

Parent and Family Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2023 Issue 2

Feb. 15, 2023

Dear parents and families,

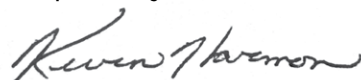
A few years ago, we introduced the One Stop webpage on our website at MinotStateU.edu/onestop. I encourage you to browse this page to stay up to date with the calendar of events and shortcut to many campus services.

This page has been designed to help simplify the many complex processes it takes to navigate being a student or family member at Minot State University. The one stop page and the parent and family page/newsletter have been designed by you for you. Please let me know if you have ideas in how we can strengthen the page or programming for parents and families.

Two weeks ago, we shared with you an invitation to learn more about your student staying on campus in of our residence halls or apartments by visiting MinotStateU.edu/life. I invite you to have this conversation with your student. Staying on campus saves money and allows your student to live the life of a college student. How memorable is college if you are only on campus three to four hours a day going to classes? Going to college should be an experience, not a job!

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

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin Harmon".

Kevin Harmon,
Vice President for Student Affairs

Be seen. Be heard. Be empowered.

Preventing academic burnout: The art of saying no

By Ianni Lee, [CollegiateParent.com](https://www.collegiateparent.com)

Biting off more than they can chew is a common problem for college students, often because they are so driven and may underestimate the importance of their own mental health.

To a lot of college students, the idea of saying no to a work opportunity or extra credit assignment is a show of weakness they'll do anything to avoid. Driven by a thirst to prove themselves, students keep pushing past their breaking points, refusing to recognize signs of exhaustion.

This is how academic burnout happens.

Do you recognize your son or daughter in this picture? If so, they may be feeling unmotivated, detached, cynical, and trapped by feelings of failure and helplessness.

This is why teaching your student when to say no is so crucial as it will teach them the importance of boundaries.

My experience with academic burnout

My first experience with academic burnout, which is to say the moment when I recognized burnout for what it was, happened my last semester in college. I was juggling a full course load, including several capstone classes, and a part-time internship which initially made me a bit nervous.

However, after classes started and I got comfortable at my internship, I was thrilled to find myself thoroughly enjoying every class and my time at work. Unfortunately, this encouraged me to push myself even harder to make sure I excelled.

Come midterm season, I realized that I had made quite a few poor choices. I'd set poor boundaries at my internship, and what should have been nine hours of work a week quickly bled into 25 hours a



week on top of schoolwork. My capstone classes were group work based, so I slotted in group meetings wherever I could fit them in, skipping meals before saying no to something that was asked of me.

Instead of turning down opportunities or taking a minute to breathe, I told myself it was okay to keep up the pounding pace because, even if I was exhausted, it would only be for a semester. I could rest once winter break rolled around.

By the middle of the semester, the quality of my work was suffering so much that I was forced to confront my exhaustion and the resulting sense of failure. Deep down, part of me knew this was happening because I was pushing myself too hard without enough time to recharge and rest, but the rest of me thought I could continue to compensate if I just worked harder.

Refocusing and reprioritizing

My wonderful roommate finally decided to sit me down to remind me I needed to breathe.

She herself had a long history of pushing herself too hard and recognized the signs of my burnout

far sooner than I did. We barely saw each other that semester as I'd made a habit of stumbling home from late nights at work or in the library long after she had gone to bed. She knew I wasn't taking care of myself properly and she wasn't going to let me keep on like that.

In the end, my internship was where I decided to make sacrifices. I resolved to set firmer boundaries on the time I spent at work and accepted any consequent feeling of failure in favor of focusing on my schoolwork — and even carving out time to enjoy my last semester of college.

Explaining this to my internship supervisor was all the confirmation I needed that I had pushed myself needlessly from the beginning. They fully accepted and supported my need to refocus my time, especially as the semester began to draw to a close.

All that stress was, in the end, entirely self-inflicted.

How to help your student prevent burnout

It may seem ironic, but academic burnout often develops when your student's hard work pays off. After they've run themselves into the ground finishing the semester, they receive their grades and see how well they've done despite their exhaustion which, in turn, motivates them to follow the same pattern next semester.

