Greetings

Dear Bridgewater College Families,

Hello, and welcome to Bridgewater College! This edition of the Eagle Families newsletter will focus on information that you, as parents or guardians, and your student can use as you prepare to enter this next stage of life – college. You’ll find information about packing for dorm life, transitioning to living away from home, academic support, textbook purchasing, tips for parents, and more.

The Family Council will serve both as a source of information and as a way for you to get involved here at BC. Best wishes to you and your student as you navigate new waters and embark on new adventures, and I hope that you enjoy the rest of your summer!

Suzanne Bushman
Presidential Spouse
Chair, BC Family Council

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST FOR YOUR STUDENT’S ROOM:

- Pillows and Bedding (XL Twin Size 84” x 36”)
- Towels
- Toiletries
- First Aid Kit with Personal Medications
- Bath Tote or Bucket
- Wastebasket
- Cleaning Supplies
- Laundry Detergent (for high efficiency washing machines, NO pods)
- Laundry Bag or Basket
- Clothing Drying Rack, Ironing Board & Iron
- Desk and/or Floor Lamp (No Halogen Lamps)
- Alarm Clock
- Dry Erase Board for Door
- Microwave (800 watt maximum, only 1 per double room or 2 per triple or quad)
- Refrigerator (4.3 cubic feet maximum, only 1 per double room or 2 per triple or quad)
- TV (Cable ready, recommended 1 per room) & Cable Wire
- Computer
- Surge Protector Power Strip
- Flashlight & Batteries
- Carpet or Area Rug
- Handi-tak (or other post-hanging product that will not damage paint)
- Fan (Geisert Hall and Wakeman Hall are air conditioned)
- School Supplies
- Bike and Lock (if desired)

Student Resources

Chip Studwell, Director of Academic Support cstudwel@bridgewater.edu, 540-828-5370
Paige French, Director of Health Services pfrench@bridgewater.edu, 540-828-5384
Randy Hook, Director of Counseling Services rhook@bridgewater.edu, 540-828-5358
Sherry Talbott, Director of Career Services stalbott@bridgewater.edu, 540-828-5369
John Manson, Director of Mediation and Conduct Services jmanson@bridgewater.edu, 540-828-5324
Ed Huffstetler, Director of Academic Advising and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs ehuffste@bridgewater.edu, 540-828-5332
Stephanie Wilson, Director of the Center for Cultural Engagement swilson@bridgewater.edu, 540-828-5749

IMPORTANT DATES:

- New Student Move-In August 22
- New Student Orientation August 22-25
- Fall Registration August 25
- First Day of Fall Classes August 26

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

OCTOBER 3-4

Family Weekend ’14
Chair, BC Family Council

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Beginning the Journey
CHIP STUDWELL, DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC SUPPORT

The beginning of college is full of excitement and challenge! But if you were to put your feelings into words right now, would they be something like this?

- “I wonder what experiences and relationships college will offer my student.”
- “If my student is away at college and I’m not there, who is going to make sure they get their work done?”
- “Will they get up in time to go to class?”

This uncertainty and anxiety about what lies ahead can affect your ability to enjoy this time. So what can you do to help minimize the fears?

Acknowledge that going to college is a big change for both you and your student. Acknowledge your thoughts and feelings about missing your student, but be careful not to project your doubts onto them. Feelings of uncertainty or anxiety do not mean our kids are not okay. Take time to relate to your student without trying to get a message across.

Growth opportunities for our students result in the development of effectively functioning adults. I have learned that while I wanted to freeze my girls at every stage in their development, I always marveled at the next stage, because with their increased capability came a deeper and richer relationship. In the training ground of college, students learn to manage, make decisions, cope and persist.

Organization, time management and work completion are the keys to handling college work. These keys are essential to effective learning and reducing stress. As a student, I studied for tests on the national day of test preparation – the night before – and then wondered why I had not done very well!

Here are some services we offer that can help your student succeed:

- **Study groups and tutors** – Setting up two hours per week to review course information with a study group reinforces material and prepares students for new material. If needed, consider requesting a tutor.
- **Academic coach program** – Academic coaches meet with the student twice weekly to assist the student in getting all tests, papers and assignments in a planner. They break tasks into specific, doable steps and create a goal time for task completion, while assisting the student with an assignment so each session results in completed work.
- **Disability services** – My experience is that students with learning differences or differences in any area – physical, psychological, neurological, medical, social – are more successful in college when they utilize their accommodations and follow through with them. If you and your child need to make any arrangements for accommodations, schedule an appointment with me as soon as possible to submit appropriate documentation and to discuss services, accommodations, and academic advising for the coming semester.

For further information on academic support services, tutoring, academic coaches, disability services or to schedule an appointment, please contact me. I wish you my best and look forward to hearing from you.

Chip Studwell, Ed.D., LPC
Director of Academic Support and Disability Services
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Online Textbook Ordering

Starting this fall, textbooks will be available for online purchase and will no longer be sold at the College’s store in the Kline Campus Center. This arrangement ensures needed books will be available, streamlines the ordering process and, most importantly, saves our students money. Your child will receive a communication from the Registrar’s Office in early August notifying them that class schedules are set and explaining how to order books. You should encourage your child to order books early and have them shipped to the home address. Books should then be brought with you for move-in day, ensuring students are ready with books in hand for the first day of classes.
Let Your Children Learn to Walk:  
PARENT-TO-PARENT ADVICE FROM JILL FRANCIS

As I was preparing to go away to college, my mother gave me some of the best advice she ever gave me, “Jill, college will be the best time of your life…enjoy it.” She continued, “This is the only time in your life that you will have quite a bit of freedom and very little responsibility. Life will be harder after college. Not bad, just harder.” She was right.

