Freshman Year Checklist - Transitions

☐ Get to know your RA, your DA, and your fellow residents
  ✓ These people are valuable resources who can help you
  ✓ Your roommate(s) and people in your building are critical to establishing an academic and social network
  ✓ Know where to go for studying. It is imperative to discover the most effective location and method to study for yourself. Possible places include the Bartle Library, Science Library, and the Discovery Centers located in each community

☐ Make sure you are going to class
  ✓ Create a balanced schedule so you don't get overwhelmed. Your DA can help!
  ✓ Organize your work and be sure to pace yourself. All-nighters are neither fun nor effective, and can usually be avoided with proper preparation
  ✓ When scheduling classes, make sure to take a variety of classes. This can help you figure out what you like and what you need to fulfill course requirements
  ✓ Be aware of the Add/Drop deadline and the Withdraw/Grade change deadline
  ✓ Use effective study skills to do well in class. Expect college level courses to be more challenging than the high school courses you may be used to
  ✓ If you get notified via Discovery’s Early Warning initiative, follow the email instructions to set an appointment up: it might not be too late to turn things around!

☐ Get involved on campus
  ✓ Getting involved in clubs or sports is a great way to meet new people so make sure to check out B-engaged, which showcases student organizations and upcoming events
  ✓ Establish yourself in a group to which you are willing and able to commit time and effort
  ✓ Go to General Interest Meetings (GIMs) and fairs in the first couple weeks of the semester
  ✓ Make sure you check your bmail daily and always look for updates on b-line as well as pay attention to emails from your professors who often use Blackboard as a medium

☐ Get to know at least one professor each semester
  ✓ Professors’ office hours are the most underutilized resource on campus
  ✓ Professors can help you gain more information about a specific field
  ✓ Make lasting connections early. Professors and professional faculty can inform you about exciting opportunities and write recommendation letters for your future endeavors

☐ Get to know the academic resources on campus
  ✓ Discovery Advisors (DAs), School academic advisors, and Faculty Masters are here to help you. Know where to go and who to seek out by finding their information online
  ✓ Have your DA assist you in interpreting your DegreeWorks and planning for future semesters
  ✓ Know where to go for tutoring (CIW Library). It’s free - sign up on cht.binghamton.edu
  ✓ Know where to go for printing (Info Commons, Discovery Centers, Academic A basement, Science Library, West Pods in Science III, etc.)
  ✓ Know where to purchase and borrow books (Library, Newcomb Reading Room, Bookstore, Mando’s, Barnes and Noble)
  ✓ Learn about the Career Development Center and its different services
  ✓ Utilize Choices Planner, Discovery’s online academic and career exploration tool

Updated Fall 2013
Sophomore Year Checklist - Possibilities

☐ Review your Academic Progress
  ✓ Meet with your Discovery Advisor (DA) to discuss your progress, including difficulties with a class or concerns about a major. A DA can also ensure that you are meeting academic requirements
  ✓ Focus on selecting courses that interest you, not merely content, but also the teaching and learning style
  ✓ Make sure that you understand how to compare your degree audit to your progress
  ✓ Get tutoring early for difficult courses at the CIW Library. Sign up for free at clt.binghamton.edu
  ✓ Begin developing a plan for the remainder of your undergraduate career
  ✓ Talk to professional or peer advisors as well as faculty associated with your current school/department of interest as you pursue your academic planning

☐ Plan for your major(s)
  ✓ Visit the Binghamton website to research academic departments, their faculty, majors, minors, programs, requirements, and opportunities
  ✓ If you know what major you want, declare it by going to its department. Some upper level classes may only be available to students declared in that field. Make sure to get on the academic department's listserv to get relevant notifications.
  ✓ Consult upper-class peers with similar majors and careers as you
  ✓ Join the email list-servs of different organizations in which you might have a genuine interest such as pre-health or pre-law.
  ✓ Visit Discovery at discovery.binghamton.edu (academic resources) for tips on exploring majors

☐ Develop career and internship possibilities
  ✓ Never equate a major with a specific career. When thinking about a major, remember to consider your interests, skills, and values. Visit the Career Development Center (CDC) to discuss with a career counselor
  ✓ For internships, ask a peer or professional advisor how and where you can find them (i.e. through an academic department, Off Campus College, CDC, etc.). Decide if you want or need credit or if you are simply seeking experience
  ✓ Visit Discovery's website to access Choices Planner, Discovery's online educational and career research tool. There are various interest and skills assessment. Ask your DA for assistance
  ✓ Start building your resume. As a sophomore, you can refer to various high school experiences. However, you should really strive to include only college-level experience, whether it is paid or voluntary. Plan to visit the CDC for resume assistance

