

# SKIDMORE COLLEGE

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## Advising Handbook, Faculty Edition

2015 – 2016

## ACADEMIC CALENDAR FALL 2015

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September 6	New and transfer students arrive on campus
September 6-11	Orientation for new students
September 7	Returning students arrive on campus
September 9	<b>FALL SEMESTER</b> classes begin
September 11	<b><i>Last day to submit completed internship credit applications to the Office of Academic Advising; last day to add a course without a signature</i></b>
September 11	Independent study deadline
September 14	Adding a course requires the instructor's signature
September 17	Adding a course requires approval of the CAS, instructor, and advisor
September 22	Last day to drop or change grading option (S/U)
October 15	Deadline for submitting off-campus study applications for Spring 2016 to the Office of Off-Campus Study and Exchanges (study abroad programs)
October 26	Advising Period begins
November 3	Registration for Spring 2016 Semester begins
November 18	W deadline: last day to withdraw from classes without grade penalty. Permission of instructor and advisor is required.
November 25-29	Thanksgiving Vacation
December 11	Fall Semester classes end; last day to withdraw failing from classes ("WF" appears on the transcript)
December 12-14	Study Days
December 15-18	Final Examinations
December 19	Fall Semester ends

## ACADEMIC CALENDAR SPRING 2016

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January 22	New and transfer students arrive
January 23	London returning students arrive
January 24	Returning students arrive
January 25	<b>SPRING SEMESTER</b> classes begin
January 27	<b><i>Last day to submit completed internship credit applications to the Office of Academic Advising; last day to add a course without a signature</i></b>
January 27	Independent study deadline
January 28	Adding a course requires the instructor's signature
January 29	Deadline for submission of grade (A-F, S/U) by instructor for Fall Semester "Incomplete" work. If no grade is submitted, grade becomes permanent IF, figured into the grade point average as F.
February 3	Adding a course requires approval of the CAS, instructor, and advisor.
February 8	Last day to drop or change grading option (S/U)
March 12-20	Spring Vacation
March 15	Deadline for submitting off-campus study applications for Fall 2016 (and academic year 2016-2017) to Office of Off-Campus Study and Exchanges
March 28	Advising Period begins
April 5	Registration for Fall 2016 Semester begins
April 14	W deadline: last day to withdraw from classes without grade penalty. Permission of instructor and advisor is required.
May 3	Spring Semester classes end. Last day to withdraw failing from classes ("WF" appears on the transcript)
May 5-8	Study Days
May 9-13	Final Examinations
May 21	Commencement
June 24	Last day for submission of grade (A-F, S/U) by instructor for Spring Semester "Incomplete" work.

# Preface

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The *Advising Handbook, Faculty Edition*, provides information that faculty advisors need for their work with advisees. All materials specific to faculty are found in this volume and include more sensitive faculty issues or amplifications of the text written for students on the same topics in the *New Student Advising and Registration Guide*. As always, we look forward to your suggestions for increasing the handbook's effectiveness. Please contact us in the Office of Academic Advising to share your thoughts.

There is no one formula for effective academic advising. Each faculty member has an individual style that he or she brings to the advising relationship. Many of the observations made in this document come from conversations over the years with faculty about their experiences. Others come from the Office of Academic Advising staff that support and help coordinate the faculty advising program at Skidmore. At its heart, advising is an extension of teaching and learning, and the strategies you employ as an advisor resemble those that you use in the classroom: posing questions that lead to discovery; exploring your advisees' intellectual and career aspirations; helping them to seek coherence among the curricular choices they make; sharing academic triumphs and achievements; and listening and responding to your advisees' academic struggles and failures.

Your work as faculty advisors is critical to the success of both the newest members of the Skidmore community, the Class of 2019, as well as our upper-class students. The faculty advisor is the first-year student's primary contact with the Skidmore academic community, and the relationship formed during Orientation and the first semester is a very significant one in setting the stage for a student's successful integration into our community. Supporting your efforts as faculty advisors is our highest priority.

July 2015

## **Office of Academic Advising - Staff**

Kim Marsella, Director of Academic Advising  
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FACULTY ADVISING  
AND  
ACADEMIC MENTORING  
PROGRAM

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## The Role of the Faculty Advisor and Academic Mentor

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Each June, the Office of Academic Advising (OAA) launches the “Summer Advising” initiative with the help of over 40 faculty and staff. Summer Advisors welcome incoming students to our community, introduce them to Skidmore’s curriculum and degree requirements, and help them to craft a Fall-semester schedule that promotes exploration and achievement. Our goal is to mentor students from the earliest days of their Skidmore education. We believe that new students arrive on campus in the fall better prepared for academic life because of these efforts.

Summer Advisors provide records of their contacts with students for your information. These notes often describe the students’ degree of preparation and the academic interests that have guided their selection of courses. The notes are available to you through the Advising Portal.

During the summer, members of the Class of 2019 were asked to write their first “Reflection and Projection” (RAP) essay. In the RAP, students reflect on their decision to attend a liberal arts college while addressing their own goals and aspirations. We encourage you to read your advisees’ RAPs before meeting them during Orientation and to use the RAP as a basis for your introductory meeting with each student. RAPs are available through the Advising Portal.

As you prepare for your first meeting with your advisees, recognize that their expectations for the advising relationship with a faculty member may or may not be appropriate. For example, your advisees may equate you with their high school guidance counselor, or, more likely, they will not know what to expect. An early discussion about expectations for the advising relationship is an important first step.

### **We hope that you will find the following expectations reasonable:**

- *Advising as an extension of teaching and learning*

Good advising is both information-based as well as reflective and philosophical. The faculty advisor can help the student comprehend issues of intellectual and personal growth as well as discover a wide variety of academic, co-curricular, and career-related opportunities beyond the student’s immediate experience. A faculty advisor can encourage the student to raise new questions about her academic life, help her clarify intellectual and personal aspirations, and help her appreciate the relationships between liberal learning and life after Skidmore.

- *Reliability and credibility*

Establish early on your credibility and reliability as a faculty advisor. Students need to know that you are an academic resource for them, that the advice and information you offer is accurate, and that you are familiar with and know how to direct them to other campus resources when there are questions you cannot answer or situations you cannot handle. Give your advisees your office hours, phone number, and email address (and tell them how you prefer they contact you).

- *Planning the academic program*

Helping your advisee plan an academic program that is consistent with her abilities, needs, and interests is a basic function of the advising relationship. You should also help your advisee monitor her academic standing and progress, especially with respect to all-college, major, and minor requirements. **Please teach your students how to access and read their degree audits.** If you have questions about how to do this, please contact our office for help.

- *Fostering qualities of independence and responsibility*

An essential goal of the advising relationship is to foster the qualities of independence and responsibility in your advisees. While you will probably need to adopt a more hands-on approach with your first-year advisees, a realistic goal for juniors and seniors is self-reliance. In the end, *it is the student's responsibility* to understand and fulfill degree requirements in a timely fashion.

- *Encouraging involvement outside the classroom*

We hope you will consider the importance of your advisees' personal development and encourage them to become involved, even minimally, in some co-curricular activity. Such engagement can make the difference between feelings of inclusion and disaffection. This good advice comes from Harvard education professor Richard Light, author of *Making the Most of College* (2001). He also counsels us to encourage our advisees to form meaningful relationships with their faculty—getting to know even one faculty member per term or per year can greatly enhance a student's college experience.

- *Accessibility and availability*

Accessibility and availability are key to the advising relationship, especially for the new student. We have no prescription for how often you should meet one-on-one with advisees, but we suggest that you schedule individual appointments with your first-year advisees at least three times during the fall semester: **(1) once before the end of the add-drop period to check on your advisees' final course schedule and adjustment to college, (2) again before midterms to assess academic progress and further adjustment to college, and (3) prior to registration.** We encourage you to meet a fourth time—in early December—to offer advice and assurance to advisees who will be encountering their first final exams and term papers. Please direct your advisees to campus resources as necessary: the Office of the First Year Experience, the Office of Academic Advising, Student Academic Services, the Writing Center, and the Counseling Center all work to promote success and achievement. Remember that not all first-year advisees will respond to your invitations.

- *Crises and academic problems*

Skidmore does not expect you to act as clinician or counselor to your advisees or to be able to handle all academic crises. When you discover an advisee in academic distress, either through your own observations or through notices of unsatisfactory work from colleagues, you should respond immediately. This can be done most effectively through one-on-one conversations with the advisee. Once you have identified the factors that have contributed to the student's difficulty, you can discuss what steps the student might take to resolve the issue(s).

In the event that you have serious concerns about the emotional or physical well being of an advisee, **we urge you to take action.** Consult with the staff of the Counseling Center or Health Center—both welcome your contact—or call the Office of the First Year Experience (8111) or the Office of Academic Advising (5720). Alternatively, if your advisee is able, help him or her make an appointment with the appropriate campus resource while he or she is with you in your office so that you are certain a plan of action is in place. If you are uncertain about the effectiveness of the steps you have taken or if you continue to have concerns about your student, call the Office of Academic Advising.



