



Parent and Family Newsletter

OCTOBER 2022 Issue 1

Oct. 1, 2022

Dear parents and families,

The first month is behind us and it has been filled with ups and downs for your students; the fear of making new friends has subsided a bit, only to be replaced with the uncertainty of a poor grade on a quiz or test. This is the time of the semester where the roller coaster starts leveling out after the hype of Welcome Week and the excitement of their newfound freedom starts to become their new norm. The roller coaster of emotions is going to continue throughout the semester, however; the six-week mark is a crucial point in their semester. Students will decide how they are going to respond to academic or social adversity, to stay in a class or drop a class, or to stay enrolled at Minot State or leave all together. These issues bring forth big decisions and your students should not try to resolve these issues without including others. Advise your students to reach out to someone, anyone whom they can talk to about a plan forward. They may speak to their advisors, visit the tutoring or counseling centers, or stop by my office and we can talk about next steps. Encouraging your student to have a conversation with University personnel is a no-risk and high-reward proposal.

I hope to meet you at Parent and Family Weekend Oct. 13 – 16. 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.

H O M E C O M I N G

October 12-15

FEATURED REUNION GROUPS

Sig Tau's • All Greek • Wellness Center

Wednesday

October 12

GOLDEN AWARDS DINNER

Student Center
Conference Center • 6 P.M.

Thursday

October 13

PRESIDENT'S CLUB LUNCHEON

MSU Dome • 12 P.M.

Friday

October 14

ALUMNI AND FRIENDS HOMECOMING SOCIAL

The Original • 7 P.M.

Saturday

October 15

HOMECOMING PARADE & 5K FUN RUN AND WALK

Downtown Minot to
the MSU Dome

TAILGATE

East of Dome, Lot L
Following Parade

FOOTBALL VS.

NORTHERN STATE U.

Herb Parker Stadium • 2 P.M.



Go Beavers!

MinotStateU.edu/Homecoming



Registered families will receive reduced 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: 10 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: 10 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
7:30 P.M., Maysa Arena

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

SATURDAY, OCT. 15

Community Brunch: 10 A.M. – 2 P.M.
Beaver Creek Café (2nd floor, Student Center)
Menu: Honey Pit Ham with Dinner Rolls · Vegetarian Egg Frittata · Pork Sausage Links · Eggs Benny · Cheesy Potatoes · Glazed Carrots · Herb Baked Salmon · Caramel Rolls (half with pecans) · Fresh Cut Fruit · Yogurt · Mixed Salad · Ranch and Balsamic Vinagrette

Homecoming 5K Fun Run and Walk

10:45 A.M., Participants will run/walk the parade route from Downtown Minot to the MSU campus. Find more information [here](#).

Homecoming Parade

11 A.M., 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

3:45 P.M., Maysa Arena

Men's Hockey vs. Midland

7:30 P.M., Maysa Arena

SUNDAY, OCT. 16

Community Brunch: 10 A.M. – 2 P.M.
Beaver Creek Café (2nd floor, Student Center)
Menu: Prime Rib with Dinner Rolls · Vegetarian Egg Frittata · Pork Sausage Links · Breakfast Burritos · Cheesy Potatoes · Glazed Carrots · Chicken Alfredo · Caramel Rolls (half with pecans) · Fresh Cut Fruit · Yogurt · Mixed Salad Ranch and Balsamic Vinagrette

Music faculty recital: Dr. Jon Rumney, violin
3:00 P.M., Ann Nicole Nelson Hall (Old Main)

Financial Aid Information

2023–24 FAFSA available soon

The 2023–24 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) becomes available at fafsa.gov on Oct. 1. The 2023-24 FAFSA covers the Fall 2023, Spring 2024, and Summer 2024 semesters.

While it might seem strange to already be thinking about completing the FAFSA for the 2023-24 school year, applying early helps students avoid delays in the future and helps them ensure consideration for as many types of financial aid as possible. It is important to submit the FAFSA every year to apply for federal and state financial aid programs, and Minot State also uses FAFSA results to determine student eligibility for need-based scholarships. Some private financial aid providers may also use FAFSA information to determine eligibility for their aid programs.

