



Parent and Family Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2022

Dear MSU Families,

One week of classes is in the books, and it has been nice having our students back on campus! Welcome Week activities have offered a myriad of exciting opportunities for students to connect with their campus community.

Make sure to ask your student about their first week at school. While the upcoming Labor Day weekend can be a difficult time to be away from family and friends, MSU Life and our residence halls have activities planned throughout the fall to help alleviate this; please encourage your student to be active and attend these events.

Later in this newsletter, you will find information about our Parent and Family Weekend scheduled during Homecoming, Oct. 14 – 16. Campus will be electric during this time! Please consider making arrangements to visit Minot State University this weekend and spend some quality Beaver time with your student.

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

Be seen. Be heard. Be empowered.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM

Welcome Week



Welcome Week kicked off with New Student Convocation in Ann Nicole Nelson Hall, followed by a barbecue for all students and staff on the Old Main lawn.

Other activities during the week included bingo, campfires in the Quad, RecFest, Slamabama concert, a hypnotist, and the MSU club fair.





Registered families will receive free admission at all sporting events, meals, and free use of the Wellness Center! Contact kevin.harmon@MinotStateU.edu to register or for more information.

THURSDAY, OCT. 13

Campus Tours: 9 A.M. and 1 P.M., Enrollment Services (Admin. 165)

Northwest Arts Center: Open 9 A.M. – 4 P.M. (Gordon B. Olson Library)

Wellness Center – Rock wall open 3 – 7 P.M. Group exercise class, time TBD

FRIDAY, OCT. 14

Campus Tours: 9 A.M. and 1 P.M., Enrollment Services (Admin. 165)

Northwest Arts Center: Open 9 A.M. – 4 P.M.

Wellness Center: Rock wall open 3 – 7 P.M. Group exercise class, TBA

Men’s Hockey vs. Midland
Maysa Arena, time TBA,

Alumni and Friends Homecoming Social
7 P.M., The Original Bar and Nightclub (21+)

SATURDAY, OCT. 15

Homecoming 5K Fun Run and Walk
MSU Campus, time TBA

Homecoming Parade
Downtown Minot to the MSU Dome

Parent and Family Tailgate Party
Dome East lot, following parade

Football vs. Northern State University
2 P.M., Herb Parker Stadium

Women’s Hockey vs. University of Jamestown
5 P.M., Maysa Arena

Men’s Hockey vs. Midland
8 P.M., Maysa Arena

SUNDAY, OCT. 16

Music faculty recital: Dr. Jon Rumney
3 P.M., Ann Nicole Nelson Hall (Old Main)

Full Homecoming schedule coming soon! View updates at MinotStateU.edu/homecoming.

What really happens after college drop-off

By Marlene Kern Fischer, [CollegiateParent.com](https://www.collegiateparent.com)

You've imagined it countless times in your head and now it's a reality. After all the planning and shopping, packing and unpacking, your child is officially a first-year college student.

You've moved them into their residence hall, said your goodbyes, and shed a few (or more than a few) tears. What happens next?!

Having dropped off three kids at college over the years, I can tell you that it feels odd to depart with one fewer family member in your midst — kind of the opposite of when you gave birth and came home from the hospital with an additional person. Here's what you might expect.

You may wait breathlessly...

After I left my two older sons, I waited breathlessly for a text or call.

And waited and waited.

Communication was never their strong suit, but I was still surprised I didn't hear from them. I wanted — no, **NEEDED** — to hear how they were doing, and they didn't provide much information.

I found out that this is normal. You may hear a lot from your student, or you may hear very little. If you're in the "very little" category, don't worry; know that your student is navigating a new environment, meeting new people, figuring out their academic schedule, adjusting to having a roommate, etc.

In other words, they have a ton going on and calling you may not be their first priority. If I was lucky, I received brief (sometimes one word) replies to my texts. More often there was silence.

With great difficulty, I squelched my desire to reach out all the time. I knew it was better to leave them be for a while.

Then they call...and you almost wish they hadn't

One thing was worse than a lack of communication:



the phone calls and texts I got when they had a problem or were unhappy. Those caught me off guard because, by the end of the summer, my sons had seemed so ready to leave.

