Making the Connection

Research studies indicate students who are connected to their college campus are most likely to stay in college and be successful. So how can students become more connected to SUNY Plattsburgh? Here are some ways students can be more involved:

• Sport lovers should be encouraged to participate on intramural teams or attend SUNY Plattsburgh athletic games. www.plattsburgh.edu/athletics

• Students who want to lend their time to a worthy cause can become involved with the Center for Service Learning and Volunteerism. They can buddy up with an elementary school student, help the elderly with chores, or participate in the Alternative Breaks Program. www.plattsburgh.edu/offices/centers/service

• Students can participate in a large variety of clubs. Clubs revolve around academic, cultural, social movement, and religious interests. Some students opt to join a club closely associated with their major to obtain additional experience. http://organizations.plattsburgh.edu/sa

• Students with an interest in politics might be interested in serving on the student association government or on their residence hall council. http://organizations.plattsburgh.edu/sa

Making campus connections helps students learn new things, meet new people, build leadership skills, and become a world and community citizen. More importantly it helps them feel more connected to the college and increases their odds of academic success and completion of college. Ask your student if they are participating in any activities or clubs.

Is it time to Re-FOCUS?

So your son or daughter received their fall semester grades during winter break and realized they didn’t do as well academically as they thought they would. What can you do to help them?

1. Remind them to use FREE campus resources. The Learning Center offers many skill development workshops, research materials, tutors, and study groups that rely on your student’s willingness to seek assistance.

2. Suggest they meet with their advisor or professors. Advisors are available throughout the academic year to provide guidance and helpful information. Students can also meet with professors during office hours for clarification on assignments, exam structures and studying tips.

3. Tell them to contact their faculty mentor or first-year advocate. Every student on campus has a faculty mentor or first-year advocate. These folks connect with students by emailing campus news and hosting special events in the residence halls. They also keep an eye on their grades. If your student is not sure whom to contact, they should ask their Resident Assistant and he or she will help them make the connection.
February...the shortest or longest month?

Although the calendar shows February as the shortest month of the year, it can seem like the longest month in Plattsburgh. The weather is at its coldest and students tend to be overwhelmed by the academic work ahead of them. That’s why February is a perfect month to send a care package to your son or daughter. The most appreciated items often include cookies, hot chocolate, tea and coffee bags, granola bars, microwave popcorn, nuts, and instant soups. Did we mention cookies? If you have a hectic schedule, you can simply contact the College Store and have a package delivered to your student’s room. Call the College Store at 1-888-778-4438 or 518-564-2082 or visit www.mysubookstore.com and click on "Care Packages."

The Violence Prevention Project

The federal government has recognized that college can be a very dangerous place, especially for young women. Therefore, a grant funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, allowed SUNY Plattsburgh to institute The Violence Prevention Project in 2003. The project is part of a nationwide college effort to reduce the threat of violence, particularly sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking.

At SUNY Plattsburgh, we treat issues dealing with violence very seriously. We provide programming to encourage students to stay safe as they learn about the root causes of violence and how to reduce it. Our main focus is on preventing violence, but we also provide victims with information regarding services available to them and we ensure that perpetrators are held accountable.

You can find out more about our Violence Prevention Project at http://research.plattsburgh.edu/vaw or call 518-564-4028.

Searching for College Information?

The “College Parents of America,” a national association serving current and future college parents, has a website providing a wealth of information at www.collegeparents.org. On the website you’ll find an abundance of free resources, tips, articles, links to other sites, suggested readings, financial aid information, and more. There is also a paid membership component that provides additional resources. Current college parents can find sections on the website devoted to Campus Life & Issues, Academics, Health & Safety, Graduate Programs, Jobs & Internships, and Career Planning.

Important Spring Semester Dates

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 10-18</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>Mid-term Grades available in Banner</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 26</td>
<td>Fall course advisement begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 6</td>
<td>Last day for course withdrawal</td>
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<td>April 8</td>
<td>Course registration begins</td>
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<td>May 5</td>
<td>Finals begin</td>
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<td>May 12</td>
<td>Commencement Ceremony</td>
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Director’s Message

Congratulations on your student’s completion of the fall semester at SUNY Plattsburgh. Please be assured that all of us at the college will continue to do our utmost to ensure that he or she is well taken care of and supported during the spring semester.

A significant number of first-year students had outstanding academic success during the fall semester. It was a pleasure to send 440 individual letters to first-year students commending them for finishing the semester with a grade point average above 3.0. Many of these students were named to the Dean’s list with a grade point average above 3.5. This group of high achievers represents slightly more than 40% of the entering class. Additionally, first-year students were actively engaged outside the classroom as measured by the Office of Residence Life’s Quality of Life Survey.

As the father of two students currently attending college—one a first-year student—I know the challenges involved for you as a parent. Your continued interest and support are crucial to your student’s success. Hopefully, you had the opportunity to discuss fall semester grades with your student. If he or she did well in the fall, please take the opportunity to praise and reinforce the success. On the other hand, if your student didn’t do well academically, or wants to do even better, now is the time to assist. Talk specifically about what he or she will do differently in the spring semester. The discussion might include plans related to attending class, keeping up with reading and assignments, taking better notes, improving study skills, enhancing time management skills, etc. The conversation should include discussion of the many academic support services available to assist all students. Your student’s “new” academic plan can end with results that will be appreciated by all concerned. This is especially true if you continue the dialogue during the semester to see how the plan is working.

I hope that you find the information contained in this newsletter useful. Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is anything I can do to assist you.

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