Summer Preparations: Equipping students to thrive

Find time to discuss the upcoming transitions with your student as they prepare for college. Ask these questions below, which will help open up communication and set the tone for upcoming changes.

1. **“What do you expect the first-year to look like?”**

Imagining what the college experience will be like will allow your child to create expectations of his/her experience and strategize decisions that align with their values. Be open to discussing topics such as friends, academics, dating, alcohol, visiting home, social life, faith, activities, and experiences outside the classroom. Without having these conversations beforehand, they may not anticipate some of the changes that occur as they adjust to being away from home.

2. **“What is your strategy for success?”**

Without a game plan it’s hard to turn expectations into reality. Help your child see the future in terms of the steps it takes to reach their goals. If your child hasn’t quite thought about this yet, be patient. During the transition, your child may need time to celebrate past accomplishments before getting ready for new ones. Remind them of their ability to make it happen.

3. **“How have you been able to connect with people in the past?”**

Help your child prepare for new relationships and the possibilities to connect with new friends on campus. They will be surrounded by peers that are also eager to get to know them. Remind them that they won’t be alone when they get here. We’ve designed opportunities to help them make those initial connections to other students within the university community.

4. **“How much time are you going to give yourself to make it all happen?”**

Goals don’t usually happen in one week, one month, or even one year. Encourage your child to be patient with themselves. Students that set their expectations too high or too fast might risk disappointment if they don’t reach their expectations right away. Help them set realistic expectations for themselves. Reinforce your student’s ability to endure and overcome challenges. Specifically remind them of times you’ve seen them succeed and point out how they accomplished their goals.

5. **“How else can I support you before you are sent off?”**

Asking how you can help sends a message that you are there for your student, but more importantly, you’re not assuming your child needs your guidance. Allow your student to begin to speak about their transition. Allow them to share how they feel about going off to college. Begin to let them take responsibility for their own preparations, while knowing that you are fully behind them.

Remind students to review our [New Student Booklet](#) and [New Student Checklist](#) prior to arrival.