Dear Parents and Families of Students in the Class of 2024—

As you all know, Wesleyan has delayed the start of the spring semester due to the omicron surge, which has resulted in some changes to the academic calendar. Classes now begin on January 27 and will be online for the first few days. In-person instruction will begin on January 31. To accommodate the late start to the semester, spring break has been shortened by one week and will now take place from March 12 through March 20.

It’s hard to believe that the Class of 2024 is now almost halfway to graduation! There are a few important items on the sophomore to-do list for the spring. First and foremost is declaring a major. While many sophomores have already made their decision, there are some who are still not quite ready to finalize their commitment to a particular field of study. While this is not a matter of making a “right” or “wrong” choice, declaring a major is nonetheless a big decision that demands careful thought and self-reflection. Students who are struggling with this question should consult with department chairs, faculty advisors, or myself for guidance and advice. The Major Declaration website is another useful source of information, with links to all the major departments and programs, and features an especially helpful set of FAQs.

The second big item on the list is General Room Selection (GRS), which is how students determine where and with whom they will be living next year. All students must participate in GRS. In a nutshell, each student is assigned “points” based on class year (1 point for rising sophomores, 2 for rising juniors, etc.). Students next form “groups,” then each group is assigned a random lottery ranking. Finally, each group selects a place to live, in order of rank, from the pool of available housing. Needless to say, the quest to find desirable housing with one’s friends for next year can be a complicated and sometimes stressful process for our students.

The third item on the list is finalizing summer plans. The summer between the sophomore and junior years can set the tone for the rest of one’s undergraduate career. Whether spent at a career-related internship, volunteering, or simply working as a barista to put money in one’s pocket, the summer offers valuable opportunities for service and self-reflection in preparation for life beyond Wesleyan. Even if your student is unsure about how their summer will be spent, I would recommend they visit the Gordon Career Center for tips and pointers on how to make the summer worthwhile. Another option is Wesleyan Summer Session, which provides the opportunity to catch up on credits or take explore areas of the curriculum in which there simply was no time to take classes during the regular academic year.
I will be writing again before the end of the semester. In the meantime, please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.

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