

# Office of the First-Year Experience

## Parent Newsletter - January 2016

January 2016

Page 1

### Inside this issue:

<b>Welcome Back</b>	1
<b>Maintaining FAFSA</b>	1
<b>Financial Aid Suspension</b>	2
<b>Returning Student FAFSA</b>	2
<b>Key TOPS Facts</b>	2
<b>Where to Learn</b>	3
<b>The Heart of Campus</b>	3
<b>Natural Talent vs Work Ethic, Who Wins?</b>	4
<b>Be Aware, Be There</b>	5
<b>Staying Safe Over Mardi Grad</b>	6
<b>Getting Involved</b>	7
<b>Let's Take A Look Back</b>	8
<b>In Theory</b>	9

### RESOURCES

- [Writing Center](#)  
H.L. Griffin Hall, Rm. 107  
Call: 482-6447
- [Computer Labs on Campus](#)
- [Counseling & Testing Center](#)  
Saucier Wellness Center in  
O.K. Allen Hall  
Call: 482-6480  
[counseling@louisiana.edu](mailto:counseling@louisiana.edu)
- [Office of Disability Services \(ODS\)](#)  
Conference Center, Rm. 126  
Call: 482-5252  
[ods@louisiana.edu](mailto:ods@louisiana.edu)

## WELCOME BACK

A college education is one of the greatest transformative experiences in a young person's life, and we are deeply honored that you have chosen to trust us to provide that experience for your child. It is the great joy of all the members of the Office of First-Year Experience to have a positive impact in the life of young adults here at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, and we look forward to doing so in the coming semester! No doubt over the winter break you were able to see the beginnings of these changes in your son or daughter, and as they return to campus we stand ready to help them continue in their growth. We are immensely aware of the love and energy you have invested in your child to get them to this point in their life, and we remain true in our devotion to serve both the students of this university, but also you their parents. We are proud to be Ragin' Cajuns and we are proud that you and your child have chosen to be members of that family with us. We hope to see you on campus over the coming months, and please always feel more than welcome to let us know how we can help you and your child.

## Maintaining Your Child's Financial Aid through FAFSA

It is FAFSA time! Although many families completed the [FAFSA](#)/financial aid documents last year, you need to be aware that it is an annual process that must be refilled every year that your student is in college. Although the deadline is June 1st, most families try to have all the necessary forms filed during March. That often means filing your 2015 tax return before the April 15th deadline so that you have the applicable figures to complete the FAFSA.

Financial aid programs, including TOPS and Perkins loans, have academic indexes or benchmarks that students must achieve and maintain in order to remain qualified. These requirements are referred to as [Satisfactory Academic Progress](#) (SAP) and students who fail to achieve the minimum standards for Grade Point Average (GPA) and completion of classes could lose their eligibility for all types of federal and state aid. Listed below are the SAP requirements. For more information contact the [Office of Student Financial Aid](#).

### **Academic Completion Rate**

Students must complete at least 67% of all registered hours with a 2.0 semester GPA, regardless of whether or not financial aid was received. Grades of W, F, FN, FS, WX, WM, U or I are not considered adequate grades for completion. For more information, please see the requirements of [Satisfactory Academic Progress](#).

January 2016

Page 2

## **Emergency Notification System**

Please encourage your child to register their communication device with UL Lafayette's [Emergency Notification System](#).

### **General Information**

The ENS system is designed to provide immediate notification for emergencies that may threaten harm to people within minutes. Even though the University may utilize the ENS for all emergencies, it is not designed for incidents such as hurricanes, in which there are days to prepare.

All students are automatically enrolled in the University's ENS. As parents, you can sign up for the University's ENS through your child's [ULink](#) account.

Registrants for the ENS are encouraged to update their profile regularly, especially when they change phones or phone service.

During an emergency, students and employees can check with the University's hotline at: **337-482-2222** for updated information.

The University runs a full scale test on its ENS at least once every semester.

Any problems or concerns experienced with the University ENS should be directed to [safetyman@louisiana.edu](mailto:safetyman@louisiana.edu).

For instructions to register with UL Lafayette's Emergency Notification System, please reach out to the [Office of Environmental Health & Safety](#).