- *Entertainment Fund and Dining Hall Program*

Scribner Seminar faculty cover entertainment funds through discretionary budgets provided by the First-Year Experience. The Office of Academic Advising also has entertainment funds available for group activities involving other advisees. The opportunities students have to meet socially with classroom faculty and advisors are occasions that they remember for years and value a great deal. Some suggestions for get-togethers include: attending an on-campus evening activity and having coffee together afterwards; having your advisees to your home for dinner; having a pre-registration pizza dinner meeting on campus with your advisees to discuss basic principles of planning a schedule and to answer questions about academic and co-curricular engagement. Faculty are asked to keep all receipts and submit them to the Office of Academic Advising. We suggest about \$75 per advisor, but please contact us if you would like to propose an activity that exceeds this amount. In addition to the entertainment fund, we invite advisors to share meals occasionally in the dining hall with their advisees, individually or in small groups. To take advantage of this opportunity, you will need a meal ticket that the Office of Academic Advising can provide if you give us advance notice.

- *Where do advisors get information and support?*

In addition to this handbook, faculty advisors should consult the [Catalog, department and program web sites](#), and the [Master Schedule](#) on the Registrar's web site. [The Office of Academic Advising](#) and [Registrar's Office](#) are available to answer your questions and to refer you to other information sources and campus support resources as needed.

## Electronic Resources

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Office of Academic Advising resources: <http://www.skidmore.edu/advising/>

*For Academic Advisors*

- [Advising and Student Records Portal](#). Course schedule, cumulative academic record, degree audit, RAP essay, and EW/QR/FLL placement information; parents' contact information, educational background, and current employment; long and short essays from the Common Application or the entire Common Application (beginning 2014); Advising Notes module.
- [Checklist of Degree Requirements](#)
- Electronic Version of the [New Student Advising and Registration Guide](#)

*For Course Instructors*

- [Unsatisfactory Work Notices](#)
- [Classroom Protocols: Notes for Skidmore Faculty](#)
- [Faculty Guide to Students in Distress](#)

Registrar's resources: <http://www.skidmore.edu/registrar/>

- [Advising and Student Record Portal](#). Class lists, majors and minors lists, anticipated majors and academic interests (at point of initial enrollment)
- [Master Schedule](#), courses that meet all-college requirements
- [FERPA Tutorial](#)
- On-line forms including:

[Schedule Worksheet](#)

[Course Registration/Override Form](#)

[Independent Study Form](#)

[Late Change in Course Registration](#)

[Part-Time Status Application](#)

[Overload Application](#)

[Withdraw Without Grade Penalty](#)

[Withdraw WITH Grade Penalty](#)

[FERPA Release of Records](#)

[Non-Matriculated Student Application Form](#)

[Request to Withdraw from the College](#)

[Transfer Credit Approval Form](#)

[Auditor Permission Form](#)

[Acceleration Process](#)

[Checklist of Degree Requirements](#)

[Major Form \(Declaration of\)](#)

[Minor Form \(Declaration of\)](#)

[Major/Minor Change Form](#)

[Student Teaching Placement Form](#)

## Web Student – Academic Records: Advising Portal

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Advising at Skidmore has been entirely paperless since Fall 2011. Rather than distribute static, paper-based advising folders containing student academic records, the Office of Academic Advising now provides these same records through an electronic portal linking faculty to their individual advisees. The portal contains access to *dynamic* copies of each student's course schedule, cumulative academic record, and degree audit. The portal also provides summary information about the student's academic interests and progress, high school background and EW/QR/FLL placement, Admissions essays (from the Common Application), and RAP essay. Further, an "e-notes" module allows faculty to document their interactions with advisees. Whether these notes are viewable or transferrable to other advisors (of the same student) is under each advisor's control *on a per note basis*.

Access to a student's electronic file begins whenever a student adds a new advisor.

The [portal](#) can be used when advising any student at Skidmore. However, Admissions essays are only available for students entering the college in the Fall of 2011 and beyond.

- **Schedule.** A dynamically updated record of the student's current course schedule. The student's schedule from the prior semester is also displayed.
- **Cumulative Record.** A record of the student's academic performance, including presence/absence of summer coursework and transfer credit. Term GPAs are calculated after each term and the current cumulative GPA is displayed at the top of the page.
- **Degree Audit.** Summary of the student's progress at meeting all-college, major, and minor requirements. The most recently run degree audit is displayed (time stamp is shown in upper left corner). New degree audits are automatically run each *week* for all students. Note: Students who want to run/view their degree audit can find the link for this on the registrar's webpage.
- **Parent Information.** Shows contact information, educational background, and current employment of the student's parents.
- **Advising Notes.** Allows the advisor to add comments about his or her interaction with each advisee. Within the Advising Notes tab, select the "New Note" button and type or paste-in your comment. The drop-down menu allows you to code the note by type while the "Access" button sets limits on confidentiality. The default option limits viewing rights to the person who created the note. The advisor may also choose to share the comment with other (secondary) advisors of the same student and/or with staff in the OAA. Notes accumulate in a scrollable window; they can be printed or saved to pdf at any time. If an advising relationship with a student is terminated, only those comments that the former advisor chose to share with other advisors will "carry over" to the new advisor.
- **Misc.** Provides a summary of registration holds (for example: advising, major declaration, financial, and disciplinary holds) and notifies advisors of the student's participation in intercollegiate athletics.
- **Admissions.** Summarizes the student's high school background, testing, and EW/QR/FLL placement. Sub-tabs provide the student's long and short essays (from the Common Application) or the entire Common Application (beginning Fall 2014).
- **RAP.** Provides the "Reflection and Projection" (RAP) question(s) posed to the student and his/her response(s).

## The Assignment of Advisors and Advisees

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The Office of Academic Advising coordinates and supports the effort of faculty advisors, who are the primary academic resource for students at Skidmore. As the *Faculty Handbook* attests, faculty are responsible for “informed and conscientious” academic advising.

### First-Year Advising and Mentoring through the Scribner Seminar

Starting in Fall 2005, Skidmore moved to a seminar system for all first-year students. All Scribner Seminar instructors, generally drawn from the full-time faculty at Skidmore, advise students. The initial faculty advisor for first-year students is the instructor of their Scribner Seminar.

### Transfer Student Advising

Department chairpersons, or a first-semester classroom instructor, serve as initial advisors to transfer students because these students typically arrive at Skidmore with advanced standing or come to Skidmore with declared majors. Transfer students often have specific questions that are best served by connecting them with a faculty member in their area of academic interest.

### Change of Advisor Process

A student wishing to change his or her faculty advisor may do so at any time after the first semester by completing an application available in the Office of Academic Advising. A first-year student may want to consider shifting to a new advisor after the first year or even after the first college semester. The goal is to build a solid advising relationship with a faculty member with whom the student has studied or with whom the student has connected through a potential major. The new advisor signs the application, the student returns the form to the Office of Academic Advising, and the advising folder is forwarded to the new advisor (in the case of paper-based advising). In the case of paperless advising, the new advisor is given immediate access to the student’s electronic records, including any advising notes shared by the previous advisor. When a student declares his or her major, the change of advisor process is incorporated into the major application so no separate form is necessary.

### Reassignment of Advisees during a Leave

Faculty who intend to take a leave of absence are encouraged to forewarn their advisees. Advisees may switch to a new advisor through the change-of-advisor process described above or wait to be assigned a new advisor by the chair of the department. Chairpersons take responsibility for reassigning a faculty member’s advisees (within the department) and notifying the Office of Academic Advising of these changes. The Office of Academic Advising in turn informs students of their change of advisor. We understand that many advisors returning from leave will want to invite their former advisees to return to them. This is not an automatic process, however, and requires that student or faculty member contact the Office of Academic Advising.

## Advising and Mentoring First-Year Students

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The following discussion includes topics that are particularly relevant to first-year student advising but apply to the sophomore year as well.

### Advising Portal

Faculty advisors obtain access to records for each of their advisees through the [Advising Portal](#). The portal contains up-to-date information on the student's degree audit, schedule, cumulative record, placement information, and admissions essays (see page 7) of this guide.

The "Advising Notes" and "Admissions" tabs will be of special interest to advisors of first-year students.

### Advising Notes Tab

Summer Advising Notes. OAA staff and Summer Advisors have already added notes describing interactions with your advisees. These notes often contain information about the rationale underlying your students' Fall-semester schedules. You may also find helpful information on each student's preparation, co-curricular interests, and longer-term goals. If the student is a Filene, Porter, or S<sup>3</sup>M Scholar, a note identifying the academic requirements of the scholarship is included for your information.

Academic Attention Letter. If a student's senior year has been below par, you will be copied on an "Academic Attention" letter from the Dean of Admissions to the student. A corresponding note will appear in the Advising Portal. Staff in the OAA will meet with any student so identified. As the advisor, consider anyone flagged in this manner to be "at risk," and please consult with OAA staff if you observe worrisome behavior or academic problems occurring.

### Admissions and RAP Tabs

Placement Information. Your advisee's testing information has been translated into Expository Writing (EW) and Quantitative Reasoning (QR) placement. FLL placements are also provided if testing information is available. Please refer to pages 14-19 in the *New Student Advising and Registration Guide* for information and recommendations regarding course selection for the EW, QR, and foreign language requirements.

