



Parent and Family Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2019

Dear parents and families,

As the weather turns colder and the daylight becomes shorter, students are more prone to colds and the flu. This is the time of year to make sure that health and wellness habits are in place. The Wellness Center, MinotStateU.edu/wellness, offers around the clock options for physical and mental health activities. The Student Health & Development Center, MinotStateU.edu/health/flu.shtml, is open Monday – Friday from 8 A.M. – 4:30 P.M. Encourage your student to take advantage of all that Minot State has to offer.

Thanksgiving break may be the first time your student has been home since the beginning of school and they may express a myriad of emotions. Midterm grades have been posted and they may be sitting on some important feelings, from how their semester is going to what they envision for the next semester and year. All these topics are important and may be difficult to discuss; however, I encourage you to talk to your student and offer your support. This is a great opportunity to help your student reflect and suggest they seek support from any of our student success resource centers on campus. Contact me at kevin.harmon@MinotStateU.edu and I will make arrangements for any requested meeting.

Respectfully,

Kevin Harmon

Vice President for Student Affairs

Be seen. Be heard. Be empowered.



IMPORTANT DATES & EVENTS

November

- 1 – Spring semester graduation application due to Registrar's Office
- 4 – Last day to withdraw from all classes and receive a 50% refund
- 5–7 – Spring registration starts for currently enrolled students
- 11 – Veterans Day, University closed
- 15 – Last day to drop
- 27–29 – Thanksgiving vacation (University closed Thursday)

December

- 16–20 – Final exams
- 30 – Official grades available

January

- 13 – Spring semester 2020 classes begin after 4 P.M.
- 14 – First full day of classes

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

What to do when you get the “I don’t feel well” text

By Scott Sager, [CollegiateParent.com](https://www.collegiateparent.com)

The text arrived early in my daughter’s sophomore year: “Might be sick. Tired all the time.” Nothing specific, but she wasn’t feeling well.

In high school, she could stay home, curled up on the sofa, and I’d bring her soup and tea. I hated thinking of her stuck in a dorm room feeling awful or slogging her way around campus while sucking down Ibuprofen and cough medicine. How was I supposed to respond?

Your student *will* get sick at college. The most recent National College Health Assessment ([acha.org/NCHA](https://www.acha.org/NCHA)) found that in the previous year, more than half of college students sought treatment for health problems ranging from sinus infections and strep throat to migraines and mononucleosis. These numbers don’t even include the many students suffering from colds and flu who don’t visit the health center.

Most campuses make health services accessible and accommodating to students, and the staff understands the demands of college life.

My friend Melissa’s son was just a few weeks into freshman year when he texted, “I have mono.” He refused to come home. “He was totally in the driver’s seat,” she remembered, and she had to face the fact that she couldn’t make him rest, drink fluids and stay home from class. Even though she wasn’t certain he had the judgment to handle the situation, she made it her goal to facilitate his independence. In the end she was able to speak with campus health center staff. “I was reassured to know someone else was aware of his illness,” she said.

As Melissa’s experience highlights, there are limitations to what we can do when our students are sick.



Some suggestions:

- Be supportive – Your student may feel isolated and unhappy about being sick.
- Be informative – Your student may need direction about over-the-counter medications, taking their temperature or when to see a doctor.
- Be empowering – This is an opportunity for your student to take responsibility for him/herself.
- Be patient – You may feel frustrated by your student’s choices about whether to go to the health center or to a party.

You may also find yourself frustrated by lack of communication. Two federal regulations, FERPA and HIPAA, can create obstacles to getting information about your student without their mediation or written consent. (For more information and helpful advice, read “FERPA and HIPAA — Federal Laws and Student Privacy,” available at <https://www.collegiateparent.com/starting-college/student/ferpa-and-hipaa/>).

Remember, even though college and medical staff are restricted in what they may tell you, you are not limited in what you can share with them. You can provide medical history and information that may help staff when treating your student.