### **Financial Aid Suspension:**

If placed on [Financial Aid Suspension](#), students have two options:

1. **Attend Without Financial Aid:** Pay for tuition on your own with a minimum of six hours in fall or spring semesters or three hours in the summer term, earn 2.00 GPA and complete at least 67% of registered courses.
2. **Appeal:** In order to be [eligible to appeal](#), you must be enrolled at least half-time for the semester you are appealing and have a current FAFSA.

### **Returning Students:**

On-time financial aid applicants (FAFSA renewal here by May 1) who have met the standards for academic progress, should have awards available by mid-June for the next academic year. If we receive your FAFSA renewal after May 1, you will be considered a late applicant and will be awarded after the on-time applicants. Being a late applicant can put you in jeopardy of delayed funds.

Please note we cannot guarantee the same level of need-based financial aid for each year of your enrollment. Families are required to submit the FAFSA annually to receive consideration for need-based financial aid awards. Eligibility can vary from year to year based on changes in family income or assets, family size, number of dependents in college and funding levels.

In addition, the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended, requires institutions that receive and disburse [Federal Title IV](#) aid to develop and enforce, annually, their standards of [Satisfactory Academic Progress](#) (SAP). These requirements encourage students to successfully complete courses for which financial aid is received and to make progress satisfactorily toward degree completion. The University of Louisiana at Lafayette also uses these same standards for the renewal of state funds. The Office of Student Financial Aid will review your academic progress each semester to verify your eligibility.

Should you have any questions or concerns please feel more than welcome to contact the UL Lafayette [Office of Financial Aid](#) electronically, or by visiting their office in [Foster Hall](#). If you still have questions, [schedule an appointment](#) with a financial aid counselor.

## **Focus on Financial Aid**

### **Key TOPS Facts:**

By the end of the first fall and spring semesters, freshmen must have earned 24 credit hours. If 24 hours are not earned, students have the opportunity to earn these hours during the summer semester to retain their eligibility. (Note that students can not use [TOPS](#) money to cover summer tuition during the first year.)

A student who does not maintain continuous [full-time](#) enrollment, or does not earn 24 credits, will have his/her TOPS award permanently cancelled.

By the end of the first academic year, students must achieve a minimum [GPA](#) in order to remain TOPS eligible. (TOPS Opportunity = 2.3, TOPS Performance/Honors = 3.0) After the first year, GPA requirements increase.

If a student fails to meet the TOPS Performance/Honors GPA they will drop down to the TOPS Opportunity Award, if they earn the minimum GPA for that award. These students can never regain the financial stipend. For more information, please visit the [Louisiana TOPS Program](#).

January 2016

Page 3

## Spring 2016 Academic Calendar

**January 13:** Classes Begin

**January 18:** MLK Holiday  
(Offices Closed)

**January 20:** Last Day for  
Adding Classes

**February 8-10:** Mardi Gras  
Holiday

**March 3:** Last Day to Drop  
with Grade of W

**March 14-24:** Advising  
Session for Summer/Fall

**Mar 25 - Apr 3:** Easter  
Holiday/Spring Break

**April 27:** Beginning of  
Dead Days (at 8:00pm)

**April 29:** Last Day of  
Classes

**May 2-3:** Final Exams

**May 4:** Exam Study Day

**May 5-6:** Final Exams  
resume

**May 13:** Spring  
Commencement Exercises  
and the official end of the  
semester!

See the [Academic  
Calendar](#) for more dates.

## The Classroom Isn't the Only Place to Learn

Traditionally when your student speaks of going to class he or she has a set time they must be in the classroom each week. This means getting up, traveling by vehicle or foot to that room, and sitting for an hour or more, listening to the instructor and interacting with their peers. However a new type of class has emerged with the invention of the internet and home computers: online courses.

[Online courses](#) have several benefits, but two of the most sought out benefits are the self-paced learning and flexibility. Students who choose to enroll in an online course need to be self-disciplined. No one is taking roll or checking to see how many hours they have spent studying and reviewing. Enrolling in an online course doesn't mean your student spends less time studying, in fact they might even spend more time – but that time is spent learning the material thoroughly on the student's terms.

