



# Parent and Family Newsletter

## NOVEMBER 2022 Issue 2

Nov. 15, 2022

Dear parents and families,

We are entering our final month of the Fall 2022 term and the upcoming weeks can be a stressful time as your student prepares for finals. Life balance is an important pillar for creating a successful ending to the academic term. Please take some time during the Thanksgiving break to give your student an emotional boost.

Students know the importance of ending a semester well and they need to prepare themselves the best they can. On the flip side, they may not know what will happen if they don't meet their hopes and expectations as final grades are posted. Please let them know that there is always a path forward and the University has team members available to help find that path.

Our dining center will be shut down from Thursday, Nov. 24 until 5 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 27. The Office of Student Affairs will be hosting a traditional Thanksgiving meal on campus at noon on Thursday, Nov. 24 in the Beaver Dam for all students.

As always, I am available for any discussions or concerns. Please contact me at [kevin.harmon@MinotStateU.edu](mailto:kevin.harmon@MinotStateU.edu) and I will make arrangements for any requested meeting.

Respectfully,

Kevin Harmon,  
Vice President for Student Affairs

Be seen. Be heard. Be empowered.



# Why leadership matters

*By James Sturm, Looyenga Leadership Center director*

While we may not be able to rattle off a definition of leadership, we all know what it looks like when real leadership is missing. We can see the impact one poor boss can make, or the disastrous effect the lack of quality leadership can have on our favorite team. The nightly news is rife with stories about leadership successes and failures.

There are certainly people who are born with traits that help them to become great leaders. Having an outgoing personality can help people to become comfortable in the presence of others and allow them to take charge. However, many leadership skills can be developed over time. All you need is the right training, the dedication to succeed and, like anything else, practice.

Leadership isn't about holding authority over someone else. It's about positively influencing people to reach new heights. Leadership is important because it inspires, motivates, and sets an example for people to accomplish positive changes in the world. Leaders establish a vision, provide a plan of action, and build strong relationships with their followers. As a result, they guide people to accomplish incredible feats together.

Employers know that leadership matters. According to two separate surveys by Georgetown University and

the National Association of Colleges and Employers, communication, problem-solving, and leadership are among the top competencies employers are hoping to hire, but also among the skills they are finding it hardest to find (according to a LinkedIn report). It would make sense then, if you want to get that dream job, you have to give employers what they want, and that includes leadership skills.

Minot State University is working hard to become the statewide leader in leadership development and education. Thanks to the generous support of Roger and Ann Looyenga, MSU has opened the Looyenga Leadership Center, the first center of its kind in North Dakota. We now offer both a certificate and concentration in leadership studies, as well as multiple co-curricular opportunities to develop leadership skills, and we continue to add new programs and services each year. Roger and Ann saw the importance of leadership and have made it possible for current students to develop their skills while at Minot State.

Only through strong leadership can we hope to solve some of the problems and issues that currently challenge the world. Leadership matters, and Minot State is determined to help develop leadership for future generations.

Learn more at [MinotStateU.edu/leadership](https://MinotStateU.edu/leadership).

# Academic success: Beyond study time

By Vickie Nelson, [CollegiateParent.com](http://CollegiateParent.com)

## Study time matters.

For most college students, academic success involves putting in the time. As a professor, when I have a student who is struggling, one of the first things we talk about is the amount of time they spend hitting the books.

But time is only one part of a good study routine. We also need to consider how students use that time and the classic Ws: who, what, when, where, and why.

## Time management: How do you use your study time?

Ask almost any successful student or any professor, and they will tell you that time management is one of the secrets to success in college. Time management means not only making time to study but also using that time productively.

Good time management means keeping track of what you need to do, planning when and how it will get done, and staying on track.

- **Get (and use!) a planner.** Whether your planner is an app or a paper calendar, it should have space to record all assignments, deadlines, exams, and other obligations. Break assignments into steps and include those on the calendar. Look for conflicts and busy times and plan accordingly.
- **Plan ahead for long-term assignments.** It's easy to forget about longer-term assignments, procrastinate getting started, or underestimate the amount of time they will take. Plan the steps involved and put them in your planner.
- **Plan a weekly reading schedule.** Determine how much reading needs to be done for the week, then create and write down a plan for getting it done. A good rule of thumb is to plan approximately five minutes per page, although some subjects or some students may need more time. (Less time may mean you aren't reading carefully. Skimming isn't reading!)

