Welcome from Dr. Eric A. Weldy, Vice President Division of Student & Enrollment Management

On behalf of the staff in the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management, I am excited to welcome family members of new students and welcome back families of current students!

Having a student in college is an exciting time for families. I want to assure you that we are advocates for your student. The Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management has numerous departments and programs focused on providing your student with the information and resources needed to be successful at NIU. We ask your help in encouraging your student to explore opportunities to develop leadership skills; find a student organization that fits with his or her academic, social, or spiritual needs; get involved in a campus diversity center; maintain a healthy lifestyle; and explore career opportunities.

You want your student to be successful both in and out of the classroom. At NIU, we share your goal—student success. We strive every day to ensure your student is in a safe, welcoming, healthy, and inclusive environment.

In Huskie Pride,

Eric A. Weldy, Ed.D.
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Important Dates

November 26-30
Thanksgiving Break; no classes

December 6
Last day of classes

December 8-13
Final exams

January 12
Classes begin
Greetings from Orientation & Family Connections!

It’s amazing to think that the fall semester is almost over! At this point in the semester, your student has probably already had his or her first big exam or paper due. I’m certain you’ve had phone calls, texts, e-mails, or visits during which your student has shared his or her daily stress of college life. As a caring family member, it’s hard to hear when your student is stressed or having difficulty.

You play such an important role in the life of your student. You are her or his strongest advisor and advocate. As family, you were your student’s first support system, emotionally and financially, and that does not change because your student is in college.

We value the relationship you have with your student and understand that you play such a huge role in his or her success at NIU. One of the best ways to support your student is to keep informed about what is happening at NIU and to speak with your student. You know when to deliver the information we share with you because you know your student best. For example, let's say your student is struggling to make a connection with NIU, and you know your student loved being involved with service in high school. When speaking with your student, you can mention the article in this newsletter from The Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning—where making connections at NIU can lead to success. Encouraging your student to join Huskie Service Scholars or another engagement activity on campus can help motivate her or him to seek out service opportunities on campus.

Orientation & Family Connections includes the latest information in our monthly e-newsletter, The Huskie Minute, as well as this publication, which is produced each semester. We also host Fall Family Weekend and Spring Family Day to continue to connect with you and your student. Make sure to visit our website at www.niu.edu/hfc often for updates on events and publications.

As always, feel free to contact our office at any time if you have a question or concern. We are happy to help you navigate NIU and connect you with any additional campus resources.

Thank you for your continued support of your student!

Go Huskies!
Abbey Wolfman, M.S.
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Helping your student prepare for Spring Registration

By: Kyle Bak, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Political Science major, Class of 2014

Can you believe that finals are right around the corner? In just a few short weeks your student will need to start signing up for next semester’s classes! Picking not only classes that are of interest, but also those required for a student’s degree is obviously important. Why pay for a class that won’t help you get your diploma? Luckily, EVERY major at NIU has an academic advisor who can make sure your student is on the right path towards graduation!

During my years at NIU, I have had some great advising. The reason I felt my advising went smoothly was because I was prepared for all my advising meetings. As I did, your student should have an idea of what he or she wants to take before meeting with an advisor. In addition to saving time, your student will be more interested in his or her studies by choosing courses this way, rather than just fulfilling requirements from the catalog.

You, our Huskie Family member, can also help! I believe there are two things you can do for your student when it comes to advising. First, ask if he or she has met with an advisor. If not, ask when he or she is planning to do so. Second, find out what classes your student is taking next semester, and make sure they count towards the degree!

The great thing is that advisors are available throughout the semester, so your student can schedule an appointment today! For registering, your student will need to check his or her MyNIU account and click on “enrollment date” to find his or her personalized registration date.

For a great video about advising at NIU, check out http://youtu.be/ccXcQs7Kyy4!

College Advising Offices—Students need to call for an appointment. Some colleges require advising each semester in order to register, some do not. Best bet, see an advisor EVERY semester!

