

STANFORD  
UNIVERSITY



June 24, 2011

Dear Parents and Family of Incoming Freshmen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you, in addition to your daughter or son, to the Stanford family. We in Undergraduate Advising and Research (UAR) are dedicated to introducing students to the full intellectual richness of undergraduate study at Stanford, supporting students in their academic and intellectual pursuits, and instilling in them a deep sense of belonging to our community of scholars at Stanford.

This is not simply our work. We regard it as our privilege to be among the first people on campus to stand beside these extraordinary students as they embark on their Stanford journey.

The first way we support new students is by coordinating the Approaching Stanford process. This process encompasses the variety of media through which the University delivers to and collects critical information from incoming students between mid-May and their arrival on campus in September.

Because we value the contributions of our students' parents and families, one of the first things we ask incoming students to provide is the contact information for those family members with whom they would like us to share information about Stanford events and programs. Thus, while the other Approaching Stanford mailings this summer are for your student, this one is specifically for you and includes *A Guide for Parents* and information about student health insurance, parent events during New Student Orientation, and the Stanford Guest House. In September you will begin receiving a quarterly parent newsletter via email.

Through the Approaching Stanford process we endeavor to prepare your student to engage with the new academic, intellectual, and social opportunities they will encounter at Stanford. The information that Approaching Stanford delivers is not exhaustive; it is an introduction, intended to lay the foundation for the in-person interactions students will have with faculty, advisors, staff, and other students during their six-day New Student Orientation (NSO).

Although we do our best to prepare freshmen to stride confidently into their first Stanford classes, we know that the process of transition unfolds gradually as students continue to encounter new experiences at Stanford: their first set of final exams, first quarterly grades, first forays into undergraduate research, and so on. Most of these "firsts" are exciting, but some can be challenging and may shake a student's self-confidence.

**Undergraduate Advising and Research**

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To assist students across their freshman and sophomore years, as they transition from being high school seniors to undergraduates who have declared a major, UAR employs a multiple mentor model for undergraduate advising. Freshmen are assigned two academic advisors: an Academic Director (a professional UAR advisor whose office is in the student's residence) and a Pre-Major Advisor (a volunteer faculty or staff member who works with a small number of freshmen). Varsity athletes are served by UAR advisors whose offices are located in the Athletic Academic Resource Center, and an additional set of UAR advisors are located on the first floor of Sweet Hall, many of whom specialize in pre-professional advising. Freshmen will be invited to communicate with their Academic Director after receiving an introductory email from her/him on August 15 and will meet their Pre-Major Advisor during NSO. We require that students have a "check-in" meeting with their Pre-Major Advisor each quarter, but we encourage students to connect with advisors whenever they have questions (simple or complex) or ideas for expanding their intellectual horizons.

Because academic decisions are ultimately a student's own, advisors will rarely tell students what to do, but together they will provide students with the information, perspectives, and guidance they need to make well-informed and well-reasoned decisions.

Parents and families are critical figures in a student's success, and we appreciate your support in encouraging your son or daughter to consult early and often with advisors when he or she encounters a challenge or feels ready to explore a new opportunity. A suggestion, from you, to consult with an Academic Director can be a powerful tool in our work with your student. We partner closely with our colleagues in Residential Education and other offices under the Vice Provost for Student Affairs, and when a student's needs extend beyond our expertise, we connect the student with the appropriate colleagues and resources.

Many of us in UAR spend the full spring and summer preparing for the new students' arrival, and though this can be a bittersweet time for families, I look forward to meeting you and your student in September. If you have questions this summer, please do not hesitate to contact the Approaching Stanford team at (650) 72-FROSH or via email at [frosh@stanford.edu](mailto:frosh@stanford.edu). As a Stanford parent, you may also call the Parent Help Line at (650) 725-0649 or email [mykidis@stanford.edu](mailto:mykidis@stanford.edu). I send you my very best wishes for a relaxing and rewarding summer with your soon-to-be Stanford freshman.

Sincerely,



Koren L. Bakkegard  
Associate Dean  
Undergraduate Advising and Research