The Midyear Path

Brandeis
WELCOME TO THE MIDYEAR CLASS.
We hope this guide will answer your questions and get you as excited about Brandeis as we are about you.

At Brandeis, we are fortunate enough to receive applications from a greater number of qualified students than we could ever offer fall admission. Several years ago, we began to accept more of the students we wanted to enroll by offering some of them an opportunity to join our community in January.

Each year, our admissions counselors carefully select a group of students who display the maturity and creativity that demonstrate they can embrace the opportunity the midyear program represents. By enrolling students for both the fall and spring terms, Brandeis is able to welcome a greater number of talented students to the class. We know that you and the approximately 100 other midyears who arrive in January for New Student Orientation will infuse our campus with a new excitement about what it means to be a Brandeisian.
BEING A MIDYEAR IS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY
As a midyear, you have an entire semester to take advantage of your independence. Students are encouraged to spend this time in a pursuit that they and their families feel will offer a productive and fulfilling experience before entering Brandeis. Some work, volunteer or find an internship. Others take classes at a college or university near their home. Still others use this time to study in another part of the country or the world.

**Finding a job, internship or volunteer opportunity**

Working or volunteering during the fall is a great way to transition from high school to Brandeis. It teaches time management, fosters teamwork, hones critical thinking and communication skills, and provides leadership opportunities.

**Taking courses before enrolling at Brandeis**

The Office of the University Registrar assists midyear students who wish to take courses at another institution before enrolling at Brandeis to ensure those courses are transferable. Faculty and staff advisors are assigned to midyear students over the summer and are available to provide advice regarding course registration, academic options, and other university policies and processes before the start of the fall semester. In general, we encourage you to select courses that excite you. This will make your midyear experience more enjoyable and will likely improve your chances for success.

**TRANSITIONING TO CAMPUS**

**Midyear students get their own Orientation**

Midyear Orientation is specifically designed with your needs and interests in mind. Prior to your first on-campus semester, you will receive contact information for your Orientation Leader so that you can begin asking questions and getting to know the university before you even arrive. During Orientation, you will have opportunities to directly engage with staff members, peer advisors and your classmates. Your Orientation Leader and the Department of Orientation staff are more than happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have.

To learn more, visit [www.brandeis.edu/orientation/arrival/midyear.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/orientation/arrival/midyear.html). You may also contact the Department of Orientation by email at orientation@brandeis.edu or by phone at 781-736-5074.

**Take the lead at Brandeis**

It probably won’t surprise you to learn that many midyears quickly assume leadership positions at Brandeis. It’s a great way to immerse yourself in the campus community while developing an important life skill. You can head a club, star in a theatrical production, serve as an editor of a campus publication or join the student government association, just to name a few of the
opportunities available to you. Later in your academic career, you may wish to serve as a Community Advisor or on a quad council in one of the residence halls, or start your own student-run business. Whatever your interests, we encourage you to step up and take the lead.

**SEMESTER ABROAD PROGRAMS DESIGNED FOR MIDYEARS**

For the adventurous, Brandeis works with study abroad programs in two distinct cities that are tailored to meet the academic and social interests of midyear students. Participants in these programs can earn 16 credits to transfer to Brandeis. Programs run from late August/early September to mid-December 2017. For more information, please visit [www.brandeis.edu/abroad/midyear.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/abroad/midyear.html).

**Fall Program in London**

The College of Global Studies at Arcadia University sponsors a fall program in London for Brandeis midyears. Experience all the culture and excitement London offers through field study, excursions and cross-cultural activities, along with thought-provoking lectures. With the city of London as your classroom, you’ll enroll in four courses in areas such as history, politics, literature, economics and journalism. The program will help you connect with the local community through volunteering, joining clubs at a British university or getting involved with a community center or religious institution. Students enroll in a first-year writing seminar and three elective courses. You’ll also have the option to enroll in a class at a British university, where you can study alongside local students.

**Fall Program in Florence**

Launch your Brandeis career in Florence, Italy. CET Academic Programs, a leading study abroad program provider, offers Brandeis midyear students the chance to spend their first Brandeis semester in Florence. Students take five courses while studying and living in one of the world’s most captivating cities. Classes include “Beginning Italian,” a first-year writing seminar and three electives in fields such as art history, studio art, politics and economics. The program brings learning outside the classroom by arranging an extensive array of fully and partially sponsored activities. Students can take bike tours through the Chianti countryside, participate in city charity walks and join local soccer tournaments.
WHO ARE BRANDEIS MIDYEARS?
What does being a midyear mean to you?