I wasn't always sure what to say when they were upset but learned that just listening and offering reassurance and support was the best course of action. Keeping the lines of communication open and letting your student know you're there for them despite the physical distance is the best you can do.

Parents of other first-year students may be reluctant to share that their offspring are also going through a period of homesickness and adjustment. However, I can assure you there is a settling-in period for everyone.

Staying close while apart

You may also be wondering how you'll stay close now that you don't live under the same roof.

The bottom line is you're not going to know what they're up to at any given moment (and you



UPCOMING EVENTS & DEADLINES

AUGUST

31 – Last day to add a 16-week class; last day to drop or withdraw from all 16-week classes with a 100% refund

SEPTEMBER

5 – Labor Day, University closed

7 – Financial aid disbursement; tuition and fees due

8 – Last day to withdraw from all first 8-week classes with a 75% refund

18 – Minot Out of the Darkness Walk, 12 –3 P.M. in Oak Park. Come walk with us to save lives and bring hope to others! Activities for hope and healing along with area resources will be available.

19 – Fall Assessment Day, no classes before 3 P.M.

21 – Last day to withdraw from all first 8-week classes with a 50% refund

28 – Last day to drop first 8-week classes

30 – Last day to withdraw from all 16-week classes with a 75% refund

OCTOBER

1 – 2023-24 FAFSA (Free Application Federal Student Aid) opens. Apply online at fafsa.gov for the FAFSA for the next academic year. The FAFSA is available to students who are U.S. citizens or eligible noncitizens with a valid social security number and accepted into a degree granting program.

12 – 13 – First 8-week final exams

14 – 16 – Parent & Family Weekend and Homecoming

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

wouldn't always want to). That doesn't mean you can't still be an integral part of each other's lives. Family group texts, funny short emails that include photos of a pet (a cheap but effective trick), and little care packages are all ways to stay connected.

We tried to have a set regular time to speak with our sons by phone but it wasn't carved in stone and often the day and hour would roll around and they just weren't available to talk.

On that note...

Mismatched circadian rhythms

Dropping your student at college is a bit like leaving them in a foreign country with its own time zone.

Scheduling conversations can be challenging. My oldest once called home at 1 a.m. to chat and I was like, "Are you kidding me?!" He'd somehow forgotten that my bedtime was several hours earlier. Even allowing for the hour difference between St. Louis where he was and New York where I was, that time just wasn't going to work. I wanted to talk to him — just not when I was half-conscious!

Worry a little, trust a lot

You may have concerns about your student's wellbeing.

Parents of 18-year-olds have all seen their occasional lapses in judgment first hand. Know that the lessons you've taught your child and the values you instilled in them have impacted who they have become. My husband and I were happy to discover that, for the most part, it appeared our boys had been listening to us all those years (even when we thought they weren't).

In other words, despite the likelihood that they will make some mistakes, your student will be okay. You did a good job. Now it's time to trust them.

I'll leave you with this

As you journey home, whether to a house that still contains other children or an emptier one, the new normal will take time to get used to. The future will be a constantly shifting kaleidoscope of your students leaving and returning and leaving again. But the ties which bind you will remain, strong and enduring.

Top tips for successful students and the families that support them

By Jennifer Sullivan, CollegiateParent.com

Here are my top tips for students and family members!

Successful students:

1. Ask for help

This sounds simple, but some students find it very difficult. This is because asking for help requires students to do two things: 1) acknowledge that they need help and 2) have the courage to ask for it.

In college, if students don't say anything about a problem, staff and professors will assume they have everything under control. If students are having trouble with anything (academics, roommates, mental health, etc.), they (not their parents) need to speak up. Students who are introverted or anxious may be daunted by the prospect of approaching their professor. Practicing or role-playing this kind of interaction can help them build confidence.

2. Find the best place to do their homework

Where did your student do homework in high school — on their bed, at a desk, at the dining room table? Encourage them to reflect on their previous study habits and then think about their ideal college study environment. Campuses have many different types of spaces for students to work, hang out, and socialize. Your student should try a few spots to find one that makes them feel relaxed and productive.

