American University
Parent & Family Transitions

WELCOME
Dr. Rob Hradsky
Assistant Vice President of Campus Life
and Dean of Students

Questions?
Contact Information:
Office of the Dean of Students
408 Butler Pavilion
202-885-1300
dos@american.edu
www.american.edu/ocl/dos
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Objectives

- Understand transitions in the first few weeks and semester
- Become familiar with AU resources to support your student
- Gain an understanding of AU’s community standards and expectations of students
- Understand your role as a partner in your student’s transition
- Feel comfortable contacting the Dean of Students Office
Beginning College

Time of joy and sadness; a new life chapter is beginning...

**Focus on basic needs first:**
- Where will I live?
- How will I get around?
- Will I like my roommate?
- Where are my classes?
- Where can I study?

**Questions about personal ability:**
- Can I really do this?
- Will college be too hard?

**Questions about fitting in:**
- Will I make new friends?
Adjusting to New Demands
Schedule/Time Management

IN COLLEGE...

• Students must create an environment that fosters their success.

• Developing a routine early on is the key to success:
  - Eating
  - Sleeping
  - Studying
  - Socializing
  - Laundry
  - Appointments
High School Schedule

07:30 - 08:20 Math
08:25 - 09:15 Spanish
09:20 - 10:05 Biology
10:05 - 10:55 Art
11:00 - 11:50 Lunch
11:55 - 12:25 Psychology
12:30 - 01:10 History
01:15 - 02:05 English
02:30 - 03:30 Yearbook Meeting
03:30 - 05:30 Lacrosse Practice
06:30 - 07:30 Dinner
07:30 - 10:00 Homework
10:00 - 10:30 Bed
College Schedule

10:20 – 11:35 Economics
02:35 – 03:50 Biology
Adjusting to College/Asking for Help

- Students face higher expectations from college faculty and may struggle with acknowledging emotions/shortfalls.

- Students must develop help-seeking behaviors and ask for help when needed.
Adjusting to the First Semester

- Honeymoon period
- Social connections
- First assignments
- Midterms/Thanksgiving
- Finals
Office of the Dean of Students

The Office of the Dean of Students advocates for students’ needs and supports student learning through programs and services that promote personal growth and development and communicate the values and standards of the AU community.
Contacting the Dean’s Office

- Questions about campus resources and services
- Concerns about your student's adjustment to college, health or safety
- Advice on how to discuss critical or sensitive issues
- Early warning signs
- General concerns about campus life

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Fax: 202.885.1560  
dos@american.edu  
www.american.edu/ocl/dos  
Facebook: AmericanUParents  
Office Location:  
Butler Pavilion, 408
Office of the Dean of Students

Academic Support and Access Center
Counseling Center
Orientation, Transition and Retention

Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Services
Student Health Center
Wellness Center
Communication with Parents

*Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*
- Protects records of students from time of enrollment
- Student must sign written consent to release records to anyone unless student is dependent for tax purposes
- AU offices provide release forms for students
- Access grades, finances and other information: MyAU.american.edu

*Exceptions to FERPA*
- Health and safety emergencies
- Alcohol and drug violations of the Student Conduct Code

Talk with your son or daughter now about information sharing
Encouraging Independence

- Offer support and understanding: be open-minded when listening
- Have the patience and self-control to let them succeed (and fail occasionally) on their own - this is a balancing act
- Be clear about your expectations:
  - Performance
  - Class attendance
  - Finances
  - Rules
- Encourage involvement in campus activities

- Express interest in hearing about their activities, challenges, frustrations and goals
- Remind your student that increased independence also means increased responsibility - talk about:
  - Alcohol
  - Drugs
  - Values
  - Healthy choices
  - Asking for help
  - Student Conduct Code
- Establish regular, healthy communication
- Seek support for your own adjustment
• Offer support and understanding: be open-minded when listening

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  • Class attendance
  • Finances
  • Rules

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  - Student Conduct Code

• Establish regular, healthy communication

• Seek support for your own adjustment
Community Standards

• Student Conduct Code

• Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Services

• Civility
  - Choose... how you behave
  - Act.......... thoughtfully
  - Reflect... on how your actions and words affect others

• Academic Integrity
Focus on Student Success

- Making Achievement Possible - Mapworks
- Think About It: Alcohol and drug education, relationship violence and sexual assault
- STEP UP! Bystander Intervention Program
- Care Network
- Early Warning System
Student Success Tools

- Online survey completed by students in third week of classes
- Focuses on student expectations, behaviors, and issues associated with academics and student development
- Student receives report that identifies areas of strength as well as areas of concern and suggests resources to support adjustment to college
- Students who are struggling with adjustment may be contacted by academic advisor and/or Dean of Students Office
Substance Abuse & Sexual Assault Prevention for Students

- Turning Points "Part 1" Completion Date is Monday, August 24
- Good Friends "Part 2" Completion Date is Monday, October 12
- The Way Forward "Part 3" Due April 2016
Recommended Reading

The Naked Roommate
by Harlan Cohen

Don't Tell Me What to Do, Just Send Money:
The Essential Parenting Guide to the College Years
by Helen E. Johnson & Christine Schelhas-Miller
Supporting Student Development: Our Role in Campus Life

- Expose your student to a variety of experiences, topics, and opportunities to challenge his/her thinking
- Provide a safe space to explore his/her independence and to make connections with others
- Advocate for your child and his/her needs
- Provide academic, social, physical and emotional support services to further your child’s success
Supports on Campus

**Academic**
- Disability support services
- Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction
- Writing and math support
- Honor societies

**Social and Service**
- Diversity education and programs
- Student involvement activities
- Student government
- Community service opportunities
- Fraternity and Sorority Life
- Social justice activities

**Personal Wellness**
- Personal counseling
- Athletics and recreational opportunities
- Spirituality observance
- Fitness center
- Wellness programs
- Mediation services and conflict coaching
- Nutritional counseling

**Vocational**
- Career exploration and decision-making
- Leadership development
- Internships, job postings, and on-campus employment
Advice from Students...

Beware of mood swings: One minute I want to transfer, the next minute I love it here!

Don't believe everything you read on my Facebook account.

Please don't disappear or lose things from me. I am in a new environment.

Please be patient with me; I am adapting to my new situation.

Just because I don't call your check right away, doesn't mean that something is wrong. Don't panic.

Don't be afraid to ask for help or advice when you need it.

Remember that you are a freshmen; there is a lot to learn and things will get better.

Just because you are not the first to arrive does not mean you are not important.

Visit, but not too often.

Stay in touch with the people you care about.

Be open to changes in perspective and new views.
Send $$$
Beware of mood swings:
One minute I want to transfer, the next minute I love it here!
Don’t believe everything you read on my Facebook account.
Listen and give advice *when asked.*
Visit, but not too often.
Just because I don’t call you back right away, doesn’t mean that something is wrong; *don’t panic.*
Remember that our schedules are different... and please keep mine handy.
Be open to changes in perspective and worldview.
Please don't disappear or keep things from me.

I can handle it.
Treat us like adults but never forget that we will always be your children.

We love you and we miss you, even if we don't tell you very often.
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