TWO'S BACK!

The end of the Fall 2014 semester is upon us and your First-Time Freshman is probably exhausted at the end of their first semester in college. It is a big adjustment from high school, as well as a lifestyle change. They have endured a long 14 weeks of lectures, quizzes, assignments, presentations, group projects and they still have finals. When they return home, they might be quite a different person than who they were just 4 months ago in August.

Expect an exhausted student when they arrive home for their extended stay during the winter break. They will need and appreciate sleep, and want to be allowed to just relax for a couple of days. Be sure to inform them of any family plans in advance so that no surprises interrupt their time to unwind.

Listen and communicate. One of their critical needs at this point is care and comfort that can only be offered by family. They might be reserved with telling you their stories and their experiences, but it is your responsibility to ask them to share. Be supportive and reassuring.

As you know, Finals are approaching and grades will be finalized. And while some students may be ecstatic to receive their grades, others may not be. It is important that you are assuring, not reprimanding, at this time. Sometimes changing their major may be necessary if the student is unhappy with where they are. Finding their interests is part of the process that each college student goes through, and choosing a major that they are passionate about is one of the keys to future success.

FOCUS ON FINANCIAL AID

Student Financial Aid: Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the term used to denote a student’s successful completion of coursework toward a degree. 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).

Click here to see the SAP requirements. For more information check the UL Office of Financial Aid website. To see how the SAP evaluation affects your student see here.

TOPS: To maintain TOPS eligibility, a student must earn a cumulative Fall GPA of a 2.0 and be registered as a full-time student by the 15th class day of the Spring semester.
Grades, Grades, Grades
Grades Matter. Grades First

Your student, if at risk, has already received their third Grade Check of the semester. The next Grade they receive will be the final grade that will count towards their GPA. With just a few weeks left of the semester it is still important for your student to be diligent in their studies.

Final projects will be due—many of which might make up a large portion of the grade for that class. Final Exams are fast approaching.

After Thanksgiving break your student has only a week of classes left before Final Exams. Encourage your student in these last few weeks to plan their time well and seek out assistance from both a tutor and their professors. It is important for your student to spend their time studying.

In planning for Final Exams it is important for your student to remember to eat healthy, exercise, and get sleep. Planning their time will enable your student to achieve a level of healthy stability during a stressful time. Here are twelve tips to help your student get a handle on Final Exams.

The Academic Success Center is offering two seminars in preparation of Finals week. These are the last of the Success Seminars for the Fall Semester. Encourage your student to attend to learn ideas, strategies and tips to prepare for finals. These seminars will be held in Lee Hall 110 on November 24th @2:00p.m. and November 25th @1:30p.m.

FERPA: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (sometimes referred to as the Buckley Amendment) was designed to protect the privacy of educational records and to establish the rights of students to inspect and review their educational records. It also provided control over the release of educational record information. The original intent of this legislation was to keep elementary and high school records private and to give parents access to their student’s school records.

Once a student turns eighteen, or attends school beyond secondary school, the rights of access to the student’s records transfer to the student. This means that all academic information regarding your college student goes directly to the student unless the student has given specific, written permission to release that information to someone else. The exception to this law occurs if parents document in writing that the student is still claimed as a dependent for income tax purposes. The college may require you to submit your most recent tax forms in order to support this claim.

What does FERPA mean for you as a college parent? Generally FERPA rules mean that student academic information such as grades or academic standing (GPA, academic transcript, academic warning, academic probation, or discipline records) will be given to the student and not to the parents. College students are considered responsible adults who may determine who will receive information about them. College representatives are prohibited from discussing information about the student’s academic record with parents. For more information see here.

RESOURCES

- Writing Center
  H.L. Griffin Hall,
  Rm. 107-108
  Hours: Mon-Thurs
  9AM - 3PM; Fri
  9AM -12PM
  Call: 482-6447

- Computer Labs on Campus

- Counseling & Testing Center
  Olivier Hall, Rm. 212
  Call: 482-6480
counseling@louisiana.edu

- Office of Disability Services (ODS)
  Conference Center, Rm. 126
  Call: 482-5252
  ods@louisiana.edu
Academic Probation: What does it mean?

Academic Probation occurs when a student’s cumulative grade point average is 10 or more quality points below a 2.0 average. A student may attend the University while on academic probation, but with the following stipulation: they must earn a 2.0 semester or better GPA. This means that a student who is placed on probation at the end of the Fall semester must earn a 2.0 GPA for the Spring 2015 semester.

