A strong password is one of the most important precautions you can take in protecting you and your information. Weak passwords are easily cracked, which could give a hacker access to your accounts, whether email, Banner, Workday, bank or other. A hack attack could result in someone stealing your identity, compromising your computer and enlisting it in a botnet that sends spam with your name, or committing a data breach of Brown’s information, leaving you to deal with all the legal and financial repercussions.

The best way to make a password strong is to have one that is easy to remember but hard to guess. One way to do that is with a "passphrase", a longer and therefore stronger password made up of a string of words that mean something to you but would appear random to others (for example, gutsyfootprinthoundintuition might have been a password for Arthur Conan Doyle).

Another example of how to balance comes from a lover of musicals, who used the first line of the song "My Favorite Things", i.e., Raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens to create: RnDpzoRz&(Nk10

Here’s one more example of another way to create a strong password:

1. Start with a word or short phrase and spell it backwards. For example: Turn Lake Placid into dicalpekal
2. Use "l33t speak", substituting numbers for certain letters: dicalpekal could become d1calp3kal
3. Randomly throw in some capital letters: d1calp3kal could become D1calp3Kal
4. Don’t forget the special character: Turn D1calp3Kal could become*D1calp3Kal!

More at:
» Strong Passwords: Take It Up a Notch or Two! brown.edu/go/passwords