Long and Short Essay. These essays often provide interesting insight into your students' educational background and goals. In some cases, a scanned copy of the student's entire Common Application is provided through the "Long Essay" link. Beginning in Fall 2014, all students have a link to the entire Common Application through the "View Admissions Application" link.

RAP Essay. The summer "Reflection and Projection" (RAP) enables the first-year student to begin the process of formulating academic and co-curricular goals. We encourage faculty advisors to read the RAP carefully and to use it as a basis for their first conversation with the student during Orientation. Please ask students who have not done their RAP to do so before their next advising appointment.

### Time Management

First-year students confront a 24-hour day that is no longer prescribed by high school classes, after-school activities, a part-time job, or parental demands. For some, this "clean slate" is liberating, and they have little trouble adjusting. Others struggle to organize and balance their commitment to studying, socializing, eating, and sleeping. Often, one or more of these four activities gets short shrift

during the first year of college. Time management is an important issue to raise in your initial conversation with your advisee and again in subsequent weeks. On-going assistance with this topic is available throughout the year in the office of Student Academic Services.

Encourage your advisee to buy an appointment book or utilize an electronic calendar and to spend a few minutes every evening plotting out the next day's activities - including blocks of *daytime* hours to study (high school students often think of "homework" as an evening-only activity). Suggest that your advisee put all of his or her syllabi information on the calendar, including dates that readings and assignments are due, mid-term exams, and final exams. If you find at a subsequent meeting that your advisee needs more help with time management, encourage him or her to keep a log of every activity in half-hour intervals throughout the day and night. The advisee should persist with the logging activity for a full week. A review of how and where time is spent should help determine where the problems lie. If neither the appointment book/calendar system nor the log seem to be helping, send your advisee to Student Academic Services for more intensive assistance.

### **Encouraging Involvement Outside the Classroom**

We hope you will consider the importance of your advisees' personal as well as intellectual development. Encourage them to become involved, even minimally, in some co-curricular activity such as joining a musical group or the student government, volunteering in the local community, peer tutoring, trying out for a theater production, or playing intramural sports. Such engagement could make the difference between a student's feeling like a member of the Skidmore community and feeling disaffected. Fourth-credit hour programming coordinated by the First-Year Experience is a resource for helping first-year students make connections outside the classroom.

### **Keeping Abreast of Graduation Requirements**

**Requirements that must be completed by the end of the first year include the Scribner Seminar, Expository Writing if placement is EN-103, and QR1 (by passing the QR Exam during the first year or by completing MA-100 by end of the sophomore year).**

While it is ultimately the student's responsibility to complete all requirements in a timely fashion, the faculty advisor should aid this process by providing reminders and reviewing the degree audit with the student on a regular basis.

**IMPORTANT:** Students should complete their foundation requirements in EW and QR in a timely manner. Students who do not complete EW by the end of the sophomore year and QR by the junior year will be reviewed by the Committee on Academic Standing for not fulfilling the College's minimum standards for continuation. Desire to study abroad does not trump fulfillment of these requirements; students should plan to complete both EW and QR by the end of the sophomore year if they wish to study abroad their entire junior year.

### **Course Selection for First-Year Students**

**Summer Registration.** During the summer advising and registration period, students were asked to submit 10 choices for their Scribner Seminar. The students were assigned to one of their choices and then allowed to enter Banner to register for the rest of their classes.

Some basic points to consider during your Orientation meetings with advisees:

- Why did the student choose these particular courses? Ask your advisee to give you his or her rationale for making the choices s/he did. Discuss the assumptions made by students who are already set on a major and/or who come to Skidmore with a specific career goal in mind; allay the concerns of students who are “undecided.”
- **Diagnostic testing** may be incomplete, so the student might be provisionally enrolled in a QR2 course, for example. If a student does not fulfill the QR1 requirement during Orientation, s/he will have to drop any QR2 course for which s/he is registered and replace it with another course.

### **Building a Schedule**

A few principles for first-year students to keep in mind when reviewing and finalizing the fall schedule:

- **Course load:** the average course load is 15-16 credits, or four academic classes. An overload (above 18 credits) is not permitted for first-term students. You will want to discuss the appropriateness of an 18-credit course schedule with any advisee so enrolled. Full-time students must be enrolled in at least 12 credits; 14 credits is required for Dean’s List Honors.
- **Breadth:** students should register for a range of courses in the different academic areas, keeping all-college requirements in mind. Unless expressly recommended for a specific major, two courses should probably not be taken in the same subject area.
- **Exploration:** taking a variety of classes across the disciplines will help the student begin to think about and lay the foundation for a major. The all-college requirements are designed to help in this process. Students may avoid taking classes in academic areas they disliked in high school, did poorly in, or were not exposed to (e.g., art history, philosophy, sociology). The faculty advisor can guide the student by discussing these issues and urging him or her to be flexible. Also, encourage your advisee to choose a course he or she expresses an interest in regardless of its “practical value” in terms of all-college requirements.
- **Balance:** students should try to strike a balance among courses that are heavy in reading or writing, classes that are lecture or discussion-based, courses with a laboratory component, or that are studio-based. Consider the distribution of course meeting times across the day and week. If a student is an athlete, there may be special considerations to take into account when constructing the schedule. Student-athletes should check with their coaches and the Athletic Department. According to NCAA regulations, students are not permitted to miss class to attend practice.
- **The All-college Curriculum:**
  - ❑ **Scribner Seminars:** Required of all first-year students, Scribner Seminars invite participants to work closely with faculty and peers; help students identify and fulfill their academic aspirations; introduce them to new ways of thinking; and provide opportunities to work both collaboratively and independently. The Seminars serve not as survey courses within programs, but as an introduction to the liberal arts. Seminars will invite first-year students to take intellectual risks, and challenge their notions about inquiry and knowledge as they make connections across disciplines. The faculty come from virtually every department and discipline, and offer a rich array of seminars designed to emphasize critical thinking and oral and written communication skills.

Students in Scribner Seminars attend four hours of instruction and other activities each week. London first-year students will also enroll in Scribner Seminars during their first semester.

- ❑ **Expository Writing Requirement:** Students are required to complete one designated expository writing course by the end of the sophomore year. Students placed in EN-103 Writing Seminar I **must complete this pre-requisite course by the end of the first year.** Students must also complete a writing requirement in the major.
- ❑ **QR 1 Requirement:** enrolling in MA-100 is required during the sophomore year if your advisee does not pass the QR exam in the first year. *The QR exam cannot be taken in the sophomore year (except in the case of transfer students and students who were in London their first semester).*
- ❑ **Foreign Language:** if your advisee plans to study abroad, it is a good idea to complete this requirement early. Skidmore's requirement calls for the completion of one foreign language course at an appropriate level, but many study abroad programs require more advanced competency in the foreign language for admission (through the 206 or 208 level).
- **Prerequisites:** Is the first-year student registered for a 200 or 300-level class? In the case of a 300-level course, this is in nearly every instance an inappropriate enrollment (barring special permission from the instructor), and the student should drop the course. In the case of a 200-level course, please be certain that prerequisites have been met.

### Things to Question or to Discourage

- Shopping for courses during the add-drop period as opposed to planning well ahead.
- Taking too heavy a course load unless it is clearly appropriate based on the student's abilities and academic needs.
- Planning a course schedule that is too compressed (for example, all morning classes or all afternoon classes; all classes scheduled on 2 or 3 days in the week)—wherever possible, breathing room is often beneficial.

### Special Academic Resources

Keep in mind that numerous resources are in place for students who need them. For a complete description of academic resources on campus see the section entitled "Academic Advising and Support Services":

- Scribner Seminar Peer Mentors
- [Math and Computer Science Lab](#) (Harder Hall)
- [Foreign Language Lab](#) (4<sup>th</sup> Floor Palamountain Hall)
- [Writing Center](#) (Scribner Library, Room 440)
- [Peer Tutors and Study Groups: Student Academic Services](#)
- [Disability and Accessibility Services:](#) available through Student Academic Services



## Advising Sophomores

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For many students, the sophomore year is an exciting time to take new classes and meet new instructors. At the same time, the second year of college presents unique challenges that require more focus and support than the first year. Because the sophomore year has much less programmatic structure than the FYE, sophomores come to rely more heavily on faculty guidance for setting academic, personal, and career goals. Indeed, it is during the sophomore year that your advising relationship with a student may mature into a mentoring relationship. Whereas an advisor is adept at helping students navigate all-college requirements and register for courses, a mentor helps the student reflect on the coursework she has completed, placing it in the broader context of institutional goals for student learning, her co-curricular experience, and her plans for the future as she considers alternative majors, the possibility of study abroad, and her life after Skidmore.

