Dear Parents and Families of Students in the Class of 2025:

If you can believe it, we are less than a month away from the end of the 2021-2022 academic year! Kudos to you and your student for navigating such a unique first-year of college.

As I mentioned in my January letter, the second semester of the first year of college is when students start to focus on plans for this summer and fall. Academically, students meet with their pre-major advisor to discuss fall courses (also known as pre-registration). For rising sophomores, these meetings focus on intended major and perhaps even study abroad. There is no cookie cutter approach to mapping out the sophomore year so these conversations will prompt students to reflect on their academic journey to date and think carefully about the direction they want to see their education go moving forward. Be sure to ask your student what courses they are considering for fall. While it’s good to encourage students to pursue subjects they enjoy, it is also beneficial to remind students to stretch and consider a course in a subject they’ve never experienced. This is the beauty of an open-curriculum – explore, explore, explore!

If your student is still exploring a job or internship for the summer, encourage them to schedule an appointment at the Gordon Career Center. If your student plans to stay on or around campus and wants to take classes, suggest to them that they learn more about Summer Session at Wes. Summer Session is a good option for students who wish to earn extra credits towards graduation or to explore areas of the curriculum they did not have time to explore during the traditional school year.

For co-curricular life, students start to feel more grounded and ready to expand their experiences beyond the classroom. If your student isn’t engaging outside of their classes, you may want to suggest that they take a peek at WesNest on WesPortal. WesNest is the main platform for students to learn about peer-led clubs and organizations as well as find activities to join during the week and weekends. If your student tells you that there is nothing happening on campus, I implore you to point them towards WesNest.

Additionally in the spring, students participate in Wesleyan’s Housing Selection process. Students participate in this process to form groups and/or approach housing individually. Though there is an exhaustive list of resources and how-to’s on the housing selection process website, this process can be stressful for some students. Our Residential Life staff is ready to answer any questions students may
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have – simply encourage your student to submit a res life ticket on WesPortal. While students do not always get assigned to their first choice for sophomore housing, they will be placed in housing appropriate for their academic class year.

I want to reiterate again that the transition to college is not linear and it does not happen automatically in the second semester. Your rising sophomore may be revealing more anxiety now than you noticed in the fall. Or your student may have arrived home for spring break demonstrating so much growth and independence that you didn’t recognize them from when you dropped them off last. It is important to remind them that no matter where they are on their journey, there are resources on campus to assist, including me as their Class Dean.

I commend you for supporting your student through this unique time. Your student has overcome so much already by managing their first year of college during a pandemic. Your student’s determination and ability to persevere during this challenging time will help carry them towards success on the rest of their Wesleyan journey.

Kelly Dunn, Ed.D.
Dean for the Class of 2025