



## Parent and Family Newsletter

MAY 2020

Dear parents and families,

Another month of the improbable has gone by as we enter the final two weeks of the spring term. We have all learned more about our virtual world, for better or worse. My thoughts are with you as everyone has a different story in this experience, and our lives have been changed, to say the least.

As you know, Minot State University will be offering only online courses during the summer term, and our campus will be closed to public events through June. A face-to-face commencement ceremony is being organized for a date this fall. The NDUS is planning to have students return to campuses in the fall while maintaining a safe environment for faculty, staff, and students.

Even though it is only May, I'm looking forward to the fall of 2020 where we will be rolling out enhanced programming for our parents and families. Thank you for your participation at events this past year; I have enjoyed getting to know many of you. Because of current events, I plan on continuing these newsletters through the summer months. Have a great spring!

As always, please direct your questions to me via email at [kevin.harmon@MinotStateU.edu](mailto:kevin.harmon@MinotStateU.edu).

Respectfully,

Kevin Harmon  
Vice President for Student Affairs

Be seen. Be heard. Be inspired.

# △ Taking Finals During Coronavirus — Seven Tips for Your College Student

Adapted article by Connie Lissner,  
[CollegiateParent.com](http://CollegiateParent.com)

It's that season again. Trees bud, flowers bloom, and college students pull all-nighters and drink way too much caffeine.

Your son or daughter may have moved back home because of coronavirus, but they still have to take final exams.

Fortunately, with planning and mindfulness, they can avoid last-minute panic. If they follow these seven steps, they'll finish the school year in great shape. Share these tips with your student today!

## THE MASTER PLAN

### **1. Get organized NOW.**

Don't wait until the week before finals to figure out what you need to do. Just 30 minutes of planning can save hours of wasted time.

Organize your notes for each class and write down all deadlines and exam dates so you can see exactly what you have to do and when. Is the instructor offering remote group study sessions? Make a note of these as well.

### **2. Triage your preparation.**

Prioritize tasks based on what needs immediate attention. Evaluate every assignment on the list to determine what is "MUST DO NOW!" versus "I have two weeks to complete this."

Consider what classes you're doing well in and where you need to spend more time. Don't assume that because you understand the material you've covered in a class that you can stop studying altogether. Remember, if your school has made Pass/Fail an option because of COVID-19, it's still preferable to choose to receive a grade if you can be sure it will be a good one.



### **3. Create a calendar and safeguard your tech.**

Now make a schedule of what you'd like to get done each day and set a realistic time frame for each activity. A color-coded Excel spreadsheet isn't required — a simple list will do — but if you need the tech support, of course there's an app (or 20) for this.

While you're at it, take a few minutes to back up your computer. This is a bad time to lose any work-in-progress.

### **4. Be clear about how and when the final exam will be administered.**

Just as you've had to adjust to attending class and submitting coursework online in the correct way in order to receive credit, be sure you follow the procedure for taking the exam. Don't wait until right before the exam to figure this out.

## SUPPORT AND SELF-CARE

### **5. It's never too late to ask for help.**

If there's an assignment you don't understand or a concept that's giving you trouble, don't waste time trying to figure it out on your own. Email your instructor, the TA, or your classmates for help.

DO NOT BE EMBARRASSED to get help at the 11th hour. Don't discount your university's academic resource center, either. Tutoring and counseling are still available remotely. Check the website for

updates on the services being offered, and then email or call to get connected with the support you need.

#### **6. Take care of yourself by taking a break.**

Don't skimp on sleep, make sure to eat well, drink plenty of water, and find a way to relax. Relaxing may seem impossible when you're only three pages into a 15-page paper but figure out what calms you and do it.

And don't feel guilty! There's proof that short breaks help you focus better when you return to a long task like studying for an exam; you'll be more productive and more able to retain information.

Plus, they feel good. Outdoor exercise is a mood lifter (don't forget your face mask if that's recommended or required). Try meditating (there's an app for that, too). Walk the dog, call a friend, write in a journal, listen to (or play) music.

Short is the operative word. Fifteen to 20 minutes is about right, and it's best to leave your workspace (and screens) behind. A 10–20 minute cat nap can also be a good idea.

#### **7. For now, focus on academics, not the larger coronavirus situation.**

Try not to worry about what comes after this semester or what's going on in the world at large. Take a break from the news or at least limit your exposure. You can stay up to date without letting yourself get thoroughly distracted.

It will feel great to give your current coursework your best energy, and this will also foster a positive outlook when it's time to turn your attention to plans for summer and fall.

**Whatever steps our students are taking to stay on top of their work during this unusual semester, finals can still be stressful. We can remind them that they have a support network — at school and at home.**

## **Emergency Funding and CARES Act**

A donor-led initiative has allowed Minot State University to grant over \$85,000 to students in need due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These funds were disbursed in a timely fashion to assist students with their current expenses. Thank you to the donors who made this possible. We will soon to be transitioning over to CARES Act funding.



Additional information about the Student Emergency Fund is available at [MinotStateU.edu/finaid/pages/student-emergency-fund.shtml](https://minotstateu.edu/finaid/pages/student-emergency-fund.shtml). For frequently asked questions about Minot State and COVID-19, visit [MinotStateU.edu/health/covid-19](https://minotstateu.edu/health/covid-19).



### **IMPORTANT DATES**

May 11 – 15 – Final exams

May 25 – Official grades available

#### **2020 Summer Semester**

May 26 – Standard eight-week term classes begin

May 30 – Last day to drop a class or withdraw from all classes and receive a 100% refund

May 30 – Last day to add a class

View more dates, deadlines, and events at [MinotStateU.edu/calendar](https://minotstateu.edu/calendar).