If 100% online is not the way for your student, he or she may be more interested in hybrid classes. This format merges aspects of both in-class and online learning methods by offering a number of in-person meetings with plenty of coursework dispersed electronically to suite the student's schedule. Hybrid courses offer many of the same benefits as online classes with a bit more structure for those students who do not feel comfortable in the fully online setting.

Distance learning is the [way of the future](#) and UL Lafayette is working hard with the [Quality Matters Program](#) to become a leading institution by training its teachers on how to succeed and excel in this new setting. Please feel welcome to reach out to the [Office of Distance Learning](#).

## The Heart of Campus Has a Strong Pulse!

Following two years of major overhaul, the UL Lafayette [Student Union](#) was reopened to the public in January of 2015. A project over ten years in the making, the new Student Union offers a more social atmosphere for students where they can meet with friends, enjoy numerous food options, and relax from the stresses of college life.



Over the past year, the Student Union has hosted events including [Orientation](#), [Cajun Connection](#), [Family Weekend](#), [Beaux Arts Ball](#), both student and professional conferences, numerous cultural events hosted by the [International Affairs Office](#), and Zydeco Breakfast every Saturday morning! The Union also hosts regular sessions of the [Student Government Association](#) as well as fun entertainment planned by the [University](#)

[Program Council](#) and the [Office of Student Engagement & Leadership](#). Beyond events, the building also offers private offices for student organizations, a post office, the bookstore, as well as various food and coffee shops.

This new addition to the UL Lafayette campus is meant to serve both students and their families. So the next time you are on campus visiting your Ragin' Cajun stop by to see the new and improved Student Union! You can also [visit their website](#) for additional information or room reservations.

January 2016

Page 4

## **Process Praise For Your Child**

- 1) You did a good job drawing. I like the detail you added to the people's faces.
- 2) You really studied for your social studies test!
- 3) I like the way you tried a lot of different strategies on that math problem.
- 4) That was a hard English assignment, but you stuck with it until you got it done.
- 5) I like that you took on that challenge project for your science class!

## **Challenge Praise For Your Child**

- 1) Boy, this is hard, isn't it fun?
- 2) Let's do something more challenging that you can learn from.
- 3) Mistakes are so interesting. Here's a wonderful mistake.
- 4) Let's see what we can learn from it.
- 5) Let's talk about what you struggled with today and what you learned from it.

## **Natural Talent vs. Work Ethic, Who Wins?**

What are the tricks to teaching your child how to succeed in life? By definition your son or daughter is now an adult, but they will never stop learning from you their parents, whether they be 18 or 40. You have played a major role in molding your child into the person he or she is today, and as a parent it is something you will always continue to do. So what is the best way to go about it?

We live in a culture that values inherent skills, from athletic ability to natural beauty. But the truth is most people do not fit into the category of super model or hall of fame athlete. So how does one teach their children to succeed without super intelligence, prowess, or beauty? You do it by teaching them that life is a process!

Modern research shows that when you tell your child that they are just smarter, or are a better athlete, or are just more attractive than the average person, they become content with the status quo. They adopt the mentality that they have what others do not and that will get them through life. Unfortunately once they reach a level where their inherent skills become average, they do not know how to react; they become defensive and shut down. You may have seen this in your child's transition from middle school to high school. When everything has been easy for them, they do not know how to thrive once the going gets tough.

So what then is the answer? The trick to showing your child how to succeed in life is to teach them about life as if it were a process. Extensive research conducted since the 1960s shows that teaching kids about personal growth as a process helps them to learn and practice perseverance. When naturally gifted kids are stumped by a new challenge they panic and become passive whereas kids who view life as a process tend to enjoy a challenge through an understanding that patience and creative thinking will help them to overcome any obstacle, big or small.

As parents and teachers what we must do is change the way we go about affirming their success. Rather than praise them for intelligence, we need to praise them for the creative strategies they used to solve a problem, or the persistence they exerted to make it through a tough experience. To learn more about this breaking research, read [The Secret to Raising Smart Kids](#) by author and researcher Carol S. Dweck.

