

Monday, September 20, 2021

Today's *Letters So Dear* is a little different from what you were used to as a first-year or transfer student last year. I started this initiative to ensure that you could hear some really helpful advice from your upperclassmen peers as they reflect on their own Wake Forest experience just a few steps ahead.

The first year class has continued to receive weekly "*Letters So Dear*" messages. If you would like to opt-in and start receiving these messages, you can click [here](#) to subscribe to the *Letters So Dear* messages.

The purpose of today's message is to: share details with you about "Sophomore Week" being coordinated by the Office of Academic Advising (OAA) with strong collaboration from various campus partners and allow you to hear advice from our professional Academic Counselors in OAA.

**Before we jump into today's *Sophomore So Dear* Letter, we want to share details with you about Sophomore Week 2021:**

**Friday, September 24th:**

- **WFU vs. Georgia Tech** (Volleyball, Athletics): Come out and watch the Women's volleyball team take on the Georgia Tech Ramblin' Wreck at **7:00 p.m.** in **Reynolds Gymnasium**. ***Sophomore t-shirts will be available while supplies last upon entry to the game.*** Download the ***Screamin Demon Rewards App*** in order to gain entry, and get credit for attending WFU sporting events.

**Sunday, September 26th:**

- **WFU vs. Clemson** (Volleyball, Athletics): Come out and watch the Women's volleyball team take on the Clemson Tigers at **1:00 p.m.** in **Reynolds Gymnasium**. ***Sophomore t-shirts will be available while supplies last upon entry to the game.*** Download the ***Screamin Demon Rewards App*** in order to gain entry, and get credit for attending WFU sporting events.

**Monday, September 27th:**

- **Roadmap to Graduation** (Office of Academic Advising): It's one thing to know you want to major, triple minor, and study abroad twice. It's another to put the pieces together and see what's actually possible. In this session, you will learn to design your own Graduation Plan, navigate the *Academic Bulletin*, and understand DegreeWorks. This event will be offered twice from **10 a.m. to 11 a.m.** or **4 p.m. - 5 p.m.** in **Reynolds Hall, Room 301**. Register [here](#); *attendance is limited to 24 participants per session.*

### **Tuesday, September 28th:**

- **How to LIFT - Learn in the Forest and Thrive** (Center for Learning, Access, and Student Success): Come learn strategies, tips, and all about the wide variety of on-campus academic resources available to all students to enhance your college learning experience! This event will be offered twice from **10 a.m. to 11 a.m.** or **4 - 5 p.m.** in **Greene Hall, Room 239**. Register [here](#); *attendance is limited to 24 participants per session.*
- **Making a “Major” Decision** (Office of Personal and Career Development): Wondering what major is right for you? Explore and play games that will provide you with resources and an action plan for next steps in your decision-making process. This event will be offered from **10 a.m. to 11 a.m.** in **Reynolda Hall, Room 301**. Register [here](#); *attendance is limited to 24 participants.*
- **Promote Yourself - Creating your College Resume** (Office of Personal and Career Development): Resumes are alive and well in the academic and professional world, critical to your personal branding. Learn the key steps to creating a resume that will best market your talents and skills. What does artificial intelligence have to do with resumes? In this event, you’ll learn how to “beat the bots” and craft a professional resume to land an internship, summer job, or simply network with influencers. This event will be offered from **11 a.m. to 12 p.m.** in **Reynolda Hall, Room 301**. Register [here](#); *attendance is limited to 24 participants.*

### **Wednesday, September 29th:**

- **The Major/ Minor Fair** (Office of Academic Advising and Student Government): The Major/Minor Fair is a great chance to learn about requirements and opportunities available in various majors and minors from faculty and student representatives of departments and programs. This event will occur from **3 - 5 p.m.** in **Benson 401**.
- **You're Involved, Now What?** (Office of Student Engagement): Getting involved is a great first step in finding a sense of belonging. But what does that even look like? How do you go from being one part of an organization to making a great impact on an organization? How do you help that organization impact the greater community? What if you’ve gotten in over your head? These are common dilemmas for the newly involved. Come spend time talking about these and other common experiences that are part of the involvement journey. This event will occur from **3 - 4 p.m.** in **Benson 410**. Register [here](#).
- **What’s the Point? Community and Leadership After the Pause** (Leadership and Character): If COVID taught us anything, it is the confusing message that, when we stop doing the things we do, the world keeps turning anyway. With this experience, it can be tough to remember WHY we do the things we do, especially when we’ve developed habits like staying in our rooms, maintaining physical and social distance, and distrusting

new communities. How might we consider the ways to recover the things that make us fully ourselves, fully alive, and fully human? This event will occur from **3 - 4 p.m.** and **4 - 5 p.m.** in **Pugh Auditorium, Benson University Center**. Register [here](#).