The sophomore year is an ideal time to recommend that students consider participating in collaborative research with faculty or pursuing academic internships on or off campus. In some cases, department or program-based internships at the 299 level may be appropriate for students seeking to engage with the knowledge they have already acquired in the classroom. For students wishing to explore areas where they have little prior experience, the Office of Academic Advising oversees 1, 2, and 3-credit IN-100 internships that are not tied to specific disciplines. Credit-bearing internships can be pursued during the academic year or over the summer. [Applications](#) are processed by the Office of Academic Advising. An extensive Catalog of internship opportunities (both paid and unpaid) can be accessed through the Career Development Center's "[Find Opportunities](#)" portal as well as portals maintained by specific programs and advising clusters, such as [Environmental Studies](#) and [Government](#).

This is also a good time to recommend that your advisees consider being a First-Year Experience peer mentor, a Writing Center tutor, or a tutor for Student Academic Services. Some of the options listed on these pages are antidotes to sophomore slump that promote sophomore engagement, and advisors are encouraged to discuss them with their advisees.

### Keeping Abreast of Graduation Requirements

Requirements that must be completed by the end of the sophomore year include the foundation component of Expository Writing and QR1 (by completing MA-100 if the student did not pass the QR Exam during the first year).

All students have 24-hour access to their degree audits. While guidance from advisors is important, please impress upon advisees that the completion of requirements toward the degree is their responsibility, and they should become careful and close readers of their degree audits. Make sure sophomore advisees know how to use this tool. Refer them to the document "[How to Request A Degree Audit](#)" on the registrar's web site: <http://www.skidmore.edu/registrar/current/index.php>, or better yet, walk them through the process of obtaining and reading their audits.

### Study Abroad

Nearly 60% of our students include study abroad in their degree plan; this is the time to direct your advisees to the [Office of Off-Campus Study and Exchanges \(OCSE\)](#) in Starbuck Center. Research should begin early in the sophomore year. A cumulative GPA of 3.000 or higher and a declared major are baseline requirements for study abroad. Student must also have completed all-college requirements appropriate to their year of study. Students who do not meet these minimal standards may petition the

Committee on Academic Standing (CAS) through the OCSE. Students who intend on studying less commonly taught languages while abroad, including (but not limited to) Chinese, Swahili, Portuguese, and Russian, might consider applying for a [Boren Scholarship](#).

### **Choosing and Declaring a Major**

Students are required to declare a major during the second semester of the sophomore year and before registering for courses for the junior year. As part of the process, students must have a faculty advisor from the major. If you have sophomore advisees who remain undeclared during the spring semester, the Office of Academic Advising will send notices to you and your undeclared advisees. You are, of course, welcome to continue to advise any student informally, but you should not be the official or primary advisor to a student majoring outside your field. If the student is stumped and unable to choose a major, talk with him or her about some of the strategies listed in this guide and encourage the student to visit with staff in the OAA for additional information and guidance.

A number of Skidmore students will arrive on campus knowing what field they want to major in and should be well underway with requirements by the sophomore year in areas such as the health professions, education, pre-engineering, and studio art. We hope faculty advisors will challenge students who come to college with plans “set in cement” to think about and explain their rationale. The majority of our students, however, arrive undecided and will need assistance in deciding on a major. This subject can generate intense anxiety, and students benefit from reassurance that indecision and changing one’s mind about a major are normal. Constructing schedules that are broad and allow for exploration will help students begin to decide on a focus.

Question advisees who want to complete a double major about their rationale for such a plan. Are academic plans that may possibly limit opportunities to explore or study abroad really what they want? The completion of a double major, while often possible with careful planning, is a very serious academic undertaking and may, in some cases, require intensified study—for example, in summer school.

Ask your advisee to consider the following strategies:

- Look up the requirements for possible majors and minors
- Go through the *College Catalog*, reading and making a list of courses of interest. Are there connections among the courses that suggest a particular focus or theme?
- Talk to faculty (and upper-class students) about potential majors and minors
- Talk to classroom instructors
- Consider a self-determined major (for the very motivated). [Self-Determined Major](#) applications are due during the second semester of the sophomore year. Your advisee should see the SDM Program Director for assistance.
- Make an appointment with staff in the Office of Academic Advising

### **Post-Baccalaureate Planning: Early Stages**

Except in the special case of Skidmore’s pre-professional programs, there is only a weak correlation between choice of major and post-baccalaureate opportunities and careers. Each major—and the liberal arts in general—prepare students for multiple pathways. The sophomore year is an excellent time to begin considering different opportunities.

Encourage your student to:

- Make an appointment with a staff member in the [Career Development Center](#) (see additional information on page 30) to explore their resources, including the “Alumni/Parent Career Advisor Network”
- Investigate career resources on the internet
- Interview or shadow a professional in a field of interest
- Consider academic internships and summer employment opportunities (Office of Academic Advising and Career Development Center)
- Get involved in community service or volunteering (Office of Campus Life)
- Develop leadership skills (Office of Campus Life)
- Get a work-study or part-time job to build skills and work experience (Student Employment Office)

### **Academic Opportunities for Motivated Students**

A list of opportunities (with the appropriate contacts) for your advisee who is achieving honors or who is highly motivated and looking for a challenge:

- [Honors Forum courses](#) - Director of Honors Forum
- [Student Opportunity Funds](#) for academic projects and travel-to-present – inquire at the Office of Academic Advising
- [Internships](#) for academic credit – inquire at the Office of Academic Advising and Career Development Center
- **Research, collaborative research, and independent study projects** – Individual faculty, DOF/VPAA Office (collaborative), and the Office of Academic Advising
- [National Merit Fellowships](#) – inquire at the Office of Academic Advising
- [Student Government Association representative on College committees; Academic Council](#) – inquire at the Office of Campus Life

## Advising Juniors

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As students enter the junior year, they benefit from faculty advice on pursuing opportunities to connect on-campus studies with internship opportunities, collaborative research, study abroad, senior capstone projects, and other academic and co-curricular experiences. Talk to your advisees about their goals for engaging the major and for getting to know other faculty in the department or program. Some students will want to know how best to approach seminars and other advanced academic work.

### Keeping Abreast of Graduation Requirements

- All students and faculty advisors have access to [Degree Audits](#) on-line. Your advisee should bring you a copy during the pre-registration period so you can review it carefully together.
- Registration for senior year (in spring of the junior year) is critical in terms of a student's being able to graduate in May of the senior year. Once classes begin in the fall, it can be too late in many cases for seniors to catch up on requirements or correct errors. You and your advisee should review the Degree Audit carefully at this juncture. Special care is needed in the case of multiple majors and/or minors as the double-counting of courses can be problematic. If either of you is confused about any aspect of the audit, consult with the Office of Academic Advising or the Registrar's Office. The ultimate responsibility for completing all requirements toward the degree rests with the student, but your vigilance and reminders are helpful.
- The following requirement must be met by the end of the junior year: QR2.
- By the end of the junior year, the student must achieve and then maintain a cumulative average of 2.000 in his or her major. Students who do not meet this requirement will be up for academic review by the Committee on Academic Standing (CAS).
- The **maturity level requirement** requires successful completion of at least 24 hours of 300-level credit. At least 12 credit hours of 300-level coursework must be taken in the senior year, and at least 6 of these 12 credit hours must be completed in the major. Students with double majors are expected to complete at least 6 credit hours at the 300 level in *each* major during their senior year. Courses earning maturity credit must be taken at Skidmore or as part of an approved study-away program. Students taking courses at other institutions during the summer or while on personal or medical leave may earn up to eight maturity-level credits by appealing to the Committee on Academic Standing (CAS).
- Continue meeting requirements for the major.

### Study Abroad/Study Away

Nearly 60% of Skidmore students study abroad/away, most often during the Junior year. Students studying abroad or away should be sure to complete all paperwork before departure (for example, they should seek the chair's approval for transfer of courses toward the major) and to check upon their return that an official transcript has arrived from the abroad/away program. Juniors returning in the spring from a fall-term leave will want to discuss their new cultural and academic experiences and should be encouraged to apply their new U.S. or international perspectives to various courses and co-curricular opportunities, as appropriate.

### **Career Development Center**

The Career Development Center is an excellent campus resource for learning about potential careers, internship opportunities, resume preparation, and graduate school. More information specific to class year can be found on page 30.

### **National Merit Fellowship Applications**

High-achieving students should be encouraged to speak with the Office of Academic Advising about graduate fellowship opportunities. Applications are complex and require a serious time commitment. The Office of Academic Advising supports students seeking merit fellowship by offering a credit-bearing writing seminar that involves focused guidance, peer critique, and faculty review panels. Students seeking institutional endorsement of their application must enroll in or audit the course. For more information on specific fellowships and scholarships, please see the Office of Academic Advising "[Merit Fellowships, Scholarships, and Grants](#)".

### **Graduate School and Testing**

Your advisee may be looking for guidance about graduate schools, graduate exam preparation (GRE, LSAT, MCAT), and graduate fellowships. Direct students to faculty and alumni in your department as appropriate and encourage them to visit the [Career Development Center](#).

### **Re-evaluating Goals**

This is another ideal point in time for you and your advisee to reconsider the goals he or she set at an earlier stage of the college experience. Have these goals changed, and if so why? Is there a discernable pattern to the individual courses the student has taken over the years, and is the student continuing to make intellectual connections while planning his or her schedule? Does your advisee have a view of his or her life beyond Skidmore, and how does the degree plan relate to this picture?

