



Dear families,

The first week of classes is in the books, and it has been nice having our students back on campus. While Welcome Week activities looked a little different this year, we continue to offer exciting opportunities for student involvement including Welcome Bingo, Pinterest Night – Plants!, and our annual Fall Club Fair. Make sure to ask your student about their first weeks. While the upcoming Labor Day weekend can be a difficult time to be away from family and friends, Minot State University will be offering virtual activities through our residence halls; please encourage your student to be empowered and active in their new community.

Minot State University conducted several mass testing events in August and we intend to offer COVID-19 testing to our students on a weekly basis throughout the fall. I'm encouraged by the number of students who are using our safety protocols. For the moment, our numbers have been manageable, and our COVID-19 campus response remains vigilant in meeting the needs of our University community.

Again, welcome to our family and please 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,



Kevin Harmon
Vice President for Student Affairs



IMPORTANT DATES AND INFORMATION

September

- 2 – Last day to add a class; last day to drop 16-week class or withdraw from all classes with a 100% refund
- 7 – Labor Day, University closed
- 8 – Club Fair, Old Main Loop, 6 – 8 P.M.
- 9 – Tuition, fees, room and board must be paid in full or a payment plan set up (three equal installments)

October

- 2 – Last day to withdraw from all classes with a 75% refund

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

Be seen. Be heard. Be inspired.

What Students Need to Be Successful in Online Classes

By Suzanne Shaffer, CollegiateParent.com



Last spring, the coronavirus pandemic forced colleges to transition abruptly to remote instruction. The experience was rough to say the least!

At its finest, online education uses digital technology to transform the learning experience; it's so much more than a class on Zoom. As colleges and universities embrace and invest in this instructional model, we can expect big improvements in online higher education.

For Fall 2020, most schools plan a hybrid approach. Large lectures will likely be held online but smaller classes like labs and seminars may be held in person with physical distancing. Parents and students should be prepared to accept and adapt to this new normal.

Challenges with Online Learning

Online and hybrid courses require students to follow precise instructions, work independently and meet deadlines to the minute. Frustrations with technology can hinder success. Some obstacles your student may face this year:

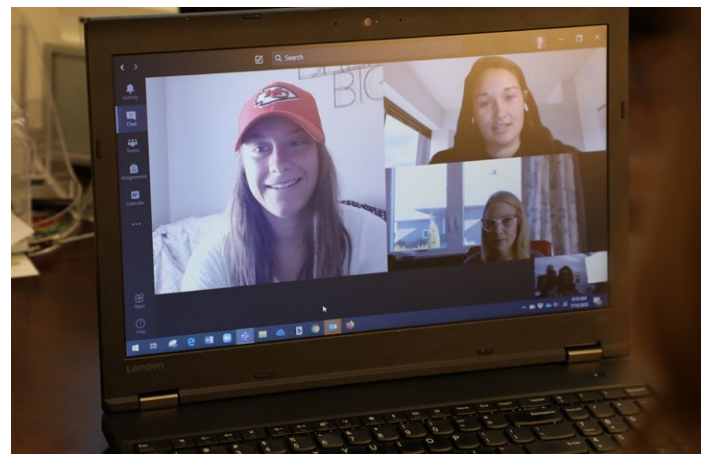
- **Lack of IT knowledge:** If students or instructors don't understand the technology, it can interfere with the coherent delivery of course material and the student's ability to learn.
- **Lack of discipline:** If a student doesn't commit to the self-discipline required for online learning, it's easy to fall behind.
- **Competing priorities:** Students living on campus while taking class online may find it tempting to use what should be "class time" for other activities.

Fully Online vs. Blended Learning

In a fully online course, all instruction and course activities take place online. Lectures are usually pre-recorded and assignments and reading material posted online for students to access whenever they want. Students and instructors communicate via email and online chats with minimal (if any) in-person contact.

In a blended (or hybrid) class, some instruction takes place in the campus classroom and some online. In-person class time may be shortened to an hour per week, with virtual instruction for the rest. Students may meet in person with instructors and classmates to study and work on group projects. Here are some blended models your student may encounter:

- **Rotation:** Students alternate between physical and online classes.
- **Flipped classroom:** Students listen to course lectures online at home. In-person class time is used for projects, group activities and questions about the lectures.
- **Flex:** The majority of instruction takes place online, with face-to-face support as needed.



