

A FRESH START **NEWSLETTER**

A NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS OF FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

Published by the Providence College Parent Program

Fall 2009

Greetings Parents!

The first semester of college signals the beginning a new semester and a “Fresh Start” for both students and parents. For first year students, it can be a time of both excitement and anxiety as they begin to explore their academic environment and cultivate new relationships. For parents, it is a time to review your role as you encourage your student’s intellectual risk-taking and search for self-discovery.

The information provided in this newsletter is designed to enhance your knowledge of the Providence College experience. Hopefully, it will also serve as a useful tool to help you to provide the necessary support as your student journeys through this next academic year.

I look forward to connecting with you as we work collaboratively in the best interest of our students. For more information about resources for parents, I invite you to visit our website at www.providence.edu/PCParents



Let The Journey Begin!

Jacqueline Kiernan MacKay
Associate Dean
Director of PC Parent Program

Timely Tips From The Freshman Dean - Dr. Wanda S. Ingram, Sr. Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies

Now that classes have begun for new students, adjustment to college involves many new realizations. Strategies that worked so well during high school may not be as effective. As the semester picks up speed, erroneous beliefs about college are dispelled, but need to be replaced with new coping skills. If students encounter a problem, it is realistic to expect second-guessing about their choice of college, major, and courses. It is all part of the “transition to college”.

Parents can help in the following ways:

- Reinforce your student’s independence but be open and honest about your values and expectations.
- Realize you don’t have to know everything—“First-Year Transitions” is a great resource for identifying issues and learning about resources.
- Before you act, ask yourself if your actions are fostering dependence or independence
- Encourage your student to focus on self-awareness re: strengths and weaknesses, learning styles, test taking skills, time management, and organizational skills
- Try to keep your sense of humor.

Keeping the lines of communication open helps both students and parents cope with the many obstacles and challenges that college brings. So much growth occurs in such a short time. Enjoy the experience!

Academic Integrity - Fr. Mark Nowel O.P., Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies

As a Catholic, Dominican College, Providence College is committed to the intellectual and moral development of our students. We are a community of scholars and learners who respect the academic integrity of the global academic community to which the College belongs. With that in mind, the College has developed a new "Academic Integrity Policy, which has been implemented this fall.

During orientation, students had the opportunity to learn about the new policy and the College's strong commitment to honesty in the classroom. As a parent of a first year student you can play an important role in helping students to protect their own academic work and the academic work of others. Here are some helpful guidelines to assist parents in this process:

- Encourage students to take responsibility for their learning. Taking a pro-active approach to coursework will help them to be more engaged in their academics.
- Urge students to ask for help from their professor when they are unclear about an assignment. Faculty want students to be successful.
- Encourage students to prioritize assignments and to be aware of deadlines, citing sources, appropriate vs. inappropriate paraphrasing. Last minute cramming and "cutting-corners" can sometimes lead to students engaging in academic misconduct, or to turn in an assignment which compromises acceptable writing standards.
- Recommend the use of academic support services. The Office of Academic Services offers individual assistance and workshops for students throughout the year. The Writing Center is available to help students at any stage of the writing process, from invention to final editing.
- Read the policy and take some time to discuss it with your student.

A summary of the new policy can be found at: <http://www.providence.edu/Dean+of+Undergraduate+Studies/Academic+Policies/Academic+Misconduct.htm>

The complete Academic Integrity policy may be found at: <http://www.providence.edu/Dean+of+Undergraduate+Studies/Academic+Policies/Academic+Integrity.htm>

The Office of Academic Services - Bryan Marinelli, Director

Regardless of your son's or daughter's academic success in high school, the transition to college course work is a major adjustment for most first year students. In many instances, they will need to reexamine their study habits and plan for change. As our best advocates, we hope that you will encourage them to make the Office of Academic Services (OAS) as part of their plan. Services include:

Tutorial Services -- Individual and group tutoring sessions are available in most subject areas, including the Development of Western Civilization.

Writing Center -- The Writing Center is available to help students at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming a topic to polishing a final draft.

Workshops and Academic Mentoring -- The OAS offers several workshops and programs including time management, test taking, and course-specific study strategies. Students may also contact the OAS (865-2667) to set up individual workshops and ongoing mentoring with one of our professional staff members.

More information about the OAS can be found at: <http://www.providence.edu/oas>

Living On Campus-It's All About Community! - The Office of Residence Life



Aquinas Hall

We want nothing more than for your son or daughter to be an accomplished student and a fulfilled member of the Providence College community. The services and programs offered through the Office of Residence Life can help to create a smooth transition and a positive living environment as your student settles in to his or her new "home-away-from-home".

One of the most important ways that parents can help to support this adjustment process is to urge students to take advantage of all the resources which are provided by the Office of Residence Life. Encourage them to follow-through on their roommate and community agreements, participate in community programming and service initiatives, and attend floor meetings. Remind them that their resident assistant can provide an extra measure of support and assistance, especially during those first few months.

Finally, urge your son or daughter to practice the **"Three C's of Community Living"**—**Communication, Cooperation, and Compromise!** They can go a long way in fostering an environment of mutual respect and support.