As parents, it can be difficult to see why your student is so hard on themselves or even exactly how hard they're pushing themselves (tired college students are the worst communicators after all). When they finally come home for break, absolutely drained, it's all you can do to help them relax in any way possible, knowing that the coming semester will likely be no easier.

Many students don't feel as if they have the power or even the right to say no. All their worry and stress comes from inside themselves as they will always be their own harshest critic, most especially when they're overwhelmed with feelings of defeat.

As they embark on their second semester, set aside some time to talk with your student about how they value their own time. Are they setting aside enough time to actually enjoy being a college student? Do they feel as if they have a duty to say yes all the time? Maybe it's not enough that they know no is an option; do they understand they should feel no shame when they say no?

Above all else, make sure that your student practices healthy coping mechanisms, especially when faced with failures and disappointments, and that they understand the unbelievable importance of boundaries. Use a cliché to explain it if you must! To set boundaries is to put your own oxygen mask on before you help others — because if you can't breathe, you won't be able to help anyone else breathe either.



IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

FEBRUARY

- 15** – Last day to drop a first 8-wk. course
- 15** – Minot State General Scholarship Application deadline
- 20** – President's Day, University closed
- 20** – Last day to withdraw from all 16-wk. classes and receive a 75% refund
- 21** – Spring Assessment Day, no classes before 3 P.M.

MARCH

- 1 & 2** – Final exams for first 8-wk. courses
- 6** – Classes begin for second 8-wk. courses

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

Financial Aid Information

Summer financial aid

Is your son or daughter planning to enroll in summer classes? Summer 2022 financial aid is based on the 2022-23 FAFSA — summer is considered the end of the 2022-23 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 at [MinotStateU.edu/finaid/eligibility/summer-financial-aid.shtml](https://www.minotstateu.edu/finaid/eligibility/summer-financial-aid.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 the 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](https://www.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 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 the required conditions for renewal during the 2023-24 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](https://www.minotstateu.edu/finaid/scholarships/index.shtml). You can reach the financial aid office at 701-858-3375 for additional questions.

Planning for the 2023-24 school year

The 2022-23 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) opened on Oct. 1, 2022. 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 2023-24 FAFSA, now would be a great time to complete the FAFSA at the [FAFSA.gov](https://www.fafsa.gov) website!



Colleges help students tackle inflation

By Suzanne Shaffer, [CollegiateParent.com](https://www.collegiateparent.com)



Inflation is taking its toll on everyone, and college students across the country are feeling the crunch.

At Texas A&M University, students told local news they are definitely feeling the rise in prices.

A senior said, “Inflation has created more stress for budgeting purposes. Books are a little more expensive because of shipping costs, and there’s also food and groceries. I’m spending twice as much as I normally would’ve when I first started college in 2019.”

Rising costs of living affect everyone, but many college students, who primarily live on low incomes, are especially vulnerable to inflation. Inflation is taking its toll on college students — and colleges are taking measures to help their student populations cope.

Dealing with food insecurity

With soaring inflation, food prices nationwide jumped 6.3% last year and have continued to

rise steadily. A recent survey by the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice at Temple University found that food insecurity was a reality for nearly one-third of all U.S. college students. The #RealCollege study found that 39% of students at two-year institutions and 29% of students at four-year institutions experienced food insecurity.

Colleges are responding to this dilemma by providing food pantries on campus. They’re making food easily accessible to students and communicating its availability while encouraging students not to be ashamed or embarrassed when asking for help.

Erica Quintana-Garcia, assistant dean and director of the Student Care Center at MSU Denver, stated, “You shouldn’t have to choose between paying rent or feeding your family. It’s okay to say, ‘I need help with food.’ That’s what we’re here for.” By partnering with community services, the university can provide a free bi-monthly mobile food market on campus.



Dealing with high gas prices

Gas prices have come down a bit, but this is a big line item for students who commute because they live off campus or attend community college.

Last summer, Southwest Tennessee Community College President Tracy Hall decided to hold classes virtually on Fridays as a cost-saving measure. “Our students and employees, like the rest of the nation, are facing historic inflation numbers and increasing gas prices,” Hall said at the time. “We are concerned about their welfare and how they may be impacted by this increased cost of living.”