## Advising Seniors

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Seniors are eager to hear advice on making the most of their last year of college. Seniors are also exploring ways to connect previous academic experiences (research, study abroad, internships, etc.) with senior academic work, including senior seminars and capstone experiences. Please encourage your seniors to consider presenting their best work at Skidmore's Academic Festival as well as at professional meetings. The Office of Academic Advising provides Student Opportunity Funds to support student projects and travel to professional meetings to present research and creative work.

### Keeping Abreast of Graduation Requirements

Continue to review the degree audit with your advisee in order to assure that he or she graduates on time. Your assistance in this process is important, although it is the student's responsibility to be certain he or she is meeting all degree requirements. Special areas of concern include the following:

- 120 credits required for graduation
- liberal arts requirement:
  - ~ for the B.A. at least 90 hours of liberal arts credit
  - ~ for the B.S. at least 60 hours of liberal arts credit
- declaration and fulfillment of all requirements for a major
- minimal cumulative GPA of 2.000 in the major and overall cumulative GPA of 2.000
- 24 hours of maturity-level (300-level) credit overall, including at least 12 hours taken during the senior year, at least 6 hours of which must be in the major (for double majors, 6 hours must be completed in each major)

### Study Abroad/Study Away

Encourage your senior advisees who have returned from a spring semester or full-year abroad to carry their international experience into course selections and into their co-curricular life. In some cases, a student who has not previously studied abroad may wish to pursue off-campus study now. Carefully consider how such a plan could support work in the major and link to post-baccalaureate goals.

### Internships

An internship provides a good vehicle for some seniors to explore connections between the Skidmore classroom and the world at large. In today's job market, the internship, whether or not it is taken for credit, can also be the gateway to employment.

### Career Development Center

The Career Development Center is an excellent campus resource for career exploration, internship opportunities, resume preparation, graduate school, and other options. Encourage your senior advisees to visit this office early in the senior year. Additional information can be found on page 30.

### Capstone Experiences

A number of departments require capstone experiences for honors-level students, but many other students do not experience the challenges and rewards of a substantial, culminating project. We

recommend that advisors discuss capstone possibilities with advisees, especially with those who have not thought about the option.

### **Departmental and Program Honors**

Departmental and Program Honors refers to the honors awarded in the major at graduation. Students need to begin thinking about honors in the major as they plan their senior year. Specific information is available in the [Catalog](#) for each major.

## Advising Transfer Students

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### Academic Advising

Transfer students are assigned a faculty advisor based on the student's declared major or academic interests. In most cases, the advisor is the chair of the major department or one of the student's first semester instructors. This close academic connection helps establish a stronger advising relationship during a transfer student's first year. As is the case for any student, transfer students may change advisors at any time.

### Evaluation of Transfer Credit

Transfer students are required to provide official transcripts from all previously attended institutions. The Registrar's Office then completes an evaluation of transfer credit. One copy of this evaluation is given to the student, and another is included in the advisee's folder. Credit may be awarded for grades of C or higher. Courses in which the student earned a Pass or Satisfactory grade may be considered with the proviso that the institution awarding the grade considered the pass or satisfactory grade as equivalent to a C or better. No credit will be awarded for course work in which the student earned C-, D+, D or D- grades. A student may transfer a maximum of 60 credit hours. The Skidmore transcript will note the number of transfer hours awarded and the institution at which the course work was taken. The grades will not be figured into the Skidmore GPA; grade point averages are only calculated from work done at Skidmore.

The evaluation process involves an attempt to match the coursework taken elsewhere to topics and content areas available at Skidmore. In some cases, specific courses may be referred to a department chair or program director for review. Course descriptions, available in college bulletins, are generally used as the basis upon which a decision is made. The student may be asked to provide additional information, such as a course syllabus to help a chair or department representative make a decision about transfer credit.

### Degree Requirements

Students who have not yet completed at least 12 credit hours at another institution will need to enroll in a Scribner Seminar. All other transfer students are waived from this requirement.

For the most part, transfer students are held to the same guidelines and expectations as all students, with few exceptions. For example, some transfer students will have completed QR2 *before* QR1 based on an evaluation of coursework at their prior institution. Other students may arrive at Skidmore as juniors without having completed the EW requirement. As always, carefully review the student's degree audit to check for requirements that have not been fulfilled.

Because transfer students almost always arrive at Skidmore with advanced standing (compared to first-year students arriving at the same time), it is important to track their progress accordingly. Your very first advising appointment with a transfer student may thus focus on preparation for study abroad or a discussion of collaborative research opportunities during the academic year or summer, topics usually not broached with new students until later.





ADVISING  
PLANNING CALENDAR

**~ ADVISING ACTIVITIES DURING SUMMER AND  
NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION ~**

SCHEDULE		FACULTY ADVISOR ACTIVITY
June	Class of 2019 Summer Advising with faculty, staff, and administrators.	
Late July / early August	The Director of the FYE emails first-year students regarding their RAP essay.	
August	SSP instructors are formally linked to their advisees through the Advising Portal.	Review first-year student advising materials online, including student class schedules, Admissions essays, comments from summer advisors, and the RAP essay.
Tuesday, Sept. 8	<p>8:30-9:45 A.M. Scribner Seminar Instructor Orientation and meeting (Dining Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>10:00 A.M.-12:00 P.M. Group Meetings (assigned locations)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>12:30 P.M.-5:00 P.M. Individual appointments with Scribner Seminar Instructors in faculty offices (arranged by faculty)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>3:30-4:30 P.M. Special Advising sessions for Health Professions, EDS, SW, AR, Arts Admin, Engineering, IGR, Chinese, Japanese, Media &amp; Film Studies, OCSE, FLL Placement Advice and Exams - <i>Check <u>orientation schedule</u> for updates</i></p>	<p>Scribner Seminar Instructors meet with first-year advisees throughout the afternoon.</p> <p>-----</p> <p><a href="http://www.skidmore.edu/orientation">www.skidmore.edu/orientation</a></p>

~ FALL TERM 2015 ~		
SCHEDULE		FACULTY ADVISOR ACTIVITY
Wednesday, Sept. 9	Fall classes begin  ----- 6:30 P.M. Special Advising session for Theater - <i>Check <u>orientation schedule</u> for updates</i>	First-year students stop by advisor's office as needed.  ----- <a href="http://www.skidmore.edu/orientation">www.skidmore.edu/orientation</a>
Thursday, Sept. 10- Friday, Sept. 18		Check with any advisees on probation or waiver; meet with upper-class advisees "at risk," especially students who need to make schedule changes.
Friday, Sept. 11	Last day to submit completed internship credit applications to the Office of Academic Advising.	Check with sophomores on their second year plans.
After Friday, Sept. 11	Adding a course requires the instructor's signature.	Check with first-year students regarding final schedule/changes.
Monday, Oct. 12- Friday, Oct. 16	Mid-semester	An opportune time to check in with first-year advisees.
Monday, Oct. 26- Friday, Oct. 30	ADVISING DAYS	Meet with individual advisees. Consider extending your office hours.
Tuesday, Nov. 3	Registration period begins	Continue to meet with advisees.
	<b>Unsatisfactory Work Notices</b>	<b>Contact advisees who receive notices.</b>
Wednesday, Nov. 18	Last day to withdraw from classes without grade penalty (with permission of instructor)	
Late Nov. – Early Dec.	Final days of fall semester	Another opportune time to check in with first-year advisees: finals, stress, time management, etc.
Friday, Dec. 11	Classes end. Last day to withdraw failing from classes.	

~ SPRING TERM 2016 ~

SCHEDULE		FACULTY ADVISOR ACTIVITY
Monday, Jan. 25	Spring classes begin. Skidmore Summer Term schedule available and registration open.	
Monday, Jan. 25- Friday, Feb. 5		Check with any advisees on probation or waiver; meet with upper-class advisees "at risk," especially students who need to make schedule changes.
Wednesday, Jan. 27	Last day to submit completed internship credit applications to the Office of Academic Advising.	
Thursday, Jan. 28	Adding a course requires instructor's signature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check with first-year students regarding final schedule/changes.</li> <li>• Check with Sophomores on declaring a major.</li> </ul>
Friday, Jan. 29	Incomplete deadline (for Fall 2015 grades)	
Monday, Feb. 22- Friday, Feb. 26	Mid-semester	An opportune time to check in with first-year advisees.
Monday, Mar. 28- Friday, Apr. 1	ADVISING DAYS	Meet with individual advisees. Consider extending your office hours.
Tuesday, Apr. 5	Registration period begins	Continue to meet with advisees.
	<b>Unsatisfactory Work Notices</b>	<b>Contact advisees who receive notices.</b>
Thursday, Apr. 14	Last day to withdraw from classes without grade penalty (with permission of instructor)	
Tuesday, May 3	Classes end. Last day to withdraw failing from classes.	



- ACADEMIC ADVISING AND SUPPORT SERVICES
- CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER
- DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES
- DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS
- COUNSELING CENTER
- PARENTS

## Academic Advising and Support Services

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Skidmore College offers a number of academic support services for all students.