- **Schedule breaks.** Set a timer for a certain amount of time and then schedule a short break. Get something to eat, walk up and down the hall, do something active.
- **Time management also means self-management.** The key is to create an action plan — and then stick with it. It's not always easy to stay on track, and it may take practice. Don't give up.

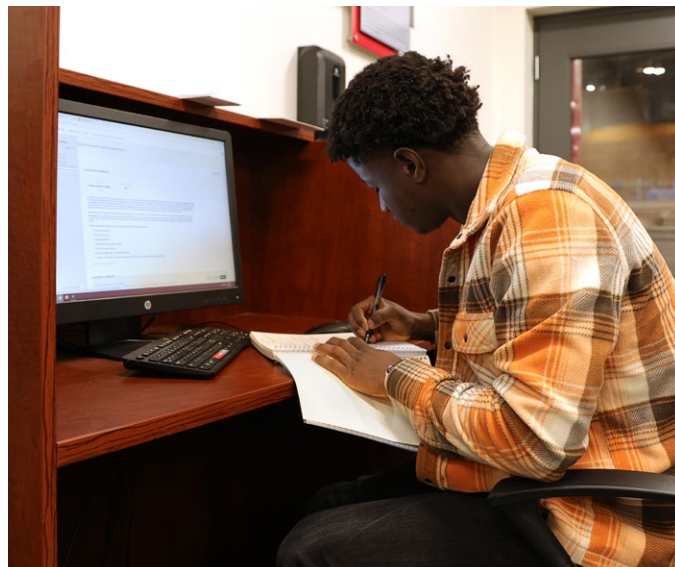
## WHO are you studying with?

Studying doesn't need to be a solo activity. In fact, it is often more effective if you don't try to do it all alone.

- **Find a study buddy or accountability partner.** Study with someone else. Keep each other on track. Hold each other accountable.
- **Hang around people who study.** Spend time with people who have similar values. Find people with similar goals who spend time studying.



- **Join or form a study group.** Meeting regularly with a study group can be one of the best study tools. Form a small group (three to five people) and meet regularly, perhaps weekly, to review class material. Review readings, go over class notes and help each other fill in the blanks, create practice tests on the material and share them with each other, explain concepts to each other.
- **Teach the material to someone else.** Is there anyone in your class who might appreciate a little help? Offer to meet to go over the material. You never learn anything as well as when you need to teach it to someone else.
- **Take advantage of the people available on your campus to help.** Use the resources. Talk to the professor or teaching assistant. Go to the tutoring center. Ask another student for help.



when you are naturally at your best. Work with your natural rhythm and try to get at least part of your hard studying done when you think most clearly.

**Don't leave all of your work until the end of the day.** High school students who are in school all day and then have after-school activities or a job may have to do all of their studying in the evening, but if your college schedule has blocks of free time during the day, use those blocks to get some of your work done. An hour or two in the library between classes can save you from a late-night session.

**Don't wait until just before the test!** Cramming doesn't work. You learn material better if you space out learning and make studying a regular habit. Start well before your test and study for a few minutes every day. Your brain needs time to digest the material, and spaced study works best.

### **WHERE are you studying?**

Location matters. Choosing the right place to study can help you focus and stay on task.

- **The most comfortable place may not be the best choice.** Keep your bed for lounging, watching movies, and sleeping, but not for studying. Train your brain to be in a relaxed mindset in one place and a work mindset in another.
- **Clear your space.** Take a few minutes to clear off your desk of everything except what you need for this study session. Put other books aside and clear off anything you aren't going to use. Clearing your workspace will help clear your brain.

### **WHAT are you studying?**

**Studying is more than reading.** Reading the assigned material is the first step but finding other ways to engage with the material is crucial. Highlight the text. Take notes. Write notes in the margins. Make lists. Work consistently with the material in as many ways as possible.

