

Advising Prompts

I. Exploratory Goals Essay

SLU's "Aims and Objectives" statement explains that: "St. Lawrence seeks to provide an education that fosters in students an open, inquiring and disciplined mind, well informed through broad exposure to basic areas of knowledge; an enthusiasm for life-long learning; self-confidence and self-knowledge; a respect for differing opinions and for free discussion of those opinions; and an ability to use information logically and to evaluate alternative points of view."

- 1) What aspect of the broad liberal arts mission brought you to St. Lawrence?
- 2) What do you hope to accomplish while you're here beyond the immediate goal of earning a diploma?
- 3) Which among the many courses of study available at SLU interest you at the moment?
- 4) Which among the many cocurricular opportunities at SLU might you be interested in pursuing?
- 5) What are the sources of these interests from your pre-SLU experiences?

II. Goals Revision

Reread the original goals you sketched out last summer. Do you still recognize the person who composed the original essay? How is he or she different from the person you've become in the meantime? What are the agents or sources for those changes (think: courses, teachers, mentors, cocurricular experiences...) Write a letter to your FYP advisor, who knew that former self, about the person that you've become.

III. Major Declaration

Compose a letter to your prospective advisor about choosing that particular major. (cc prospective department chair and current advisor) List the courses you've already taken in that department. In addition, describe formative learning experiences in those classes and outside of them that helped to lead you to this decision. Make an effort to explain how this major might relate to your cocurricular and/or vocational interests.

IV. SYE Prospectus

Your senior year allows you to integrate many of the academic and cocurricular experiences you've had at SLU. As you think about this final year, imagine a project that would allow you to pull together your interests and to work closely with a faculty mentor. You might think about how your goals have evolved since your first year at SLU. Talk to your advisor about what this project might look.

Write a formal proposal to your advisor about how you will spend your senior year. What sorts of choices will you make in your senior year that will bring together your current interests and passions both inside and outside the classroom? What courses or academic projects do you plan to undertake that reflect a kind of culmination of your four years of study? What sorts of co-curricular activities will you be involved in that both complement your academic work and prepare you for the path you envision yourself on after graduation? Look back at the first reflection you wrote as a first-year student. How does this plan for your senior year reflect your growth and evolution at SLU?

Specific issues to consider addressing:

- If you are engaging in an independent study or honors project, write a prospectus for that project that describes it in significant detail.
- If you're taking a senior seminar, explain in some detail how the work you will do in that course will represent the culmination of what you've learned in your major and beyond.
- Explain the significance of your co-curricular activities, either in terms of your academic pursuits or other passions you have.

V. Looking Back

Write a letter to someone who has had significant impact on you while you've been at St. Lawrence. Think back on your time at SLU and how it has affected who you are today. Complete the following: "There's something I need to tell you..." The "something" can be about a single thing like a book you read or a class you took that changed the way you think or an experience that influenced you in some significant way. It might be about a number of these things combined. Write about how this "something" affected you the way it did and why it did. Think about it in relation to the goals you set for yourself early on. Did you accomplish all you set out to do? Knowing all that you do, how might you revise those goals now?