GREETINGS from OPAL!

We are so happy to have returning students back on campus and to welcome new students to our Dartmouth community. We know some of you may be wondering, “What exactly is OPAL?” Here’s what we know: studying and living in a diverse community enhances social development, prepares you for leading and working in a global society, promotes critical thinking and enhances self-awareness. To further such experiences at Dartmouth, the Office of Pluralism and Leadership (OPAL) was created to support students’ academic success, provide student leadership development opportunities, enhance the engagement and cultural competency of the Dartmouth community, and design programs and services to build and sustain an inclusive and welcoming academic community. OPAL realizes this vision through its talented Socio-Cultural Advising and Outreach team of Assistant Deans, via collaborating with partners across campus on signature programs like the Leadership Discovery Program, the Diversity Peer Program, the First Gen Network, the OUTreach Peer Mentoring Program, Crossing the Line and many other programs. OPAL also coordinates campus-wide dialogues and cultural programs to promote both education and celebration of diverse experiences and perspectives. OPAL provides so many wonderful opportunities to learn about oneself, the Dartmouth community and the world.

In Community,
All of us at OPAL

Principle of Community

In June of 1980, the Board of Trustees endorsed the following “Principle of Community” for Dartmouth College:

The life and work of a Dartmouth student should be based on integrity, responsibility and consideration. In all activities each student is expected to be sensitive to and respectful of the rights and interests of others and to be personally honest. He or she should be appreciative of the diversity of the community as providing an opportunity for learning and moral growth. The following principles guide OPAL’s priorities and goals:

• An inclusive and affirming educational environment leads to better learning outcomes for all students.
• Students who are supported and challenged appropriately are best positioned to meet their educational, personal, and career potential.
• Understanding where students are developmentally, as well as their socio-cultural context, increases our ability to positively enhance student learning and leadership development.
• Leadership development can be a bridge between students’ curricular and co-curricular experiences, evidenced by the transfer of knowledge into applied skills.
• The development of key partnerships with campus colleagues maximizes learning outcomes for all students.
### Who’s Who In OPAL?

**OPAL is located in Carson 125, and at dartmouth.edu/~opal**

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About Our Offices

Pan-Asian Community Advising

The Office of Pan-Asian Student Advising (OPASA) within OPAL provides counseling and advising support to individual students, organizes educational, cultural, and social programs related to racial and ethnic identity development, advises Dartmouth’s 19 Asian-related student organizations on campus, and advocates on behalf of the Pan Asian student community to other areas of the College administration. For more information visit the Office of Pan-Asian Student Advising website: www.dartmouth.edu/~opasa or check out our Dartmouth Pan Asian Community blog: www.sites.dartmouth.edu/pac.

Native American Program

Dartmouth’s Native American Program (NAP) is designed to support Native American education; facilitate the holistic development of Native students; reflect on the value that self-determination and cultural expressions have in the lives of Native students; and cultivate a strong ethic of community engagement within the College community, its Native communities and its external relationships. The NAP Team is available to welcome you and connect you to the NAP’s Peer Advisors. Please connect with Minnie.L.Slater@dartmouth.edu to get information about NAP programs and services before you arrive.

Leadership and Community Resources

Whether you are the first in your immediate family to attend any college, a four-year American college, a private or even an Ivy League university, there are unique, and sometimes unforeseen, challenges that The First Generation Network can help you navigate. The First Gen Network promotes and hosts free student success events, activities and times to gather over food throughout the year.

The numerous leadership opportunities offered by OPAL throughout the year emphasize the importance of your individual identity development, how you interact with the Dartmouth community, and how you can affect change in your world.

Programs include:
- LDP - Leadership Discovery Program (open to first-year students only!)
- DPP - Diversity Peer Program
- IGD - Inter-Group Dialogue
- CTL - Crossing The Line
- ICC - Inter-Community Council

Latino/a Community Advising

As part of the Office of Pluralism and Leadership (OPAL), Latina/o Advising provides students with 1-on-1 personal, cultural, and academic support, and works with students and student groups on leadership development and student organization matters. In collaboration with the Latina/o student groups, the Advisor sponsors a number of campus events and workshops focusing on raising awareness of Latina/o issues. The Office of Latina/o Student Advising also offers internships to help students develop leadership, organizational, and communication skills. The Advisor oversees the Latin American, Latino and Caribbean Studies (LALACS) House Program, which serves as both a residential program and the hub for the community.

International Student Community

OPAL’s International Student Programs (ISP) enables new international undergraduates to quickly adjust and adapt to Dartmouth through an extensive International Student Orientation from September 3 - 9. In addition, upper-class International Student Mentors provide advice and assistance to first-year students. International students who sign up for the ISP Friendship Family Program will have the opportunity to learn about and participate in the lives of families and share home country cultures and customs with families from New Hampshire and Vermont! Learn more about ISP opportunities for new international students at our website: www.dartmouth.edu/opal/international.

