New Student and Family Programs can assist students and families with a variety of needs in the first year of college and beyond. Our office provides programs and services which are designed to assist all first year students, undecided students, and family members with their transition to Minnesota State Mankato. As students are making the adjustment to University life, the office is a good first point of contact to assist with any questions or concerns. A large number of first year students are undecided or are choosing or changing majors. New Student and Family Programs provides academic advising services for students who are unsure of their major. Academic advisors can help students understand and meet general educational requirements, map out a plan for course selection, and assist your student in choosing introductory classes that help them determine their major. Good academic advising is one of the keys to academic success and timely graduation.

To make an appointment with an advisor, students should contact their respective college:
- Allied Health .................... 389-5194
- Arts and Humanities .......... 389-1712
- Business ........................ 389-2963
- Education ....................... 389-1215
- New Student and Family Programs (undecided) ....... 389-5498
- Nursing ........................ 389-6810
- Science, Engineering and Technology .... 389-1521
- Social and Behavior Sciences .......... 389-6306
## WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS EXPERIENCING:

Students are filled with a wide range of emotions as the day to move to campus and begin college nears. They are often times worried about making friends and fitting in, whether they are prepared academically for college level work, if they will be able to afford college expenses, and how their relationships with friends, family or significant others will change while they are away.

## TIP FOR FAMILIES:

Have a conversation with your student about the things that are important to you and your student including finances, academic expectations, decision-making, substance use, communication, visits, and your changing roles. Don’t forget to ask your student what their expectations are as well.
Living on campus can be one of the most rewarding and enjoyable aspects of a student’s college experience. Student success is the number one priority of the Department of Residential Life, and research shows that students who live on campus have higher GPAs. Socially, there is no place where it is easier to meet people and make new friends, all while living steps away from academic buildings and campus resources. This convenience, coupled with an abundance of opportunities, allows residents to get to know the campus and be involved in University events and organizations. Learning Communities, mentoring, and direct faculty involvement give residents an academic edge. Residents can make a difference for themselves and for others by volunteering to be on their floor community council through the Residence Hall Association. Students should ask their Community Advisor for more information on how to participate. Residence hall staff plan social, educational, and academic programs throughout the year.
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**Room changes available in the Residential Life office**

**September 2015**

**Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday**

1 2 3 4 5
6 7 Labor Day No Classes
8 9 Room changes available in the Residential Life office
10 Room changes begin through the front desk of each residence community
11 12
13 14 Last day for 50% refund for official withdrawal for fall semester
15 16 17 18 19
20 21 Last day for 25% refund for official withdrawal for fall semester
22 Last day to enroll in remaining FACTS automatic payment plans for fall semester
23 24 25 26
27 28 Fall semester tuition due date
29 30

**WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS EXPERIENCING:**

The transition to college is both new and exciting and an adjustment. Around this time students are adjusting to their new surroundings and negotiating roommate relationships, understanding Residence Hall policies and guidelines, learning about personal health and wellness, finding new sleep patterns, understanding the meal plan system, learning about academic expectations, reviewing course syllabi and establishing a study routine, and missing friends and family back at home.

**TIP FOR FAMILIES:**

Call your student often at first to listen and provide encouragement. Do not be alarmed if you call and your student doesn’t return your calls. The first few weeks of the semester are busy and students are out learning about campus and making new friends. When you do reach your student encourage them to attend one of the many campus lectures, sporting activities or other events. If your student lives in the Residence Halls encourage them to interact with their Community Advisor. For a student who expresses missing the familiarity of home, send them a reminder of it. Send a small care package of snack items and a note with words of reassurance.