Being a midyear for me means having a family. Although I’ve made so many amazing friends here at Brandeis, some of my closest are fellow midyears. Coming to Brandeis in January is definitely nerve-racking, but knowing that there are other students in the same position is comforting. After Midyear Orientation ended and all the other unfamiliar students came back to campus, I took comfort in knowing that I had an intimate friend group I could rely on. I still know that if I’m having a rough day, have questions about classes or even just want to see some friendly faces, I can always turn to my midyear family.

What did you first think when you were offered a spot in the midyear class? How did you come to know that being a midyear was a good fit for you?

When I was first offered the spot, I was confused — I had never heard of a program like this. I was uneasy about being in a different situation than my friends who were going to college in the fall. The more I thought about it though, the more comfortable I became with the idea. I realized how great of an opportunity it would be to have a pre-college experience. I weighed the pros and cons and saw this as a great opportunity to travel, explore, mature and do something off the beaten path. Brandeis is full of individuals with unique experiences, and being a midyear was just one of mine.

What do you love about Brandeis?

I love the sense of community. Whether you join some of the 200+ clubs we have, volunteer with one of our community service groups or play an intramural sport, you will create an extensive network of
friends you interact with every day. You find out what kind of person you want to be and then live that life, surrounded by a community that is stimulating and comforting.

**What are you most proud of doing here at Brandeis?**

I’m most proud of volunteering in the Waltham Group, one of our community service groups. It is made up of many different programs, and I am a part of two called SPECTRUM and Blood Drive. Through SPECTRUM I have the amazing opportunity to work with children who have autism. It allows me to learn and grow as a person, while helping them at the same time. I am also a coordinator of the blood drives we host at Brandeis. Through this, I cooperate with fellow coordinators to create three blood drives on campus that collect enough blood to save more than 1,000 lives. It also engages more than 150 student volunteers and numerous university staff in altruistic events.

**What did you do in your fall semester? What did the experience mean to you?**

During my fall semester, I went to London through one of the amazing study abroad programs Brandeis offers midyears. I was able to take fascinating classes in areas such as London film and theater, as well as visit eight European countries. I made some of my greatest friends, who were also midyears, through the program. Ultimately, this experience was one of exploration: exploring my education, exploring Europe and exploring myself. Being a midyear allowed me this eye-opening semester that matured me and shaped me forever.

**What advice would you give future midyears?**

My advice would be: Don’t stress. There are eight semesters in college, and missing one of them doesn’t affect you. You will still accomplish everything that you want to, as long as you’re open to new opportunities. Everyone at Brandeis has had different life experiences, and being a midyear is just one thing that makes yours unique and special. It’s a great opportunity to take a break, find yourself and have fun!
What does being a midyear mean to you?

Being a midyear means being able to start my Brandeis academic adventure with an extraordinary community of people who have done amazing things during their first semester and are excited to start their college career.

What did you first think when you were offered a spot in the midyear class? How did you come to know that being a midyear was a good fit for you?

When I opened my acceptance letter I was thrilled, but my happiness was suppressed after I read that I would not start school until the spring semester. To be totally honest, I was confused, upset and kind of disappointed. After I got over the idea of not going straight to college as I had always imagined, I began to see that Brandeis wanted me to be a part of its community. The reason it offered me a position in January was due to a spacing issue. It did not mean that I was a less qualified student.

I soon began liking the idea of starting school in January. Good things come to those who wait. I knew in my heart that Brandeis was the right school for me, so I had to wait.

What do you love about Brandeis?

I love that people who I do not know will say hi to me and hold the door for me. This may sound like an insignificant gesture, but I believe it shows the compassion and concern for others that many students have. It is nice to know that students are looking out for someone other than themselves.
What are you most proud of doing here at Brandeis?

I am proud that, through Brandeis, I had the opportunity to study abroad at one of the best universities in Asia, the National University of Singapore. During the spring 2016 semester, I sought ways to improve relations between the East and the West. Studying abroad somewhere out of my comfort zone was a step in my life that took a lot of preparation, bravery and effort on my part, but Brandeis was there to help me through the entire process and prepare me for life abroad.

In addition, when reflecting on my freshman semester, I am proud that I was able to join the Brandeis community with ease. I am an outgoing person, so I did not find it difficult to meet fall admits and upperclassmen. I am also proud that I was able to make an academic transition into Brandeis with ease. I did not feel academically behind after my first semester. I am on track to graduate, on time, with a major in international and global studies and a minor in business.

What did you do in your fall semester? What did the experience mean to you?