On the 2023-24 FAFSA, you and your student will report income information from your 2021 federal tax returns. Most students and parents will be able to use the IRS Data Retrieval option within the FAFSA to automatically retrieve and import 2021 tax information directly from the IRS into the FAFSA, making the FAFSA easier than ever to complete.

We encourage students planning on attending Minot State during the 2023-24 school year to submit the FAFSA by April 1, 2023 to meet the University's priority funding deadline. This helps ensure they are considered for all federal aid programs available. Returning students who have successfully completed the FAFSA and listed the Minot State school code can expect to receive an official award notice in early June 2023. For questions about completing the FAFSA, please contact the Minot State financial aid office at 701-858-3375.

Keeping track of student loans

Your student's federal student aid history, including their Federal Direct Loan and Pell Grant history is available at studentaid.gov. Students can log in with their FSA ID and password, used for filing the FAFSA, to keep track of their loan and grant history and view contact information for their loan servicer.

Encourage your student to be mindful of the amounts they are borrowing, as well as the total borrowing limits for federal loan programs, to avoid overborrowing or exhausting their eligibility before they complete their program. More info about federal loan limits is available at studentaid.gov.

Student loan interest

If your student borrowed an unsubsidized Federal Direct Loan or a private education loan, those loans typically will begin accruing interest as soon as they are disbursed. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 emergency, student loan interest for unsubsidized Federal Direct Loans for in-school borrowers has been on "pause." The U.S. Department of Education announced a final extension of the COVID-19 emergency relief measures will end on Dec. 31, 2022. That means interest will begin accruing again after Dec. 31. For more information, visit studentaid.gov/announcements-events/coronavirus.

Although students are not required to pay interest on unsubsidized or private loans while they are enrolled at half-time (six or more credits) or higher status, voluntary payments on interest while they are enrolled can help keep the overall debt amount down. Students can contact their loan servicer to make a payment at any time. Servicer contact information can be found by logging on at studentaid.gov.

Student debt relief plan

You may have heard recent announcements about plans for federal student loan debt forgiveness for borrowers who had disbursed federal student loans prior to June 30, 2022. We are waiting more details and final information about the plan, and we encourage borrowers to look at the Federal Student Aid website for updates and the most accurate information at studentaid.gov/debt-relief-announcement/. You can also sign up for notifications as updates are posted at the Department of Education's subscription page, ed.gov/subscriptions.

Finding patience with your new college student — and yourself

By Jennifer Sullivan, CollegiateParent.com

I recently spoke with a college parent who confided in me her struggles and frustration with her son. “What did I do wrong?” she asked. “I’ve been rethinking all the decisions I made when my son was growing up. I know I did the best that I could but I still feel like I should have done something differently. Why is he struggling in college?”

It was hard to listen to this amazing woman and mother question herself and her actions. As she was sharing with me, I found myself thinking that I, too, had probably said the same words about myself as a mother. I’ve wondered if I made the best decisions for my daughters as they were growing up. I’ve doubted my choices and questioned if I was a good enough parent.



Why are we parents so hard on ourselves? How can we find kindness and patience with ourselves and our children?

In my book, “Sharing the Transition to College: Words of Advice for Diverse Learners and Their Families,” I offer suggestions based on real-world situations that I’ve seen in my work as a college transition specialist. New college parents are cautiously optimistic. They’re hopeful that their high school graduate will make a seamless transition to college. Parents are holding their breath during the first few weeks and months of the fall semester as they wait for midterm and final grades to be posted as if their child’s grades are an indicator

of how well they did, as parents, raising a new college student.

But if our student stumbles or makes a misstep, how do we respond? I suggest that we respond with patience — both for our student and for ourselves.

Missteps and mistakes are a normal part of your student’s journey to becoming independent. Supporting your children through these missteps is important, but equally important is supporting and caring for yourself. Sadly, the second part of this suggestion is often overlooked. Why? Because as parents we are so focused on fixing, helping, and supporting our children that when the helping “moment” is over we feel that our work is done.