Compton College in California offers students a “GoPass” with unlimited free rides on the local Metro bus and rail through June 2023. Wayne State University has made transportation significantly easier for its students and employees by forming partnerships with four companies within Detroit to provide free commuting opportunities.

Dealing with increased housing costs

A consequence of inflation is rising housing costs. Rents have gone up, making off-campus housing less appealing. Rising rents and higher gas and food prices make living on campus a more affordable choice.

“More and more students are seeing the value of the on-campus residential experience,” said John Capo, assistant professor of corporate

communication at Lycoming College. “They’re choosing to live on campus rather than in off-campus housing because things like meal plans can be folded into the overall cost of attending college. It’s not just food. Many other expenses go down or even go away when you live on campus. You don’t have to send money to the electric or cable companies each month.”

One college addressed the rising cost of housing specifically. The University of California at Berkeley provides all of its housing below market value.

Dealing with higher tuition costs

According to the website FinAid.org, “A good rule of thumb is that tuition rates will increase at about twice the general inflation rate.” If inflation is 4%, college inflation will be closer to 8% — and 8% inflation means that the cost of college doubles every nine years. Today, however, the inflation rate isn’t 4%. It’s 9.1%, which puts college inflation potentially above 18%.

Many colleges are increasing scholarships, keeping grant levels steady, and providing additional funding to help students fund their educations. Other colleges are advertising small percentage tuition increases and even tuition freezes this year.

Morgan State University provides at least 10,000 free online courses and credit-bearing exams to prospective students. With this program, the university has been able to expand its access to more Maryland students than ever before, saving students thousands on tuition.

Unfortunately, higher tuition also forces more students to borrow money to pay for tuition and other college expenses. Editor-in-chief of EDI Refinance Melanie Hanson points out, “For many college students, there isn’t much of a choice here. They have to take out more student loans in order to stay afloat during college. If it’s a choice between taking on more debt now to finish a degree and dropping out, most people will choose to stay and finish.”

Providing emergency funds

In this economy, most students don't have discretionary funds available when emergencies arise.

The University of Virginia has several options to help students remain financially afloat, such as peer financial counseling, the Hoo Needs Help financial support network, and an emergency fund that offers a \$500 loan that is interest-free and has no fees if it's paid back before the last day of the month after the loan was taken out.

Amherst College established a Student Emergency Fund in the fall of 2020 for students who experience financial strain and need supplemental resources due to temporary hardship. The funds distributed may cover expenses such as unforeseen medical costs, damage to educational materials, and emergency travel.

Vassar College's Engaged Pluralism Initiative expanded a project that began before the pandemic to help students who need emergency funds by providing them with a short-term, interest-free loan.

Combating high textbook costs

With college costs rising and inflation becoming a problem, students might be tempted to go without certain textbooks, especially if they choose between buying a book or eating. However, there are [ways to save money on textbooks](#), and some colleges are chipping in to help.

Vassar College's Movement for Affordable Textbooks ensures that the college's libraries purchase several copies of course textbooks.

Northwestern University has programs that help students who are struggling financially, such as the Books for Cats program, which allows students to borrow course materials from Barnes & Noble and the college's chemistry department.

Dealing with mental health issues

Economic insecurity can impact college students in other ways than an inability to pay bills or purchase essential items. Worry and concern over financial issues can influence their academic performance. It's essential that colleges recognize the psychological impact inflation can have on their students.

For example, Belmont University recently expanded their mental health support to college students by buying Assistance Online and Timely Care. The two online platforms provide mental and physical health support for their students.

Could inflation have a positive impact?

Jo Ann Oravec, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater College of Business and Economics, decided to assign her students an essay about how rising prices are affecting their daily lives. Their responses might indicate there is a positive impact of inflation.

Several students reported drinking less at bars, eating less at restaurants, and organizing potlucks, picnics, and other low-cost alternative gatherings instead.

Orvac discussed the results of her student essay project in a [recent article](#). Although inflation certainly has a negative impact on student lives, "This academic tailgating brings them closer to each other as friends and fellow students. At least this is one positive outcome of these stressful economic conditions. Binge drinking at taverns has replaced sharing, camaraderie, and friendship."

Your college student is certainly feeling the strain and stress of rising inflation. It's good to know that colleges are implementing programs to help them through difficult times so they can focus on academics.