

# ACADEMIC AND CAREER ADVISING

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The Lynk (p. 1)

Academic Advising (p. 1)

Career Advising (p. 1)

Pre-Medical and Pre-Health Advising (p. 2)

Engineering Advising (p. 2)

Graduate School Advising (p. 2)

Competitive Fellowships and Scholarships Advising (p. 2)

## The Lynk

At Mount Holyoke, academic and career advising go hand-in-hand. Starting from their first year, students are encouraged to connect their academic interests with cocurricular learning opportunities. The Lynk is Mount Holyoke's signature approach to connecting curriculum to career. The Lynk connects each Mount Holyoke student's academic work with practical applications of the liberal arts and sciences. Each student's Lynk experience is unique, reflecting the student's values and aspirations. Through rigorous coursework, advising, alum mentoring, professional development, and experiential learning on and off campus, students are empowered to achieve their immediate goals while being equipped to navigate a lifetime of career opportunities and challenges.

At the Lynk's core are intentional reflection and assessment, tools for discerning students' interests and developing long-term goals. From their first semester to their last, students are challenged to think critically about ideas and events while reflecting upon them intellectually and personally. They work closely with faculty, staff, and peer advisors on honing their ability to assess and translate knowledge.

The Lynk facilitates shared experiences such as industry site visits and a wide range of pre-professional and job skills workshops – while also connecting students to thousands of accomplished alums who open doors for each other. See internships (p. 1) and The Lynk website (<https://offices.mtholyoke.edu/lynk/>) for further information.

## Lynk Resources

Rather than follow a prescribed program, students shape their own Lynk experience with a number of resources the College makes available:

- Integrated advising with faculty, staff, and peer mentors from the first semester to graduation.
- First-year seminar program introducing students to the academic and intellectual life of the College.
- The Academic Centers at Mount Holyoke which empower students to become agents of change.
- Living-learning communities fostering higher levels of academic self-confidence and increased involvement.
- Study abroad offering a powerful experience to advance a student's academics and build global competence.
- Career Development Center where students learn to map their unique paths to success.

- Sophomore Institute, a conference introducing and building professional career skills.
- Lynk Summer Funding is guaranteed for all students planning an unpaid domestic or international summer internship or research experience.
- COLL-211 course connecting learning in the world, learning on campus, and taking action.
- Learning from Application (LEAP) symposium, for students completing summer internships.
- Nexus, offering nine tracks that enable students to link their liberal arts education with their career goals.
- Alum networking events connecting the global Mount Holyoke community on campus and off.
- Community-Based Learning linking students with communities and combining learning and analysis with action and social change.
- Industry and field site visits through Lynk on the Road and Career Development Center trips.
- Senior Symposium presentations showcasing intellectual passions, independent projects, and scholarly research.

For more information, consult The Lynk website (<https://offices.mtholyoke.edu/lynk/>).

## Academic Advising

All first-year students and sophomores are assigned a faculty advisor who offers guidance about everything from course selection to meeting requirements and planning a major. The College's Orientation program and the Academic Dean for New Students offer supplementary programming to introduce all first-year students to the academic life of the College.

Midway through the second semester of their sophomore year, students declare their major. From that point on, they work with a faculty advisor in their major or interdisciplinary department. Students who pursue a special major work with a faculty committee of advisors. In addition to offering advice about the major, advisors offer valuable counsel about Five College study, other off-campus study options, and preparation for graduate and professional school. Each academic department or program also identifies one or more student departmental liaisons who are helpful peer academic resources to students interested or already majoring in that field.

## Career Advising

The Career Development Center (CDC) offers a variety of career exploration, networking, internship, and job search services as well as prelaw advising. These programs and services are designed to assist students in connecting their education in the liberal arts with long-term success in the professional world, preparing students to navigate future career transitions as well as the internship and job searches they conduct while at the College.

The CDC provides individual career advising to all students throughout each stage of the career development process, from self-assessment and information gathering to exploration and decision making. The CDC maintains a helpful career resource library and a variety of online information sources.

Students are encouraged to explore career options and gain experience in areas of interest through internship and research opportunities. Funding is available to students for unpaid summer internships and

research experiences through the Lynk Summer Funding Program. To be eligible for Lynk funding, students must follow the published policies and deadlines.