Please always remember that OFYE is here to serve the students of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and you their parents. Should you have any questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

**Office:** [Lee Hall](#), Room 106  
P.O. Box 44332  
Lafayette, LA 70504-4332  
Phone: 337-842-6599

**Email:** [ofye@louisiana.edu](mailto:ofye@louisiana.edu)

**Website:** <http://firstyear.louisiana.edu/>

**Social Media:** [Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Instagram](#)



January 2016

## Be Aware, Be There

Page 5

### Know the Warning Signs of Suicide

- 1) Social Withdrawal
- 2) Drastic behavior changes
- 3) Loss of interests: hobbies, work, school
- 4) Drastic changes in personal appearance
- 5) Use, or increasing use, of alcohol or drugs
- 6) Expressions of hopelessness
- 7) Expressions of a violent or hostile history
- 8) Unwillingness to connect with those who can help

### Always Remember to ACT:

**A**cknowledge the person has a problem and need for help.

**C**are for the person and make sure they know it.

**T**reatment, get them the help that they need.

According to the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) suicide is the number one leading cause of death among college students. The University of Louisiana at Lafayette is active in Suicide Prevention. This means that the university spreads awareness to the student body, to the community, and to the parents. Parents play an important role in suicide prevention by recognizing the symptoms and getting their student help. It is important that you are communicating and speaking with your student; conversing with them about their friends, classes, and weekend activities. When conversing with your student you should watch for symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress or grief. The number one cause of suicidal tendencies is depression; however there are other mental disorders that may cause suicidal tendencies. Visit [Suicide.org](http://Suicide.org) for more information. Any combination of depression, anxiety, stress, or grief may cause your student to experience suicidal thoughts and tendencies. The following are some signs to look for.

Symptoms of [suicidal](#) tendencies are: withdrawal from friends, drastic changes in behavior, previous attempted suicide, neglecting their personal appearance, and mood shifts. Symptoms of [depression](#) may include low motivation level, avoiding friends, changes in eating or sleeping patterns, unpleasant, negative thoughts, or loss of energy. And symptoms of [stress](#), [anxiety](#), and [grief](#) could be manifested physically, emotionally, or in behavior.

If you are concerned for your student, or suspect they are experiencing grief, stress, or anxiety, you should speak with your student about it and make them aware that there is assistance available both on and off campus. For on-campus resources, the [Counseling and Testing Center](#) located on Hebrard Boulevard provides free and unlimited professional assistance to students.

Please be aware that many of these symptoms overlap. If your student is experiencing any of these symptoms, encourage them to seek assistance; there are a number of resources on campus for you and your student. If you are worried about your student's immediate health or safety we encourage you to drive them to any Emergency Room. You may also call the [Counseling Center](#) for information and/or the [Dean of Students Office](#) for assistance on how to get your student help.

For more information see the links below:

The [Crouch Foundation](#) is a local suicide awareness foundation that seeks to establish suicide prevention, awareness and educational programs in the Acadiana area. The [Counseling and Testing Center](#) has provided information on various topics.

If you are concerned about your student or someone you know, and may suspect or know they have suicidal tendencies you may direct them to:

**Southwest Louisiana Education & Referral Center**

**232-HELP / 211**

Monday - Friday, 8:00am - 4:30pm with  
24 hour on-call services for emergencies

Information & Referral Line

**(337) 232-4357 (HELP)**

January 2016

## **Lafayette Schedule of Parades**

### **Saturday, Jan 30**

Krewe des Chiens, 2:00pm

Krewe of Carnivale en Rio, 6:30pm

### **Friday, Feb 5**

Friday Night Parade, 6:30pm  
(Multiple Krewes)

### **Saturday, Feb 6**

Children's Parade, 12:30pm  
(Multiple Krewes)

