

## **Advice for First-Year Students from Biology Seniors**

- 1) Take the lead on your education and career goals. Your advisor and professors are there to help, but nobody can advocate for you like you! Research what you want to do here and later and what is possible and required. Look for opportunities on your own. Talk over all your plans with your advisor, professors and others you think can help.
- 2) If you are having trouble, ask for help. College gets easier as you progress if you put in the time and effort. Be Persistent with classes and aspirations, and use all the resources available. Don't try to do it all on your own!
- 3) Talk to and get to know your professors. They are not that scary and they can be great mentors and sources of recommendation letters later on. When contacting professors, be persistent and professional. If they don't reply to an email right away, it's probably because they are busy and not because they are ignoring you - give it a little time and then follow up. Most professors are happy to meet with students about advising, research, etc. They are just busy people.
- 4) Try as many new things as possible and have fun! What do you have to lose? Realize that college will probably be the fastest 4 (or 5 or more) years of your life so take advantage of the unique opportunities while you have them. Get involved with things that interest you not just what may look good on a resume. Take a look at the student groups, cultural centers, community volunteering, research, internships and other opportunities on and off campus.
- 5) Network with other students to discuss good courses, opportunities and resources.
- 6) Actively seek out opportunities and do not assume you are not qualified. It often helps to be willing to volunteer at first, and you don't have to have experience to do things in many cases - the whole point is to learn!
- 7) Seek out and apply for undergraduate research funding and scholarships at OSU, nationally and internationally. There are lots out there and they may not be as hard to get as you think. Especially apply for COS scholarships and HHMI and URISC undergraduate research funding.
- 8) Study abroad or complete an international internship abroad! There will never be a better time to do it, and you can generally use your financial aid - most scholarships can be used. The credits can help you with graduation, and it does not take you any longer to finish at OSU. There are so many amazing places to go, and it is one of the more rewarding things you can do.
- 9) Do undergraduate research. If you want to get involved in research, be willing to volunteer in a lab or start with menial tasks and work your way up to an individual research project. You do not need to have experience to get started, and it can be very rewarding. Apply for URISC and HHMI undergraduate research funding.
- 10) Try and get as much professional experience as possible. Seek out shadowing, internships, preceptorships, research experiences and others so that you have a real resume or CV when you graduate. Many experiences frequently begin or include significant amounts of volunteering. Watch the listserve and use the tools on the website. There are a huge number of opportunities!
- 11) Keep a running resume or CV (curriculum vitae). It is easy to forget things you have done, as well as the timeline duration etc. This is very useful to have around when you apply for things.