#### **Thursday, September 30th:**

- **Hit the Bricks:** A tradition like no other, each year the Wake Forest community comes together in the fight against cancer, running and walking laps for the day to raise money for the Brian Piccolo Cancer Research Fund. Register [here](#) by **Monday, September 27th**.

#### **Friday, October 1st:**

- **WFU vs. Clemson** (Soccer, Athletics): Come out and watch the Men's soccer team take on the Clemson Tigers at **7:00 p.m.** at **Spry Stadium**. Download the ***Screamin Demon Rewards App*** in order to gain entry, and get credit for attending WFU sporting events.

*Now back to our regularly scheduled program!*

**Today, our “Sophomore So Dear” letter is brought to you by my colleagues from the Office of Academic Advising:**

I asked our Academic Counselors in The Office of Academic Advising to reflect on their sophomore year of college and what they wish they had known at the time.

#### **Here's what they had to say...**

**Brandon Bost:** Selecting a program(s) of study should be fun. [Explore](#) the various options Wake has to offer. Go with your interests. Seek advice from OAA and other faculty and staff. Attend the major/minor fair and visit with departments. And remember, it's ok if your preferences and interests change as you delve deeper into a subject. Consult your major advisor and OAA if you think a change of program is best for you. You want to look back on your college years, that fly by so quickly, and reflect positively on the knowledge and experience you gained.

**Bert Ellison:** I have good news: If you're reading this, then you have leadership skills. Put another way, I guarantee that you're a part of at least one group in which your presence helps to actualize the potential of your peers towards the achievement of a common goal. At its core, that's what leadership is all about. This guarantee may apply to a role that you fill in your family, a friend group, a campus organization, a sports team, or any other kind of formal or informal group. When viewed this way, leadership has very little to do with job titles or resumes and everything to do with being aware of your surroundings and your contributions to those spaces. This awareness is something that can be intentionally cultivated and developed over time as you continue to leverage the many resources that Wake has to offer. For guidance, consider what it means for you to be [Ready7](#).

**Ruiting Gong:** It is common to doubt ourselves when we need to make decisions. Though college teaches us to become more independent, it also provides plenty of intimidating opportunities to make choices. However, you can always talk things through with someone you trust who can offer guidance and support. When I was in college, I had to choose between studying abroad my senior year or graduating on time. This decision required a long conversation with my family as well as a pro-con list. When I look back on my choice to study abroad, I can say it was one of the best I made even though it was incredibly difficult to trust my instincts. When you're faced with a tough choice, remember that it's all part of the learning process: trust yourself, utilize your resources, and have faith that everything will work out.

**John James:** My favorite advice that I received in my sophomore year was from a Wake Forest religion professor, Dr. Wiethaus. She advised us to treat school like a 9-5 job. By setting those hours, and working within those hours, you can avoid the feeling that there is always more you could be doing. While this is not a hard and fast rule, it is a helpful framework that can contribute to both productivity and genuine relaxation.

**Maggie Sheridan:** It's never easy when things don't go your way, especially when you know you tried your hardest. As difficult as it may be, working *through* disappointment is often the best way to beat it. It's tempting to avoid feelings of shame and discomfort, but that strategy rarely helps us heal, and it often leaves us ill-prepared for future challenges. No matter the disappointments you may face, remember that you are capable, worthy, resilient, and surrounded by many [pillars of support](#). As the cliché goes, "When life shuts a door, it opens a window." But here's what no one tells you: the view from that window might be better than anything that was waiting for you on the other side of that door.

**Shane Weimer:** Much like life, college is full of change. My advice as you continue your journey here at Wake Forest is to embrace change and lean into it. Instead of focusing on what is out of control, focus on what is in your control. The controllables, as I refer to them, are things such as your attitude and your effort. Lastly, know that you are not alone. There are people and [resources](#) here on campus that you can go to for support as you continue to navigate the remainder of your time here at Wake Forest.

**Wendi Zongker:** Even though you're a sophomore, we know your transition into Wake was anything but traditional and that you may be struggling to get involved and feel at home. In my first few weeks of college, I called my mother in tears to say I wanted to go home. I was in a completely different place and felt isolated and discouraged in equal measure. One small conversation with my RA changed everything, and before I knew it, I was feeling more inspired than intimidated. Here's my advice to you... Attend events you normally might not attend, even if you go alone. Walk up to that seemingly random table of food on the lower quad and find out

what's going on. If you want to get involved in a club or organization, don't hesitate. Just do it. Not sure where to start? Connect with the Office [of Student Engagement](#) to complete an Interest Matcher survey, meet with a student engagement consultant, and prepare a personalized plan for getting involved on campus.

To learn more about our Academic Advising team, please visit:  
<https://advising.wfu.edu/about/staff/>

Best,

**Cherise James, Ph.D.**

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Associate Director of Orientation & Lower Division Programming