



Parent and Family Newsletter

AUGUST 2019

Dear parents and families,

Another school year is upon us, and I would like to welcome you and your student to Minot State University! It is an exciting time of new beginnings and experiences; however, it is also an important time to establish clear lines of communication with your student. The first five weeks of the fall semester are crucial to their success at Minot State University. During the opening weeks of the school year, the honeymoon period will diminish a bit and the reality of being away from home and friends, and the fact that they have to start all over again in creating their persona, can be stressful.

So how does your student have a great beginning of the semester? Get engaged, both socially and academically. The social part is easier than the academic portion of engagement. Your student will have an opportunity to join a club or organization during the month of September, and they really need to do it to become a part of our family and meet new people. From an academic standpoint, the best way to begin the school year is to begin building relationships with professors by scheduling a regular meeting with each professor. These meetings don't have to be long; ten to fifteen minutes a week will go a long way! Once the assignments and grades start to present themselves, your student will have already formed a level of trust and communication with their professors which will become a factor in their success.

Again, welcome to our family and please always know that you may contact me at any time at 701-858-3140 or kevin.harmon@MinotStateU.edu if you have questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Harmon".

Kevin Harmon
Vice President for Student Affairs

Be seen. Be heard. Be empowered.

Here Comes Move-in Day

By Kimberly Yavorski, CollegiateParent.com

The weeks leading up to your freshman leaving for college are a virtual amusement park (i.e., beyond just a roller coaster) of emotion and activity. Shopping and packing, paperwork and appointments, connecting with new roommates, saying goodbye to old friends...

Some students — and parents — embrace the chaos while others resist and procrastinate. To help you make it to (and beyond) move-in day with your sanity intact, here are eight things to prepare for and work on with your student, with special thanks to Patricia Hilkert, Director of New Student and Family Programs at Northwestern University, for insights into what makes a successful transition.



1. Get in the email habit.

Some colleges still send U.S. mail, but many are “green” and only communicate electronically, and with the student, not the parent. That means you need to ask your student for information or do your own sleuthing to find out what’s due when. (It may be an option for your student to grant you access to some areas of their student account; the school will tell you how to do this.)

Summer is a good time for your student to clean up old email accounts and get in the habit of checking their new college account daily. It can be tough to find a balance between helping and taking over — start by making sure they’re paying attention to action items from the school so they don’t miss deadlines for:

- **Accepting the final financial aid award.** An offer doesn’t make it official — the award must be accepted, by the student.
- **Course registration.** Depending on the school, this will happen over the summer or at move-in. Students who register late may not get their preferred schedule.
- **Waiving the college health insurance plan** (if your student will stay on your plan).
- **Reviewing/paying the fall semester bill.**

2. Collect and shop.

Colleges share suggested packing lists as well as a list of items not permitted in residence halls. Dorm rooms tend to be small and have limited storage, so less is definitely more. Not everything on the list is essential, and some items can be shared by roommates or purchased later if need be.

3. Expect emotions to fluctuate.

As the summer progresses, try to ignore the attitude. Experts refer to the unpleasant behavior that can come with a large life change as “soiling the nest.” Your child may cycle rapidly from happy and cooperative to sullen and argumentative. Remember that, though they may not want to admit it, this whole “going away to college” thing is scary. Soon they’ll be living in an unfamiliar place, and in some cases sharing a room for the first time with someone they’ve never met.

Cut them some slack, and give them some space. Respect their desire to spend time with high school friends rather than family. School calendars vary, so there will be lots of going-away parties starting in mid-August.

4. Teach independent living skills.

Think about the things you do for your child that in college they'll need to do for themselves. They should be competent in the following areas:

- Laundry (How much makes up a "normal" load? Hot or cold water? Folding and putting away is part of the process...)
- Basic cooking skills
- Basic cleaning skills (custodial staff will clean the bathroom and common areas but your student and their roommate will be responsible for their room)
- Managing their bank balance and writing out a check
- Making an appointment (by phone and online) and using their health insurance card
- Using public transportation
- Addressing and stamping a letter
- Keeping personal documents and valuables safe

Don't assume anything! Northwestern's Patricia Hilkert has found that some students still come to school with no idea of how to do laundry and "expect student orientation leaders to teach them." Not gonna happen!

5. Talk about keeping in touch.

While some parents and their college students are in contact daily, others touch base once a week or month. How often and what method of communication (phone, text, social media) do you expect will work best? You're looking for a balance that you're both comfortable with.

While you're at it, make a note of their campus address so you can send an occasional card or care package (family members may ask for it, too).

Hilkert points out that parents who expect to hear from their students often may be disappointed or have their feelings hurt. Don't forget that your student will not only have classes but also extracurriculars and maybe even a job. "If you're not hearing from them, everything is right. You will hear from them when everything is wrong."

6. Review move-in day procedures.

Take a look at the move-in day schedule and be sure you understand how everything will work. At some schools, upperclassmen with carts are available to help unload vehicles and handle the heavy lifting; others leave you on your own. Know where and when to check in (you may be assigned a specific time).

