to adhere to rules regarding adequate progress usually results in an internal notation on a student’s transcript. Falling below Brown’s progress requirements arises from a number of causes. Our job is to make sure that, for every student, ignorance is not one of those causes.
Academic Standing Calculations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years and Semesters of Study at Brown</th>
<th>Good Standing</th>
<th>Warning</th>
<th>Serious Warning</th>
<th>Suspension</th>
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<td>Fourth Year at Brown</td>
<td>VII</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>30</td>
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The chart above shows the number of courses students must pass each semester in order to stay in good academic standing.

As a general rule, Brown students are expected to complete four courses each semester. Enrollment in three, four or five courses in a semester is considered full-time. Academic progress rules do allow students to pass three courses in a semester once every two years. Exceptions to the academic progress requirement are recommended by academic or student support service deans when a student’s individual circumstances, either academic or personal, warrant special consideration.

Academic standing is determined by courses completed at Brown and transfer credit from qualifying institutions, whether in the summer or during the school year.

When a student falls below progress requirements, they may be placed on Warning or Serious Warning, which includes an internal notation on the student’s transcript. It is important to know that students can become so deficient in their coursework that they may be suspended from the College for a specified time (normally one year).

**Advisees on Warning and Serious Warning**

If one or more of your advisees have been placed on Warning or Serious Warning, it is imperative that you discuss with the students why they have been placed on warning and help them set realistic plans for returning to Good Standing. This section provides guidance to advisors on how to structure this conversation.

**How should a student respond to being on Warning or Serious Warning?**

The most useful response to being placed on Warning or Serious Warning is a close examination of the reasons for the student’s academic difficulties. Problems can arise for many reasons: poor preparation in a subject area, lack of interest in a particular course, illness, problems of social adjustment, etc. Some students who begin an intensive, highly focused program may discover that they lack the background and/or motivation to cope with the level and volume of work. Encourage these students to think about alternate educational goals.

**Policy on Incompletes**

If the warning results from an authorized Incomplete in one or more courses, remind the student that completing the work by the deadline established by the College will improve his or her academic standing (February 1 for fall semester Incompletes and July 1 for spring semester Incompletes). Students who finish their Incompletes after these deadlines may still earn course credit, but their academic standing will not be affected.
Should a student on Warning take five courses to “catch up” in Semester II?

A student on Warning should choose four courses (not five) for the next semester and should strive to find courses that are both interesting and manageable. While it is true that a student on Warning can return to Good Standing after one semester by completing five courses, the costs and dangers of attempting five courses, particularly for students who have failed to complete four courses in one or more preceding semesters, can be significant. It is difficult to do one’s best work in five courses. Moreover, students who attempt five courses after failing to complete four frequently fail two courses in the subsequent term, placing them even further behind. Caution students about taking on too heavy a course load. It is more prudent to take four courses and do well in those. Students who complete four courses in two consecutive semesters will return to Good Standing even if their cumulative count would otherwise place them on Warning or Serious Warning.

What about students who remain in Good Standing but feel they performed poorly in the first semester?

These students should go through the same process described above: Examine the reasons for the difficulties, plan ways to address these difficulties, reconsider educational goals and choose four courses carefully for the next semester. You can be immensely helpful in this process.

Should a student drop a course to avoid a “C” or a “B”?

No. Dropping a class because of fear about a particular grade is never to be encouraged. This is true for philosophical as well as practical reasons. Students can become so focused on grades as a measure of performance that they overlook Brown’s academic progress expectations and find themselves on Warning. If an advisee mentions that he or she may drop a class because of fear of a particular grade, the advisor can probe for reasons why the grade is so important to the student. Often it is because the student has plans for the future (e.g., law school or medical school) that they believe will be affected by the performance in the course. Advisors can work to dispel the notion that a “B” or a “C” in one course will determine the student’s future. A referral to an academic dean may also be in order. Deans are accustomed to handling such misperceptions and can help students adjust their approach to their studies.

Dropping a course while on warning or serious warning

All students on warning or serious warning will be blocked from dropping any courses in the last three weeks of the term. To remove this block, students will be required to meet with an academic dean.