Black Student Advising

As a part of OPAL, the Office of Black Student Advising (OBSA) is designed to support the Black community at Dartmouth. We are dedicated to enhancing students’ college experiences through supporting and challenging the community around issues pertinent to the Black experience. We offer personal and academic guidance, advising, and support including, but not limited to, social adjustment concerns, academic/classroom issues, bias related incidents, personal issues, financial aid concerns, new program ideas and program funding. Our office also helps students and internships, supports programming initiatives, and much more. We hope that you will find our office to be a great resource to you throughout your Dartmouth career.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Allied Student Community

The Office of Pluralism and Leadership is dedicated to supporting the academic, personal, and social success of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and allied students. Reese C. Kelly, Ph.D., the Assistant Dean and Advisor to LGBTQ+ Students and Allies in OPAL, provides support to individual students and student groups, supervises student interns, organizes educational, cultural, and social programs regarding sexual orientation and gender identity, advocates on behalf of LGBTQ+ students across areas of the college, and works collaboratively with campus partners to provide an inclusive, arming, and empowering environment for all students. OPAL directed programs that are central to LGBTQ+ and ally life include a peer mentoring program, Pride Week events, ally development workshops, a gender neutral residential floor, and a resource room. In the fall of 2014, a new LGBTQ+ living and learning residence will open for students interested in developing a deeper knowledge of LGBTQ identities, histories, and politics.
# 10 Tips for Succeeding in Your First Year

1. Leave your door open, both literally and figuratively, so new conversations can happen!

2. Let Dartmouth challenge you. Your perspective on a lot of issues will evolve continually throughout your time here, and that’s okay. No one here has all the answers, and it’s important to remember that our varying life experiences shape our opinions.

3. Remember to spend time alone and reflect on what matters to you.

4. Choose classes that interest you, not one’s you think you have to take. Make sure you balance your classes sensibly. Try checking out each class’s syllabus to figure out where the classes are weighted, so you don’t end up with two midterms one day and three essays the next.

5. Get to know your professors, Dean, Advisor and staff members on campus—especially at OPAL! Everyone is very excited that you’re here and can’t wait to get to know you and see you grow.

6. Don’t be too shy or embarrassed to try and meet older students. In fact, go out of your way to do it. You won’t regret the effort - talking to older students can give you a whole new perspective on your first-year fall.

7. There will always be parties, but you only get one shot at that midterm. Not everyone here drinks, and it's totally possible to enjoy yourself without doing so.

8. You will get at least one grade lower than what you expected. Learn from the situation and adjust your study techniques accordingly. There's nothing wrong with taking a little bit of time to get settled into college academics. Reach out to tutors or study groups through the Academic Skills Center.

9. No matter what other people tell you, your Dartmouth experience should be what you want it to be. Don’t feel pressured to do more than you want to. Do what’s right for you.

10. It gets better -- some of the happiest people that you’ll meet had a not-so-amazing first-year fall.
“Take advantage of all the opportunities provided to you, because being at Dartmouth is a blessing and you should try to have the most enjoyable experience you can. Also, find your 'Dartmouth family' early on, because they will help you feel at home when you are confronted with challenges.” -Bazille Owen-Reese '15

“1) Solicit advice on professors and classes, and listen! The professor really does make a difference. I learned this way too late.

2) Take advantage of the Deans, and form relationships with them. They can be really helpful in coordinating your life at Dartmouth, and are always happy to be consultants in your Dartmouth-life crises and endeavors.

3) You’re surrounded by thousands of intelligent and talented people with perspectives and life experiences entirely different from your own. Reach out to your peers and take the time to hear their stories, even if it’s just getting coffee on a free afternoon. Make it a part of your college education. You will learn something that you’re unlikely to have learned in a classroom.” -Kate Thorstad '14

“Use the resources provided to you, they are there to help you succeed at Dartmouth. Don't be afraid to ask for help in your classes-tutors, study groups, and professor’s office hours help tremendously if you are feeling unsure about concepts. And definitely don’t hesitate to ask upperclass students for advice, tips, and tricks!” -Christina Goodson '14

It is okay to be vulnerable. It might appear that everyone on campus has their act together, but that is a complete lie. Don't be afraid to express how you are truly feeling and to ask for help when you need it. Use your resources: UGAs, DOSEs, Academic Skills, OPAL, the Dean's Office, etc. and form a support network. Please reach out to upperclass students! We made it through our first year here and have so much advice we can share with you. I promise we're not intimidating, just bummed we can't be first-year students again. Never forget that you are now a part of the Dartmouth family and we are all here for you. -Karen Afre '12

“Research professors that you would be interested taking classes from during your 4 years. If you intend to be a gov major, I would recommend: Professor Mastanduno: US Foreign Policy, Professor Muirhead: American Political Thought, Professor Stone: Making of American Public Policy, Professor Carry: Gov 4 and Other Latin American political classes. Also Duthu and Calloway were my favorites in the NAS department.

Even if you did well in high school, be sure to make the time to adjust to the college workload. It will catch up to you faster than you think, especially on the quarter system.” –PaaWee Rivera '13

“Be sure and pay attention to good advice and use it, don’t just ignore it. Because it’s always preferable to learn from the mistakes of others than from your own.” –Spencer Lone Fight '16
Orientation Information

If you are joining the Dartmouth College community in the fall of 2013, OPAL would like to welcome you to connect with any of our affinity communities or programs that you identify with. Also, be sure to check all the important information and upcoming dates for Orientation, and some frequently asked questions to the Undergraduate Deans Office.

You Can End Bias at Dartmouth

All members of the Dartmouth Community have a responsibility to maintain a welcoming and inclusive environment. If you are the target of, witness to, or even simply hear about any form of bias at Dartmouth, you should submit a Bias Impact Report immediately. These reports, which can be anonymous, assist the College in tracking, investigating, or responding to bias incidents in order to mitigate their impact on our community. Access the reporting form through the OPAL website. Dartmouth.edu/~opal.

Ending bias at Dartmouth begins with you.