

September 2014

Parent Newsletter

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September 2014

University of Louisiana at Lafayette



Money Matters

During your students first semester it can be difficult to balance school, activities, and friends. But school is the top priority, especially if your student is receiving financial aid, a scholarship, or TOPS. Here is some technical information that you need to know for your student to retain their financial aid, scholarship or TOPS.

Financial Aid and Scholarship

To retain financial aid and scholarships each student must at least meet the **Satisfactory Academic Progress**—otherwise known as **SAP**. At the end of each semester your student will be evaluated according to the SAP requirements. To meet the **SAP** requirements for the purpose of financial aid, your student must first have a minimum GPA of 2.0 at the end of the semester. Secondly, your student must complete at least 67% of all credit hours attempted. At the end of the semester your student may use this simple calculation to check their completion rate: $Credit\ hours\ registered\ for\ during\ the\ semester \times 0.67 = Hours\ that\ must\ be\ completed$ (round up if the number is a decimal- $12 \times 0.67 = 8.04 \sim 9$). Hours completed do not include classes that the student has withdrawn from, received the grade of an F, or has received an incomplete. A student who is enrolled in 12 credit hours must complete 9 of those and receive a minimum GPA of 2.0 to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements. Students who fail to achieve minimum standards for Grade Point Average (GPA) and completion of classes could lose their eligibility for all types of federal and state aid (includes grants, work-study, Direct, PLUS and Perkins loans). SAP information can be found [here](#). For questions please contact finaid@louisiana.edu or call (337) 482-6506

TOPS

To retain TOPS for the Academic year of 2015-2016 your student must be enrolled as a fulltime student during each semester in this Academic year. That means they must be registered for at least 12+ credit hours in the fall and spring semesters. At the end of each semester your student must maintain a steady **Academic Progress**. Academic Progress, as defined by TOPS, means that at the end of *each semester or session* (fall semester, winter session, spring semester, and summer sessions) your student must have a minimum GPA of 2.0. In addition to maintaining Academic Progress, at the end of each **Academic year** your student must earn 24 hours of credit. The Academic year includes the fall semester and continues through all semesters and intersessions until the *following* fall semester begins. At the end of each spring semester your student's TOPS cumulative GPA will be determined by LOSFA. Each TOPS award differs in their GPA requirements. The required cumulative GPA for the different awards can be found [here](#). The TOPS cumulative GPA may differ from that of the cumulative GPA calculated by the school. *All first-time freshmen TOPS recipients are required to participate in an informational [workshop](#).*

Wear Red on Fridays!

You can support your son or daughter and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette by wearing red each Friday! Encourage your son or daughter to wear red on Fridays as well. It shows support for our university.

Still need that Ragin' Cajun gear? Check out the wide array of apparel available at the University Bookstore and the Red Zone or online at <http://bookstore.louisiana.edu>



WEAR RED

The Fall 2014 Academic Calendar

October 9-10
Fall Break

October 13
Last Day to drop
With grade of W

November 27-28
Thanksgiving
Holiday

December 5
Last Day of Class

December 8—12
Final Exams

*The Academic
Calendar may be
found [here](#).*

Getting the year started: Grades First

Your student will be getting feedback during the semester on attendance and grades. This will come to students through Grades First. Students who have missed class or who have grades below a C level will receive an email from the student's instructor, encouraging the student to contact the instructor immediately about seeking help. The first of the three scheduled Grades First Check just ended.

Academic Progress is an important focus of the University. While your student's academic journey is their own, you can support them by knowing about the various support resources on our campus that help students academically and encourage your student to take advantage of these resources.

The **Academic Success Center**, located in Lee hall, provides academic counseling, career information and tutoring. Counselors also assist students with dropping classes and changing majors. [Tutoring](#) is held in the learning center where students can get assistance with academic problems. The Center offers free one-on-one tutoring, study group tutoring, supplemental instruction, computer lab assistance, and other services. Tutoring is available for almost all 100 and 200-level math and science courses as well as for accounting, economics, engineering, French, psychology, Spanish and statistics courses.

The **Academic Success Center** also offers [Student Success Seminars](#). These Seminars have many different topics. A few of these are:

- Test Taking Strategies
- Managing Stress
- Mindset, Motivation, Success & you

The Student Success Seminars have already begun and will be continued throughout the semester. Encourage your student to take advantage of the Seminars which are pertinent to their struggles.