RISD Cross-Registration

As a result of a cooperative arrangement, all Brown students have the option of taking certain courses at the renowned Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), adjacent to Brown on College Hill. Up to four RISD credits may count toward a student’s graduation requirement at Brown. During the fall and spring semesters and during RISD’s winter session, Brown students enroll at RISD under a cross-registration agreement that is part of their Brown tuition. Students may take courses at RISD during the summer session but will pay RISD directly upon registration. Once approved, each RISD course (three to six credits) is regarded as the full equivalent of a Brown course, and upon satisfactory completion is recorded on the student’s Brown transcript.

Students must petition the Committee on Academic Standing for approval to study at RISD when they wish to enroll in certain non-studio courses, including those that fall within RISD’s liberal arts division, or when they wish to register for more than four RISD credits over the course of their academic career. Students who wish to register for a RISD course should visit the Office of the Registrar’s webpage for instructions on how to register.

Transfer Credit Policies

College courses completed before a student matriculated to Brown fall under one set of requirements. Transfer credits for courses taken after a student has matriculated to Brown are governed by a different set of rules. With the appropriate approvals, transfer credits may count toward degree requirements.

ADMISSION.BROWN.EDU/TRANSFER/TRANSFER-CREDIT
Pre-college Programs and Course Placement

Many students complete courses and programs during their high school years that may place them out of introductory courses at Brown. These include:

- Advanced Placement (AP) exams (AP credits do not increase course count)
- International Baccalaureate (IB) exams
- British A-Level exams (but not AS or O-level exams)
- Other national "13th-year" programs
- Courses taken at another college during the summer or school year while the student was still in high school
- Courses taken in the Brown Summer Session before entering Brown as a first-year student

Any of these experiences may be used to satisfy prerequisites for more advanced courses at Brown, whether or not the student formally receives transfer credit on his or her Brown transcript. Students who wish to use these credits as course prerequisites should consult with the instructor of the Brown course they wish to take. Instructors may issue a course override in these cases.

Not all of these experiences may qualify for course credit and/or reduce the number of semesters of enrollment required for graduation.

AP exam results must be on file at Brown before they can be used for placement or as course prerequisites. In the summer, students will get more detailed, personal information about their own scores, as well as the opportunity to accept or decline the transcript notations of AP credit.

A full list of AP exams recognized by Brown may be found at brown.edu/go/ap.

International diplomas and certificates most commonly earned by our students are International Baccalaureate or A-Levels. Qualifying exam results in certain subjects may be eligible for both course credit and enrollment credit; these also may be used to petition for a semester of advanced standing during the sophomore or junior year. Brown will not process transfer credits or advanced standing for these exams prior to sophomore year. Brown does not grant course credit for AS-Levels or O-Levels, or AO-Levels.

BROWN.EDU/GO/INTERNATIONAL-EXAM

Enrollment Requirement

A Brown education implies eight full semesters of college experience. For this reason, Brown students must complete an equivalent of eight semesters of academic study as measured in 32 enrollment units in order to graduate. Students may earn credit toward this requirement by completing a full semester of study at Brown or at an approved college or university in the United States or abroad. Various international certification programs may also be applied to the enrollment requirement. For students who enroll as first-year students at Brown and who complete 30 or more credits in eight semesters at Brown, fulfilling the enrollment requirement is straightforward. Students earn one semester of enrollment credit for each full-time semester they are at Brown. If students do anything other than take eight sequential full-time semesters at Brown, fulfilling the enrollment requirement can get complicated and should be discussed with an academic dean.
ACADEMIC SKILLS
DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT SERVICES

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES AND TUTORING
All students have free access to academic coaches, academic workshops and tutoring in select courses. Students can sign up for this by going to their ask.brown.edu account.

CURRICULAR RESOURCE CENTER
brown.edu/go/crc

Libraries and Content Librarians
Brown’s library collections furnish a blend of traditional and digital content, covering some 80 subject areas as well as innumerable interdisciplinary fields. The library’s collection of more than 6 million physical items is complemented by licensed electronic holdings including nearly 2 million e-books, over 111,000 electronic scholarly journals and more than 300 licensed databases. Brown students also have direct access to collections owned by RISD, the other Ivy libraries and most other U.S. libraries via our easyBorrow service.

LIBRARY.BROWN.EDU

Science and Math
Math Resource Center
151 Thayer St.