Many schools offer move-in orientation programs that provide useful information for families and students alike. If you're traveling a distance and plan to spend a night or two, book a room in advance. Build in time for a shopping trip to pick up last-minute/bulky items. Be sure to have water and snacks on hand, and be dressed for heat and dirt!

7. Don't rush the first visit home.

Experts agree students should stay on campus for the first month or two. "Going home frequently messes with the transition," Hilkert says, and can actually make homesickness worse. "It is better for students to stay on campus to form relationships and get involved." Make plans for them to return home for the long fall weekend or Thanksgiving break and get those dates on the calendar.

8. Be prepared for move-in day to go fast.

Once everything is in the room and you've helped make the bed (they'll roll their eyes, but every other mom is doing it!), follow your student's lead. Let them decide where to put stuff, and how much they want to unpack right now. Go to the parent programs. Give a hug and say goodbye. Don't be surprised if the tears flow before you make it to the car, and then again when you get home and look into their empty bedroom. Before you know it, they will be back for break. Each goodbye gets a little easier.



Click on the articles below to read more helpful preparation tips!

- [Summer to-do list for new college students and families](#)
- [Dorm shopping tips for parents](#)

Supporting Your Student

Minot State University recognizes how important your involvement is to your student's success and overall experience at Minot State. You can support your student by encouraging them to take ownership of their academic and career exploration, pursue engagement opportunities, and take advantage of campus resources. Together, we can assist in achieving their goals by identifying our unique responsibilities in the college process.

Family/ Guardian Responsibilities

- Actively listen to what your student tells you about their college experience.
- Support your student's development of coping and problem-solving skills. Remind your student to seek resources and be proactive about asking for help.
- Allow your student to take the lead in their own learning.
- Encourage your student to explore various interests and learn about new majors and career paths.

MSU Student Services' Responsibilities

- Assist students with navigating course registration, major and career exploration, and University policies and procedures.
- Provide resources to track timely graduation and to prepare for life after college.
- Connect students with internships and services that will compliment and support their academic experience.
- Offer referrals to campus to support students' success and well-being.

Students' Responsibilities

- Take responsibility for their own learning and be prepared to invest time in studying outside of the classroom.
- Communicate with student support service providers when needed.
- Pursue opportunities that will enhance their academic experience.



IMPORTANT DATES & INFORMATION

August

- 23 – Fall 2019 Move-in Day, 8 A.M.
- 23 – New Student Convocation, Ann Nicole Nelson Hall, 2:30 P.M.
- 23–30 – Welcome Week, check your email or call 701-858-3350 for a schedule of activities
- 24 – Business, Financial Aid, Parking, Registrar, and ID offices open, 10 A.M. – 2 P.M.
- 24–26 – Welcome Weekend group sessions and service projects
- 26 – First day of classes beginning at 4 P.M. and after
- 27 – First day of classes beginning at 8 A.M. and after
- 28 – Club Fair in Quad, 11 A.M.

September

- 2 – Labor Day, University closed
- 11 – Tuition, fees, room and board must be paid in full or a payment plan set up (three equal installments)
- 15 – Study Abroad application deadline for spring and summer programs
- TBD – Time management seminar, sponsored by MSU Career Services (date/time TBD)

October

- 18–20 – Parent & Family Weekend

View more dates, deadlines, and events at MinotStateU.edu/calendar.



The Parent's Perspective Corner

Move-in Day

*Submitted by Shari Huber, Regina, Saskatchewan
Parent of current student*

My daughter, Eden, was attending Minot State University for a degree in communication disorders with the hope of taking her master's in speech language pathology. Applying for school, attending orientation day, getting a student visa, and the security check to cross the Canadian border were relatively simple and smooth sailing thanks to the MSU staff and contacts that answered our many questions along the way. Eden was excited and nervous as the days got closer to move-in day. She was going to be moving into Cook Hall, a building I lived in my first year over 30 years ago (the building is still the same!). As I am sure similar to many, she left packing to the last few days. Between work, packing, and saying good bye to friends she had a few late nights prior to leaving for Minot State.

Move-in day went super smooth. MSU had that organized down to perfection. By the time we unloaded our vehicle and parked it, staff and current MSU students carried or hauled everything up to the fifth floor. Someone even taught us how to loft up the bed. Lunch was provided. We organized what we could and then went on a Target run to pick up things we had forgotten. Eden had a quick hello with her new roommate. It was a busy day. That night she decided to stay in the dorm. We stayed with friends. We picked her up early the next morning for a visit. I could tell from her voice that something was not quite right.

The physical part of the move was super simple. Now came the part that I was not prepared for, the emotional part. That was hard and complicated. I guess Eden did not sleep so well in her new home. The heat with no air conditioning, the sound of traffic and trains outside her window, the neighbor

dorm having people over for a visit until early hours of the next morning, and the point that her new roommate decided not to stay in the dorm that night made the whole idea of the perfect stay in a University dorm room not quite like she had imagined. She started crying that morning and really did not stop that entire day. I had not expected that. We delayed heading home until later Sunday evening, but my husband had to work the next day so we had to leave. In our final goodbye that evening, her dad started crying along with her. I did finally say, "You don't have to stay if you don't want to," knowing that she really did want to stay and she replied, "No, I want to do this." I believed once classes started and she got into a routine, she would meet people and settle in.

