



a newsletter for parents & families



GEORGIA'S PUBLIC LIBERAL ARTS UNIVERSITY

University Housing

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Seasonal Student Issues

There's a seasonal ebb and flow when it comes to student issues. Here are a few things your student may be experiencing this month...

- First year students begin to realize college life is not as perfect as they were expecting it to be
- Diversity issues become very apparent as students begin interacting with others who are very different from them
- Conflicts between friends – both new and old – can occur as students settle into the rhythm of the new academic year
- Feeling behind in class work and wanting more contact with instructors
- Anticipating midterms and questioning their abilities
- People start to show their “true selves” – masks start to come off as students begin to feel more comfortable in their surroundings

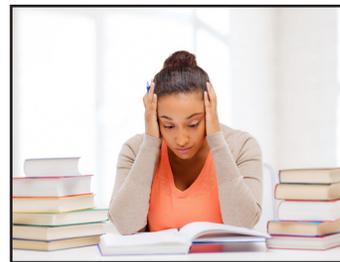
Strategies to Help Students Not Feel So Overwhelmed

Feeling behind in your academics, like you'll never catch up, can be an overwhelming feeling. Yet, students who try some simple, effective academic success strategies are much more likely to overcome that overwhelmed feeling.

Here are some strategies to share with your student...

Come Up with a Study Plan. Many students are used to studying and doing their work at the last minute. This won't fly at college, so it's important to come up with a study strategy that maps out the week ahead and what needs to get done. Figure intentional chunks of time to study and where to go to make this happen.

Use Instructors' Office Hours. Go meet face-to-face with an instructor, explain how you're struggling and ask for assistance. This helps professors see that you care and want to do well. Plus, you become more than a face in the crowd this way!



Visit Support Services. Whether it's visiting the disability support office to address a learning concern, the writing center to get help with a paper or the counseling center to talk about test anxiety, the support is there and ready to help.

Don't Just Rely on Weekends. It's easy to put the majority of your academic work off until the weekend. Yet, that rarely works because everyone needs down time to stay healthy. So, parcel out the work throughout the week and the weekend, giving yourself time to enjoy some non-academic pursuits, too!

When Overwhelmed...

- Take several really deep breaths
- Dump out your to do list on paper so it doesn't keep swirling in your head
- Talk it out instead of bottling it up
- Make exercise a priority to release pent-up stress
- Do one small thing at a time rather than tackling something big all at once



People First Language

Language can greatly impact attitudes. That’s why terms such as “cripple” or “gimp” or “retard” have deservingly been put away when it comes to the language of disabilities. Instead, People First Language focuses on the ability rather than the disability and on people instead of conditions. It’s a very important distinction.

For instance, here are some People First language considerations to share with your student...

- Referring to someone with a disability as a “sufferer” or a “victim” tends to impose value judgments that are often untrue. These terms can be disempowering to a person with a disability who doesn’t want to be considered helpless and at the mercy of uncontrollable forces.



- Instead of “the blind,” refer to “people who have visual impairments.” This emphasizes the importance of the *person* involved rather than equating him with his condition.
- Instead of saying someone is “wheelchair bound,” refer to her as a “person who uses a wheelchair.” This demonstrates that the wheelchair is not a confining de-

vice but a helpful apparatus being used by a capable human being.

People First Language is intended to do just that – put the *people* involved at the forefront rather than focusing on their disabilities.

Source: “Students with Disabilities: What RAs Need to Know” by Alan H. Davis and Michael S. Daugherty, *Journal of College and University Student Housing*, Volume 24, Number 1, Summer 1994.

R-Word: Spread the Word to End the Word

Hundreds of thousands of people have taken this pledge:

“I pledge and support the elimination of the derogatory use of the r-word from everyday speech and promote the acceptance and inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities.”

It’s part of the R-Word campaign to eliminate the hurtful word “retard” because it is exclusive, offensive and derogatory. It’s often used as an insult, according to the campaign, “for someone or something stupid.”

It’s also about replacing the term “mental retardation” with “intellectual disability.” President Obama signed Rosa’s Law on Oct. 5, 2010 to change this language within federal health, education and labor policies.

The Special Olympics, Best Buddies and over 200 other organizations worldwide support the campaign. Learn more about it at www.r-word.org.

Simple Hispanic Heritage Month Celebrations

From September 15-October 15, we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. Here are some quick and easy ways that you and your student can, too...

Food! Go to a Mexican, Cuban, Spanish or other delicious restaurant when you’re visiting your student.

Coffee! Send some different types of coffee from Hispanic/Latino countries, such as Colombian coffee, Café Mexicano, shade-grown coffee

from Central and South America, and more.

Words! Share a Spanish word of the day when you’re texting one another – sites like www.spanishdict.com/wordoftheday can help.

Stories! Check out the intriguing stories of Latinos in history at <http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/hispanic/history.htm> and share links with one another.

Travel! Talk about study abroad options and how your student can learn more.

Events! There are some great Hispanic Heritage events happening on campus this month, so encourage your student to check them out.

More Food! Encourage your student to try some of the cultural cuisine offered in the dining hall – it’s delicious!



Thinking Ahead

It's only October, right? It may seem like the term has just begun, yet the next few weeks and months are bound to fly by. So, here are some ways to think – and prepare – ahead...

