

Family Connections

A newsletter for parents of Minnesota State University, Mankato Students



Dates to remember:

- Nov. 10: First day of spring term registration
- Nov. 11: Deadline to withdraw from individual course
- Nov. 25: Deadline for withdrawal from University
- Nov. 25: No night classes
- Nov. 26-27: No Classes-Thanksgiving
- Dec. 7-11: Final Exams
- Dec. 13-Jan. 10: Winter Break
- Jan. 11: Spring Semester Classes Begin

Questions, Comments Or concerns?

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Home for Break

...adapted from www.collegeparents.org

In just a few short weeks, students will be returning home for the holidays. In preparation for this impending homecoming we offer a few tips (adapted from the website www.collegeparents.org) to help ease family tension while students are back for break.

- Plan **with** your young adult how they will spend their time. Be sure to listen and not just to dictate. Be sure to gather their input on the amount of time they will spend with family/friends or if they will be asked to find employment during this period.
- Discuss with your student your expectations regarding curfew and chores. Your student may have very different ideas about how late they will stay out and their household respon-

sibilities.

- Let them have **fun** with some old friends. This will give you some winter-break capital to utilize when you ask them to spend time reconnecting with extended family.



Winter Break:
Dec. 13-
Jan. 11

- Plan a family retreat. Just like you might in business, go away somewhere that is distant from the rhythms of everyday life. Geographically, it doesn't have to be far, but it should feel like it is far from the norms of home. Use this time to talk with and, more importantly, to listen to, your adult; learn about

the issues on his or her mind and, where appropriate, offer solutions to problems in the manner that a trusted mentor at work has done for you.

- Encourage your student to spend time searching and possibly applying for summer jobs or internships. Help your student think about employment opportunities that may help them further explore a possible major or gain experience in an area of academic interest.

Use the winter break period as an opportunity for both you and your student to reflect on the successes of the first semester at Minnesota State and prepare for the spring term.

Avoiding College Scams

Adapted from:
www.collegetipsforparents.org

College students can often be the victims of fraud and identity theft. Students are often a good target because they may be naïve about security, too trusting (probably because they have never been swindled), or because they don't take the necessary precautions.

To avoid cleaning up the financial messiness of fraud, have a conversation with your student about preventative steps to protect their dollars and preserve their credit score.

- **Never** print your driver's license number, birth

date, or social security number on checks.

- **Use** a password or PIN that would not be easy for someone to guess.
- **Be skeptical** of unsolicited telephone offers; if you didn't sign up for it and ...continued on page 3

Resource profile:**Center for Academic Success**

- **Location:** Memorial Library, room 125
- **Mission:** To provide programs that contribute to MSU students' academic and developmental success.
- **Services:** Tutoring for math & sciences, accounting, economics, and statistics, writing assistance, mathematics placement testing, athletics pre-advising, and other tips to ensure academic success.
- More information: <http://www.mnsu.edu/>

"Peer Assistants serve as positive role models and mentors, discussion leaders, tour guides, and educators."

Last year's benefits:**OPAs received:**

- Compensation of \$3600.00
- Free summer housing
- Earned university credit
- Free meals during orientation

LCCs received:

- Compensation of \$2000.00
- Single room at price of a double
- Leadership experience

Residence Hall Room Selection for 2010-2011 Year Has Begun!

On-campus room selection is underway, and for the first time, can be done online. Current and prospective Minnesota State Mankato students can sign up, based on eligibility and available space, through Friday, April 2.

There are many new and exciting options available for next year. The recently opened Julia A. Sears Residence Community offers semi-suites for two and four students. Newly renovated spaces in five halls are up for grabs within Crawford and McElroy, featuring contemporary closets, great lighting, and the ability to control heat, among many other updates to the rooms and public areas.

There are several floor plan options available in the residence halls. Students may live in standard double rooms, singles, double suites, deluxe suites, semi-suites, and may be the first to live in a newly renovated hall!

A limited number of rooms may be reserved through this process, and a pre-determined number of single rooms are available, so students should act now!

**Reserving space for next year:**

The process for current on-campus students to sign up for on-campus housing for next year is similar to the course registration process. Each student has their own "week" in which they may submit their choice for next year's housing; seniors first, juniors second, etc. Students can make their prepayment and reserve their room online with a credit card. Cash, check or money order prepayments and reservations can be made in the Residential

Life Office, 111 Carkoski Commons.

Students may request their friends as roommates or be randomly assigned.

More details:

- **Grad, senior, and junior week:** From October 26 to November 1, upper class students may begin choosing their spaces for next year online.
- **Sophomore week:** Current on-campus sophomore students may reserve next year's space from November 2 to November 8.
- **Freshman Week:** Beginning November 9, current on-campus freshmen may choose next year's space. Their week lasts until Nov. 15, then room selection will be open to all MSU students.