### [Office of Academic Advising \(OAA\)](#)

The Office of Academic Advising (Starbuck Center; Tel. x5720) oversees Skidmore's academic advising programs and services and disseminates information about academic policies, procedures, and programs of study. Academic Advising staff work closely with students, faculty, staff, and families to inform students' academic decisions, to guide them to academic support services as necessary, and to enrich their intellectual lives through special program opportunities. In addition to coordinating the faculty-based advising system, the OAA oversees:

- [Credit-bearing Internships](#) – OAA reviews all internship applications for summer and academic-year work and provides administrative support for IN-100 (*Exploration Internship*) opportunities.
- [Student Opportunity Funds](#) – OAA provides competitive grants in support of student research, creative projects, and travel to read or present.
- [National Merit Scholarships](#) – OAA supports students seeking institutional endorsement for undergraduate and graduate merit fellowships, scholarships, and grants.
- [Academic Integrity](#) – OAA responds to violations of the Honor Code.
- [Academic Standing and Student Status](#) – OAA counsels students on personal and medical leaves of absence and reviews the academic standing of all students to award honors distinctions and ensure compliance with Skidmore's standards for continuation.

### [Office of Student Academic Services \(SAS\)](#)

The Office of Student Academic Services (Starbuck Center; Tel. x8150) works to promote high student academic achievement and help students take full advantage of the wide variety of opportunities available at Skidmore. As part of the college's commitment to academic excellence, the office serves all students interested in strengthening their academic performance by organizing peer tutoring, study groups, drop-in tutoring and offering one-on-one and small group academic support. SAS collaborates with other campus offices and faculty to support international students, English Language Learners (ELL), students of color, student athletes, and students with disabilities.

- [Peer Tutors](#) – SAS hires students recommended by faculty to provide one-on-one tutoring with students in specific courses. Peer tutors are available for course work in all disciplines. Students request a tutor in the SAS office. There is no fee for tutoring services.
- [Study Groups](#) – SAS organizes study groups for a number of classes. There is no fee to attend these groups.
- [Disability and Accessibility Services](#) – SAS staff includes a Coordinator of Student Access Services who arranges for academic accommodations and assists students with other disability-related issues. Current documentation is required in order to apply for status as a student with a disability at Skidmore. Further guidelines are available on the SAS web site.

## **Other Academic Support Resources:**

### **Career Development Center**

The [Career Development Center](#) (Starbuck Center; Tel. x5790) offers advice and guidance on career planning as well as information on internships, graduate study, and scholarships.

### **Computers and Writing**

The Charlotte M. Lanzit Center for Computers and Writing (Palamountain Hall 302) provides students with a comfortable environment in which to use computers for academic or personal writing projects.

### **Counseling Center**

The [Counseling Center](#) (Jonsson Tower, first floor; Tel. x5555; *Note: For Fall 2015 the Counseling Center is temporarily located in West Lot A*) provides a supportive context in which students may actively reflect on personal dimensions of their college experience and arrive at important new understandings of their motivations, needs, values, and relationships with others.

### **First-Year Experience: Scribner Seminar Peer Mentors**

The [First-Year Experience office](#) (Starbuck Center; Tel. x8111) assigns peer mentors to particular Scribner Seminars. The peer mentors provide assistance to first-year students facing the challenges and stimulation of the seminars and the transition to college. Their experience as more advanced students, selected both for their academic achievement and their ability to steer new students to effective engagement, makes them a valued resource for enhancing the education of new Skidmore students. Peer mentors bridge the space between the classroom and the residence hall by serving as academic and social role models for the first-year student. They also support new students' transition to college by encouraging their integration into the larger community of scholars through the promotion of academic and co-curricular opportunities.

### **Foreign Language Resource Center (FLRC)**

The [Foreign Language Resource Center](#) (Palamountain 429; Tel. x5207) provides resources for foreign language study. The facility includes multiple computer stations for use in the evenings, an interactive Smartboard, and multi-region DVD and VCR players with large screen projection. The student stations also include webcams and headsets with microphones for intensive language practice and multimedia production. The FLRC also has an open study area with four computer workstations for use by students on a drop-in basis. The lab also offers a lounge area for viewing foreign videos and TV from foreign stations received by satellite. An adjacent workroom provides additional workstations with hardware and software to support the production of multimedia projects.

### **Mathematics and Computer Science (MCS) support**

The [MCS Peer Tutoring and Computing Lab](#) (Harder Hall) is operated by the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science and provides tutorial and computing support for mathematics and computer science courses. Quantitative reasoning (QR) tutors are available to assist students working to satisfy QR requirements as well as students enrolled in departmental courses.

### **Off-Campus Study and Exchanges (U.S. and abroad)**

The [Off-Campus Study and Exchanges office](#) (Starbuck Center; Tel. x5355) provides information on study in the United States, U.S. territories (including Puerto Rico), and foreign countries. Students seeking to clarify their academic goals may benefit from consulting OCSE staff about opportunities to enrich a Skidmore education. A GPA of 3.0 or better is needed in order to study off campus. Students must also be in good academic, social and financial standing with the College at the time of departure and have met all-college requirements appropriate to their year of study (or have an acceptable plan for completing such requirements). Students should check with their specific program regarding any additional requirements and consult the OCSE website for more information.

## **Writing Center**

The [Writing Center](#) (Scribner Library, Room 440; Tel. x8441) offers students individual help in any academic and personal writing project. Maintained by the English Department and directed by a faculty member, the center is staffed by Skidmore students majoring in subjects across the disciplines. Writing tutors are especially effective in helping students generate ideas, organize material, and clarify writing style. The Writing Center is not a proofreading service, but tutors will answer students' questions about grammar, punctuation, and effective style. Whether students are new to college writing or already accomplished writers, they will find that a one-on-one meeting with a writing tutor will help them become better, more self-sufficient writers. The Writing Center is open daily, afternoons and evenings. Students may call to make an appointment, or they may walk in for tutoring during open hours. Other writing resources include:

- **Skidmore Guide to Writing** – This general guide to writing provides guidance on college writing as well as information for writing in particular courses. The guide is available in print as well as online: [http://www.skidmore.edu/writing\\_guide/index.php](http://www.skidmore.edu/writing_guide/index.php)
- **Expository Writing Network** – The network provides faculty and students online writing resources for all disciplines. Consult the web site: <http://www.skidmore.edu/academics/writingbrd/INDEX.html>



## Career Development Center

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The Career Development Center (CDC) ensures that every Skidmore student participates in early career engagement through the [What's NEXT](#) initiative. This four-year career development program provides targeted services and programs to help students develop a holistic view of their education plan, offering activities for each year to foster:

1. Self-awareness;
2. Exposure to a variety of career fields;
3. Effective career decision-making;
4. Participation in off-campus experiential activities; and
5. Positive outcomes at graduation and beyond.

In addition to *individual career counseling*, the CDC offers pre-health and pre-law advising. The following are a **SAMPLING OF SERVICES AND PROGRAMS**:

### First Year Students:

- **MyPlan**: online career assessment that measures interests, values, skills and personality
- **Career Panels**: comprised of alumni that expose students to a variety of career options
- **Internship Expo**: collaborative fair where upperclassmen discuss their internship experiences with first and second year students
- **Resumania**: resume preparation opportunities offered throughout the year

### Sophomores:

- **CareerJam**: student networking opportunity with over 60 parent, alumni, and employer volunteers representing all career fields
- **Pre-Health Student Panel and Mock Interviews**: opportunity for students interested in careers in health to meet alumni in the health field and participate in mock interviews
- **Phantom Job Search**: employers take students through the entire job search process, with one student selected for “the job” at the end
- **Sophomore Year Experience (winter break)**: five-day program featuring career development activities, leadership training, and techniques for presenting one’s unique brand

### Juniors:

- **Summer Funded Internship Award Program**: funded by parents and alumni, the SFIAP awards \$4,000 grants to students conducting unpaid summer internships
- **Career & Internship Connections**: internship recruiting fair in Boston, NYC, Washington, and LA
- **Tours in NYC**: students attend day-long tours for careers in publishing, finance, and fashion, among others
- **On and off-campus recruitment**: opportunity for students to compete for competitive internships (juniors) and jobs (seniors)

### Seniors:

- **Networking events with alumni**: Boston and NYC T&T, Real World Etiquette Dinner, etc.
- **Eastern College Career Day** – recruitment event for full-time opportunities in NYC and Boston
- **The Interview Project**: students meet with members of the Alumni Association for mock interviews
- **Walk on Wall Street**: multi-dimensional program to help prepare and connect students to careers in finance

CONTACT US AT: [cdc@skidmore.edu](mailto:cdc@skidmore.edu)

[www.skidmore.edu/career](http://www.skidmore.edu/career)

518-580-5790

## Disability and Accessibility Services for Students

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Skidmore College employs a [Coordinator of Student Access Services](#) who works to ensure that eligible students are provided the accommodations they need to obtain full access to all Skidmore programs. Academic accommodations and services are granted based on the type and extent of the student's documented disability. Skidmore encourages incoming students to apply for needed accommodations/services and to discuss disability issues with the Coordinator before arriving on campus.