Later Monday from home, I texted her that I found something of hers and asked if she wanted to Facetime. Her response was, "How about tomorrow? I am busy right now." I gave a sigh of relief to that response because I knew from there on everything would be ok. Move-in day is a wave of emotions. Within that wave of emotions, you are tremendously proud and happy for your child as they move away from home and begin their journey to be independent. In the long run, my goal as a parent was to raise an independent child.

Flash forward three years. Eden is about to begin her fourth and final year in her communication disorders degree. She now considers Minot home and her "people" there are her best friends. She has become super involved in MSU through many clubs and attends – anything where there is free food and activities!

Move-in day can be extremely difficult and things might happen that you were not expecting, but give it a little time, and MSU will become one of the best experiences of your child's life!

Last Minute Financial Aid Tips for Parents

Classes will begin soon and it's a great time to consider these last minute items before financial aid is applied to student accounts. Fall semester tuition and fees are due on Sept. 11.

1. If your student has not yet filed the 2019–20 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), it's not too late! The 2019–20 FAFSA is available at fafsa.gov. The FAFSA is the single application form for U.S. citizens and permanent residents to apply for all forms of federal financial aid including federal grants, student loans, and work study. We encourage students and parents to file the FAFSA using the handy IRS Data Retrieval Tool to ensure accuracy and to make filing easier.
2. Review the amounts due for fall semester tuition, fees, residence hall, meal plan charges, and books with your student and consider their amount of anticipated financial aid for fall. Fall charges will be posted to the student's account in Campus Connection during the first week of August. Your student can log into Campus Connection at MinotStateU.edu/cc, select 'Financial Account', then 'Account Summary' to view the charges and anticipated financial aid for the fall semester. He or she should accept or decline any pending financial aid. If you and your student determine that he or she may have previously accepted too much in loans and would like to reduce the amount, contact the Financial Aid Office at 701-858-3375 for assistance in adjusting loan amounts to keep loan debt as low as possible.
3. If your student will owe a balance after all financial aid is applied, consider options to help cover any remaining balance such as:
 - a. The Minot State Tuition Payment Plan which allows student to divide up the remaining balance into three monthly payments: MinotStateU.edu/busoffic/pages/tuition-payment-plan.shtml.
 - b. Federal Parent PLUS Loans which are federal loans that parents can borrow to help students pay their educational expenses. For more information, visit MinotStateU.edu/finaid/loans/index.shtml, then click Federal Parent PLUS Loan.
- c. Alternative loans are non-federal loans offered by lending institutions to assist students. More information and an alternative loan comparison tool are available here: MinotStateU.edu/finaid/loans/index.shtml, then click 'Alternative Loans'.
- d. If you plan to pay the remaining balance out of pocket, you can pay online on Campus Connection, by mail, or in person on the second floor of the Administration Building. The mailing address is:
Minot State University Business Office
500 University Ave W
Minot, ND 58707
4. For first-time federal direct student loan borrowers, in addition to accepting their loan(s) in Campus Connection, all first-time borrowers are required to complete a Master Promissory Note (MPN) and Entrance Loan Counseling at the studentloans.gov website. Encourage your student to complete these steps as soon as possible rather than waiting until they get to campus. Students must be enrolled in six or more credits to be eligible to receive a federal direct loan disbursement.
5. Encourage your student to confirm that all required admission documents (such as final high school and college transcripts) have been provided to the MSU Enrollment Services office by the first day of classes. Financial aid will not be disbursed until all admission documents are on file.
6. If your student expects to receive more total financial aid for fall than they will owe to Minot State, encourage them to enroll in direct deposit in Campus Connection to allow their excess financial aid to conveniently be sent directly to their bank account. Detailed direct deposit instructions are available here: MinotStateU.edu/busoffic/pages/direct-deposit-of-financial-aid.shtml.

7. If your student is expecting financial aid that doesn't yet appear on Campus Connection, such as payment from an outside agency or a scholarship that hasn't yet been sent to Minot State, encourage your student to contact the outside agency to determine if anything additional may be needed (such as proof of admission or enrollment) to have the funds sent to Minot State. They should also report the expected financial aid to the financial aid office at financialaid@MinotStateU.edu.
8. If your student hasn't already done so, discuss having them complete and submit the FERPA Consent to Release Information to provide permission for parents to discuss financial matters with Minot State Financial Aid and Business Office staff members. The form is easy to complete and it's available online at MinotStateU.edu/records/right_to_privacy.shtml.
9. If you have any questions, contact the Financial Aid Office for assistance. We are happy to help with any questions your student may have. We look forward to assisting you and your student as they complete their education at Minot State!



Parent and family submissions needed

The Student Affairs Office is trying something new this year and we need your help! It is our intent to produce two publications next spring for Mother's and Father's Days. We are looking for short essays written by our parents about their experiences throughout the year as it relates to your student going to Minot State. We thought it would be interesting to read about your experiences this year. For more information, please contact Kevin Harmon at kevin.harmon@MinotStateU.edu.

