

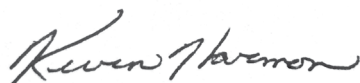
Dear parents and families,

This month, our Residence Life office opens registration for the 2021 Fall semester to our current students. While many returning students choose to live off-campus for a variety of reasons, I would like you, as parents, to say, "Not so fast..." Minot State room rates and meal plans are very affordable and make economic sense. Not to mention, upperclassmen who stay on campus tend to graduate from Minot State at a higher rate than those who live off campus.

Minot State University intends to continue offering regular COVID-19 tests for the foreseeable future. We have also added BinaxNOW rapid antigen testing for symptomatic students upon appointment in the Student Health Center. For our on-campus residents, we offer meal delivery to their residence hall or isolation quarters when identified as a case or close contact. Students who test positive are required to be moved to Dakota Hall for their isolation.

As always, I'm prepared to field any questions or concerns you may have at kevin.harmon@MinotStateU.edu.

Respectfully,



Kevin Harmon

Vice President for Student Affairs

Be seen. Be heard. Be empowered.



"The best part about living on campus is the convenience. Everything is close and it is easy to be part of programs and school activities."

Beverly Chigarira
Hometown: Kadoma, Zimbabwe



IMPORTANT DATES & EVENTS

February

- 15 – President's Day, University closed
- 22 – Last day to withdraw from all classes and receive a 75% refund

March

- 8 – Midterm grades
- 15 – 19 – Spring break

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

Staying on track during another pandemic semester, Part 1: Focus on moving ahead

By Vicki Nelson, [CollegiateParent.com](https://www.collegiateparent.com)

This is the first in a series of three articles about staying motivated and productive during what we all hope is the final lap of remote pandemic learning. This is an ideal time for parents and students to think about how they will stay focused during this spring semester.

Over the last ten months, remote learning has shifted from what we all thought was a temporary, emergency measure to a prolonged way of doing school. It now seems likely that this spring semester will look very much like last fall at many schools.

The good news: this may be the final lap in this exhausting race. We're not sure when life will be normal again, or what that new normal will look like, but we're all hopeful that it will come soon.



Fall was one long challenge for most students.

Fall semester took many forms, with some students fully in the classroom, others fully remote either on or off campus, and still others somewhere in between — or moving from one format to another as virus numbers dictated.

A study conducted by [Digital Promise](https://www.digitalpromise.org), an independent educational organization, found that 42% of students said one of their primary challenges with online learning was staying motivated. This isn't

surprising. Students and parents alike are feeling pandemic fatigue, Zoom fatigue, and social isolation. Another semester of the same can seem daunting.

This is an excellent time for parents and students to evaluate how things are going. We can celebrate the positives — and yes, there are positives. We've been able to spend more time with family and less time commuting. Many of us have practiced patience and empathy. We've learned to be flexible and to adapt. Some of us even learned how to bake sourdough bread!

This is also a good time to talk about what the upcoming semester may look like — and to make some decisions.

Decision time: Do I stay or do I go?

Some students have simply had enough. They are overwhelmed, sad, angry, bored, frustrated (or all of the above). As parents, we need to honor those feelings and let our student know that it's okay to be stressed and anxious right now.

For those students who are struggling, taking a break from school might be an option. This may change your student's timetable, but a lot of us have had to pivot this year. It's also possible your student can make up lost credits over one or two summer terms.

Talk to your student about whether a break makes sense. Although it may feel scary, suggest the option. Your student may be relieved that you suggest something they were afraid to voice. If they decide to step out, your student will need to contact the school to ask about the process of withdrawing or taking a leave of absence and to check about financial aid implications. Then you and your student can talk about what they will do with their time so they will feel productive. This is not an easy decision but may be the right thing for now.

Your student may decide not to take a break but to forge ahead. This affirmative decision to accept the challenge of another remote (or at least radically different) semester becomes a proactive choice that can give your student a more positive perspective on the semester.

Staying motivated for a successful semester

Once your student has made the affirmative choice to continue with “pandemic school,” they may need to dig deeper than ever to find the motivation to be successful.