Getting It Right

Encourage your student to approach online and blended courses as they would any other course — it's an opportunity to learn from a stellar professor, discover new academic interests, and connect with their classmates.

You can help your student create a strategy for success in their online classes — share these tips!

1. **Be equipped with the right technology.** Online learning is optimized with the proper tools. Video



conferencing requires a good microphone and headphones. A strong Wi-Fi or internet connection is crucial, along with an efficient desktop or laptop computer with up-to-date operating system.

- 2. Create an organized, comfortable study space.** With so much extra time spent alone at a desk, your student needs a place where they can settle in, focus, and feel energized. Help them set up a workspace with all the materials needed to study and books and other resources easily available. Lighting is important, as is an ergonomic chair.
- 3. Show up.** This might seem obvious, but students actually need to sit down, attend the online class, and do the work. You're spending money on this education, and online courses can deliver great value if your student treats them the way they would a traditional face-to-face class by putting in their best effort.
- 4. Use good time management.** The flexibility of online classes can be a bonus but also makes it essential that your student carefully manage their schedule. At the start of the term, they should look at each syllabus and record assignments and exams on a calendar. For each hour of class instruction, they should expect to spend 2–3 hours on outside work (e.g., if a class meets in person and/or online for 3 hours each week, they'll spend at least 6 hours on reading, studying and assignment completion). Encourage your student not to wait until the last minute to complete work or seek help if they need it.
- 5. Be accountable.** Assignment details and deadlines will be posted online and that may be the only reminder. Your student is responsible for keeping

track of assignments. If they're finding it hard to stay on task, suggest they find a study buddy in their class.

- 6. Eliminate distractions.** It's extra easy to be distracted when attending class online. In order to focus as they would in a physical classroom, your student should turn off their phone, silencing social media and email notifications.
- 7. Actively participate in the online forums.** This will be key to enjoying and getting a lot out of the class (and doing well in it!), so encourage your student to contribute to discussions, ask questions, comment on projects, and in general engage with the class community.
- 8. Build relationships.** Online courses may make your student feel isolated, but they're built around the concept of collaboration with instructors and fellow students. Virtual study groups are helpful in making person-to-person connections.

Your student should approach online classes with an open mind. It may not be what they're used to and there will be a learning curve as they adjust. Colleges are adjusting to this new learning environment, too. Patience and flexibility are the watchwords this fall!

▲ A Note about Parent & Family Weekend

In an effort to keep your student safe, Minot State continues to make decisions regarding large gatherings based on guidance from public health officials. That, coupled with the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference's decision to suspend all athletic competition through Dec. 31, has led to the cancellation of many in-person activities on campus this fall. Due to this, the Parent & Family Weekend experience has been cancelled for Fall 2020. As we continually evaluate the campus in regards to COVID-19, we may reschedule our annual Parent & Family Weekend to Spring 2021.

The Parent's Perspective

Submitted by Laurie Norman, parent to Emily Norman, class of 2022, Las Vegas, Nevada

*Hey look ma, I made it!
Are you ready for the sequel?
I'm gonna be the greatest
Ain't you ready for the latest?
Everything's coming up aces, aces
Hey look ma, I made it!*

Some of my best memories with my kids are from our time in the car. Thousands of miles were spent traveling for sports, school, work, or family vacations, and we always had music playing. When they were younger, we had a sleeve full of kid CDs, and as they got older (me too), that evolved into more mature lyrics, sounds, and trends. As with any relationship, even music in the car is about give and take and, if you are lucky, one song fits everyone's likes/needs.

Going into this year as a sophomore parent, Panic! at the Disco and their song "Hey Look Ma, I Made It" does it for me. Take a listen. It may not be your groove, so find one that is.