Brown’s Math Resource Center offers assistance to students in introductory mathematics courses (MATH 0050, 0060, 0070, 0090, 0100, 0170, 0180, 0190, 0200, 0520 and APMA 0330 and 0340). Staffed by graduate and undergraduate math students, the center is open virtually Monday through Thursday from 8 to 10 p.m.

MATH RESOURCE CENTER
brown.edu/academics/math/math-resource-center

Science Center
Sciences Library, Third Floor

The Science Center offers programming that supports both academic and pre-professional development for students who are pursuing study in the sciences. We help students connect with faculty members who are committed to academic advising, research training and mentoring. Students come to engage in science-related events, attend lectures and workshops. At the center, students will discover comradeship among their peers as well as a space to study collaboratively or individually.

SCIENCE CENTER
brown.edu/academics/science-center
Writing

The Writing Center

Sciences Library, Fifth Floor (x3-3524)

The Writing Center is located on the fifth floor of the Sciences Library and is available for virtual appointments throughout the year. By visiting the center website, students can use an online scheduling application to request appointments to work one-on-one with experienced academic writers. They work on a range of writing assignments, including academic essays, reports and projects as well as professional documents for fellowships, internships and the job market. Students need not have a completed draft or any draft at all to make and benefit from an appointment.

The center also offers individualized support for:
- Students for whom English is not a first language;
- Students who are studying abroad; and
- Students seeking writing coaching.

WRITING CENTER
brown.edu/go/writingcenter

SUPPORT FOR WELLNESS AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

In addition to asking for academic guidance, students may talk about dealing with parental expectations and demands, homesickness, feeling overwhelmed or the need to take time off from Brown. Some advisors choose to address these issues directly. Others prefer to restrict advising discussions to academic matters.

Whatever your preference, we encourage you to refer students to appropriate campus resources. Advisors most commonly refer students to the College, Student Support Services, Student Accessibility Services, and Counseling and Psychological Services. Information about the kinds of support offered by each of the offices is provided below.

If you are unsure which office might be appropriate to support a student, feel free to call one of the deans, who will be happy to assist you in finding the best possible source of support for the student.

Student Support Services

The Student Support Services staff is available to assist students with a wide range of issues and concerns (personal, health, family). Deans are available to consult with individual students about their personal questions/concerns, providing a sounding board to explore options and helping to connect students to the right set of resources, allowing students to succeed and thrive in their academic pursuits. A 24-hour crisis service is available for students with personal or family emergencies.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES
brown.edu/student-support
401-863-3145

Student Accessibility Services

Student Accessibility Services coordinates services and accommodations for students with physical (including medical conditions and temporary injuries), psychological, sensory or learning disabilities. Students with disabilities who believe they may need services or accommodations are encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services.

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES
brown.edu/sas
401-863-9588

Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life (OCRL)

OCRL leads Brown’s work in religious diversity and strives to enhance religious literacy within the University community. OCRL supports more than 18 traditions, including the Brown-RISD Catholic Community, Brown-RISD Hillel, Brown Muslim Students’ Association, Protestant groups (i.e., ecumenical, multiple evangelical, Pentecostal, African American and Episcopal), Quaker, Christian Scientist, Orthodox Christian, Unitarian, Baha’i, Hindu, Buddhist, yoga and mindfulness, queer faith and contemplative practices.

OCRL
brown.edu/ocrl
401-863-2344
The Brown Center for Students of Color (BCSC)
BCSC serves as a gathering place for communities of color. Students are encouraged to build meaningful relationships across difference, develop racial and ethnic consciousness and enact change at Brown and beyond. The BCSC advances the University’s mission of educating and preparing students to discharge the offices of life with usefulness and reputation by empowering students of color, cultivating leadership, facilitating critical reflection, fostering informed action and promoting social justice.

**BROWN CENTER FOR STUDENTS OF COLOR**
brown.edu/bcsc
401-863-2120

Undocumented, First-Generation College and Low-Income Student Center
The Undocumented, First-Generation College and Low-Income Student Center (U-FLi Center), is a communal support space for undocumented, low-income and/or first-generation college students at Brown. The center offers programming for community building, individual and group advising and opportunities to engage in advocacy. There is no specific level of family income that determines whether or not a student may take advantage of the community and programs of the U-FLi Center.