- Academic Advising Center 815-753-2573
- College of Business 815-753-1325
- College of Education 815-753-8352
- College of Engineering and Engineering Technology 815-753-1142
- College of Health and Human Sciences 815-753-1891
- College of Liberal Arts and Sciences 815-753-0114
- College of Visual and Performing Arts 815-753-1635

MyNIU Shared Access

Have you signed up for MyNIU Shared Access yet?

Shared access allows your student to grant up to two individuals access to view her or his student information, which can include billing and grades. For more information,

Once you have shared access, you can log onto MyNIU and view your parent portal.

Other Academic Related Resources

- ACCESS/PAL (Tutoring) www.niu.edu/access/
- Disability Resource Center www.niu.edu/disability/
- Office of Student Academic Success www.niu.edu/osas/
- NIU Writing Center http://uwc.niu.edu/uwc/
- Huskies Mentoring Huskies www.niu.edu/mentor/
Interested in service? Maybe conducting research with a faculty-mentor? Being a peer mentor? All of these opportunities exist at NIU, and more! The Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning (OSEEL) offers a variety of programs that help students enrich their NIU experience. From undergraduate research opportunities to themed learning communities, OSEEL’s programs allow students to create connections with faculty, staff, peers, and community.

Ashley Pales is one of these connected students. A double major in Environmental Studies and Geology, Ashley has been involved in OSEEL programs for the last two years. She started as a mentor for Huskie Service Scholars, a program that engages first-generation and/or low-income students in campus and community-wide service events. Having excelled as a leader, Ashley now serves as the program’s Cohort Leader. This leadership position allows her to “truly explore all of the resources that NIU has to offer” and be “completely immersed in everything OSEEL.”

Ashley also considers herself “lucky enough to be chosen to be a part of the REU Program over this past summer.” REU, or Research Experience for Undergraduates, gives students the opportunity “to learn and understand what it takes to conduct formal research” according to Pales. This program, similar to the Summer Research Opportunities Program coordinated by OSEEL, provides students with the opportunity to conduct 8 weeks of faculty-mentored research over the summer, and provides a generous stipend as well as room and board. (Students interested in research opportunities might also be interested in the Research Rookies and Undergraduate Research Assistantship programs.)

Why participate in programs like these? Pales explains that by participating in programs like HSS and research, she has “developed into a more well-rounded and aware person” and changed the way she thinks and approaches situations and people. When asked about her undergraduate research experience,

Pales mentioned that beyond learning to “be a good formal researcher” these experiences helped her further develop life-long skills in “time management, organization, [and] overcoming obstacles.”

As for the overall impact? Ashley observes that these experiences absolutely have helped prepare her for post-graduate success. She admits she is now “more confident in [her]self as a leader and follower” and more confident in her “abilities to perform formal research” which she will need for graduate school. OSEEL oversees additional leadership programs, including the Northern Lights Ambassadors (coordinated with Office of Student Academic Success), as well as the upcoming Leadership and Service Living-Learning Community.

Ashley’s finals thoughts? “If you have the opportunity to get involved, DO IT! It is a great office, everyone in there is there because they love to see students succeed! They are supportive, informational, and really great people overall! When in doubt, get involved with OSEEL! It will really change your life! I know it changed mine!”
There’s Nothing to Do!

By: Abbey E. Wolfman, Director, Orientation & Family Connections

Have you heard your student say this to you? Despite the fact there are numerous things happening on and around campus, I often hear students say this to me, too. Being involved on campus is one of the most important things your student can do at NIU. Research shows students who are involved and engaged in the campus tend to be better satisfied with their college experience, do better academically, and persist more to graduation. Next time you hear your student complain about nothing to do on campus, suggest one of the points below.

- **Have you checked online?**
  - Students receive numerous e-mails to their student accounts with various activities going on around campus. Remind them to check their NIU e-mail!
  - Every time students log onto MyNIU, they see a calendar of events happening around campus.
  - What2Do@NIU is a great website full of activities and involvement opportunities around campus. Have your student check out [http://what2do.niu.edu](http://what2do.niu.edu) today!

- **Have you gone to a sporting event yet?**
  - Students get in free to all sporting events. It’s a great way to get engaged on campus and spend time with friends. With 16 NIU sport teams, there’s always something going on! Schedules can be found at [www.niuhuskies.com](http://www.niuhuskies.com).