What I do know is that she made it, I made it, and you and your student are going to make it your freshman year! Here are a few things I learned along the way:

- **Food** – The "caf," as my daughter calls it, has plenty of choices. They are not going to wither away the first or second semester, but they will look forward to their favorites when they come home.
- **Explore** – It's okay when you get that text saying they are headed to Bismarck for the day. Even better, Winnipeg for the weekend. What? With who? Where are you staying? Do you have your passport/ID? Don't lose it! Do you have money? Did you bring your vitamins? They are adults and need to learn to explore this great country on their own. Just keep drilling in the commonsense things, like using the buddy system, and they will be fine.
- **Money** – Hey, who doesn't like an occasional meal out or a new mechanical pencil? I enjoy Buffalo Wings & Rings when I visit Minot (best wings and blue cheese). They will need some extra money and I can't stress how important it is to have a budget.

There will be those trips to Target, Walmart, or Taco Bell. Agree on a dollar amount and stick to it.

- **Jackets and shoes** - Desert girl meets the North Dakota weather. Do you need another jacket? I always think North Dakota and snow and, while true, I also learned along the way that you need options! Rain jacket, cold jacket, extreme cold jacket, snow jacket, fall jacket, spring jacket — and the same applies to shoes and boots. This doesn't mean your student needs eight different jackets like my kiddo, but set your student up for success.
- **Communication** – I just can't imagine the old days of snail mail and pay phones. How lucky we are to have the technology we do. With that said, keep your expectations real. Your student should be busy studying, working, and having fun. Sometimes it will be a text, a one-minute phone call, or a goofy Facetime. Take it, listen, and offer advice when asked. Just remember those dorm walls are thin, and the roommates next door can hear everything your student's crazy mother is saying!
- **Endorphins (feel-good)** – Your student isn't the only one that should be experiencing something new and staying busy. What are the things you have been wanting to do, but have been a little too busy for the last 18 years? Get those endorphins going and start working on that list! Just don't plan the dream family cruise in the middle of the semester and send them a tee shirt. Wait until winter, spring, or summer break, so they can be part of the family adventure.

You are going to make it!
– Laurie Norman



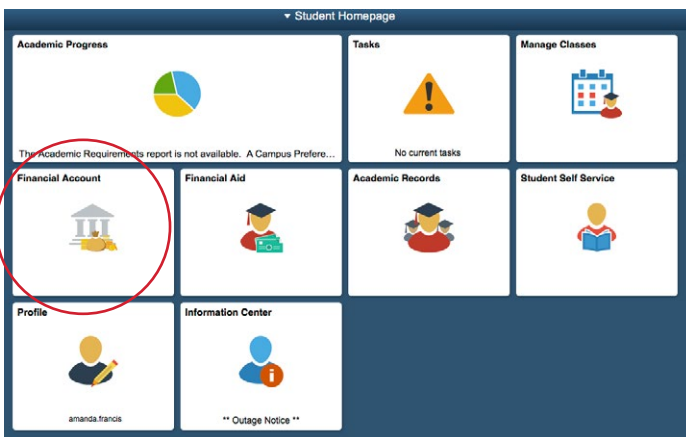
Parent and family submissions needed

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.

Last Minute Financial Aid Reminders for Parents

Classes are now in progress, and it's an exciting time for your student as they start the school year! Here's a few reminders for your student related to financial aid and paying their bill at Minot State:

1. Have your student access their account summary in Campus Connection to review tuition, fees, and other charges posted to their account, as well as anticipated financial aid.
 - After logging in, choose **Financial Account**, then **Account Summary**.



2. Remember that financial aid will begin applying to student accounts just before the **Sept. 9 fall semester fee payment deadline**.
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 allows students to divide up the remaining balance into three monthly payments: [MinotStateU.edu/busoffic/pages/tuition-payment-plan.shtml](https://www.minotstate.edu/busoffic/pages/tuition-payment-plan.shtml).
 - b. Federal Parent PLUS Loans are federal loans that parents can borrow to help students pay their educational expenses. For more information, visit [MinotStateU.edu/finaid/loans/index.shtml](https://www.minotstate.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](https://www.minotstate.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. 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 at [MinotStateU.edu/busoffic/pages/direct-deposit-of-financial-aid.shtml](https://www.minotstate.edu/busoffic/pages/direct-deposit-of-financial-aid.shtml).
5. 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](https://www.minotstate.edu/records/right-to-privacy.shtml).
6. Contact the financial aid office at 701-858-3375 or financialaid@minotstate.edu if you or your students have any questions. We look forward to assisting you at Minot State!