Green - Financial Information; Blue - Registration Information; Orange - Residential Life Information
The Counseling Center offers free, confidential help to assist students in resolving personal, social, and educational concerns that may be interfering with their ability to succeed at Minnesota State University, Mankato. The Counseling Center’s services include short-term counseling, educational programming, crisis intervention, consultation, national testing, and referral to outside resources for all currently-enrolled students. If you think your student could benefit from using the Counseling Center, remind them that they don’t have to be experiencing an emotional or academic crisis to use the center. No concern is too small to bring in to discuss. Common concerns include adjustment to college, low self-esteem, relationships, sexuality, loss, anxiety, indecision, stress, depression, test anxiety, alcohol use issues, drug use issues, and coping with difficult family situations.
### What Your Student Is Experiencing:

At the mid-point in the semester students will begin to feel the stress of coursework. With impending mid-term exams and upcoming finals, students will feel pressured to perform in the classroom. They are also juggling this stress with the continued exploration of relationships both new and old, homesickness, financial strain, and time conflicts involving balancing a social life and school work.

### Tip for Families:

First year students may resist your curiosity into their life at college, but most still desire the security of knowing that someone is interested in them. Ask questions as well as follow up questions when you communicate with your student. Many students feel the need to “handle it on their own.” While you want to give them space, a little open-mindedness and curiosity can help open up communication.

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#### Calendar:

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The Center for Academic Success is the primary academic support resource on campus and all students are welcome to use its services. Tutoring for most of the lower division courses is available at no cost. Tutors are experienced, have demonstrated mastery of the subjects they tutor, and have participated in a certified training program. The Center provides individual and small group tutoring in virtually all academic areas on a walk-in basis, as well as assistance in writing academic papers. The tutoring schedule and hours of operation can be found on the Center for Academic Success website.

Additional options for tutoring for specific content areas include (but are not limited to):

Math and Statistics Learning Center  
cset.mnsu.edu/mathstat/mlc/

Physics and Astronomy  
cset.mnsu.edu/pa/current/tutoring.html
**WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS EXPERIENCING:**

With finals, Thanksgiving break, and spring semester registration all approaching students have multiple priorities to manage. Students should be seeking out resources and asking questions of instructors and professors regarding how to best prepare for final papers and projects. They should also visit with their advisor to plan out course selection and receive a registration access code, if necessary.

**TIP FOR FAMILIES:**

Help your student become empowered by asking questions, referring to campus resources, and letting them find solutions when appropriate. The family (www.mnsu.edu/family) website provides lots of information about campus offices, but let your student make the call. They will need your support, but the experience of taking the lead on their problem solving will help your student grow.
The Career Development Center (CDC) assists students in exploring academic majors and learning about careers; developing job search skills and planning for entry-level employment or graduate school; and connecting with employers and job/internship opportunities. Students who are in the process of choosing or changing academic majors can meet individually with a career counselor, utilize career assessment instruments, and attend sponsored events. The Career Resource Library, within the CDC, includes hundreds of books and a wide range of material for students to use when selecting careers, identifying majors or enhancing job search skills. CDC also has an extensive website of career planning and job search resources, including the University’s comprehensive online job listing and recruitment system, mavjobs.com.
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**WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS EXPERIENCING:**

Final exams and heading home for winter break are the two main concerns for students at this point in the semester. Students will be spending large and concentrated amounts of time preparing for finals as they look forward to returning home to a little rest and relaxation.

**TIP FOR FAMILIES:**

Prepare your student for their time at home. Set expectations about time spent with family, curfew, and other expectations while living at home. Your student will also want to reserve time to hang out with high school friends, so allow for flexibility in the hectic winter break schedule. If this is your student’s first visit home since coming to school, you will probably notice they’ve changed since you last saw them. Change is natural, inevitable, and it can be inspiring. College and its new experiences can effect changes in vocational, social, and personal behavior and choices. An open mind and an understanding attitude can help both you and your student adapt to the new adult they are quickly becoming.
Student Health Services is staffed with physicians, nurse practitioners, laboratory technicians, pharmacists, health educators, medical records and billing/insurance personnel. Services are available every weekday that school is in session, including summer session with limited hours during breaks. Medical services available to all enrolled students include care for acute and chronic medical treatment, preventative services, laboratory, pharmacy and referral as needed. Current prescriptions can also be transferred to the pharmacy and refilled on-site. Students are encouraged to make an appointment, however walk-in services are available for emergency needs or as we can accommodate. Student are encouraged to have a copy of their pharmacy/health insurance card. Student peer education opportunities are available along with other health education activities and programs.
### WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS EXPERIENCING:

After a long winter break, students will be gearing up to get motivated for the spring semester. They will also likely be feeling excitement about reconnecting with college friends. Students who may have struggled to find ways to connect with the campus community can use the start of the new semester to look for ways to get more involved on campus now that they are more comfortable with the college environment.