For more details, visit the Residential Life webpage at <http://www.mnsu.edu/reslife/current/process.html>

Student Leadership Opportunities!

...adapted from Nov. 2008 newsletter

Leadership skills are essential in the world of work, and getting a jump start on building a solid resume is strongly suggested to college students.

In January, the Office of First Year Experience will be accepting applications for Learning Community Coordinators (LCCs) and Orientation Peer Assistants (OPAs).

Learning Community Coordinators are the student staff who live in the residence halls and work with students in each Learning Community. They are responsible for providing academic support through being available to students, planning study groups, and making referrals to campus

resources. They also help connect students to faculty and staff on campus and are expected to create a fun, socially supportive, and welcoming environment for students.

LCCs are required to live on campus, and are paid for their time. They also receive a single room, but pay the rate of a double (when available). Enthusiastic, dedicated students with solid communication skills are encouraged to apply!

Orientation Peer Assistants work throughout the summer months (May-July) assisting new and transfer students through the Orientation process. Peer Assistants serve as positive role models and men-

tors, discussion leaders, tour guides, and educators. Students who are selected to become OPAs work approximately 40 hours per week and receive wages plus free on-campus housing and some meals throughout the summer Orientation program.

Please encourage your student to take advantage of one of these important leadership opportunities and apply today!

Contact the Office of First Year Experience or check out the "Student Employment" section of <http://www.mnsu.edu/fye/> for more information!



“As the flu’s grasp reaches farther, it is becoming even more important for students to take steps to stay healthy.”

10 Most Popular Majors at MSU:

Fall 2009

1. Elementary Education
2. Physical Education
3. Biology
4. Law Enforcement
5. Management
6. Psychology
7. Finance
8. Accounting
9. Nursing
10. Art

“For many first-year students, college finals take up more time and cause more stress and anxiety than in high school.”

Avoiding the Flu

...Trevor Gohner, Graduate Assistant
Adapted from MSU Health Services Website

As the flu continues, and the H1N1 vaccine delays are being reported, many students worry about becoming sick. As the flu’s grasp reaches farther, it is becoming even more important for students to take steps to stay healthy.

Health officials are instructing people NOT to seek medical care unless they are urgently ill, so the following precautions are suggested to avoid illness and be prepared:

- **Wash your hands** frequently for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer.
- **Always cough into your sleeve**, NOT your

hand.

- **Keep your hands away from your eyes and mouth**, and if you bite your nails, wash your hands frequently.
- **Secure a support system** in case you do get sick and need to ask for help.

If you DO get sick:

- **Recognize the signs:** fever (for some), cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache, chills, fatigue, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting.
- **STAY HOME.** Be in contact with your pro-

fessors/boss, but going to class or work sick isn’t worth risking the health of others.

- **Only seek medical attention if you develop serious symptoms**, such as shortness of breath, chest or abdominal pain, confusion or sudden dizziness, or severe or persistent vomiting.
- **Rest and recuperate** and do NOT return to class or work until 24 hours AFTER your fever has dissipated.

Do your part to stay healthy and ensure the health of others!

Avoiding College Scams

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it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

- **Shred** financial documents like bank statements to keep your information safe.
- **Read** the fine print. Some offers that seem legitimate may not be so great once you find the catch.

- **Look** into offers that do seem credible; who is offering it? Do they have a history of integrity? Be confident of your decision before you commit to something.
- **Talk** before acting. Many college students may be on a “freedom

high” during their first year of college, so make sure the talk is really a talk, and not a lecture. Engaging your student will be more successful than teaching.

If you and your student are proactive and assertive, you can avoid being victims!

Support During Times of Stress

...Trevor Gohner, Graduate Assistant

With the semester quickly winding down, there isn’t much time left before finals will be upon your student. For many first-year students, college finals can take up more time and cause more stress and anxiety than in high school.

While you may find you are communicating less with your student, take the opportunity to support your student and show that you are there for them in ways

that may be appealing to a busy student’s lifestyle:

- **Emails.** Sending an email is an easy way to keep in touch, with you and your student being able to respond on your own timetables.
- **Care packages.** As your student may be missing home, send a family keepsake, homemade tasty treats, or a surprise that will make

them smile.

- **Mail.** Whether it’s a letter or a “Thinking of You” card, college students love getting mail!
- **Text messages.** If you feel like jumping on the text message bandwagon, learn how to text so you can give a quick “Miss You!” to your student!

However you do it, showing support will be appreciated!