Dear Families,

One aspect of my job that I love is teaching a First-Year Experience course. This class is a one-credit hour course for freshmen that teaches them the tools necessary to successfully transition from high school to university. One of the most important topics that I cover is persistence. At the beginning of the semester, students are excited and eager to start, but throughout the term many get “burned out.” This is a term I am sure you begin hearing around midterms from your student. The work load can be difficult at times and it is common to feel overwhelmed. Now is the time to be proactive. Find out from your student what interests them in their courses, and continually check in. When they speak of that “burned out” feeling, remind them that there are things to be excited about. Sometimes that friendly reminder is all it takes to get them through the rest of the semester!

Sincerely,

Craig Lennon
Assistant Dean of Students

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Melissa Lopez is the Director of Student Health Services. She has been a part of the UB family for almost 10 years! Melissa says, “Every day I come in is an adventure and working with college students is such a pleasure.” The vision of the Department is a healthy campus community that promotes a healthy lifestyle for each student while enhancing and supporting academic success. Its mission is to promote learning and the well-being and development of students through providing high quality, culturally competent, patient care, and through providing evidence-based health education programs to the campus community. Helping Melissa keep students healthy are her staff members: Fran, their concerned and caring nurse; Kira, an experienced and skilled nurse practitioner; Jen, their friendly and detail-oriented office manager; and Dr. Nalini Anand, the incredibly competent and knowledgeable medical director.

Melissa’s favorite part of the job is working with students. She sees many opportunities for students to learn about how to take care of their body, mind, and spirit while they are here in college. Sometimes valuable life lessons happen outside of the classroom. Student Health Services plans many opportunities and initiatives to keep students engaged and aware of health issues and keeping the campus healthy. For example, there are many different events and programs throughout the year addressing risky behaviors such as alcohol, drugs, sexual assault prevention, STDs, HIV, and tobacco. The events might take place in small group settings, in the classrooms, health fairs, or awareness campaigns. The most rewarding part of Melissa’s position is that it is truly a privilege working with such a diverse and exciting student body. “Watching students graduate every year brings tears to my eyes,” Melissa says.

Melissa’s advice to parents is to “Let your student know that you can continue to act as a trusted mentor and guide, but give them a chance to navigate difficult situations independently and be accountable. Know that there are professionals here on campus that you can reach out to if you notice any red flags. You have spent many years preparing your child for this moment — enjoy it and celebrate your student’s successes.”

From Fast Web written by Dr. Lynn F. Jacobs and Jeremy Hyman

10 Tips for Parents of College Students

1. Don’t pick your child’s courses. Many parents feel the need to help their student select from among the thousands of choices. Don’t. An important part of getting settled into college is finding the courses that best suit the student’s interests and best satisfy the college requirements. Let your student’s academic adviser do his or her job.

2. Don’t install a GPS on your student. Many well-meaning parents want to track their student’s every movement at college. Resist the temptation to call five times a day on your cellphone. Let your student develop a sense of independence and personal responsibility.

3. Help your student develop his or her passion. The single most important thing in college is to help your student develop a true interest that he or she can enjoy throughout life. Let your child grow into his or her passion. Do not pressure him or her to major too early, or to pick a field solely for its job prospects. Let your student spend the first two years of college exploring many possibilities, without undue direction from you.

4. Don’t edit your child’s papers. In many families, parents are used to “helping” with homework, especially when paper-writing time comes around. In college, the student is supposed to be working on his or her own, 100 percent. Resist the temptation to pitch in and just look over a draft of the paper. You could be leading your student astray.

5. Encourage your student to go see the professor. One of the hidden resources at every college is a professor’s office hours. A required part of every professor’s job, the three or four office hours each week are the time that professors are available for one-on-one conferences to help students with their papers and tests. Encourage your student to avail himself or herself of this free service as often as appropriate. You’ve paid for it, why not use it?

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If you are seeking out internships, make sure you are being proactive about it. Using job sites such as Indeed.com, Ubjob.net, or attending job fairs whether on campus or off.

—Ashely Jean Louis
6. Don’t panic too soon. In most college courses, there are many graded pieces of work — quizzes, homework, a midterm, a research paper, lab reports, a term paper, and a final exam. As a result, each piece of work counts a small percentage of the final grade. What’s more, the earlier pieces count less than the rest, since professors want to give students a chance to test the waters without great risk to their final grade. Upshot? If your child gets a bad grade on some early quiz or assignment, don’t send in the troops. Most students will do better as the course goes on.

7. Never call the professor, department chair, or dean. There are no parent-teacher conferences in college. Professors don’t want to hear from parents. Your child is now an adult, pursuing his or her own future. Don’t get in the way.

8. Protect the last month of the semester. In many college courses, up to 70 percent of the course grade is awarded in the last month of the semester. Do not distract your child with winter vacation plans, worries about finances or what to major in during the crucial November-December and April-May periods. These are “make or break” times for your child. Respect them.

9. Talk about the realities of excessive drinking, drugs, and partying. Many college students experiment with campus drinking, recreational drugs, and too much partying. First-year students can quickly get in over their heads and wind up causing all sorts of danger — both to themselves and to others. Educate your children about the importance of acting responsibly — even when their peers are acting irresponsibly.

10. Direct your student to appropriate campus resources. Sometimes in spite of your best efforts, a child has difficulty in college — either academic or personal. Alert your kid to the many college services available free of charge. The writing center, the counseling center, the health service, the international student center, the academic advancement center, the center for students with disabilities. All of these are available to help your student on a moment’s notice. If your student is in trouble, consult the college website or catalogue for a complete listing of the college resources. Then encourage your student to go.

www.fastweb.com/college-search/articles/ten-tips-for-parents-of-college-kids