The **English Writing Center** is also a great place to receive academic assistance, particularly for any writing assignments. The [Center](#) will assist students at any stage of the writing process, including:

- Helping students enhance their writing skills
- Focusing on writing processes and the value of creating multiple drafts
- Helping students see strengths and weaknesses in their writing
- Helping students learn to proofread their writing
- Empowering students to own their writing
- Nurturing creative ideas in students

Studies have shown that students who seek academic assistance receive benefits such as higher academic achievement, improved personal and social development, and increased motivation. If your student is struggling academically or expresses that they are overwhelmed, encourage them to seek out assistance. (read more at <http://www.nea.org/tools/35542.htm>)

Need some extra help?

The Office the First-Year Experience is sponsoring two different groups to provide students with additional support as they transition to college:

FYE/FYI: students can stop in to get questions answered or just talk about their college experiences. **Wednesdays, starting 9/3 from 4-5 p.m. in Lee Hall 212.**

Conversations: a group for students who would like to talk about transition issues in greater depth. Questioning your place and purpose in college? Here's where you might talk about it. **Thursdays, starting 9/11, from 4-5 p.m. in Lee Hall 212.**

Transition Tribulations: Timely information on typical September transition issues

The first few weeks of college offer tremendous challenges for new students. Adjusting to new time schedules, academic and social demands, and school/life balance issues can create some stresses and anxiety that you can coach your student through. Here are some typical issues students face and some insights on how you can help your student successfully navigate through them.

“I wonder how that person can believe that or live that way.”

UL Lafayette has students from all over the state, country, and world. Students often meet people with different religious, political, or moral beliefs, as well as people from different backgrounds. Encourage them to think with an open mind and to clarify their own values, beliefs, and lifestyle.

“My classes don’t seem all that hard. The professor never takes roll and we never talk about the assigned reading.”

Students often underestimate the difficulty of the college curriculum. Encourage your son or daughter to make sure they are taking notes in class, completing assigned reading prior to class, participating in study groups, and making academics their top priority. Often, professors expect students to absorb reading material outside of class.

“I feel so stupid in class. I’m afraid to talk to the professor and I don’t understand what is going on.”

Students often times feel intimidated by professors. Faculty want your student to succeed. Encourage them to ask questions in class or after class, to go to the professor’s office hours, and to participate in study groups. Students can also receive tutoring assistance for free at the Learning Center, located in Lee Hall. Tutoring schedules are available on your student’s ULink account under the Tutoring Tab. (See “In Theory” on p. 6 for more on this topic)

“I thought I would have free time, but I can’t find time to do anything. I’m stressed by the amount of work.”

Time management may be one of the biggest challenges facing new students. Encourage your student to use a planner and schedule their lives. Each student was provided an academic planner before classes began, that includes campus events as well as room to schedule class, work, and study time.



Ragin' Cajun Athletics

Ragin' Cajun Athletics is a big part of student and community life at UL Lafayette. Our students participate in 16 NCAA Division I sports and compete in the Sun Belt Conference. Schedules and information on tickets for all events can be found online at <http://ragincajuns.com>

UL Athletics is garnering attention nationwide. Last season, head football coach Mark Hudspeth led the Ragin' Cajuns to a 3rd consecutive R&L Carriers New Orleans Bowl Championship. The Ragin' Cajuns Softball team, Coming off a 2014 season that included the program's sixth trip to the Women's College World Series, releases their 2015 [schedule](#).

Involvement Matters!

There are over 190 Student Organizations at UL Lafayette. Encouraging your son or daughter to become involved is an important part of the transition to our university.

Most studies of college student retention and success show that students who get involved early will perform better academically and adjust to college life more quickly and easily.

Encourage your son or daughter to join a club or organization today by visiting:

Getinvolved.louisiana.edu



UNIV 100 students keeping our campus clean.
Summer 2014

UNIV 100– Cajun Connection

UNIV 100 is the university's First-Year Student Seminar. It is designed to help students develop skills in academics, further develop knowledge of campus resources, participate in community service and engage in a common reading experience meant to promote global competence.

UNIV 100 classes are purposely kept small, with 25 students per section and are divided by colleges so students with similar majors are kept together. In addition each section has a trained upper-classman (called Peer Mentor) to provide incoming students with help through the course and help transitioning into college

FRESHMAN FIRST DOWN

Freshmen First Down – Saturday, **October 4th** – is an opportunity for parents of freshmen to enjoy a Ragin' Cajun football game for free! This is a time when you can visit your student and enjoy a great family weekend. There will be tailgating, free food, and fun. Have your student “show off their new turf” here at UL Lafayette. There are many events going on all over Lafayette and the highlight of the weekend is the football game. The family of each freshmen student can receive two free tickets (with the option of purchasing more tickets at a reduced rate). All you have to do is register. Click on the link for more information. <http://upc.louisiana.edu/freshmanfirstdown>

ATHLETICS

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VOLLEYBALL

9/19 v. UALR @ Little Rock 7p.m.