**Make flash cards.** Flashcards work, and physical flashcards often work better than virtual flashcards – even if they seem old school. Online apps like Quizlet are fine but being able to manipulate physical cards seems to help. Play games with them. Challenge others with them. Carry them around and pull them out whenever you have a few minutes.

**Learn to take good class notes.** Taking good class notes takes practice. Don't try to write down everything and don't just write down what is on the instructor's slides. Listen carefully for the gold of what the professor says. Go over your notes soon after class and fill in the details. Try merging your class notes with your reading notes.

### **WHEN do you do your best studying?**

Deciding when to study is part of time management, but it is also important to ensure that your study time is most productive.

**Are you an early bird or a night owl?** Some people are just naturally wide awake and sharp early in the morning; others do better later in the day. Think about

- **Reduce noise and distractions.** Minimize the things that tend to distract you. Do you need to be away from your friends? Your TV? Your phone? If your dorm is noisy, you may need to study somewhere else or at least consider noise-reducing headphones.
- **Consider alternative places to study.** Consider other places to get your work done – a quiet corner of the library, a lounge, a local town library, an empty classroom (maybe with a whiteboard you can use), a local coffee shop, or outdoors. Give yourself an occasional change of scene for a new perspective.



### WHY are you studying?

The answer to this question may seem easy: to learn, to get a good grade, or to pass the class. But thinking more deeply about the motivation behind each study session can be helpful.

Find your why and consider how studying fits your goals. If you don't know why you are spending the time, it's difficult to stay motivated and stick with the work.

#### For the test

Is this study session simply to learn material for an upcoming test? If so, you need to be clear about what

will be covered and what the exam will look like. Stay focused on the material — and try to space out your studying.

#### Only for the grade

While this isn't a motivation most professors would encourage, if this is your goal, then you must be clear about what is required to achieve your desired grade. Work closely with the syllabus.

#### Career goal

How does the subject fit in with your career goal? What are the practical applications of what you are learning? How will this material move you closer to the next step or class on your path?

#### What else?

Roadblocks and detours can pop up for all of us.

- **Getting enough sleep.** Most Americans don't get enough sleep. Most college students definitely don't get enough sleep. One study found that 75% of adults are less productive after a poor night's sleep.
- **Trying to multitask.** We all do it — and many of us believe we have no choice and that we're successful at it. But when it comes to studying, multitasking doesn't work. Trying to study while watching the game, or listening to some type of music, or watching a movie doesn't work.
- **Saying no.** Being able to say no is one of the hardest things for many of us. Students are faced with many tempting options. Students who prioritize and can say no to activities that don't move them forward will be more likely to succeed.

Productive studying is complex and hard work. Too many students underestimate how important good study habits are. Good studying is just that — a set of habits that make a difference. Students who take time to find clarity about what they are doing will find the right tools to help them succeed.

# Financial Aid Information

## Unpaid balances

When students have an unpaid balance on their Student Account in Campus Connection after waivers, scholarships, grants, and federal loans have been applied, there are a few payment options. We always encourage eligible students to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to ensure they have accessed all types of federal aid available first, but when those options have been exhausted, there are some additional options that might be considered.

- 1. Personal savings or earnings from work.** Some families are able to cover the remaining balance by accessing funds from savings or earnings from employment.
- 2. External scholarship opportunities.** Follow the [MSU Financial Aid Office Facebook](#) page to learn about opportunities from various organizations that come up throughout the school year. We also share timely financial aid related reminders.
- 3. MSU Tuition Payment Plan.** This plan allows families to spread out the fall and spring semester payments over three months, rather than having to pay the entire balance at once — in September for the fall semester and in January for spring. There is a \$50 fee for enrolling in the plan each semester and students typically must enroll in the Tuition Payment Plan and pay their first payment on or before the standard fee payment deadline for the semester. More information about the tuition payment plan is available at [MinotStateU.edu/busoffic/pages/tuition-payment-plan.shtml](#).
- 4. Federal PLUS Loans.** The Federal Direct PLUS Loan is a loan available to parents of dependent students who file the FAFSA. You can apply online at [studentaid.gov](#).
- 5. Private education loans.** Private education loans are non-federal loans offered by a variety of lending institutions. Students are typically the borrower but usually need a co-signer with good credit in order to qualify. For more information and a link to FASTCHOICE, a tool that allows students

to compare the terms of several different private loans borrowed by MSU students in the past three years, visit [MinotStateU.edu/finaid/loans/index.shtml](#), select Private Loans, then click the FASTCHOICE icon. Students are not limited to using lenders on this list.

