The Start of the Spring Semester

Happy New Year! In the fall editions, we discussed that your student would be developing a sense of belonging, academic competence, and career direction. As students begin the spring semester, they may find that they have to re-establish and redefine themselves in some of these areas. The second semester is also a time where students build on what they learned during the fall, or it is a time when they may face a new set of challenges altogether.

Develop a Sense of Belonging

Your student may have had some friends that did not return for the spring semester. He or she may have realized that his or her friends were not a positive influence on academic success. Spring semester is a time where friendships are often redefined. This can be stressful for your student and can be much like the beginning of school.

While students hopefully got involved with a club or organization last semester, students should begin to explore clubs and organizations for leadership opportunities. Most organizations hold elections during the spring semester, so this is an ideal time for your student to pursue a role in a student organization. It is never too late to join a student organization! If your student did not get involved with an organization last semester, he or she can always take advantage of them now. Students can explore clubs and organizations at eastcarolina.orgsync.com.

Students receive “Pirate 4-1-1” emails twice a month alerting them to events happening on campus, as well as regular messages from groups like the Student Government Association. Students should use these as a starting point to find academic activities like study skills workshops, social activities such as weekly movies, and career activities such as the career fairs.

Develop Academic Competence

Your student is taking a new set of classes this semester. He or she should be reminded that there are many campus resources available to assist in his or her success. The Office of Student Transitions encourages students to take advantage of the resources on campus, such as the Writing Centers (see page 4), the Math Lab, the Pirate Tutoring Center, and various tutors across campus. Students are welcome to contact our office for direction.

In the Office of Student Transitions, we have Semester at a Glance Calendars that are available to students who come by to pick them up. These calendars allow students to view the entire semester at once in order to see important upcoming tests or assignments. They also include important academic dates of which your student should be aware.

Develop a Sense of Direction

The Student Employment Office serves as a clearinghouse for student employment and can help students find jobs on campus and off campus. The Career Center is often thought of only when a student is about to graduate. However, The Career Center can help a student seek co-op opportunities and internships. The Career Center also offers resume writing workshops, practice interviews, and career fairs. Part time jobs, internships, and co-op opportunities are ideal ways for students to “test out” a major to see if it is the right fit for them. Discovering that their chosen major is the right fit can help students confirm their sense of direction.
College Spotlight: College of Business

There's a new direction in business leadership at ECU. By building on the solid foundation laid throughout the past 75 years, we're now doing even more to prepare the next generation of leaders.

For decades, the College of Business has done an excellent job teaching students the technical material necessary for success in the business world. In today's economy, though, that is no longer enough. A revamped curriculum for undergraduate students now emphasizes leadership, professionalism, and communication skills. While not compromising our long history of teaching strong technical skills, the Leadership and Professional Development program teaches students how to “Think, Act, and Lead” regardless of their job title or position. The bar is set high for students, with personalized support coming from a network of mentors, advisors, and coaches. It is a groundbreaking program – the first of its kind.

Throughout a student's time at ECU, specialized leadership courses give important insight into today's business world and the skills needed to be competitive. Also, we recently established the college's first-ever living-learning community – a place where business students have the option of joining a unique, inclusive residential learning experience that connects classroom learning with residence life. Students proposed this idea last year as something that would add value to the ECU experience, and now it is a reality.

To give you a bit of history, the College of Business has prepared future business leaders to serve eastern North Carolina, the state, and beyond since 1936. Our college has been continuously accredited by The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) for more than 40 years, underscoring our commitment to quality.

We continue to grow substantially and now have more than 2,900 undergraduate students, 900 graduate students, and 130 faculty members, and we offer 30 degrees, majors, and concentrations. More students are enrolled in the ECU College of Business than in any other business school in the state. Our college offers undergraduate degrees in accounting, finance, management, marketing, supply chain management, and management information systems. As a four-year college, undergraduate students who qualify can enter the College of Business at any time. We also offer a minor in business administration, which complements any non-business major or degree. Additionally, our graduate business programs further prepare students for careers as effective and responsible leaders. Whether seeking a Master of Business Administration or a Master of Science in Accounting, we have a program that will accelerate any career.

Individuals with a College of Business education are highly employable in a wide range of business careers – from advertising to auditing. Our graduates work for companies large and small in North Carolina, across the country, and around the world.