3. Write down usernames and passwords

New college students receive a school email address and username. Most colleges also require new students to set up an account in an online learning management system (LMS) for viewing grades and submitting assignments. Remembering all their usernames and passwords can be tough! Ideally, students find an organizational system they like before arriving on campus, but it's not too late. There are great phone apps that store and organize this important info.



4. Get to know the health and counseling center

Your student's physical and emotional health is as important as their academic success! Every college and university has health and mental health services available on campus. Even if your student doesn't need this care right away, chances are good that soon they, a roommate, or friend will get sick or may need some support or a listening ear.

Encourage your student to explore services on the college's website and locate the health care building, its hours of operation, and how to make an appointment. Some offices accept walk-in appointments while others schedule appointments in advance online.

For families:

1. Remember: College is a marathon, not a sprint

Developing college-level academic, social, emotional, and executive functioning skills takes time. During the early weeks and months of college, your student will rely heavily on the academic and social skills they developed in high school.

For some lucky students, this works just fine. Others are surprised to learn that their high school skills aren't helping them meet the rigors of college. This is completely normal! Successful students recognize which high school skills work and which don't. Trust the process and settle in for the marathon. The student who enters college will not be the same person who graduates. Walk alongside them and support them.

2. Expect them to make mistakes

Expectations shape our attitudes and reactions. If we expect perfection, we will often (always?) be disappointed. If we expect some bumps in the road we won't be surprised to hit a pothole. College students must learn how to balance academic demands, friendships, nutrition, exercise, mental health, money management, and more — without a parent around to help. Oversleeping an occasional class or ordering too many GrubHub deliveries in the first semester is common. They're figuring it out — just like you did at their age.

3. Avoid the worst-case-scenario mental minefield

It will happen eventually — you get a text from your student with bad news. Or maybe it's a letter in the mail addressed to your student with midterm grades, or a social media post that sends up your parental red flag. Have you ever gone down this dangerous road? "They got a D! What if they fail the class? What if they fail all their classes?"

We parents tend to obsess over bad news. It's important to take care of yourself. Avoid the "what if" thoughts by doing something joyful and distracting: turn on uplifting music, offer to walk a neighbor's dog if you don't have one of your own, spend 30 minutes writing a letter (or nice comments on social media), or meet a friend (and don't talk about your kids!).

4. Celebrate their homecomings

Students love coming home because it's where they can leave the pressures of school behind and just be themselves. However, parents may see school breaks as a chance to get stuff done (go to the dentist, get a haircut, visit grandma!). Try not to overdo it. There are sure to be serious things to discuss (grades, their budget), but start by making them feel special when they come home — and loved. There's nothing they'll appreciate more.

Your child leaving for college affects your life as well. Allow yourself to feel your feelings. Treat yourself with patience and compassion. There's no rush to "have it all together" immediately. If you feel like texting your student to say "I love you," do it! They may need to read those words as much as you need to send them.

Last minute financial aid reminders

Classes are now in progress and it's an exciting time for your student as they start the school year!

Here are a few reminders for your student related to financial aid and paying their bill at Minot State:

1. Have your student view 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. Financial aid will be applied to student accounts just before the Sept. 7 fall semester fee payment deadline.
3. If your student will owe a balance after all financial aid is applied, consider the following options to help cover any remaining balance:
 - a. The **Minot State Tuition Payment Plan** allows student to divide up the remaining balance into three monthly payments. The first payment must be made by Sept. 7. Learn more at [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. Private loans are non-federal loans offered by lending institutions to assist students. More information and a private loan comparison tool are available at [MinotStateU.edu/finaid/loans/index.shtml](https://www.minotstate.edu/finaid/loans/index.shtml), then click Private Loans.
 - d. If you plan to pay a remaining balance, you can pay online on Campus Connection, by mail, or over the phone at 701-858-3333. 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. This will 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 done so, discuss the benefits of having them complete and submit the FERPA Consent to Release Information. This form provides permission for parents to discuss financial matters with Minot State Financial Aid and Business staff members. The form is easy to complete and is available 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!