- **What about joining a student organization?**
  With over 300 student organizations, there’s something for everyone—students can even form their own organization if they don’t find just the right one! Student organizations are classified by the following: academic interest and professional, community service, diversity and cultural, governing bodies, fraternity and sororities, honorary societies, political, military, programming and performing, public media and communications, recreational and sports, religious, social justice, advocacy, and support. For more information, check out [www.niu.edu/studentinvolvemen](http://www.niu.edu/studentinvolvemen).

- **How about attending a theater performance or an art show?**
  From our art museums to theater and musical performances, there is always something going at NIU in the arts. Direct your student to visit [www.niu.vpa.edu](http://www.niu.vpa.edu) for a complete list of upcoming events.

Calendar of Events

Want to know what’s happening on campus?

[https://calendar.niu.edu](https://calendar.niu.edu)
It’s cold and flu season. Do you know about Health Services?

Northern Illinois University Health Services maintains the highest standards in quality of care and professional ethics. At Health Services, students’ individual needs are attended to in a confidential and caring manner. We provide ambulatory medical and psychiatric health care for NIU students to support them in their academic pursuits and are nationally accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care, Inc. (AAAHC).

NIU Health Services is available to all students, full- or part-time, who are registered and have been assessed on-campus tuition and fees. The clinic’s regular hours are Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Students may use Health Services whether or not they are enrolled in the NIU Student Health Insurance Plan. The staff at Health Services consists of Physicians and Nurse Practitioners specializing in family practice, internal medicine, sports medicine, women’s health, and psychiatry. Health Services has Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, and Medical Assistants to assist the providers in three clinic areas. Health Services also provides laboratory, radiology and pharmacy services. The Preventive Medicine clinic provides immunizations, allergy shots, flu vaccines and travel counseling.

Flu vaccines are available now at Health Services for $23, no appointment needed, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-noon, and 1-4 p.m. Please visit our website at www.niu.edu/healthservices.

Below is a list of additional resources beyond Health Services that are available. Encourage your student to visit if needed!

- Health Enhancement
  www.niu.edu/health
- Campus Recreation
  www.niu.edu/campusrec
- Counseling & Student Development Center
  www.niu.edu/csdc

Money Matters

College is a significant investment in the life and success of your student. Below is a list of additional resources and support services.

- Scholarship Office
  www.scholarships.niu.edu/scholarships
- Student Employment
  www.hr.niu.edu/ServiceAreas/StudentEmployment
- Student Financial Aid
  www.niu.edu/fa

What is the Financial Cents program at NIU?

NIU Financial Cents is a peer-to-peer education program that assists students with important financial decisions they will make along their path at NIU. Some assistance may simply be to help students navigate the campus and learn what resources are available to assist them. The Peer Educators specialize in helping students understand budgeting, credit cards, credit scores and more. Additionally, these educators work closely with other departments and resources on campus to keep students up to date on deadlines and important events that will help them gain a better control of their financial future. We understand that many students rely on their parents to help them make these important decisions at NIU. Our goal is to help students gain the foundational knowledge they will need to effectively make independent decisions, while also displaying the ability to converse with professional staff on financial topics. The Financial Cents Peer Educators can be found at informational tables throughout the university. In particular, the staff is available in the Holmes Student Center Monday-Wednesday between the hours of 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Financial Cents can also be found at several workshops and university events throughout the calendar year that include scholarship help, FREE tax preparation for all enrolled students, and Financial Feud game nights in the residence halls. The Financial Cents program is housed within the Office of Student Academic Success at NIU. To learn more information and to check the current calendar of events, please visit our website at: www.niu.edu/financialcents.
Ask a Huskie

Orientation & Family Connections asked four current students to share a piece of advice with you and your student.

Jackie: How did you find balance between having fun and studying/projects?

When you go off to college, the main goal is to graduate with a degree. At school I aim to accomplish that goal, but I still want to have fun and make memories that will last me a lifetime. I find a balance between the two by organizing my schedule down to what I need to do first in order to do what I want to do. Getting good grades is a great motivator to study/do homework. So when I have finished my assignments in the time I set aside for school, I find myself having a lot of free time.