If on academic probation, your student will remain on probation until a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or better is achieved. When your student has earned a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or better, he/she will be placed in academic good standing. If your freshman student is on Academic Probation after this Fall semester they are required to participate in the “Taking Responsibility for Your Success” workshop before the end of the first week of classes in the Spring Semester.

If your student is put on academic probation, they will be contacted by the University through their University email. For More information contact the Academic Success Center, or email asc@louisiana.edu. For information about the “Taking Responsibility for Your Success” workshop for the Spring Semester click here.

Repeat Rule

Students who do not pass a required course may repeat the course. Once a course has been repeated and a higher grade earned, students may request the removal of the previous attempt from the GPA hours, hours earned, and quality points from the calculation of the adjusted grade point average. Only some colleges use the adjusted grade point average for graduation and entrance into the Upper Division (for more information please see an advisor). Repeats are not automatically figured into the adjusted grade point average. The student is responsible for reporting a repeated course to the Registrar’s Office. Students should complete a Request for Application of Repeat Rule form and return it to the Registrar’s Office, Martin Hall, Room 171.

The Repeat Rule can only be applied for coursework taken through UL Lafayette. Courses completed through another university or college cannot be used as part of the Repeat Rule. Please note that prior course attempts are not removed from your students academic record, only from the adjusted grade point average.

Remember that we have many resources for our students to succeed, including: Departmental Tutoring, Academic Success Center, The Learning Center, The Writing Center, Career Counseling, and Counseling and Testing. We want to see students succeed so please encourage them to utilize these resources next semester!
Double Major or Add a Minor?

One reason your student may decide to double major is because they are having difficulty deciding on a single major in which they are interested. Or there may be difficulty in narrowing their choices down to one major. Whether double majoring is a good choice or not depends on the student and their reasoning for double majoring.

Your student will want to be sure to gather all of their information before making a decision to double major. Double majoring will require a lot of work, coordination and time management. Keep in mind that it is possible that completing two majors may add extra time to your student’s college career. It will probably also involve summer classes or winter intercession classes. Your student will need to consider whether that extra time is worth it and whether it is financially feasible. Because of the extra work involved in a double major, and the potential sacrifices involved, one should be completely committed to the decision.

Your student should speak with their academic advisor about all of the requirements involved in double majoring. They should also discuss whether or not the same thing can be achieved with one major and one minor. Your student also might talk to several professors in the chosen fields of study. This will help the student to understand what the professionals in the field will be looking for in a college graduate, or what graduate schools will want to see on a transcript. Participating in some informational interviews with people working in their chosen field might also help your student in making the decision.

Weighing the advantages and disadvantages, your student should consider their reasons carefully and honestly. An informed decision requires knowing the reasons, the pros and cons, the implications and sacrifices, and the potential benefits.

Adapted from www.collegeparents.org Click here to read the full article.

Double Trouble. Double Major.

To Double Major means your student will complete two majors in one baccalaureate program. This means that when your student graduates they will have one bachelor degree, but comprised of two fields of study. To earn a degree as a Double Major, the student is required to complete all requirements of their primary degree program. In the secondary degree program the student is required to complete all major courses (including all pre-and-co-requisites and other designated courses). More information can be found in the University of Louisiana Online Catalog, or a representative in the Academic Success Center. You may also see the Student Guide to Academic Procedures and Resources.

A Minor

The University offers students a wide variety of minors that enrich their course of study while at the University. Minors may expand a student’s knowledge and skills in an area that increases preparation for a particular career. Other students may choose to enroll in a minor simply to learn more about an area of personal interest. The newest minor offered by the University is a Leadership Studies minor. This minor is for any Major. The Leadership Studies minor became available in the Spring 2014 semester. The minor was student-developed with the goal of developing well rounded students who can communicate effectively. Learn more about Minors on the Academic Program Affairs website. To learn about the requirements for the Leadership minor click here.
Parking Decal for Spring 2015
Dear Parents: Please be aware that your student, if a UL resident with a vehicle, will have to purchase a Spring 2015 parking pass. The parking permit may be purchased through ULink. Your student must login, and on the first page UL Today, on the right hand side will be a picture of a UL transportation bus. Please click on the bus, this will open a new tab; this tab is your student’s personal account with the Office of Transportation.
If your student has not registered their vehicle or if they have a new vehicle, they must register it with the transportation office. To register the vehicle please click on the “Manage Your Vehicles” in your student’s personal account with the Office of Transportation. Your student’s vehicle must be registered before purchasing a parking permit.
To purchase the decal (parking permit) please click on the “Purchase Permit.” The website will guide your student through the process of purchasing their Spring 2015 permit.