**TIP FOR FAMILIES:**

Celebrate the first semester, by recognizing the accomplishments of your student’s first semester. It may help your student stay focused on the bigger goals when they get frustrated. The transition to college can be very challenging academically, socially, and personally. While celebrating the accomplishments of the past, help your student reflect on their performance and goals — is this what they wanted to see in their grades and how can they set new goals and strategies?

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### Monthly Calendar

**January 2016**

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**WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS EXPERIENCING:**

**TIP FOR FAMILIES:**

**Happy New Year!**


Online textbook orders at Barnes & Noble at Minnesota State Mankato available for pickup

![Calendar Image](image)
The Student Financial Services staff handle all billing and payments to your student’s University account as well as all financial aid matters. The Campus Hub, located on the main level of the Centennial Student Union, is the first and primary point of contact to assist with your student’s financial questions. Students can check financial aid status by logging into the site at https://secure.mnsu.edu/SFS/ and can use the e-services website to check tuition and fees balances, at www.mnsu.edu/eservices.

Payments to the University are accepted online through the e-services website, in person or by mail. Cash, checks and credit cards are accepted for payment at the Cashier’s Office, 209 Wigley Administration Center.
With winter weather beginning to wear on students, some may begin to experience cabin fever. Students will need to find creative ways to express their energy. They may consider going sledding in Sibley Park, building a snowperson outside their residence hall, or going to All Seasons Arena for opening skating.

**WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS EXPERIENCING:**

**TIP FOR FAMILIES:**

Don’t worry (too much) about phone calls and conversations with your student. Often when troubles become too much for a first year student to handle (a failed test, ended relationship, and shrunken shirt all in the same day) the only place to turn, or call, is home. Unfortunately, during these trying times the urge to communicate with family is felt strongly, you are less likely to hear about the “A” paper, the new boyfriend/girlfriend or the domestic triumph. In these “crisis” times your student may unload trouble or tears and after the conversation return to their routine, relieved and enlightened while you inherit the worry. Be patient with this type of phone call. You are providing the real service of being a listening ear.
The Student Activities office is the hub for student involvement on campus, offering students the opportunity to create their own co-curricular experience. They are the home of IMPACT (your Campus Activities Programming Board), Fraternity & Sorority Life, more than 200 Recognized Student Organizations (RSOs), and various leadership programs.

The Student Activities office offers off-campus housing resources and houses Minnesota State Mankato’s Non-Traditional Student Center, focusing on programs and services.

The Community Engagement Office (CEO) provides opportunities for students to make a difference in the greater Mankato community. The CEO hosts a Community-Engagement / Service-Learning Fair each semester, providing opportunities for students to visit one-on-one with representatives from our agency partners. The Campus Kitchen Project delivers over 10,000 meals per year to Mankato Residents while the Mavericks READ program, connects Minnesota State Mankato students with school aged children to enhance their reading skills.
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1. **Deadline to register for Spring Break Housing**
2. **Food service ends at 6:00 p.m.**
   - Residence communities close at 7:00 p.m. for Spring Break
3. **Spring semester past due date-hold, late fees, suspended dining privileges**
4. **Residence communities open at 12:00 noon and Food service begins at 4:30 p.m. for evening meal**
5. **Daylight Savings time begins**
6. **Fall course schedule available for viewing online**
7. **2015-2016 FAFSA priority application date**
8. **Summer registration opens**
   - Summer financial aid applications available
   - Online enrollment begins for Nelnet/FACTS automatic monthly payment plan options for summer
9. **St. Patrick’s Day**
10. **Classes in Session**
11. **Easter Day**
12. **Spring Break**
13. **What your student is experiencing:**
   - Students are at the mid-point of the second semester and academic pressures will increase, as they expect more out of themselves this semester. Students will also be thinking about how they want to spend their spring break. Registration for fall semester will begin in the coming weeks, and they are beginning to consider what classes they will take in the fall.
14. **Tip for families:**
   - Encourage your student to use the resources available to them on campus. There is always help available, but they need to seek out that assistance. When you share your opinions, thoughts, and values with your student, remember to refer them to a campus resource that can be of assistance. Your student’s success is our first priority; we are here to help them.
Campus Recreation
118 Myers Field House
507-389-6215
www.mnsu.edu/campusrec/