Krewe of Bonaparte, 6:30pm

### **Monday, Feb 8**

Queen Evangeline's Parade, 6:00pm

### **Tuesday, Feb 9**

King Gabriel's Parade, 10:00am

Lafayette Festival Parade, 1:00pm

Independent Parade, 2:00pm

## **New Orleans Schedule of Parades**

### **Friday, Feb 5**

Krewe of Hermes, 6:00pm

Krewe d'Etat, 6:30pm

Krewe of Morpheus, 7:00pm

### **Saturday, Feb 6**

Krewe of Tucks, 12:00pm

Krewe of Endymion, 4:15pm

### **Sunday, Feb 7**

Krewe of Okeanos, 11:00am

Krewe of Thoth, 12:00pm

Krewe of Bacchus, 5:15pm

### **Monday, Feb 8**

Krewe of Orpheus, 6:00pm

### **Tuesday, Feb 9**

Krewe of Zulu, 8:00am

Krewe of Rex, 10:00am

## **Staying Safe during Mardi Gras**

Mardi Gras is perhaps the most well-known, and vibrant, contribution south Louisiana's French Catholic heritage has made to the modern United States. People from around the country and around the globe flock to New Orleans and Lafayette to take part in the renowned festivities. Though it can be an amazing opportunity for entertainment, history has shown it can also be a recipe for disaster. With the first parades taking place in less than two weeks, we encourage you to talk to your student about how to stay safe, whether they plan to be on Johnston Street or Canal Street.



Luckily, the [New Orleans Mardi Gras Association](#), as well as the Lafayette Police Department, lend some suggestions on how to stay as safe as possible over the holiday.

- ✦ Make your plans ahead of time, not on the fly.
- ✦ Plan your transportation, including parking, walking, and/or carpooling.
- ✦ Know the weather forecast and dress appropriately.
- ✦ Have an idea of where you plan to eat if it becomes necessary.
- ✦ Always have cash with you. Debit & Credit cards will not always be accepted.
- ✦ Go with a group of friends and stick with them.
- ✦ Establish a meeting place in case you get separated from the group.
- ✦ Know parade rules of whatever city you are in.
- ✦ Respect the police.
- ✦ Get to your parade spot early to guarantee yourself a good spot.
- ✦ If you do get there late, don't encroach on other people's space.
- ✦ Catch only. Do not throw beads or objects at floats or bystanders.
- ✦ Do not cross the barricades during a parade for any reason.
- ✦ Be careful when reaching down to pick up beads, you leave your head and your



January 2016

Page 7

## Getting Involved

Student involvement on campus and in the community is an important aspect of college success. Research shows that students who are engaged perform better academically than those who are less involved. As such we do all we can to offer a variety of opportunities for UL Lafayette students to find their comfort zone. Below are some of the events available to students:

Date	Event	Star Time	Location
Jan 16	<a href="#">Men's Tennis vs. Lamar</a>	1pm	Cajun Courts
Jan 16	<a href="#">Shrek: The Musical</a>	2pm	Crossroads Exchange
Jan 16	<a href="#">Rendez-Vous des Cajuns</a>	6pm	Liberty Theater Eunice, LA
Jan 19	<a href="#">Book talk with Author T. Geronimo Johnson</a>	7pm	Ernest Gaines Center
Jan 21	<a href="#">Women's Basketball vs. South Alabama</a>	5pm	Cajundome
Jan 21	<a href="#">Men's Basketball vs. South Alabama</a>	7pm	Cajundome
Jan 21	<a href="#">Cinema on the Bayou Film Festival: One Armed Man</a>	7pm	Acadiana Center for the Arts
Jan 22	<a href="#">Cinema on the Bayou Film Festival: Inseguire il vento</a>	1pm	Vermilionville
Jan 23	<a href="#">Lafayette Farmers &amp; Artisans Market</a>	8am	Lafayette Horse Farm
Jan 23	<a href="#">Cinema on the Bayou Film Festival: Tasmanian Tiger</a>	6pm	Celebrity Theater Broussard, LA
Jan 27	<a href="#">Get On Board Day</a>	10am	UL Lafayette Quad
Jan 31	<a href="#">Footloose: Christian Youth Theater</a>	3pm	Angelle Auditorium



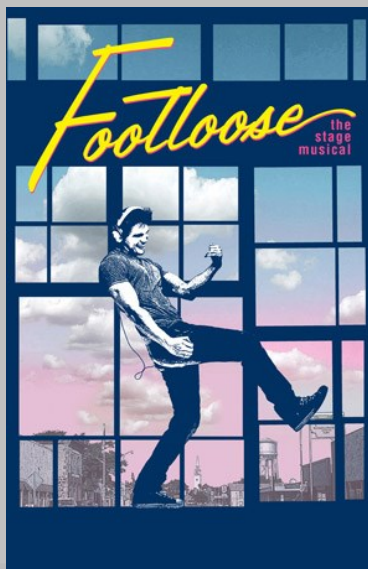
BOOK TALK with AUTHOR

**T. GERONIMO JOHNSON**

Recipient of the 2015 Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence and acclaimed author of *WELCOME TO BRAGGSVILLE* and *HOLD IT 'TIL IT HURTS*