Parking permits for students who reside on campus will be available to purchase on December 1, 2014.

For more information please check the Office of Transportation Services website. Information regarding the Spring 2015 parking permit will be available around December 1st.

Be sure to keep in mind that the deadline for Spring 2015 tuition AND housing is January 5th!

Your student will be able to see their statement of account on ULINK.
* Login to ULINK Portal
* Click on Student Tab
* Click on Statement of Account
* Choose term and submit query

The statement of account does not necessarily show everything owed. The statement only shows current charges for the selected semester. Check semester options to possibly view other semesters, or call the Student Cashier Center at 337-482-6385 for further information on prior semester balances due.

Office of the First-Year Experience has moved!
We are now in Lee Hall room 106.

Stay tuned for Fall housing application information!
THE BIG EVENT

HOMECOMING

See more Homecoming pictures!
In Theory – Reflections on the University Experience

Higher education is a marathon, not a sprint. As every amateur marathon runner understands, what matters is that you finish, not how quickly you finish (nor how direct your route to the finish line). Preparing to finish the race is what training is all about. So, how should students prepare to graduate from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette? Let’s use the “Team in Training” approach to running as an analogy. “Team in Training” is an organization that helps people (especially first-timers) train for a marathon and fund-raise for a non-profit organization. Anyone who has ever trained for a difficult and long-term goal such as a marathon knows that support matters — what one cannot do alone, one is able to do with the support of others. Organizations such as “Team in Training” also take a holistic view of race preparation — they advise runners on proper shoe fit, nutrition, overcoming injuries, and race-day psychology. As with running a marathon, college students need support and they need to give attention to the whole picture; we want them to finish the race, but to get there, we need to help them to stay healthy (physically and psychologically), eat well, and “outfit” themselves with the proper equipment.

Below, we provide some guidance on supporting your marathoner.

Runners need the right equipment. For a college student, this often means books (and today, also typically a computer).

Runners need a support team. Some marathon runners prefer to run alone; others like to run in a group of runners with compatible paces. But every runner has a support group, including: family members who forgive the hours-long absences for weekend runs, coaches who they turn to for advice, friends who they count on to encourage them when injured or discouraged by their (lack of) progress, and doctors and trainers who help them to mend when they are sick or injured. Whether your student is a “lone runner” or a “group runner,” he or she needs a support system to turn to when discouraged, to provide advice when unsure, and to remind him or her that the goal is to finish. As parents, you are an essential part of this support system for your student.

Runners need to stay healthy, and that requires proper nutrition. Is your student eating a healthy diet and getting enough sleep? In the Office of the First-Year Experience, we help students to see that “cramming” for exams and other less-than-ideal habits are not conducive to long-term success. While they may actually manage to get through that one exam, they are not likely to retain this knowledge beyond that day. (Indeed, research shows that daily review of one’s notes is far more conducive to learning and long-term memory than a “cram session.”)

Runners need to believe that they can finish the race. Confidence and self-esteem are essential to mental health and well-being. Early successes can lend long-term confidence to both runners and students. Equally important is resilience. If a runner falls, has an injury or other setback, or just doubts that he or she can finish the race, the ability to recover from a setback (resilience) can result in better long-term performance. Students who struggle during the first couple of years are capable of graduating—but they need to understand that they can recover from these setbacks. Again, supporters and coaches can be the key to helping someone develop resilience.

But no amount of support or number of supporters can run the race for someone else — the fact is that the runner has to put in the time and the hard work. Training for a marathon will involve blood, sweat, and tears. This struggle is what makes the finish so valuable; it feels good to overcome the obstacles and cross the finish line. Anyone who has ever seen the end of a race knows the feeling, as we then witness the flood of euphoria that results from having survived the struggles to reach the finish.

Just remember—and remind your student—that marathons are run one mile at a time. Celebrate every mile marker, and keep the long-term goal in mind.

Thank you for your support of our UL Lafayette students!

Dr. Jennifer Faust
Director, Office of the First-Year Experience