9/21 v. UT Arlington @ Arlington 12 p.m.

9/26 v. Appalachian @ Lafayette 7 p.m.

9/27 v. Georgia Southern @ Lafayette 7 p.m.

10/2 v. Georgia State @ Lafayette 7 p.m.

10/4 v. Texas State @ San Marcos 1 p.m.

SOCCER

9/19 v. Houston @ Lafayette 7 p.m.

9/21 v. Alcorn State @Lafayette 1 p.m.

9/26 v. Georgia State @ Lafayette 7 p.m.

9/28 v. Georgia Southern @ Lafayette 12 p.m.

FOOTBALL

9/20 v. Boise State @ Boise 9:30 p.m.

10/4 v. Georgia State @ Lafayette 6 p.m.

10/14 v. Texas State @ San Marcos 7 p.m.

FOR MORE INFO:

www.ragincajuns.com

SEE WEBSITE FOR MORE GAME DAYS!

News Around Campus

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette has earned the city a spot among the nation's Top 20 college towns, according to *USA Today*.

Lafayette is a finalist for the "[Best College Town Weekend](#)" designation as part of the newspaper's "10Best Readers' Choice" contest.

USA Today editors selected 20 of the nation's best getaway college towns, places with "a fun, youthful vibe" and ample retailers, restaurants, and entertainment options, according to information on the contest page.

- See more at: <http://www.louisiana.edu/news-events/news/20140909/usa-today-lists-lafayette-among-top-20-college-towns-nation>



Baker Hall
One of the sophomore / junior residency halls



The first six weeks of school are jam-packed with activities and events for your son or daughter to attend. From Welcome Week Activities sponsored by University Program Council to academic workshops put on by our Academic Success Center and everything in between, your son or daughter is sure to find something they will enjoy and want to attend!

Check out the list of events at cajuncraze.louisiana.edu

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined."

-Henry David Thoreau

Online Parent Guide
[University Parent](#)

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

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Website: ulorientation.com/parents



In Theory –

Theoretical Reflections on the University Experience

By now (well into the first month of your child's college career), you will no doubt have heard some hesitation or doubt in your student's voice when he or she reports to you their experiences. It is not uncommon for first-year students to feel overwhelmed by how much they do not know. In this column, I'd like to address the beginning student's recognition of his or her own limits as a natural—indeed, necessary—cognitive phenomenon. That is, I want to make a case for encouraging your student to embrace this uncertainty as a necessary part of their learning.

Psychologists who study learning have long recognized that many students learn best through inquiry and exploration; learning results when students build on their existing knowledge and past experiences to construct new theories that explain what is at present unknown (to them). These theorists, generally known as “constructivists,” argue that learning is the result of the learner actively making hypotheses and testing them against what is already known to them and to others. This process of constructing knowledge has, as an essential component, the recognition of the unknown (a component, by the way, that is often supplied by a professor – one thing that sets an expert apart from a layperson is the expert's ability to pose the right questions, thus both illuminating what students don't know and at the same time suggesting to them the path to an answer).

What is true on the individual level is also true for the community of knowers. Phillip Kitcher, a renowned philosopher of science, attempted to define the criteria that distinguished science from pseudoscience. He asked “what is it that makes a question a scientific question?” or “why does science lead to empirical knowledge?” Surprisingly, one of the criteria that Kitcher identified as definitive of scientific questions was this: when a scientific question is answered, it leads to new *unanswered* questions. In other words – science is fruitful in the sense that progress is measured not only in new information, but in newly identified gaps in our knowledge.

What psychologists and philosophers have theorized about in lofty treatises poets have remarked on in more lyrical language. In his *Letters to a Young Poet*, Rainer Maria Rilke wrote:

You are so young, so much before all beginning, and I would like to beg you ... to have patience with everything unresolved ... and try to love questions themselves. ... Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.

And so, we ask you to comfort your young ones as Rilke did and beg them to have patience with things unresolved. If they feel inadequate or scared, remind them that they are making progress—for one cannot learn without first recognizing that one does not know. Most important, remind them that their instructors do not see them as ignorant; rather, we see them as learning, even if today's lesson is simply to recognize what they do not already know.

Dr. Jennifer Faust
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