Consider Thanksgiving Plans. If your student lives away, how will he get home? What are your time and family expectations for him during that break? What is important to him to accomplish during that time?

Prepare for Finals. Those final papers and exams will be making their presence known this December! Help your student see the importance of staying on top of academics now – including reaching out for help where needed – so she's not scurrying at

finals time. And think about how you can be a support system during this stressful time of year.

Look at Winter Break Job and Class Possibilities. The winter break will be here sooner than you know it! Encourage your student to think about what job she can work during that time or if she will be taking classes. This break can be an important time for your student to job shadow, do a mini-internship or get some career experience through a certain job – yet it all requires advanced planning.

Think About the Holidays. How will your family celebrate the holiday season? What role will your student play? How can you help him get in

Warmer Clothes

As the temperature starts to dip, your student will likely need warmer clothes. Those may be tucked neatly in the back of her closet. Or you may need to deliver them to her somehow, either in person or via mail. Make a plan for the sweaters and the jackets to get to her smoothly.

the holiday spirit during the stress of finals week?

Putting some intentional thought into these milestone happenings now can help all of you prepare for what the term has to offer.

Starting with a Healthy Breakfast

Part of fueling up for a full day of learning, concentration and involvement is beginning with a healthy breakfast. Many good options are available here on campus to help your student start the day right!

According to the Mayo Clinic, here is what forms the core of a healthy breakfast...

Whole Grains. Include whole-grain rolls, bagels, hot or cold whole-grain cereals, low-fat bran muffins, crackers or melba toast.

Low-fat Protein. Include hard-boiled eggs, peanut butter, lean

slices of meat and poultry, or fish, such as water-packed tuna or slices of salmon.

Low-fat Dairy. Include skim milk, low-fat yogurt and low-fat cheeses, such as cottage and natural cheeses.

Fruits and Vegetables. Include fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables,

100 percent juice beverages without added sugar or fruit/veggie smoothies.

Experts suggest choosing one or two options from each category to round out a healthy breakfast. Problem-solving skills, concentration, alertness and creativity are all made more effective when students start their day right.

Source: Mayo Clinic, www.mayoclinic.org



Halloween Happenings

In this month of black cats, witch's brew and more candy than you can shake a toothbrush at, consider informally discussing some Halloween "stuff" with your student ahead of time, such as...

1. Being careful about alcohol consumption and keeping your wits about you during Halloween celebrations
2. Not creating a costume that portrays an offensive stereotype
3. Steering clear of vandalizing property, even if others are doing so
4. Not submitting to peer pressure, especially if an action doesn't feel right
5. Partaking of all the positive Halloween happenings on campus!



Supporting Your Student During Midterms

The time is almost here – the year’s first round of midterm exams. Your student is likely preparing to show how much she learned, or didn’t learn, when midterms soon kick into high gear.

As a parent or family member, you can help alleviate some of the panic associated with this high-stress time of year. For instance, you can...

Be Understanding When She’s Not in Touch. Preparing for midterms often throws students off schedule, causing them to be unable to get to everything on their To Do list. One of those things may be calling or seeing you as frequently. Try to understand and not take it personally.

Keep Burdens Away. This may not be the best time to tell your

student that money is tight or that the house is up for sale, especially if there’s nothing she can do about it.

Encourage Healthy Habits. Good nutrition and getting enough sleep will help your student stay focused and on track. Too much caffeine during late-night study sessions can throw her system out of whack.

Send Positive Stuff. An encouraging e-card, a piece of real mail, a fun magazine to read when midterms are over... all of these “little” things can mean a lot!

Don’t Add Academic Pressure. Making all or nothing statements like “You better pass this test” or “If you fail, we’ll pull you out of school” adds a whole other layer of stress to an already stressful time. Try to steer



clear of ultimatums and unnecessary pressures so your student has a shot at doing her best.

And let your student know that you are there, ready to talk and process through things, when she needs you. Having the support of people who believe in you can make a huge difference in getting through midterms successfully.

Beloit Mindset List for Class of 2020

Today’s traditional-aged new students were typically born in 1998. And, as they do every year, Ron Nief, the director emeritus of public affairs at Beloit College (WI), Tom McBride, a professor emeritus of English and Charles Westerberg, Brannon-Ballard professor of sociology have created their Mindset List for the Class of 2020. They describe it not as a chronological list of things occurring that year, but as an effort to identify the cultural touchstones that shape the lives of traditional-aged students about to enter college.

Here is a sampling of the 60 entries...

- They can’t recall a time when someone named Bush or Clinton was not running for office
- The Sandy Hook tragedy is their Columbine

“They’re an impatient generation learning how to be patient.”

— Tom McBride, one of the Mindset List’s authors

- They have never had to watch or listen to programs at a scheduled time
- The U.S. has always been at war
- Serena Williams has always been winning Grand Slam singles titles
- Vladimir Putin has always been calling the shots at the Kremlin
- For every year that they’ve been alive, the U.S. population has grown by more than one million Latinos
- If you want to reach them, you’d better send a text – emails are often ignored
- Citizens have always been able to register to vote when they get their driver’s license
- Snowboarding has always been an Olympic sport
- There have always been iMacs on desks
- They have never seen billboard ads for cigarettes
- Airline tickets have always been purchased online
- Michael J. Fox has always spoken publicly about having Parkinson’s disease

Source: www.beloit.edu/mindset/