Adjusting to Change - Dr. John Hogan, Director of the Personal Counseling Center

"We want to help parents, to help students, to help themselves. An important part of this process for parents is to encourage students to learn to identify and make use of campus resources."

-Jacqueline Kiernan MacKay

Now that the semester has begun there has been time for both your sons and daughters as well as you, their parents, to begin to adjust to the new reality of the change of physical location, change of environment, change in expectations, change in communication with each other, to mention a few changes. Change always comes with the challenge of letting go of what was and embracing what is becoming now and going into the future. Some of us, whether young or more senior, embrace change easily. For many, the challenges can be both hurdles and pot holes.

The Personal Counseling Center is a resource primarily for students where they can learn to better manage obstacles and develop the skills they need to be successful young adults in this new and different environment, College. The obstacles may be developmental adjustments such as dealing with homesickness or loneliness while making new friends. The obstacles may be or become more serious mental health needs such as depression or anxiety.

As a parent you can play an important role in helping your son or daughter during this critical adjustment phase. When difficulties arise, recommend that your student seek out the services of the Personal Counseling Center. Additionally, we invite parents to make use of the counseling staff as consultants on how to address or react to the adjustment or mental health needs of their student.

If you have concerns or would like to know more about the services of the Personal Counseling Center, please call 401-865-2343 and ask to speak with a counselor.

"Overcome the urge to take charge if something goes wrong. When talking to your student, make sure he or she can answer "who", "what", "where", "when", and "how" questions. When did it happen? Where can your student go for help? Who should your student speak to? What can that person do to help? How can this be resolved?"

Source: "Let the Journey Begin: A Parent's Monthly Guide to the College Experience", J. MacKay and W. Ingram, Houghton-Mifflin, New York, 2002.

**Office of Career Services-Not Just for Seniors! - Dr. John Nonnamaker,
Executive Director**

According to a recent survey of the Providence College Class of 2009, parents are the most important source of career advice for students. When asked to name all the people to whom they turn to for career advice, over 84% of graduating students identified their parents as compared to only 44% who listed the Office of Career Services. This might be partly due to the myth that Career Services is only for seniors who know exactly what they want to do. In fact, career development takes place across all 4 years, both inside and outside of the classroom. Our office serves all undergraduate students and has a variety of services and programs geared toward students early in the career development process.

The mission of the Office of Career Services (OCS) is to help students identify, enhance and accomplish career development, internship, job search and educational goals, in the transition from freshman year through senior year and from college to career and further education. We need your help in carrying out our mission. As their most important source of career advice, parents can help their student prioritize this important aspect of college. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers there are a number of ways parents can help their student with career planning. Some of these include:

- Encouraging your sons or daughters to visit the Career Office early and often
- Allowing them to take responsibility for decision making
- Emphasizing the importance of internships and co-curricular involvement
- Exposing your student to the world of work
- Teaching them the value of networking
- Helping the Career Office by listing internships or full time opportunities through your work

To learn more about the resources and programs available through the Office of Career Services please visit:
www.providence.edu/career

We look forward to partnering with you and welcome your input and support.



SAVE THE DATE!
FRESHMAN FAMILY WEEKEND
November 6-8 2009

<http://www.providence.edu/About+PC/College+Events/Freshman+Family++Weekend/>



Providence College's Response to Flu Pandemics

Providence College has implemented numerous proactive measures to combat all influenza strains. These include reminding everyone about proper cough etiquette and hand washing, locating germicidal soap dispensers and alcohol-based hand sanitizer in residence hall bathrooms and public restrooms campus wide, and installing hand sanitizer stations in dining areas.

Earlier outbreaks of the H1N1 virus have been the most virulent among individuals age 6 months to 24 years – which is why this health alert is of concern on college campuses.

We strongly advise you and your student to consult with your family physician about appropriate flu shots and inquire about the availability of the H1N1 vaccines. Federal and state health officials are recommending that individuals at highest risk – those with persistent illnesses such as chronic respiratory disease, diabetes, heart disease, and suppressed immune systems – be vaccinated first. If your student has a high-risk medical condition, your family physician can help guide you in making an informed decision about inoculations and will emphasize how important it is for high-risk individuals to seek medical care at the first sign of flu symptoms.

We will keep the campus community regularly updated about a flu outbreak, using all available communication methods. Important information about prevention tips, flu symptoms, and state and federal resources are posted – and will be updated as needed – on the College's Web site at: www.providence.edu/H1N1.

Parents for Providence Association

All parents of first year students are invited to become active in the Parents for Providence Association. The Association encourages volunteerism among the parent community in the areas of career services, admissions, fundraising, and much more.

Volunteer opportunities are outlined on the Family Information Survey you received in the orientation packet. Have you returned the survey? If not – there's still time! Please visit the Parents for Providence Association at www.providence.edu/parentsforprovidence to complete the online form in order to volunteer in your area of interest.

To learn more about Parents for Providence, please contact Alicia Cipriano at 401.865.1296.

You've Got Questions; We've Got The Answers!

Just Visit: www.providence.edu/pcparentsask

THE PROVIDENCE COLLEGE PARENT PROGRAM

Information. Education. Collaboration.

Feel free to contact us at:

parents@providence.edu