



Parent and Family Newsletter

APRIL 2021

Dear parents and families,

We are entering the home stretch of the school year. At the beginning of the year, I used an analogy that a school year can be much like a roller coaster ride. Well, this is the time where we do our loop-to-loop! Temperatures are warming, summer jobs are in place, and some students are still figuring out where they fit in as a college student.

With only six weeks left of school, your student may be experiencing many emotions. What can you say to help? The best advice I can give is for every student to take it class-by-class, day-by-day, and project-by-project. Encourage your student to use the many campus resources available — like the tutoring center, writing center, math center, and Power Center — and to talk to their advisors and professors for guidance.

Outside of their studies, it is important from your student to take care of themselves. At Minot State, we encourage a holistic approach to wellness. They can go to the Wellness Center and take part in one of the many stress-reducing activities available, enjoy a bike ride with our bike share program, or utilize the counseling services available Monday through Friday at the Student Health Clinic.

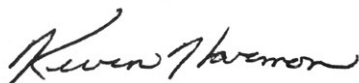
Looking to the future, Minot State University is excited to announce plans to return to campus for Fall 2021! Students can expect a full schedule of in-person classes, student activities, athletics, and performing arts. We are eager to showcase the best of student life and the 250+ activities per year once again in our vibrant, growing community. Make sure to mark your calendar for Homecoming Oct. 3 – 9 and Parent & Family Weekend Oct. 19 – 22.

Registration for summer and fall semesters begins on March 30 for currently enrolled students. This month's feature story focuses on the importance of good advising as we prepare for next semester.

I am also pleased to announce new dining and residence hall packages for 2021-22. These plans offer extraordinary value to students by reducing meal plans by \$1,000 annually for the upcoming school year. To learn more about our residence halls and dining plans, visit MinotStateU.edu/life/meal-plans.shtml.

As always, I'm available to answer any questions or concerns that you may have.

Respectfully,



Kevin Harmon,
Vice President for Student Affairs

Be seen. Be heard. Be empowered.

Make the most of an advising appointment

By Amy Baldwin, Ed.D., CollegiateParent.com

“Dr. Baldwin, can I talk to you about something before I go see my advisor?” a student asked last week. We had just discussed college majors and minors in class, and something I’d said sparked the student’s imagination.

Though I’m not a trained advisor, I often work with students to help them think creatively about what they want to study. So even when a request is a bit surprising, like this one, I always jump at the chance to talk about academic stuff with my students.

“I was thinking,” the student said, “about majoring in business and minoring in psychology. But before I talk to my advisor, I wanted to see if you thought it was crazy to add a minor to my degree and a psychology minor at that.”

A quick review of the student’s degree plan showed that she indeed had room to focus her elective courses into a psychology minor without lengthening her time to graduation.

“Looks like you could do it easily. Tell me why you’re thinking about a psychology minor,” I said.

The student talked about her long-term plan to work as a mortician. She thought that knowing about business and how people think would be beneficial to her career. I agreed, but I wanted the student’s advisor to weigh in and help her make that plan for the next four years. “Be sure to tell your advisor about your long-term goals and why you think this would be a good fit.”

I realize that not every student feels comfortable talking to an advisor when they think their ideas may be viewed as “off the wall,” but trust me when I say that the advisors at your student’s institution have heard it all and seen it all, and they can be pretty creative when it comes to helping a student find ways to complete their degrees.

But that is not all an advisor can do. In fact, advisors can help your student connect with resources if

they are having academic, personal, or financial challenges during the semester. In some cases, they can intervene on behalf of the student if there is a class that is closed that they need to graduate.

In short, an advisor is like that utility knife that can do more than just cut something open. (Sorry, advisors, to reduce you to a tool!) This is why your student should make the most of every appointment and begin to view their advisor as a guide, coach, and support system.



You can help your student by preparing them to use their advising appointments wisely. Here are three steps they should follow.

1. Plan the visit with the advisor.

Any time your student makes an appointment with an advisor, your student should prepare ahead of time. Your advisor needs to know **what your student needs** as soon as they get there.

- **Create a list of questions or a goal to share with the advisor.** For example, your student might say, “I’m here to talk about what classes to take next semester and what would happen if I change my major.”