Tuesday, January 19  
7:00 PM

Ernest J. Gaines Center





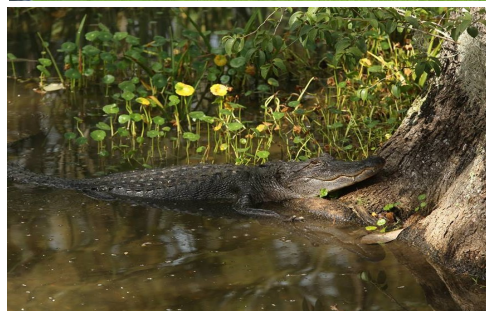
January 2016

Page 8

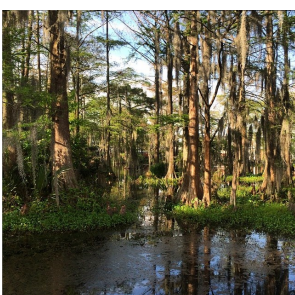
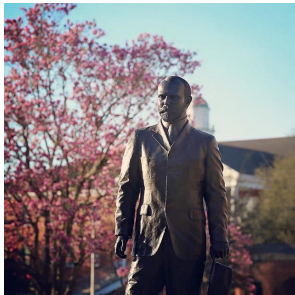
## Top Moments of 2015

- 1) Students closed out the first week of school at the Block Party on St. Mary Blvd.
- 2) The UL Lafayette Marketing & Communications Office debuted a new school commercial.
- 3) The Ragin' Cajun Ski Club won its 6th National Ski Championship.
- 4) UL Lafayette was recognized by the National Wildlife Federation for its preservation of Louisiana's natural habitat.
- 5) 3,000 students gave back to the local community through the 3rd annual Big Event.
- 6) Students & parents alike enjoyed Jurassic World, a zydeco breakfast, Ragin' Cajun football, as well as other parts of campus during the first annual Family Weekend.
- 7) Students destressed during Finals week thanks to a library visit to see therapy dogs.
- 8) Ragin' Cajuns and the local community got to see a campus Winter Wonderland at Sneaux Day 2015.
- 9) The Class of 2019 rung in Fall 2015 as the first class to enjoy Cajun Connection and the new Quad.

**Additional information detailing these events can be located by clicking the corresponding picture to the right.**







## In Theory – Reflections on the University Experience

As we look to Spring, the time has come for your college student to return to campus. Sure enough, some parents will be saddened to see their child leave while others may rejoice in seeing their homes return to a quieter, calmer way of life. Nevertheless, the time has come for your young Ragin' Cajun to resume his or her path toward completing a college degree and becoming a participating adult in our society.

It is true college is a powerful transformative process, but it is one that happens over time. No doubt you were able to see the beginnings of some of these changes over the winter break, however this was only a foreshadowing of the changes to come. The students of the Class of 2019 still have a long way to go in both education and personal growth. Though your student now has a foot in the door, another three and a half years of college (or more) can be just as daunting as when he or she set foot on campus for Cajun Connection back in August. This is where we in the Office of the First-Year Experience, as well as you the parents, come in to provide the emotional support these students need in staying dedicated to the goal of becoming a college graduate.

As put by English writer Samuel Johnson, "Great works are performed not by strength, but by perseverance." The faculty, staff, and administration at UL Lafayette are committed to providing all the necessary resources and skills your student could need to successfully complete college. This experience is designed to push students academically, emotionally, and socially, and it is a process that makes or breaks students. Even for the best and brightest of students there are plenty of times of struggle. What we must do as their OFYE advisors and you their parents is applaud them in their highs and support them through their lows, in order to help them persevere until they day they finally walk across that stage to accept their diploma.

Always remember that we are here to help not only the freshmen of UL Lafayette, but you their parents through this process. Please always feel more than welcome to contact our office for assistance. We thank you for your support of the freshman experience at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and Geaux Cajuns!

Phillip C. Arceneaux  
Office of the First-Year Experience