College parents need to care for the caregiver — themselves. How do we do this? By making time for self-care, not holding ourselves to an outside standard, and meeting our college student where they are.

Parent self-care

Parent self-care is important to a college parent’s mental health and to their relationships with family, friends, and spouse or partner. The first year of college is a significant shift in many ways for both individuals and family dynamics. Recognizing the impact of the college transition on yourself and your family unit is important. Acknowledging how the transition is affecting you requires both honesty and courage.

A few questions to think about:

- How has your college student’s transition affected you?
- In what ways has the college transition affected you more positively than you thought it would?
- In what ways has the college transition affected you more negatively than you thought it would?
- How would you describe your relationship with your college student now?
- Identify a positive quality of your relationship with your college student that makes you smile.
- Identify a goal that you would like to move toward in the relationship with your college student.

After reflecting honestly on the questions above, the last crucial step toward self-care is taking action! Identify those activities in your life that energize you, refresh you, or give you peace. Do more of them!

Not holding ourselves to an outside standard

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a time of chaos and unpredictability. I haven't felt like I've "had it all together" the past couple of years, and I'm sure most families would agree.

Parents, we can't compare our college students' journey to anyone else because, well, no one else has experienced what our teenagers have been through during their last years of high school. Avoid looking around and comparing yourself or your child's journey to someone else. Their journey is unique and they, like all of us, are trying to manage one day at a time.

Meeting our children where they are

The best piece of advice I ever received was from an educator giving a presentation about working with diverse learning students. The presenter said that anyone working with or parenting children would be wise to eliminate the word "should" from their vocabulary.

When we use the word "should," we automatically imply judgment. "My child is 18 years old. They *should* be able to wake themselves up to attend class" or "This is my second child going to college. I *should* know what to expect and have it together by now."

Using language such as "should" suggests that where we are now is not the place we are meant to be. But what if where you are is exactly where you are meant to be? What if parents changed their thinking from "my student shouldn't be struggling with this" to "my student *is* struggling with this. I will see how I can help without judgment."

This is a difficult time that requires all of us to demonstrate flexibility and grace. Our college students are trying their best to cope with uncertainty and change — and we as parents are trying to do the same. By making time for self-care, not holding ourselves to an outside standard, and meeting our emerging adults where they are, we can hopefully find patience and peace in the parenting process.



UPCOMING EVENTS & DEADLINES

OCTOBER

- 1** – The FAFSA (Free Application Federal Student Aid) is free and available beginning today. Apply online 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.
- 4 – 5** – **12** – 1:30 P.M., Central Europe Study Information Table: Stop by the information booth on the second floor of the Student Center, near the café, to learn more about the incredible study abroad opportunity to Central Europe in May 2023!
- 7** – Spring semester graduation application due to Registrar's Office
- 10** – **4** – 8 P.M., Indigenous Peoples' Day event in the Quad
- 11** – MSU Sports Day: Show your spirit for your favorite Minot State sports team(s)
- 12 – 13** – First 8-wk. final exams
- 14 – 16** – Parent and Family Weekend
- 15** – Minot State Homecoming
- 17** – First day for second 8-wk. classes
 - Midterm grades due to registrar's office
- 20** – Last day to add second 8-wk. classes
 - Last day to drop or withdraw from second 8-wk. classes with 100% refund
- 24** – Final grades available for first 8-wk. classes
- 25 – 27** – Spring registration for currently enrolled students
- 24** – Last day to withdraw from all classes with 50% refund for 16-wk. classes

NOVEMBER

- 3** – Last day to withdraw from all classes and receive a 75% refund for second 8-wk. classes

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

Coach your student to communicate with professors

By Amy Baldwin, Ed.D., [CollegiateParent.com](https://www.collegiateparent.com)

A freshman parent once called my office early in the school year. Because I'm a department chair, I sometimes field general questions from parents, but this parent wanted very specific information. "Is there a way to log in to see my son's grades?" she asked.