I am from Washington, D.C., which influenced my decision to intern during the fall semester. I was fortunate to receive the opportunity to intern at NPR and at a nonprofit called Search for Common Ground that promotes peace building and conflict transformation across the world. At Brandeis, I have found myself referring to experiences from my internships in class. In some classes, I feel very familiar with the material taught, because I have firsthand experience from working in the field before school. My internships taught me more than I could have imagined.

What advice would you give future midyears?

Do not let the idea of starting school later than some of your friends bog you down. Honestly, it could be a blessing in disguise. Intern. Travel. Build your résumé. Do something that you always wanted to do but never had time. Do not see being a midyear as a setback. Instead, see it as a semester of opportunity.
What does being a midyear mean to you?
As a midyear, I was able to study abroad and learn a new language before I started at Brandeis. This experience allowed me to have a greater perspective on college as a process. During the program, I spent a fair amount of time with juniors from another university, and after traveling through Europe as a freshman, I felt that the distinctions between the different years of college became more arbitrary. I realized quite clearly that the college experience is what you make of it, which was very reassuring to me.

What did you first think when you were offered a spot in the midyear class? How did you come to know that being a midyear was a good fit for you?
At first, I was very excited to be accepted to Brandeis, but when I read that I had been admitted as a midyear, I was confused. I thought that I couldn’t have been admitted as a midyear, as I hadn’t applied to be one, and I didn’t know entering as a midyear was an option. I didn’t know if being a midyear would allow me to study the sciences, as I intended, or if I would be limited in my academic options. However, I knew that Brandeis was the school that best fit me, so I chose to make it work and used the opportunities Brandeis offered, such as the study abroad program, to prepare me for a meaningful college experience.

What do you love about Brandeis?
The people here are incredibly nice and supportive, and they encourage me to pursue my interests on both academic and extracurricular levels.
What are you most proud of doing here at Brandeis?

I’m pretty proud that I have already completed every general education requirement and that I was able to do so in my first semester/summer at Brandeis. Now I have time to study physics and complete my major requirements.

What did you do in your fall semester? What did the experience mean to you?

In my fall semester, I studied in Florence, Italy, living with a host family. I traveled throughout Europe, learned Italian and became more independent. Going abroad meant that I was farther away from home than I had ever been, and I felt more responsible for myself after living in Florence for four months.

What advice would you give future midyears?

Being a midyear doesn’t mean that you can’t be just as involved with Brandeis as other students. Get involved in clubs, activities and anything else that interests you! Furthermore, if you’re interested in majoring in a science, rest assured it is possible to accomplish. It’s difficult, and varies by person, but it worked out for me and feels very rewarding to meet my academic goals. Use the resources on campus to help you meet your goals.
What does being a midyear mean to you?

Being a midyear means being part of a community. As a midyear, I was identified as a student who could thrive in a nontraditional environment and explore an incredible opportunity during my first semester.

What did you first think when you were offered a spot in the midyear class? How did you come to know that being a midyear was a good fit for you?

I was definitely a bit upset and surprised when I found out I was offered a spot in the midyear class, but it eventually turned into one of the determining factors as to why I decided to attend Brandeis. Being a midyear and having the opportunity to take my first semester in another country seemed like an opportunity I couldn’t pass up. I was able to earn credits and learn while not enrolling directly in the traditional college experience. I was able to explore the world and new culture in an unfamiliar setting.

What do you love about Brandeis?

Brandeis has this charming and admirable characteristic of attracting students who strive to do great things. There are numerous opportunities to get involved that already exist, but you can also create your own new opportunities. I always feel like if I want to try something new, it is open to me. I think Brandeis does an incredible job of helping students find their niche.

What are you most proud of doing here at Brandeis?

I am most proud of creating my own club called ONE Brandeis. ONE is a national advocacy and campaigning organization tackling the global poverty crisis. I started
What advice would you give future midyears?

Don’t be afraid of the nontraditional and out of the ordinary. Don’t let this experience scare you because it is different from what your friends, siblings or even your parents did. Get involved — even if you weren’t on campus for the fall semester! People want to hear your voice at Brandeis, so don’t hide it!

I spent my fall semester abroad in Arcadia University’s London program with 13 other midyear students. I can definitely say it was one of the most fun and eye-opening experiences I have ever had. It’s the first time I felt like I was truly navigating adulthood, while being thousands of miles away from home. I think it really pushed me to learn how to be an individual and take advantage of opportunities, no matter how intimidating they may be. It reaffirmed my thoughts on how important it is to be pushed outside your comfort zone. I gained such meaningful friendships, explored incredible cities and learned how to cook on my own. … I now make a mean chicken.
FREQUENTLY ASKED MIDYEAR QUESTIONS
How large a midyear class will Brandeis enroll?
Brandeis enrolls approximately 100 midyear students each academic year.