If you or your student would like assistance determining how much to borrow in a PLUS or private loan, our staff members are happy to assist you. Please call the financial aid office at 701-858-3375.

## 2023-24 FAFSA

The 2023-24 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) opened on Oct. 1 at [StudentAid.gov](#). The 2023-24 FAFSA covers the Fall 2023, Spring 2024, and Summer 2024 semesters. Get an early start on applying for federal financial aid for next school year by submitting your FAFSA now!



## UPCOMING EVENTS & DEADLINES

### NOVEMBER

- 16** – Last day to withdraw from second 8-wk. classes and receive a 50% refund
- 21** – Last day to drop 8-wk. classes
- 23** – Thanksgiving vacation, no classes
- 24** – Thanksgiving, University closed
- 25** – Thanksgiving vacation, no classes

### DECEMBER

- 7-8** – Final exams for second 8-wk. classes
- 12-16** – Final exams for 16-wk. classes
- 26** – University closed

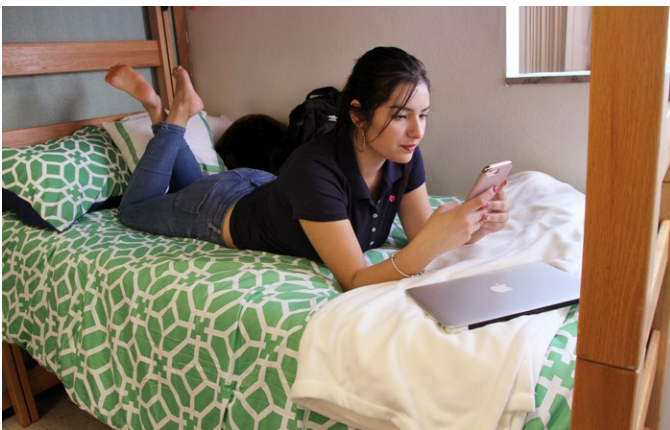
View more dates, deadlines, and events at [MinotStateU.edu/calendar](#).

# Housing timeline

[CollegiateParent.com](http://CollegiateParent.com)

Your student is all moved in so housing is off your to-do list for a while, right?

Wrong! Housing season starts earlier than you might think. If you don't want your student scrambling at the last minute or discovering that all the desirable housing (and roommates) are taken, share this timeline and check in periodically about their progress.



## Right now

Look at the [university's housing website](#) to find out when applications are due for returning students. Even if your student doesn't plan to live on campus, this is a good end date for having a plan in place.

Have your student ask an upperclassman when apartments start to fill up (try their RA or upper classmen). This varies by area so the inside scoop is valuable. Don't be surprised if it is early!

Will you attend Family Weekend at your student's college this fall? If you find yourself with a few extra hours, the two of you might want to tour a few off-campus communities together.

## By midterm

Now's the time to start talking to potential roommates if they haven't already. Your student should have a good idea what types of housing are available, and, in some rental markets, should already have started looking for a place.

## Thanksgiving break

### If your student wants to live on campus:

Encourage them to check out the different residence halls and on-campus apartments.

### If your student wants to live off campus:

Rental search time! Start by deciding on a budget for next year's housing (we have a helpful worksheet: [bit.ly/cp-budget](#)). Browse apartment websites with your student (their university may have a search portal) and point out the features that they may not have top of mind but you know are important. They can also be talking to upper-level students about which neighborhoods and buildings are desirable and which they should avoid.



## Winter break

Your student should know where they want to live and in some areas should be ready to sign a lease (review the lease with them). Check out our [glossary of lease terms](#) and our property-viewing checklist ([bit.ly/property-viewing](#)).

## Spring

It's time to complete the housing process with the university or sign a lease. Encourage your student to make a plan for moving and/or storing their belongings.