**U-FLI CENTER**
brown.edu/go/flicenter

JOIN THE LISTSERV:
brown.edu/uflii/home

Global Brown Center for International Students
Support for international students is available through Global Brown, a network of several offices that works to coordinate the broad range of community and support services. Students studying on a visa will work with the Office of International Student and Scholar Services, which handles all matters related to immigration and student visa concerns. The International Student Experience Center provides support for students who self-identify as international students regardless of visa status, through ongoing programmatic efforts including the International Mentoring Program and International Orientation, trips and community-building initiatives.

**GLOBAL BROWN**
brown.edu/about/administration/global-engagement
401-863-1300

LGBTQ Center
Brown’s LGBTQ Center provides a comprehensive range of education, information and advocacy services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and questioning students. The LGBTQ Center works closely with other identity-based centers on campus to counsel individual students about their aspirations and concerns, advise student leaders and help organize programming. The LGBTQ Center staff also advises various LGBTQ+ student groups including the Queer Alliance, an undergraduate group of LGBTQ+ students and allies that serves as a hub of LGBTQ+ organizing on campus.

**LGBTQ CENTER**
brown.edu/lgbtq
lgbtq@brown.edu
401-863-3062
The Sarah Doyle Center for Women and Gender provides a dynamic environment for exploring issues of gender, including the intersections of gender with race, ethnicity, economic class, sexuality, gender identity, dis/ability, age and geography. All members of the Brown community are welcome to visit the center and to make use of its resources. The center provides meeting spaces, an art gallery and a library, and also maintains contact information for the gender and sexuality organizations at Brown and in the Providence area.

**SARAH DOYLE CENTER**
brown.edu/sdwc
401-863-2189

**Office of Military-Affiliated Students**
The office provides advice, advocacy, information and support for students who have served, are serving or are interested in serving in the U.S. military, as well as offering support to student veterans of other nations. Brown students may participate in ROTC for the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force. Programs are offered through partnerships with nearby host universities; transportation is provided.

**OFFICE OF MILITARY-AFFILIATED STUDENTS**
brown.edu/veterans
brown.edu/go/rotc
401-863-ROTC

**The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards**
The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards investigates and adjudicates alleged violations of the Code of Student Conduct. Students who have been harmed or who have witnessed harm are encouraged to report these incidents and speak with deans.

**STUDENT CONDUCT AND COMMUNITY STANDARDS**
brown.edu/go/student-conduct
401-863-3145

**STUDENT HEALTH**

**Health Services**
Health Services provides confidential urgent and primary medical care including sexual health and counseling to all Brown students. Students may make appointments with providers including physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nutritionists and nurses; same-day appointments are available if students call ahead. For students with chronic medical conditions, providers can help with transition and coordinating care while on campus. Students can talk to a nurse for medical advice 24 hours a day.

**HEALTH SERVICES**
brown.edu/health

**BWell**
BWell provides strong, effective and culturally relevant health promotion services. Its work is both proactive and responsive to the health needs of students in an effort to provide holistic care. BWell provides both individual and community education and support on a variety of wellness needs, including topics of alcohol and other drugs, sexual health and sexual violence, as well as stress and anxiety management, sleep and general self-care.

**BWELL HEALTH PROMOTION**
brown.edu/bwell

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**
Counseling and Psychological Services is a safe and confidential place for students to talk. CAPS provides short-term psychotherapy, crisis intervention and limited medication management. The department also offers a variety of workshops, support groups and presentations on mental health issues throughout the year. For students requiring ongoing treatment, CAPS will provide individualized referrals to therapists in the Providence area. Clinical staff members are on call at night and during weekends.

**CAPS**
brown.edu/caps
### STUDENT SAFETY OR CONDUCT CONCERNS

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<th>Nature of Concern</th>
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<td>Potential or immediate danger</td>
<td>Department of Public Safety</td>
<td>863-4111</td>
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<td>General concerns about Brown community member</td>
<td>Student Support Services</td>
<td>863-3145</td>
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<td>Psychological support needed</td>
<td>Counseling and Psychological Services</td>
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<td>Non-emergency medical care</td>
<td>Health Services</td>
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<td>On-call Counselor</td>
<td>863-3476</td>
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<td>Sexual Harassment and Assault Resources</td>
<td>863-7895</td>
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#### After-Hours Contact Information

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<td>Non-emergency</td>
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<td>Counseling and Psychological Services</td>
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