Approximately ten percent of Skidmore students register with the Coordinator. While most of these students regularly utilize the accommodations they are eligible for, others maintain their eligibility in the event that their disability presents a barrier to a particular subject area in the future.

At Skidmore, most of the students with disabilities who are approved for academic accommodations have diagnoses of learning disabilities and/or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. However, an increasing number of students arrive on campus with mental health disorders, chronic medical conditions, and/or multiple diagnoses. If a student discloses that she has a disability that may affect her academic work, please refer the student to the **Coordinator of Student Access Services in Student Academic Services (SAS), Starbuck Center 102E, (518-580-8150)**.

Further information about disabilities is available on the SAS web site:

<http://www.skidmore.edu/accessibility/index.php>

### Important Information for Providing Access to All Students

**Textbooks** – Because it is the College's responsibility to provide recorded or electronic versions of textbooks to some students with disabilities, it is helpful if faculty could identify required texts as early as possible. Newer textbooks (after c. 1996) are readily available in electronic format and the College has additional assistive technology available that allows students to access internet sites, scanned text, or e-texts and listen to the material being read out loud while they read along. For more information about these resources contact the Coordinator of Student Access Services.

**Course syllabi** – You are strongly encouraged to add a statement to your course syllabus encouraging students to obtain appropriate accommodations. Such practice will help the college remain in compliance with federal legislation and will send the message that you are aware that students may have disabilities and are open to discussing them. An example of such a statement would be:

**“If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need academic accommodations, you must make requests for such accommodation to the Coordinator of Student Access Services. You will also need to provide documentation that verifies the existence of a disability and supports your request. For further information, please call 580-8150, or stop by the Office of Student Academic Services in Starbuck Center.”**

**Accommodation Letters** – Although students may request academic accommodations at any time, students typically register with the Coordinator prior to their first semester at Skidmore. If accommodations are warranted, the Coordinator prepares a memo describing what accommodations pertain to the student's particular case; students are responsible for delivering the memos to faculty.

**Note:** Except at the instructor's discretion in highly unusual and temporary circumstances, students who do not have a semester memo should not receive academic accommodations. Providing accommodations to a student without contacting the Coordinator of Student Access Services places the instructor and the College in a potentially problematic legal situation and raises questions of equity and fairness to other students. Please refer students to the Coordinator of Student Access Services to initiate all classroom accommodations and to discuss accommodations not originally authorized.

## **Disruptive Student Behavior**

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### **The Role of the Office of Academic Advising**

Faculty do not all share the same level of comfort in addressing disruptive behavior; each faculty member must first assess his or her individual level of comfort and willingness to address the inappropriate behavior with a student. Both the Counseling Center and the Office of Academic Advising have engaged in numerous conversations with faculty who request suggestions on how to approach a potentially troubled student. Others are not comfortable with any interaction and ask the Office of Academic Advising to intervene on their behalf.

A strategy that has proven effective is for the faculty member to send an Unsatisfactory Work Notice to the Office of Academic Advising if the student's behavior is affecting his or her performance in the course. This system works well as it establishes a "paper trail" which may help document the student's difficulties. Students who receive such notices are contacted by the office and urged to make an appointment. When the student meets with an academic counselor, the counselor will focus the conversation on the student's classroom behavior and the faculty member's expectations.

No administrative office can mandate that a student attend counseling or monitor the student's use of on- or off-campus services. Skidmore's Counseling Center maintains a confidential relationship with students and reveals student contact only at the request of the student. Nonetheless, OAA staff work cooperatively with the Counseling Center when difficulties arise and will make referrals as necessary.

### **DISRUPTIVE STUDENT WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE (Approved by CAS and CAFR, January 2013)**

Central to Skidmore's philosophy is a commitment to freedom of thought, expression, and behavior. The College is also committed to providing supportive assistance to students who may be experiencing academic or personal difficulties. It is never the intention of the College to stifle debate, to discourage the expression of different and provocative points of view, to prescribe a particular behavior pattern in the classroom, or to exclude students from the educational opportunities provided at Skidmore without serious cause. Any initiative to require a student to withdraw from a classroom must reflect Skidmore's care and concern for its students' well being and for their rights and freedoms.

The College also takes seriously the responsibility of all members of a learning community to interact in a respectful and civil manner in every area of community life. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior that subverts the efforts of faculty and students to pursue the teaching and learning process cannot be sanctioned. In some extreme cases of disruptive and/or disrespectful student behavior in the classroom, it may be necessary for an instructor to request the withdrawal of a student from a class in order to insure the educational rights of other students, to protect the personal and pedagogical rights of the instructor, or to protect the personal or academic well being of an individual student.

If a very serious case needing immediate intervention arises, College officials may draw on policy and procedure already outlined in the Student Handbook, which states that "the College has the right and obligation to act upon conduct not in accord with the informing principles of the Honor Code or codes of conduct. Violations of the Skidmore Honor Code and

code of conduct include...obstruction or disruption of teaching or other educational activities on the College campus or other property used for educational purposes" (page 6). If the instructor confronts an issue requiring swift attention, he or she should consult immediately with the department chair or program director and the ADOF, who may recommend to the Dean of Student Affairs that the student withdraw from, or be withdrawn from, the class. The Director of Campus Safety may be asked in these situations to interview the student and others who may have witnessed the disruptive behavior. The Director of Campus Safety also has the authority to intervene immediately in any seriously disruptive situation. If the student's withdrawal from the class is the only viable course of action, the student may be allowed to withdraw immediately with a grade of W or WF or be required to do so by the Dean of Student Affairs.

### **Definitions of Disruptive Classroom Behavior**

- 1) The student routinely or periodically exhibits language or behavior that makes it difficult for instructional activities to continue.
- 2) The student on one or more occasions exhibits language or behavior of such a disturbing, disrespectful, or threatening nature as to make the student's return to class untenable.

### **Procedures**

- 1) Whenever the situation allows, the College will try to resolve behavioral conflicts through a deliberative process. Thus, in cases of disruptive behavior not requiring immediate intervention from the Dean of Student Affairs and/or Campus Safety (as described above), the instructor should speak with the student privately and in a confidential setting; however, if the behavior seems threatening to the instructor, she or he should ask the chair of the department or program director and/or the ADOF to join the initial discussion. (Here, too, the Director of Campus Safety may be asked to aid the process.) The conversation should occur soon after the first sign of disruptive behavior, and the instructor should express clearly the difficulties caused by the student's behavior and describe the changes in behavior that need to take place. If appropriate, the instructor may recommend that the student seek help from the Counseling Center. The instructor is advised to give the student a written summary of expectations and should also retain a documented record of the student's disruptive behavior and of all interactions he/she has with the student regarding the behavior. (Instructor notes should focus entirely on the behavior itself, not speculate regarding motives or underlying causes of the behavior.)
- 2) If the disruptive behavior persists after the first conversation, the instructor should seek the advice and intervention of the department chair or program director and the ADOF, both of whom can help the instructor consider alternative classroom strategies, can speak directly with the student about the situation, or can move to the procedure in (d) below. If the consulting group believes that the student behavior might still be ameliorated, the ADOF will prepare a formal letter for the student that outlines the faculty member's expectations regarding acceptable (and unacceptable) classroom behavior. The Dean will also indicate in the same letter his/her recommendation in the event there is a recurrence of unacceptable behavior (for example, immediate withdrawal from the course). Copies of this letter will go to the instructor and the department chair.

3) If an involuntary withdrawal seems necessary, the decision-making process will be as follows (except when, as described above, the case has required immediate intervention by Campus Safety and/or the Dean of Student Affairs): the instructor, the department chair or program director, and the ADOF will interview the student when possible (if this has not already occurred) and make their recommendation to the Dean of Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Student Affairs (a letter from the ADOF may already be on file as a result of action in (b) above). If the chair or program director is also the instructor of the class, then a tenured, senior member of the department will join this deliberation. A recommendation for course withdrawal requires the concurrence of the instructor and one other member of the consulting team (either the chair or program director or the ADOF).

4) The Dean of Faculty/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Student Affairs will determine whether the student should be withdrawn from the class or whether a different course of action is more appropriate. Under most circumstances the student will receive a grade of "W" (or a "WF" if appropriate). If the deadline has passed, CAS will deliberate on any petitions for change in status.

## Counseling Center — Faculty/Staff Information

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**Note:** The following information is also available on the Counseling Center's web site:  
[http://www.skidmore.edu/counseling/fac\\_staffinfo.php](http://www.skidmore.edu/counseling/fac_staffinfo.php)

Counseling Center Location: Jonsson Tower 1st Floor (Next to Health Services)

**NOTE: For Fall 2015, the Counseling Center and Health Services will be temporarily located in West Lot A.**

Phone/Fax: 581-580-5555/ 518-580-5562

Hours: Monday through Friday - 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM-5:00 PM

### Students in Psychological Distress and/or with Mental Illnesses

During their time at Skidmore, students will typically make huge strides in their intellectual and psychological development. They may fall in love for the first time, with a person or a subject matter or a cause. They will likely experience failure and rejection on a scale that is new to them. They will struggle, we hope, to understand who they are and what matters to them in a world that looks more complicated than they ever realized. They will move to a new place, make new friends and build a life for themselves, and four years later they will be expected to repeat that process. They may not always recognize themselves, nor will their friends and families. All of this change, challenge and turbulence is ultimately usually a good thing.