When do midyear students graduate?
Like other Brandeis students, midyears follow a program designed to be completed in eight semesters. Some students, however, are able to fulfill their requirements in seven semesters. The choice of when to graduate, like the choice of how to spend the fall semester, is one you will need to make for yourself, in conjunction with your advisors and family.

What housing opportunities are available for midyear students?
Midyears are guaranteed housing in a residence hall for their first three consecutive semesters. Brandeis makes every effort to place midyear students together, either as roommates or as neighbors in the same hall. You will be notified about your housing assignment in November.

Can midyear admission be deferred for a semester?
No, all admission offers at Brandeis are deferrable for a full year only. Midyear students must start at Brandeis in the month of January.

Will members of the midyear class be considered for financial aid?
Yes. If the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE application was filed on time, you will receive a tentative financial aid award letter from the Financial Aid office. This application must be filed online at www.collegeboard.org.

Can members of the midyear class take courses at another college during the fall semester before they enter Brandeis?
Midyear students may enroll in a non-degree-seeking program at a regionally accredited, degree-granting institution prior to matriculating at Brandeis. The Office of the University Registrar at Brandeis can help you determine, before you enroll in fall classes, whether you will receive credit for such coursework and whether those courses will fulfill Brandeis academic requirements. To learn more, please visit www.brandeis.edu/registrar/transfer/midyear.html.

What are my options if I’m interested in pre-health or the sciences?
Brandeis has an excellent record of preparing midyears to pursue science degrees and education in the health professions. With some careful planning, midyears can position themselves to attend top medical schools or other science graduate programs. There are benefits to starting your academic career in the spring. The senior year of high school is often filled with tough AP courses, the stress of college admissions and other high-pressure situations. A semester off gives you time to refresh mentally. You can focus on other pre-health
or science-related activities, such as gaining EMT or CNA certification, working in a hospital or doing research full time. Such experiences can help strengthen your understanding of the health- and science-related professions and improve your candidacy for professional school.

*If you wish to pursue the pre-health track, you have several options. For example, you can:*

**Enroll in “BIOL 15b: Cells and Organisms,”** one of three core courses in the biology sequence, in your first spring semester. You may then enroll in “BIOL 14a: Genetics and Genomics” the following fall. You may also start the “General Biology Laboratory” sequence with BIOL 18b in your first fall semester if you took BIOL 15b in the spring.

**Complete both semesters of “General Chemistry” (I and II) and “General Chemistry Lab” (I and II) at Brandeis during the summer after your first semester or during your first full academic year.**

Students who wish to attend medical or dental school typically need to complete two semesters of general chemistry with lab, two semesters of organic chemistry with lab, two semesters of biology with lab, two semesters of physics with lab, and biochemistry before taking the MCAT or DAT. Students interested in other health professions should visit the pre-health website for more information.

If you are planning to major in chemistry or physics, it can be challenging to pursue these academic tracks as a midyear student. We strongly recommend that you meet with your Class Advisor in Academic Services to discuss course sequencing options.

Academic Services staff are dedicated to working with you in order to support your academic pursuits. For more information on the sciences and pre-health at Brandeis, visit [www.brandeis.edu/acserv/health](http://www.brandeis.edu/acserv/health).
BRANDEIS MIDYEARS HAVE SPENT THE FALL SEMESTER:

> Working on Capitol Hill
> Working in fundraising for organizations such as the World Children’s Fund and Medical Mission International
> Working and volunteering in hospitals
> Working at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Museum of Science in Boston
> Working as an emergency medical technician
> Volunteering with local community service organizations
> Volunteering on a kibbutz
> Studying in places like Israel, Italy, Switzerland, Scotland and China
> Studying in London or Florence with other Brandeis midyears
> Writing a novel
> Teaching English in Ghana
> Working for Greenpeace International
> Interning at a zoo
> Running family businesses

WHAT WILL YOU ADD TO THIS LIST?
WE WANT TO HELP MAKE YOUR MIDYEAR TRANSITION A SMOOTH ONE. IF YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS, FEEL FREE TO GIVE US A CALL.

ACADEMIC SERVICES
781-736-3470

ATHLETICS
781-736-3668

COMMUNITY LIVING
781-736-5060

HIATT CAREER CENTER
781-736-3618

ORIENTATION
781-736-5074

STUDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES
781-736-3700

STUDENT LIFE
781-736-3600

STUDY ABROAD
781-736-3483

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS
781-736-3500

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