- **Look up policies, forms, or other information that will improve the conversation.** Your student may want to look at course descriptions or download a copy of their degree plan.
- **Identify a note-taking strategy beforehand.** Will your student take handwritten notes or record the session? Your student will need notes about what was discussed and what steps they will take next.

2. Role play the conversation.

I know from my own son, who is a college freshman, that many students often don't know what to say in the moment, even with a list of questions in their hand. That's why it's important to practice the conversation with your student before their appointment.

You don't have to know the ins and outs of college advising to be a good person for role play. You just need to help your student learn how to ask questions, take notes, and follow up with additional questions. Here's an example of a simple role play:

Advisor role: What can I do for you today?

Student: I need some help registering for classes and I want to talk about changing my major.

Advisor role: First, what classes are you thinking about taking? Then, tell me what is motivating you to change your major.

Assist your student in identifying what preparation they still need to do before their appointment and in clarifying what they want from the meeting.

3. Follow up if needed.

One advising appointment will most likely not answer all your student's questions throughout their entire college career. A follow-up — even multiple ones — will most likely be needed.

Encourage your student to make a point to check in regularly with their advisor even if there is not a pressing issue. Other reasons to make another appointment with an advisor include:

- Your student didn't get all their questions answered.
- Your student's progress in a course or courses is in jeopardy and they need to know what will happen if they fail a class.
- Your student isn't able to get into a class that is required for their degree plan.
- Your student may not graduate on time.
- Your student wants advice on a different major, a minor, or a career pathway.

Advisors can't solve all of your student's problems while in college, but they can certainly do a lot more than help your student register for classes. In fact, if your student cultivates a solid relationship with their advisor, they will have a coach, guide, and cheerleader all rolled into one.



IMPORTANT DATES

Mar. 30 – Apr. 9 – Summer and fall registration for currently enrolled students

April

2 – 5 – Easter Break
(University closed Friday only)

9 – Last day to drop

May

10 – 14 – Final exams

14 – Commencement, 10 A.M., MSU Dome

24 – Official grades available

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

Financial Aid Information

Plans for summer

Summer and fall class registration is Mar. 30 – Apr. 9! If your student is planning to enroll in summer classes, encourage them to complete the short Summer Financial Aid Application online at MinotStateU.edu/finaid/eligibility/summer-financial-aid-info.shtml. The Summer Financial Aid Application allows students to easily communicate their summer plans to the financial aid office so that we can determine their eligibility for summer and send a new award notice specifically for the summer term.

Getting ready for 2021-22

If your student hasn't already submitted the 2021-22 FAFSA to apply for federal student aid, now is the time to submit at fafsa.gov. We encourage students to submit the 2021-22 FAFSA by April 8 to meet the Minot State priority funding deadline of April 15. Applying by the priority deadline helps students maximize their eligibility for federal and state aid programs, allows additional time to provide verification materials if needed, and helps students avoid delays in disbursement of funds in the fall.

If your student has already submitted the FAFSA, remind them to watch for emails or items on their "To Do" list in Campus Connection related to financial aid documents.

Returning students who have completed the FAFSA will be notified by email when their federal aid eligibility is posted in Campus Connection for the 2021-22 school year shortly after the end of the spring 2021 semester. They will be able to accept or decline financial aid in Campus Connection at that time.

If you or your student determine that you need to consider additional resources to assist with paying for the coming school year, some options to consider might be:



1. Minot State Tuition Payment Plan

The payment plan allows students to spread out payments over three months. Students must make the first payment and be enrolled by the semester fee payment deadline. The fee payment date for Fall 2021 is Sept. 7.

2. Federal PLUS Loans

The Federal Direct PLUS Loan is available to parents of dependent students who file the FAFSA. Parents can apply for the PLUS Loan online at studentaid.gov.

3. Private Education Loans

Private loans are non-federal loans available from a variety of lenders. Students are the borrowers on these loans but will typically need a co-signer with good credit. More information about private loan options can be found at our website at MinotStateU.edu/finaid/loans/index.shtml.

Feel free to contact the Financial Aid Office at 701-858-3375 if you have any questions.