This question is becoming more common. Many parents, used to online K-12 grade portals, expect the same access in college.

"No," I told her. Some of the faculty at my university use an online learning management system, but others, like me, teach students how to track their grades the old-fashioned way — by collecting all graded work and using the formula in my syllabus. "But your son should be able to calculate his grade if he's keeping up with his graded assignments."

This did not satisfy her. She suspected he was floundering and wanted to know for certain. I reassured her that he was being coached through his first-year success course on how to stay on track — and more importantly, how to talk to his professors if he was concerned about his progress.

The student-professor relationship in college is one of the most important to cultivate. Professors want to

develop strong relationships with their students, and students should want the same.

Here are a few tips to guide your student through the process of creating an open line of communication with a professor. Pandemic or not, these are solid strategies for starting off the semester right!

Establish a relationship early.

Professors will be happy to get to know your student before a problem arises. Any time during the semester — with the exception of the day before the final! — is a good time to reach out, but the sooner the better.

Your student should take cues from the syllabus about the best way to communicate with a professor. Is the professor available to meet in person or is email or an online meeting better? It goes without saying, but I'll say it anyway: if the professor prefers email, then use email and check it often.

When your student meets with the professor for the first time, it's a good idea to have a list of questions ready. Here are a few that can help your student learn more about the professor's expectations:

- "I want to learn as much as I can in your class. What can I do to succeed?"
- "I usually (fill in usual study practices). What will work best for this class?"
- "I want to be sure I start off with solid work in your class. Can I come see you before an assignment is due to make sure I'm on the right track?"

A solid relationship early in the semester can be helpful if your student's circumstances change.

In the spring of 2020, when students moved home because of the pandemic, one of my students had to pick up extra shifts at his job and so he could no longer join our class online at the designated time. Another student was dealing with limited internet access. Faculty will want to know about any situation that makes it hard for a student to access their courses online or show up for an in-person class.



Create a plan to stay organized.

College students need a planner, preferably a large one that can be hung on a wall or anything that can be accessed easily. Classes meet on different days of the week and at different times, and your student will also have study sessions and extracurricular activities to map out.

Last year during the pandemic, students at my institution had hybrid classes that were held both online and in person, and those designations changed from week to week. Students were asking themselves questions like, “Am I meeting my psychology class in person for small group work this week or are we online?” A consistent organizational strategy will keep the chaos under control.

Seek immediate feedback after graded work.

If your student gets a low grade, or lower than anticipated — even if they think they know why — it’s good to check in with the professor as soon as possible.

Here are a few ways your student can open a conversation after a low or failing grade:

- “I reviewed my work. Can we go over what I did wrong so I understand what I should do differently next time?”
- “I’m bummed I messed up that assignment. Would you help me see where I made mistakes?”
- “Can we talk about how this low grade will affect my progress in the course? I want to be sure to make the improvements I need to raise my grade.”

Because students share this fear with me, it’s worth telling you: yes, professors want to talk with students

who’ve failed an assignment. No, they don’t think their students aren’t smart enough to pass their class. Professors want their students to learn and to earn good grades. Your student shouldn’t be ashamed to speak to a professor about a class they’re failing. Reaching out demonstrates a willingness to improve.

Practice patience, kindness, and self-care.

We’ve learned during the pandemic that we are resilient, but the last year and a half has still been stressful for families and communities. Despite lots of work on our end, faculty and administrators can not 100% guarantee that our institutions’ plans for this academic year won’t need to shift if COVID-19 cases increase.

Remind your student to practice patience and kindness to themselves and others as they begin their fall term. And know that, more than anything, their school wants them to be successful *and* healthy.

Check email!

Encourage your student to check their official school email account daily.

Just as most colleges and universities changed from on-campus to online in a matter of days in the spring of 2020, your student’s college may institute quick changes at any time. Professors often communicate with their class by email, and so do offices including financial aid. The more your student reads and responds to email, the more prepared they’ll be.

If you as a parent are able to sign up for institutional announcements, often provided through the parent and family program, do so immediately.

We all benefit from staying connected and informed!