Sam: As a transfer student, why was getting involved on campus important to you?

As a transfer student from a community college, I knew that getting involved with something would really make my experience here at NIU more enjoyable. My previous institution was just “school” for me, and I missed out on a sense of community because my only involvement was going to class. There are so many things to do at NIU, and after finally realizing what organizations were the best fit for me, NIU became more than “school” for me. Rather than just a place to go attend class, it became a place I could grow in my faith, grow as a leader, and created an appreciation for a diverse community. Getting involved made NIU so much more than another “school” to me: NIU is “my school.”

Megan: Learning time management is important during your first year. What tips can you share with families to help encourage their student?

Time management is one of the most important skills needed to succeed as a college student. Having your family always there for you means so much. If I could give families any tips to encourage their students it would definitely be to check in on your student regularly, so they know you are there for them. Whether it’s random phone calls throughout the week or even a text, it goes a long way. Also, I would say it is important to encourage your student to stay organized with their school work and upcoming events. Time management is a skill most students take time to develop; however, helping your student along the way will only be beneficial.

Nick: What are three things NIU students should do before they graduate?

Attend an NIU Football game! There is nothing better than the feeling you get from all the fans when you enter Huskie Stadium.

Actively get involved in an organization Unless you have an active role in an organization, you don’t really get the full experience.

Make sure to check out the DeKalb/Sycamore community One amazing event I go to every year is CornFest (every August)! Take advantage of the community—lots going on!
Advice to Family Members from NIU Alumni

Orientation & Family Connections asked NIU Alumni to share with us how being involved at NIU has helped to shape them in their current profession. We also asked them to tell us how their family supported them with involvement at NIU.

By: Drew Herrman, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, English major, Class of 2012

I think I can safely say that had I not become involved as an active student leader at NIU, I would be in a very different place in my life today. I took the proverbial leap my sophomore year when I became a community advisor in the residence halls, and after discovering how satisfying overcoming a challenge outside of the classroom could be, I joined just about anything I could find. Throughout my training and on-the-job interactions in these positions, I learned and practiced conflict-resolution techniques, presentation skills, best practices for supervision, training methods—I could probably continue the list ad infinitum, but I’m sure the message is clear: these experiences were incredibly valuable.

As a high school English teacher, I draw upon those skills on a daily basis when teaching lessons, interacting with students, and collaborating with my co-workers. During the creative speaking class that I teach, I find myself referencing my time as an orientation leader and coordinator as I remind my students that they need to make every word, gesture, and smile as authentic and polished as they possibly can. When introducing group work, I recall my training on how to effectively deal with interpersonal conflict: try to stay calm and focus on what the group can do to improve for next time. It’s really hard to say where the influence from my time as a student leader stops and the influence from my time in the classroom starts, but I think that’s how that dynamic should play out, with both sets of experiences building off of each other.

I would be remiss (and potentially ridiculed) if I didn’t acknowledge the part my family played in all of this. My mother, father, and sister were integral to my success at NIU and beyond, as they have always been available and willing to discuss my anxieties, failures, and accomplishments. I remember calling my mom when I was deciding whether or not to apply for the community advisor position and asking her if she thought it was a good idea, to which she replied, “What do you have to lose?” “Well, it is a pretty hefty time commitment,” came my retort. She barely even paused before asking, “But what do you have to gain?” Well played, Mom, well played.
Important Numbers

Admissions Office: 815-753-0446
Athletic Ticket Office: 815-752-6800
Bursar’s Office: 815-753-1885
Campus Recreation Services: 815-753-0231
Counseling & Student Development Center: 815-753-1206
Financial Aid: 815-753-1395
Health Services: 815-753-1311
Holmes Student Center Hotel Reservations: 815-753-1444
Housing & Dining: 815-753-1525
Information: 815-753-1000
NIU Police (non-emergency): 815-753-1212
Registration & Records: 815-753-0681
Student Employment: 815-753-1394
Housing & Dining: 815-753-1525
Student Involvement & Leadership Development: 815-753-1421