Most college students make their way through these challenges and changes without serious incident. Some however, struggle more, suffer more and need more help. There is growing evidence that the incidence of serious mental illness on American college campuses is increasing. More students are arriving on campuses already taking psychiatric medications, and Counseling Centers are reporting both an increased demand for services and an increase in the severity of student symptoms. Here at Skidmore, we are no exception to those national trends. Over the last eleven years, we have experienced a significant increase in both the number of students seen at the Counseling Center and in the number of appointments offered to those students. During the 2010-2011 academic year, 18% of the student population, almost 500 students, sought help at the Counseling Center for difficulties ranging from trouble sleeping to roommate conflicts to anorexia, depression and bipolar disorder.

### The Role of Faculty and Faculty Advisors

Faculty members, because of their close contact with students, are in a unique position to notice students who might be distressed and struggling. An expression of interest and concern from the right person at the right time can make all the difference in the world. College should be, at different points, exciting, overwhelming, challenging and stressful. Ideally that stress is balanced with support, in the forms of teaching, advising, friendship, mentorship and other kinds of help. The vast majority of students with psychological difficulties will be able to have successful and productive academic careers, with appropriate support and intervention. We offer the following guidelines about helping students:

## How to help

- **Trust your gut.** If you experience a sense of unease or concern about a student, it is important to pay attention to your inner signals.
- **Use your common sense.** You don't need to be able to officially diagnose someone with Major Depression to know that they are in trouble.
- **Listen carefully.** It takes time and close attention to determine that the student who comes in ostensibly to talk about changing their major also wants to talk about their sense of confusion and/or isolation at Skidmore. Sometimes important information will emerge over time as the student begins to know and trust you.
- **Intervene sooner rather than later.** It is tempting to hope that difficult situations will resolve themselves. Some do, but in our experience, early intervention is both easier and more effective.
- **Know your limits.** Different faculty members will have different roles in students' lives. Being a teacher, advisor and mentor does not mean being a therapist or caretaker.
- **Consult with colleagues.** As more college students appear to be suffering from more serious types of mental illnesses, they will present with more acute needs, more overwhelming symptoms and more complicated family and life circumstances. We all need support and help to work with these students. The Counseling Center encourages and welcomes calls and contacts from faculty members about situations of concerns.

## When to Refer

Any of the following signals would be reasonable grounds for suggesting to a student that he or she come in to the Counseling Center for an initial consultation. The Counseling Center is located on the first floor of Jonsson Tower (*NOTE: For Fall 2015, the Counseling Center and Health Services will be temporarily located in West Lot A*). The Counseling Center is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to noon and 1 to 5:00 p.m. Services are confidential and free of charge to all currently enrolled Skidmore students. Students are welcome to call (580-5555) or stop by to set up an initial appointment.

- **Urgent concerns.** Urgent concerns are mental health emergencies in which you are worried about the student's health and safety or the health and safety of others. Examples include any clear threat of violence to others, severe confusion, disorientation or hallucinations, and an inability to take care of the basic tasks of daily life, such as eating and hygiene. Another clearly urgent situation is when a student expresses some intent to hurt him- or herself. Most, but not all, individuals who attempt suicide make some communication about their state of mind before acting. These types of communications can range from direct threats to kill themselves, "goodbye letters" and giving away possessions, to vague statements about life not being worth living. Any communication about suicide or potential for self-harm should be taken very seriously. While the types of situations listed above are not frequent, they do require immediate intervention. You can contact the Counseling Center at 5555 and/or Campus Safety after hours at 5566. Someone from the Counseling Center is always on call during the fall and spring academic terms and can assist you immediately.



- **Marked behavior changes.** These types of changes might include reticence from a student who is typically very engaged in class, excessive tardiness, exaggerated emotional responses that are not appropriate in a classroom context or high levels of anxiety that interfere with academic performance. While it is normal for stress to occasionally interfere with a student's academic life, if the interference stretches out over more than two weeks, or if it involves a dramatic drop in performance or presentation, intervention is definitely warranted. Your own nagging sense of concern about a student or a sense that "something is not quite right" is a potentially important indicator here as well.
- **Personal communication.** Many students confide directly in faculty members that they are in distress or struggling. Other types of communication are less direct, and might involve repeated requests for personal conferences, vague descriptions or references to "personal problems" or visible signs of self-injury such as recent cuts. Depending on your relationship with the individual student, the context in which you interact, and your own philosophy and personal limits, you may choose to engage the student directly in a conversation about what is troubling them or you may choose to simply suggest that they consult with the Counseling Center to get additional support.
- **You feel over your head.** Different faculty members will have varying levels of comfort discussing more personal issues with students. However, if you find yourself having the same conversation over and over again with a student, if you find yourself feeling stressed out or overwhelmed about the situation they are describing to you, if you feel angry or afraid of the student, or if you find yourself wanting to adopt or rescue the student, you have probably overextended yourself. Professional staff at the Counseling Center can help you sort through the situation, determine what is most appropriate and helpful and consult with you about various options.

### **How to Talk with Students about Your Observations and Concerns**

If you have contact with a student that you believe may benefit from professional assistance, the following suggestions can make that conversation, or series of conversations, as productive as possible.

- **Communicate in private.** If you can, set aside time during office hours or after class to speak with a student. Doing so maximizes the chances that you will actually be able to help the student talk about what is most important and also communicates to the student that you take their situation seriously.
- **Try not to beat around the bush.** Use simple and direct language to let the student know that you are worried about them. Often, listing the different changes you have observed and their impact on the student's classroom performance is a good way to start the conversation. Describing the problems in behavioral terms will avoid sounding judgmental and it may mean the student will be less defensive and more receptive. It's hard to argue or avoid the facts. "I notice you have been missing a lot of classes lately" or "you have stopped contributing to class discussion" or "I wanted to talk with you about what you wrote in your last journal entry" are potentially good opening statements. Most distressed students will be relieved and appreciative that someone has noticed them.
- **When in doubt, listen.** Typically, in situations where individuals are suffering and struggling, it is tempting to rush in to reassure, advise, diagnose or "fix" the problem. Often, however, such actions can seem premature, condescending or ill-fitting. It is usually more

helpful to be a sympathetic sounding board, someone who can help a student discuss their situation in a mature and considered way.

- **Know some facts about the Counseling Center.** Giving students concrete information about the Counseling Center makes accessing help easier. Many students can be hesitant about seeing a therapist, so your positive and matter-of-fact attitude can help de-stigmatize mental health services. You can let them know where the Counseling Center is located and that a high number of Skidmore students use their services for a range of difficulties. The Counseling Center is accessible, free of charge, and their services are confidential. Counseling Center staff cannot share information with anyone, including information about whether a student has made an appointment, without that student's permission. Staff can generally see a student for a full appointment within a few business days of an initial contact. The Counseling Center also reserves appointments (daily) for students who are in crisis. If you are concerned about a student who you believe is in crisis, please call ahead and let Counseling Center staff know that student may be coming in. The Counseling Center welcomes information, concerns and questions from you at any time.

## Parents

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The very large majority of Skidmore parents expect their sons and daughters to take responsibility for their decisions and behavior at Skidmore, trust the College's expertise and supportive structures, and seldom (if ever) attempt to contact the faculty. Individual faculty will make their own decisions on whether to respond to a parent intervention or inquiry, but faculty should know that they have no obligation to "share" the advising (or teaching) process with a parent. The Office of Academic Advising and other administrative colleagues do routinely respond to parent inquiries and concerns, and that is part of our function – often a fruitful one. If a faculty advisor decides to engage in a conversation with a parent at the parent's request, we encourage the faculty to talk with the student first and the parent second, thus keeping the student's own concerns and decision-making as the primary focus.

We also encourage faculty never to act upon a parent request for the advisor to intervene when the parent asks that his or her request be kept secret from the student. Honoring a request of this sort sets up a less-than-honest relationship between the student and the faculty member, gives inappropriate cues to the parent, and may then lead to further requests that the advisor "monitor" and report back to the parent. Our educational commitment is, after all, to the student; an important aspect of that commitment is to help the student become a more informed and independent being. There is no easy formula for parent and faculty interactions, and we invite you to contact The Office of Academic Advising if you find yourself in a situation with which you are uncomfortable.

**Parents and FERPA.** All Skidmore students are provided information about their right to access and amend their educational records under the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#). They are also advised that they must consent to disclosure whenever personally identifiable information is requested by a third party, including their parents. Although many students "waive" their FERPA rights and allow administrators to discuss their academic standing with parents, this consent to disclosure does not automatically extend to instructors and advisors. Parents who contact instructors or advisors for information about a student's grades, course schedule, or academic standing should be directed to the Office of Academic Advising.