Campus Recreation offers open recreation, intramural sports, fitness activities, adventure education, rock climbing, and sport clubs. Open recreation offers leisure activities daily, including weight room, swimming pool, sport courts, and a fitness area. The intramural sports program offers organized, competitive leagues, tournaments and special events in a variety of sports including but not limited to: flag football, basketball, soccer, softball, and volleyball. The fitness activities program offers individuals the opportunity for personal fitness through the group fitness program, the recreation center and fitness services including: exercise testing and prescription, personal training and wellness services. Adventure education offers teambuilding and leadership development workshops through high ropes and challenge course facilities. Rock climbing opportunities include both indoor and outdoor facilities on a year-round basis for climbers of all skill levels. The sports club program offers students the opportunity to compete in local, regional, and national competitions in a variety of sports.
With just weeks left in the academic year, students will be prepping for end of semester projects and papers, summer work or travel, and the social pressures involved in end of the year banquets, picnics, and campus events. Students should use the coming weeks to prioritize work and social events. They should also begin cleaning out their residence hall room or apartment and possibly taking home belongings they don’t anticipate needing in the coming weeks.

**Tip for families:**
Trust your student. Finding oneself is a difficult enough process without feeling that people whose opinion you respect the most are second-guessing your own judgment. Have faith in your student’s ability to make their own decisions. Don’t be afraid to let your student make a mistake. Although it’s difficult, we all make mistakes and this is part of growing up. Tell your student that you trust them to make the best choice and do the right thing.
Institutional Diversity supports a multicultural educational experience for students, faculty, staff and the greater community by encouraging access, opportunity and success. We support students and build leaders for a global society. Diversity is who we are and what we do!

Experience one of our enriching educational programs, cultural activities or insightful conferences to learn more about other cultures or celebrate your own.

Be a leader! Get Involved! Choose to make a difference!
### WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS EXPERIENCING:

Much like December, students are preparing for final exams and preparing for the adjustment of moving home for the summer. Students should be taking advantage of the study sessions and wrap up activities offered in the residence halls to prepare for tests and say goodbye to college friends.

### TIP FOR FAMILIES:

Summer jobs are often taken to earn some much needed cash but talk to your student about what experiences they will gain from certain jobs. Summer work and volunteering can help students think about their major or career choices. They should look for experiences that challenge them and help build skills important to their field of choice. Students can also learn a great deal by shadowing or visiting a professional in the field.
The Security Department is an integral part of the campus community. They are the primary unit for supporting the personal safety of all students, employees and guests. They have officers on duty 24 hours a day providing vehicle and foot patrols of the campus and its buildings. They respond to calls for service, maintain the university lost and found program, the recorded Personal Safety Hotline 507-389-2594 and provide SafeWalks. Visit their website for a comprehensive review of the additional services and personal safety programming offered.
WHAT YOUR STUDENT IS EXPERIENCING:

Over the summer months, students often teeter totter between connections and relationships with both old and new friends. Encourage your student to stay in touch with college roommates/friends as well as spend time with high school pals. Students are also gearing up for a new school year, getting excited for coursework, living with new friends, and preparing to pursue new social and academic interests.

TIP FOR FAMILIES:

When a student goes to college, it’s a transition for younger siblings as well. It’s easy to get caught up in the new experiences of the older sibling. Spend some intentional time talking to younger siblings about what it means to go to college. If possible allow your college student and their younger sibling to have a special dinner or night out before they go back to campus. Encourage your younger student to visit their sibling’s college and begin thinking about what college they’d like to attend.