Beginning in October 2023, the Career Development Center and Student Financial Services will partner to deliver the MHC Student Employment Program. Within Student Financial Services, students will find the Student Employment Office, which serves as a clearinghouse for all on-campus jobs for students. The Career Development Center serves as a resource to students and supervisors in making on-campus employment a valuable learning experience. Student employees are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the College's Code of Ethical Conduct (<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/policies/code-ethical-conduct/>) which identifies principles, policies, and laws that govern the activities of the college and identifies expectations for every member of the community who conducts business on behalf of the College regarding proper professional and ethical conduct that reflects the College's values.

In addition, the CDC fosters connections with professionals in a wide variety of fields in order to provide opportunities and to support students in developing professional networks. The CDC's recruiting program facilitates access to hundreds of employers through its on-line job search and on-campus recruiting programs. Recruiting programs include interviews, information sessions, and job fairs on-campus and with Five College institutions as well as other consortia. Students also have opportunities to connect with alums and professionals in a variety of fields through on-campus programming and off-campus site visits.

## Pre-Medical and Pre-Health Advising

Pre-health advising is available to all interested students, primarily through the Office of Pre-Health Programs.

The Pre-Health Programs Office and the faculty Chair of the Committee on the Health Professions cosponsor information sessions early every fall semester for students interested in learning about careers in the health professions and the advising system that is available. A robust schedule of programming offered throughout the year includes workshops, information sessions and alum panels, and visits by admission staff from health professions programs throughout the country.

Pre-Health advising is available beginning in the first semester, primarily through the Office of Pre-Health Programs. Faculty members from the Committee on the Health Professions are also available to assist with aspects of identifying and preparing for a career in the health professions. Often, Committee members are the professors teaching the science courses which are prerequisites to health careers. As students enter the application process, typically in the spring of the junior or senior year, each student should plan to ask a member of the Committee, or any other faculty member who knows the student's work well enough, to serve as the author of the Committee's letter of Recommendation. The Committee's letter is a composite letter of recommendation, a comprehensive summary of all aspects of the student's preparation, including coursework, internships, research, entrance exam scores, and comments contained in the student's individual recommendation letters. The Committee also conducts a practice interview of the student.

All students who are applying to post-graduate programs in the health professions should formally declare their intentions to the Committee no later than March 31 of the year in which they are planning to begin their application. Students declare their intent by completing a pre-application packet, available at the Pre-Health Programs office. This packet is intended to help optimize the student's efforts in completing an application that will be successful, and to aid the committee in

supporting the student's application. Students who fail to submit a pre-application packet by the deadline may not receive the full support of the committee.

## Engineering Advising

Students interested in pursuing a career in engineering should contact a member of the Committee on Engineering as soon as possible after arriving on campus. The College offers three dual-degree programs (see Other Degree and Certificate Programs (<http://catalog.mtholyoke.edu/other-programs/other-degree-certificate-programs/>) for details) for students interested in earning an undergraduate degree in engineering as well as their Bachelor of Arts from Mount Holyoke. These programs all have a large number of required courses, so it is in a student's best interest to take both a math and a physics course in each of the first three semesters.

The Nexus in Engineering program offers an alternative route to prepare for future graduate work in engineering or employment in engineering-related fields. Students should consult with a Nexus advisor in planning their courses and the summer internship in the field of engineering which the Nexus requires.

## Graduate School Advising

Throughout the academic year, faculty advise students about graduate study in specific fields and about ways to meet graduate admission requirements. Students can also receive guidance about researching graduate programs, preparing application materials, financing graduate study, and readying themselves for entrance examinations by consulting with an advisor in the Career Development Center.

## Prestigious Fellowships and Scholarships Advising

Fellowships at Mount Holyoke (FMH), a part of the Career Development Center, offers developmental and progressive advising to students intent on furthering their educational and aspirational goals by competing for prestigious merit-based awards. Advising should begin early in a student's college career with a broad-ranging and focused intake conversation, encouraging introspection and self-reflection and leading to intention- and goal-setting. Fellowship candidates explore opportunities aligned with their minds and hearts, prioritize their unique attributes to develop a competitive edge, and work through a talking-and-writing program to refine and polish their self-expression.

For a school of its size, Mount Holyoke competes for a significant number of top national and international fellowships and scholarships every year, having in the past decade won Rhodes, Fulbright, Goldwater, Boren, Beinecke, Gates Cambridge, National Science Foundation Graduate Research, and Truman awards. While demonstrating MHC's talented student corps, the large number of awards also reflects the college's exceptional success network for students who apply. Eligible students receive extensive support and guidance from the Fellowships Advisor, the Committee on Fellowships, and mentoring staff and faculty.