When your student is home over break:

1. Revisit the importance of getting enough sleep, eating well, and physical exercise. For information about regulating sleep, read: <https://www.collegiateparent.com/starting-college/sleep-and-the-college-student/>
2. Go over their health history with them, including hereditary conditions and major childhood illnesses.
3. Check that their vaccination record is up to date (meningococcal meningitis vaccine is highly recommended for college students, as is an annual flu shot).
4. Complete a HIPAA release form, then scan and save to your smartphones and computers. A free form can be downloaded from the HIPAA Journal website: <https://www.hipaajournal.com/hipaa-release-form/>.

Trust is essential

First, trust that — with some guidance from you — your student will rise to the occasion and learn how to care for him or herself. Second, trust in their school. Most campuses make health services accessible and accommodating to students, and the staff understands the demands of college life. Most schools have procedures in place for dealing with common health issues. Melissa was impressed that her son's college informed his professors as soon as he was diagnosed and he was automatically given extensions on assignments.

What will you do when you get that call, text or email? I encouraged my daughter to see a doctor and helped her think through how to keep up with classes and activities while getting extra rest. I comforted her and sent a care package. But the most important thing I did was letting her know I was confident she could handle it on her own.

Financial Aid Information

2020–21 FAFSA Form Available with Mobile Options

The 2020–21 *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®) form is available to students and parents to complete through the myStudentAid mobile app and the fafsa.gov website.

While it might seem early to be thinking about financial aid for the 2020-21 school year, filing the FAFSA now can help students avoid future delays.

myStudentAid Mobile App

You can complete the 2020–21 FAFSA form using the myStudentAid app. Download the myStudentAid app in the [Apple App Store](#) (iOS) or [Google Play](#) (Android). The myFAFSA component — which is used to complete the FAFSA form — is the app's featured function.



Mobile-friendly FAFSA® Website

The fafsa.gov website was updated with new colors and has been redesigned so that the site pages will fit the screen size and shape of any device, including desktop or laptop computers and mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets. You can now complete the FAFSA form on a mobile device with the same ease as on a desktop or laptop computer.

▲ Unpaid Balances

When students have an unpaid balance on their Student Account in Campus Connection after any waivers, scholarships, grants, and federal loans have been applied, there are a few options that we often discuss with families. We always encourage eligible students to submit a *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA®) to ensure they have accessed all types of federal aid available first, but when those options have been exhausted, there are some additional options that might be considered.

1. Personal savings or earnings from work

Some families are able to cover the remaining balance by accessing funds from savings or earnings from employment.

2. MSU Financial Aid Office Facebook page

Follow the MSU Financial Aid Office on Facebook to learn about scholarship opportunities from various organizations that come up throughout the school year.

3. MSU Tuition Payment Plan

The MSU Tuition Payment Plan allows families to spread out the payments for fall and spring semesters over three months, rather than having to pay the entire balance in September for fall semester and in January for spring semester. There is a \$50 fee for enrolling in the plan each semester. Students typically must enroll in the Tuition Payment Plan and pay their first payment on the standard fee payment deadline for the semester. More information is available at: MinotStateU.edu/busoffic/pages/tuition-payment-plan.shtml.

4. Federal PLUS Loans

The Federal Direct PLUS Loan is a loan available to parents of dependent students who file the FAFSA. Apply online at Studentloans.gov.

5. Alternative Loans

Alternative loans are non-federal loans offered by a variety of lending institutions. Students are the borrower on these loans but typically, students will need a co-signer with good credit in order to qualify for these types of loans. For more

information and a link to FASTCHOICE, a tool that allows students to compare the terms of several different private loans borrowed by MSU students in the past three years, visit MinotStateU.edu/finaid/loans/index.shtml, select Alternative Loans, then click the FASTCHOICE icon. Students are not limited to using lenders on this list.

If you or your student would like help determining how much to borrow in a PLUS Loan or an alternative loan, our staff members are happy to assist you. Please call the Financial Aid Office at 701-858-3375 or 800-777-0750 with any questions.



Beaver Dam, Parent & Family Weekend



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 you, our parents, about your experiences as your student attends Minot State. For more information, please email kevin.harmon@MinotStateU.edu.