

Academic Issues

Issue	How Parents Can Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class pace, time management, syllabus planning, study skills • Learning to think critically • Experience of first poor grade may affect self-esteem (loss of identity as high achiever) or cause feelings or guilt for letting family down 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage your student to use a daily planner and large wall calendar • Discuss time management skills; share your own strategies/suggestions • Remind students of services available (Writing Center, tutoring) • Ask them what they think about what they learned, not just “What did you learn?” • Help student and family set realistic expectations for college level work (different from high school) • Ask how they feel about their classes, not just how they’re doing in them • Share your own struggles with success and suggestions for dealing with them

First-Generation Issues

Issue	How Parents Can Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family worries that student will outgrow them intellectually and perhaps not respect them anymore • Family may have a difficult time relating to college experience if they never attended college 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don’t be too concerned about this – typically students see the difference between “book” and “life” knowledge • Remember that students’ respect for parents usually grows during college as they gain an appreciation for all that parents have dealt with

Financial Issues

Issue	How Parents Can Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Because of college costs, student may work many hours each week while trying to maintain a full course load and graduate in a timely manner• Student may have trouble budgeting money so that it lasts through the semester (can lead to accruing large amounts of debt via credit cards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set realistic expectations with student about finding a balance between work and grades• Help student develop a budget and maintain it• Recommend that your student visit http://www.cashcourse.org/siuealumni for excellent financial planning and education resources



Parenting a college student...it's a trip. Here's a guide map!

Fitting In and Finding Friends

Issue	How Parents Can Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding a new group of friends (VERY important; needs to happen fairly early) • Relationship with significant other and close friends from home will change and maybe even end • Experiencing cultural diversity (finding own culture to connect with; interacting with different cultures) • Trying on new “self” with new look, foods, habits, friends, personas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind student that friendships take time and effort. Encourage student to be proactive by joining clubs, forming study groups with classmates, participating in residence hall or commuter activities, etc. • Discuss that long-distance relationships are very difficult to maintain; encourage your student to talk with you about what they are feeling • Support change; both the student and significant other may be growing in different ways • Discuss importance of balance between finding a comfort zone and pushing self to meet others • Discuss the types of diversity your student will encounter (geographic, ethnic, religious, age, sexual orientation, wealth, physical ability) and encourage tolerance, exploration, and appreciation • Remember that most students usually do not stray far from their family’s values • Discuss that self-exploration is part of determining “who you want to be as an adult” • Encourage exploration ask your student to talk with you about changes

Independence & Adjustment to Being on Own

Issue	How Parents Can Help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship with parents WILL change, usually for the better (different for every family and student) • Beware of homesickness (going home frequently can be detrimental to success) • Living with others who are not family • Living in a non-family owned property • Learning to manage own time, money and health (staying up late, eating junk food, spending too much) • Learning to make choices about alcohol and other drugs • Feeling guilty/bad about not being home during a crisis (especially the death of a family member, friend or pet) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support change and be willing to change, too • Visit your student, if possible, as an alternative to asking him/her to come home – Family Weekend is an excellent opportunity to do this • Listen, offer support and suggestions; encourage honest communication; encourage your student to use the services of Resident Assistants (RAs) and Hall Director; don't always assume that a roommate is at fault • Discuss respect for property and community • Discuss choices, consequences and taking responsibility for actions • Acknowledge that mistakes are part of the growing process; help your student assess how he/she can approach things differently • Do not assume your student will start or increase these activities while at college • Encourage your student to make choices for him or herself, not others; remind your student that many students choose not to drink; discuss drinking responsibly and safely • Remind your student that there are many no-alcohol events planned by the Campus Activities Board, Residence Housing Association and other campus organizations • Discuss how your student can set boundaries for him/herself and a partner and how to talk about them with that partner • Listen to and discuss these feelings • Prepare your student and family for such events • Never "spare" the student information; this may decrease your student's ability to deal with the issue • Encourage use of counseling services