Our college also enjoys a diverse and talented faculty. Instruction is provided by qualified full-time professors, not graduate teaching assistants. Students benefit from our small class sizes as well as our high touch, close knit environment. We also offer students opportunities to get involved through our numerous student organizations.

Choosing which degree to pursue is one of the most important decisions that your son or daughter will make. A business administration degree provides a broad learning base, laying a foundation for numerous career opportunities ahead.

For more information, please contact us at cobadvising@ecu.edu, or visit us online at www.business.ecu.edu.

The College of Business at ECU. Your bridge to a professional career.

By Jennifer Brezina, College of Business
March 7—Last Day to Drop—What Does this Mean?

The “drop deadline”—the last day an undergraduate can drop a term-length course (or withdraw from school) without a grade on his or her transcript—will occur on March 7 by 5:00pm. Entering freshmen receive 4 total drops upon enrolling in ECU, a sophomore enrolling at ECU receives 3, a junior receives 2, and a senior receives 1. These drops can be used throughout a student’s entire time at ECU, but a student never receives more. If a student drops a lecture and a lab at the same time it counts as one drop. If a student drops the lecture and lab at different times it counts as 2 drops. If courses are co-requisites then they must be dropped at the same time (thus counting as one drop). For clarification of this policy, students should consult their course catalog and/or academic advisor.

Why would a student use a drop? Sometimes students want to drop a class because they have done poorly on an exam. Students should meet with their professor to discuss where they stand in the course and the possibilities and strategies needed to improve in the course or to get a recommendation. If a professor tells them to drop, then they should highly consider dropping the course. Other times students may wish to drop because they feel their overall academic load is too much, and they want to focus on their other classes. This may be a wise decision depending on the course they want to drop. Students should speak with their academic advisor to determine if this is the best course of action.

What other things should be considered before a student uses a drop? Students should discuss using a drop with their academic advisor. Academic advisors will be able to help students determine if dropping a course could have an effect on the sequencing of courses for their major or towards graduation. Financial aid should also be considered. If a student falls below full time (below 12 hours), his or her financial aid may be reduced, and the student may be required to return a certain amount of the aid received. And finally, consider insurance policies. If your student falls below full-time, will he or she still be covered on any insurance policies you currently hold for the student? Typically these policies are only valid if a student is enrolled as full time (12 hours).

Course drops can be very useful for students during their academic journey at ECU. However, students should use them wisely and make sure all factors are considered before choosing to use a drop.

Important Dates

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 14</td>
<td>Classes begin</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 18</td>
<td>Last day for late registration and schedule changes (drop and add) by 5:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 21</td>
<td>State Holiday (no classes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>Preferred date to file FASFA financial aid form (<a href="http://www.fafsa.gov">www.fafsa.gov</a>). Financial Aid forms must be filled out each year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>Last day for undergraduate students to drop term-length courses or withdraw from school without grades by 5:00pm. Block courses may be dropped only during the first 50% of regularly scheduled class meetings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 10-17</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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Support for Writing on Campus

Writing well is vital to student success here at ECU and beyond. While writing is an important mode for communicating with others, it is also a primary tool for learning and thinking. Writing helps us discover new ideas, think more clearly about concepts and problems, and make meaning for ourselves in a complex world.

Here at ECU, we are committed to helping students develop effective writing skills right from the start. As part of the Foundations Curriculum, students typically take two composition courses, English 1100 and 1200, to learn about college-level writing and research. As they move towards graduation, students are required to take a minimum of two additional writing-intensive courses, one of which must be in their chosen major, that will foster more advanced writing skills. These writing-intensive courses help prepare students to actively and knowledgeably participate in their chosen majors and disciplines, while providing opportunities to practice the kinds of writing they will be expected to do in graduate school or in their future careers.

While students and graduates are expected to write well, we know that writing well means developing flexible strategies to meet the needs of different audiences at different times and for different purposes. This development can be challenging, which is why ECU offers support for all its student writers on campus in the form of two writing centers.

