

Brandeis University Sophomore Year Reflective Guide

Sophomore year marks the midpoint in the collegiate career of the student. Some of the major milestones in the sophomore year are planning your academic path, pursuing extracurricular activities at a deeper and more involved level, and exploring internships or post-graduate opportunities that fit the student's interests. Each of these milestones can take place during the entire year, and continue into the next two years. They are processes that require you to reflect not only on what you have accomplished in your first year, but also decide what you want the next two years to look like.

Milestone #1: Planning My Academic Path

- What classes have I most enjoyed and benefited from?
- What resources can I utilize in determining my major?
- Why am I choosing to declare this major?
- Will I be challenged by the coursework in this major?
- How do I strengthen my relationships with faculty? *Have I visited my instructors during their office hours? Have I participated in the "Take a Professor to Lunch" program or invited a professor to lunch on my own initiative?*
- *Have I found a faculty advisor who will help me achieve my academic goals, including helping me think about whether or not to pursue a minor or a second major?*
- Do I see myself pursuing a form of independent research within the major (senior essay, honors thesis, independent study) so that I can expand my research, analytic, and creative skills within a topic that really interests me?
- *What will help me be pushed to think critically at a higher level?*
- How will I connect my coursework to my experiences outside of the classroom?
- Have I thought about study abroad or a sort of abroad experience? *Do I know the appropriate deadlines for study abroad applications? Have I prepared myself for study abroad by continuing my study of a foreign language or taking appropriate courses?*
- How can I make space in my schedule to explore courses in other disciplines?
- *How have my courses helped me learn about other cultures, or issues related to social justice?*

Milestone #2: Pursuing Extracurricular Activities

- What extracurricular activities do I want to pursue this year?
- Have I familiarized myself with the extracurricular opportunities on and off campus for this activity (by attending activity fairs and contacting the club leader)?
- Do I want to take on a leadership position?
- What would taking on the leadership role mean? Will it complement some of my classroom experiences (it is ok if it does not)?

Milestone #3: Exploring Internships/Post-Graduate Opportunities

- What academic and non-academic experiences have I enjoyed for the past two years?
- Do I want to pursue an internship based on extracurricular interests, *on career goals*, on classroom experiences *and/or based on contributions I can make to social justice?*
- What will I learn by doing a specific internship?
- How will it affect my post-graduate decisions? Will it affect my choices in graduate schools or the types of jobs I look for after graduation?
- *Have I visited the Hiatt Career Center or attended any of their programs?*