Recognizing that this is a choice is a good beginning. In his book “Drive,” author Daniel H. Pink suggests there are three things that help us stay motivated:

1. Directing our own life and having control (autonomy)
2. The desire to get better and better at something that matters (mastery)
3. Pursuing goals (purpose)

Parents and students might work together (we probably need some motivation as well) to find things over which we have control, to work at becoming better at something, and to define our goals and purpose. Talk to your student about some options and suggest that they make a list of their own.

1. Focus on things you can control. Practice autonomy. It's time to be proactive.

- **Create a schedule or routine for your days.** Give yourself structure with blocks of time for class, studying and recreation.
- **Discover your most productive time of the day.** Schedule your difficult work then.
- **Try an experiment for a few days and keep a time journal.** Jot down how much time you spend doing the various things in your life. How much time in classes? How much time studying, scrolling on your phone, playing video games, talking to friends, watching movies, sleeping? Are you happy with what you discover? Make some adjustments to come closer to the way you'd like your schedule to look.



- **Branch out.** Balance school with time spent on hobbies, creating something, listening to music, dancing, cooking. Try to do something interesting each day.
- **Manage your media exposure.** Be aware of how much screen time you spend. Give yourself a break from your screen.
- **Make a list of action steps that will get you to your long-term goals.** What can you do NOW to get you where you want to be when this is over?

2. Get better and better every day. Practice mastery — and remember that this doesn't mean perfection. Aim for improvement.

- **Ask yourself some simple questions at the end of each day:** Was I who I wanted to be today? Did I make today better than yesterday? How can I make tomorrow better than today?
- **Make a list of the obstacles that can get in your way.** Determine how you can overcome each one.
- **Challenge yourself to do something new or hard, or to do something better.** Push yourself out of your comfort zone.
- **Reward yourself for completing something or making progress on it.**
- **Make a reasonable to-do list for each day.** Enjoy the satisfaction of crossing things off the list.

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- Find software or an app that will help you stay focused on your tasks. [Focus Booster](#) is one option.
- Identify five skills you'd like to learn or improve this semester. Make a plan for doing that and keep track of your progress.

3. Connect what you do to a larger purpose.

- Isolation is getting tiresome, but use this time to get to know more about yourself. Try journaling. Explore your thoughts and dreams.
- Make a list of long- and short-term goals. Where would you like to be at the end of the semester? Next year? In five years? Remind yourself of where you are going and why you want to get there!
- What can you do in the next six months that will move you closer to some of your goals? What positive steps can you take right now?
- Make a motivational poster. What word or quote inspires you? Find an image to match. Print it out and hang it where you can look at it every day.

And just a few practical things we all know...

And yet always need to be reminded to do!

- **Take care of yourself.** Watch what you eat, get exercise, get sleep.
- **Try to get outdoors at least a little bit every day.**
- **Open your curtains and let the sunshine in!**
- **Separate your workspace from your rest space.** Don't study and attend class in your bed. Do your work in a different part of your room or house.
- We may not know exactly when this pandemic will end, but there will be an end to this semester. **Remind yourself that every day brings you closer to the finish line.**

You and your student may share many of the same motivational issues. Talking about them may help both of you find new ways to fuel your motivation to drive forward.

Stay strong!

Residence Life – A New Home

By Karina Stander, MACo, RYT-200

Director of Minot State Residence Life

Hometown: Springside, Saskatchewan

College is a pivotal point in life. For those who get to experience college, living on campus is as much a right of transition as is getting our driver's license and experiencing the freedom and responsibility that comes with that.

Unfortunately, our first time experiencing anything can be stressful and full of many emotions we do not always know how to process. Attending university and living on campus is no exception. There are a lot of new experiences that on-campus living brings: first time living with a roommate that isn't family, first time eating at an all-you-can-eat cafeteria, first time having complete control over your own schedule. While I have seen the research about how living on campus has been proven to benefit students academically and financially, I do not think these are the reasons students choose to return to live on campus.

"Living on campus has introduced me to some of my best friends. Through activities on campus I was able to meet some great people and get involved. Everyone at Minot State is so welcoming and living away from home it has given me a sense of belonging."