☐ Seek involvement
  ✓ Take advantage of Study Abroad Programs or the National Student Exchange at http://oip.binghamton.edu or http://nse.binghamton.edu
  ✓ Get involved in leadership positions. This can be in a residence government, in a student organization, in a sport, or even with campus faculty. Don’t overdo it by assuming too many responsibilities. Rather, join one or two positions and take an active, effective role

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Junior Year Checklist - Excellence

☐ Make sure you have declared a major!!!
  ✓ Declaring a major is not only helpful to get into upper level classes and graduate on time but some financial money is only given after your major is declared

☐ Check your Degree Audit
  ✓ Make sure everything is up to date. You don’t want to catch a mistake too late! Visit your school's advising office to correct any errors
  ✓ Plan to finish up any Gen-eds or school specific requirements that are left.
  ✓ Know which courses you still have to take for your major

☐ Research possible internships
  ✓ Know what you want to get out of an internship (i.e. experience, credit, money, etc.)
  ✓ Attend mandatory OCC Information Sessions at the beginning of each semester and CDC information sessions throughout the semester
  ✓ Make sure your resume is up to date: go to the CDC for help in revising your resume
  ✓ Improve your interview skills with CDC and your presentation skills at the Public Speaking Lab
  ✓ Consider the time commitment: can you fit it into your semester/summer/winter schedule?

☐ Seek leadership and involvement on campus
  ✓ The responsibility you gain in clubs or organizations is a great way to boost your resume
  ✓ Establish yourself in a student organization you are dedicated to and interested in. Employers and graduate schools would much rather see a student with meaningful commitment to one or two clubs rather than a student who simply participated in several

☐ Start approaching different faculty and mentors
  ✓ Recommendations are extremely important and you want to make sure these key individuals have your most updated information
  ✓ Professor office hours are the most underutilized resource on campus

☐ Start planning for after-college
  ✓ Attend CDC workshops. This can also help in searching for internships and jobs
  ✓ Utilize the CDC’s alumni network to gain insight into your potential career paths
  ✓ If you plan to attend graduate school, make sure you have all the prerequisites required and know what program you plan to pursue
  ✓ If you plan on taking the MCATs, LSATs, or GREs, look into the different options in regard to preparation. Applications for medical and law schools are due your first semester of your senior year. Graduate school applications are often due by December of January.

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Senior Year Checklist - Future

☐ Submit your intention to graduate form and check your Degree Audit
  ✓ The Undergraduate application for Degree (AFD) is available via BU Brain, under the Student tab. Students may submit the AFD provided they have 104 earned credit hours by the first day of classes in the semester they wish to graduate in.
  ✓ AFD's must be submitted by the Withdraw/Grade Change deadline
  ✓ Make sure your degree audit is up-to-date. Meet with an advisor to ensure you are on track

☐ Make a plan - do you plan on working next year or attending graduate school?
  ✓ Remember: Graduate School should not be a backup for unfavorable employment prospects
  ✓ Start talking to different faculty and mentors to get ideas
  ✓ Utilize the CDC to explore different options
  ✓ Make a schedule for yourself - make sure you know deadlines!
  ✓ Register and prepare for different tests - GRE, MCAT, LSAT, GMAT, etc.

☐ Make sure to check the CDC schedule for all upcoming job fairs
  ✓ If you plan on attending the Job and Internship Fair, make sure your resume is up to date and that you have a professional outfit to wear. RESEARCH the companies and jobs before attending - being well informed makes a good impression to potential employers
  ✓ If you plan on attending the Graduate School Fair, make sure you know which programs you are interested in. Write down questions before you go
  ✓ Consider your social networking accounts. If found by an employer, are they professional?

☐ Open an Interfolio account with the CDC
  ✓ Interfolio is a service that can indefinitely hold your references from professionals digitally
  ✓ Directions on how to create an account: http://www2.binghamton.edu/career-development-center/credentials
  ✓ Establishing references is vital to your career and academic pursuits
  ✓ Determine who you will contact for references and make the effort to meet with them to explain your career and/or academic goals
  ✓ Rule of thumb is typically three references for employment and/or professional school
  ✓ For employment, plan to have at least two references from current or former supervisors
  ✓ For graduate and/or professional school, plan to have at least two references from former or current upper-level faculty

☐ Prepare for Commencement!!
  ✓ Students must submit their Commencement participation form on commencement.binghamton.edu in order to walk in graduation. Check the site for deadlines
  ✓ Make hotel and/or dinner reservations for your family as soon as possible because everything books up quickly, even almost a year in advance!
  ✓ Make sure to purchase your cap and gown as well as graduation tickets. Remember - you only get 6 tickets depending on your school if you do not request more!
  ✓ Have your senior portraits taken for the yearbook
  ✓ Start making plans for living arrangements for next year
  ✓ Make plans to stay in contact with your friends and faculty. Life after Binghamton University will take you far, but the bonds you’ve made during undergraduate will still hold strong!

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