While students are taking English 1100 or 1200, they are encouraged to work one-on-one with trained graduate student consultants in the English Department's First-Year Writing Studio (FYWS), located in Bate 2005. The consultants are familiar with common expectations and assignments first-year students will encounter. The consultants can also help them learn a language for talking about their writing, while developing flexible writing strategies that are useful beyond the end of a single session. The FYWS works with students to prepare them for the more advanced college writing they'll be doing for the next few years.

In upper-level courses, students will continue to encounter new writing styles and content—tackling chemistry lab reports, marketing plans, and literature reviews—and applying strategies learned in composition classes to new situations. Designed to help with this challenge, the University Writing Center (UWC) is a separate space on campus, located in Joyner Library, with a staff of trained undergraduate and graduate peer consultants that work with students writing in any course on campus. Students still get one-on-one help with their writing but from peer consultants more familiar with the styles and expectations of writing in different disciplines.

Both the FYWS and the UWC have an online scheduling system that all students can use. All they need to do to make an appointment is go to http://ecu.mywconline.com and select what center and time that works for them. For more information about the FYWS or the UWC, visit us on the web or contact us by phone. We look forward to supporting student writers and helping them recognize the power and importance of writing in the university and beyond.

First-Year Writing Studio
http://www.ecu.edu/cs-cas/engl/writingstudio/
252-328-6399

University Writing Center
http://www.ecu.edu/writing/writingcenter/
252-328-2820
March 1 is the preferred deadline for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the 2013-2014 school year. A new FAFSA must be completed for each school year – but you can update the information from last year if you applied.

You can apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Please know when you apply on-line you will need your electronic signature or PIN – be sure to apply for one now – even if you are not ready to complete the FAFSA today.

You will want to include East Carolina University as a school eligible to receive your information: ECU’s code is 002923.

The FAFSA website (http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) has a wealth of information. The handbook “Funding Education Beyond High School: The Guide to Federal Student Aid” can be found online and is also a great resource.

ECU Scholarships are offered through the different colleges on campus. Information on available scholarships, grants, loans, and other assistance can be found online at http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/financial/availableaid.cfm.

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Write Where You Belong

Helping Students Become Better Writers through the Quality Enhancement Plan

“Will your writing take you where you want to go?” That’s the question ECU’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) asks students to ponder. Required for institutional accreditation through the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, a QEP involves the design, implementation, and assessment of a focused set of initiatives to improve student learning over a five year period.

ECU’s QEP, “Write Where You Belong,” focuses on enhancing students’ writing abilities. More specifically, the goal of this multi-faceted plan is to integrate, align, and reinforce writing instruction for students from the day that they begin their first classes at ECU until the day that they complete their degrees and transition into the workplace or advanced study.

Under the direction of Associate Professor of English Wendy Sharer, the QEP Council—a group of over thirty-five faculty, staff, and students from across the university—has spent the past year researching best practices in college writing instruction, investigating the current writing abilities of our students, and gathering information from faculty, staff, alumni, and local professionals about the kinds of writing students need to succeed at ECU and beyond.

“The Quality Enhancement Plan provides an opportunity for faculty from across the university to have discussions about the teaching of writing,” said Dr. Michelle Eble, director of graduate studies in the Department of English. “We sometimes forget how hard writing can be, and when we don't do it regularly or we don't have specific reasons to do it, it's even harder.”

By Dr. Wendy Sharer, Department of English

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Financial Aid Information

Office of Student Transitions, 210 Mendenhall Student Center
East Carolina University, 252-328-4173, www.ecu.edu/ostfyp
There has been much talk recently of the “helicopter parent”—termed for parents that seem to hover over their children and their lives. As colleges are deciding how to interact with the helicopter parent, they are finding that hovering may not be all bad. The National Survey of Student Engagement recently reported that students are more satisfied with their education and engage in deeper learning activities if their parents are more involved. These students had frequent contact with their parents and/or guardians.

In a recent USA Today article, Chrissy Coley, a previous college administrator, stated “In many ways it’s good that students want to stay in close contact with their parents, that they respect their parents’ opinions.” But, she says, once a student enters college, “that relationship needs to loosen up.” You are probably still working at finding the balance between hovering and supporting your student. You can assist in the growth of your student by staying involved and asking questions but also allowing your student to solve some problems on his or her own. Parents can often serve as a resource to share ideas or get some direction but encourage the student to follow through on his or her own.