Wyniah Mintz
Hometown: Glendive, Montana

In my position as the Director of Residence Life at Minot State, I have visited with students that live on campus to find out what they want to improve. I've learned that they value proximity to activities, personal space, independence, and financial prudence.

Residence life provides students with leadership opportunities to work as resident assistants, residence hall directors, and desk attendants. These students gain valuable skills in confrontation, time

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"I love the community and family spirit that develops for the residents. I like that I get to meet new people every year, make new friends and establish connections."

Praise Osagioduwa Okubur
Hometown: Benin City, Nigeria



management, communication, and programming that will help them in whatever future career they pursue. We hire for our student leadership positions in February for the following academic year.

Watching the national awareness of the rising cost of college, I believe in keeping the cost of living on campus affordable and competitive. When setting rates, I have looked at what is available to students in Minot as well as at other institutions.

For the academic year 2020-2021, we are offering financial benefits for students returning to on-campus housing. A few of those benefits will include a discount towards their on-campus housing, lower rate for a single room, and second year students can apply to live in on-campus apartments.

When it comes to where they will live, our students have options. It is my hope that they enjoy living on campus, experience the benefits of living on campus, and choose to return. With all the choices and responsibilities that a student has to stay on top of, it is my hope that the choice of where they will live is simple, and that residence life becomes their new home, away from home.

Pictured at right,
Minot State
residence halls,
top to bottom:
Lura Manor,
McCulloch Hall,
Cook Hall, and
Crane Hall



"I considered the cost of living in an apartment. I looked at the extra expenses of utilities, long leases, gas for my car, internet, and food, as well as having the time to cook the food, and realized that living on campus was a good financial decision."

Sarah Waclawik
Hometown: Fargo, ND

▲ Learn more at MinotStateU.edu/life.

Financial Aid Information

▲ Summer Financial Aid

Is your son or daughter planning to enroll in summer classes? Summer 2021 Financial Aid is based on the 2020-21 FAFSA — summer is considered the end of the 2020-21 school year. The amount of financial aid students have available for the summer semester is impacted by the amount of aid they have received during the preceding academic year.

The Minot State Financial Aid Office will post a short Summer Financial Aid Application online at MinotStateU.edu/finaid/eligibility/summer-financial-aid-info.shtml when summer registration opens in late March. The summer financial aid application allows students to easily communicate their summer plans to the financial aid office so we can determine their eligibility for summer and send a new award notice specifically for the semester.

In some cases, students may not have eligibility for additional federal student aid for summer. You may want to consider the Federal Direct PLUS Loan as an option to assist your student with summer costs or students may look at non-federal private loans as an option. More information about PLUS and private loan options is available at MinotStateU.edu/finaid/loans/index.shtml.

For questions about summer financial aid options, contact the Financial Aid Office at 701-858-3375.



▲ Renewal Criteria for Scholarships and Awards

If your student is the recipient of a renewable scholarship or award program that may be renewed from year to year, be sure to review the renewal criteria now and ensure they will meet all of the required conditions for renewal during the 2021-22 school year.

If your student's renewable scholarship is from a source other than Minot State, check with that organization about any questions related to the renewal standards.

Criteria for renewable Minot State awards is available on our website at MinotStateU.edu/finaid/scholarships/index.shtml and you can reach us at 701-858-3375 for additional questions.

▲ Planning for the 2021-22 School Year

The Minot State General Scholarship Application for the 2021-22 school year is open. The application deadline is Tuesday, Feb. 16. All students planning to enroll for the 2021-22 school year are encouraged to submit their application online at MinotStateU.edu/academicworks.com. Encourage your student to apply today!

The 2020-21 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) opened on Oct. 1, 2020. Applying early helps your student maximize their eligibility for financial aid options and allows extra time for resolving any questions. The FAFSA has become easier to complete with options to pull data directly from the IRS records and fewer questions for most applicants. If your student has not already submitted the 2021-22 FAFSA, now would be a great time to complete the FAFSA at the FAFSA.gov website!