How do we help our children have four of the best years of their life? Here are my thoughts.

Humans have legs, not propellers. Let your children learn to walk.

No parent would stop their child from learning to walk. In fact, those first tottering steps are encouraged, applauded, recorded and posted online for the world to see! We instinctively know they are going to fall, and we let them, because we also instinctively know that standing back up and trying again is part of the learning process.

But something happens as our children begin school and grow toward adolescence and the teen years: many parents grow propellers. They go from letting their children fall and learn, to hovering and rescuing and impedance the growth process. If we never let our children fall down, they will never learn they can recover from a fall. If we always carry them, they will never develop the strength to stand on their own.

Take them to college, hug them, tell them you love them, and walk away. Then do not call or text them for two days…minimum. Warn them ahead of time, but leave your children alone. Let them figure out their first couple of days of college life without you. Let them fall and pick themselves up again.

If they have a problem, don’t solve it for them. Tell them you love them and know they can figure it out. Then say good-bye and hang up. Don’t hover. Don’t rescue. They can do this.

Then try to limit the amount of time you speak with them over the next few weeks.

It’s fine to call and text your child in moderation, but the propeller blades need to stop whirring.

Trust the faculty, staff and administration at Bridgewater College to help your child adjust to life without you. They are not only trained experts, but they genuinely care about your child. They are at Bridgewater because they have chosen to invest in young adults and want to help them succeed.

Encourage them to participate in college life.

The college experience is about so much more than the classroom. It is a microcosm of life! Bridgewater offers intercollegiate sports, intramural sports, clubs, social organizations, service organizations, student government, faith-based groups, music ensembles, and more. Participation in campus life will help your child discover new interests, make friends, find a place to belong, and create a campus “family.” When that happens, it’s much easier for them to stay when the going gets tough.

Encourage them to connect with an adult on campus.

Encourage your child to get to know a favorite professor, an advisor, or a member of the staff or administration. They are easily approachable and available to help your child develop into the person they are meant to be. Let them. If your child has an issue, tell them to seek help from the faculty and staff on campus. Wisdom is knowing when you need help and asking for it. Teach your child to seek wisdom as well as knowledge.

Don’t make grades the only focus.

Of course your child needs to study, but they also need to make friends, become involved in the campus community and have some fun along the way. If they can learn to balance study and campus life, they will be more likely to succeed. Take the pressure off before they go. Tell them you want good grades and that class attendance is required, but you don’t expect a 4.0 in their first semester. Help them strive for balance in academics and fun.

Let them choose their own major.

You know your child’s strengths, and you probably know which majors would be a natural fit. But let them choose. If they enjoy their classes, they will be more likely to study, to connect with their professors and to finish all four years. Even if it takes extra semester for them to figure it out, they need to “own” their major.

Let them go and think about your own future.

Our children are given to us for a season. Our purpose as parents is to raise them to be caring, capable, contributing members of society. College is a natural transition for them…and for us. As you prepare your child to leave home, prepare yourself as well. Plan to have a “life after children.” Even if you are launching your first and have more at home, begin to think of your future, not just theirs. Life doesn’t end when the children leave home, it simply changes. And perhaps, those years will be the best years of your life.
We’ll leave the light on for you

RANDY HOOK, DIRECTOR OF COUNSELING SERVICES

Believe me...this isn’t an advertisement for the nearest Motel 6. And I am certainly not advocating that you, as parents, spend the first weeks of your student’s freshman year camped out in a local hotel awaiting your child’s first distress call from their freshman dorm.

I remember being 18 years old and very excited about what the future held for me. My parents were equally excited, but I also remember sensing their protective concern about me heading out on my own into the world and to a school nearly 4½ hours away.

As I mentioned, the title above actually has nothing to do with Motel 6. It references a poem my father wrote for me a few days prior to my leaving for my freshman year entitled “I will leave a light on.” His message to me was no matter what I encountered “out there” that he and my mother would always be there for me. In re-reading that poem I was moved by the message “to immerse your entire spirit into the mystery of life,” and “as you walk out of my life and into your own.” As with many of you, my parents held great hope and excitement for my launching and a great, yet silent, wondering about the ability of my wings to fly.

So here are some thoughts for you and your new BC eagle.

Encourage your student to seek out campus activities and resources. There are a number of resources available to students at Bridgewater College: Health Services, Counseling Services, tutoring, the Writing Center, etc. Let them know that help is available when they need it.

Encourage your child by asking what they have been up to and whether or not they are meeting new people and experiencing new activities. The resident advisor on their hall can be a valuable peer resource in helping them to get connected to other students.

Remember the basics: Help them to remember to get sleep, eat well and not to put off getting medical attention when they don’t feel well. We all know that when we are more well-rested and healthy, we are also more engaged and successful at everything we do. Please encourage your child to balance “going out” and getting rest. In academics, encourage them to get started early and to avoid procrastinating on assignments.

Find a balance in communication between you and your child. Have a conversation with your child about how much they would like you to check in with them and what feels right to you. It can be done in a way that helps everyone remain connected, while encouraging connections to other support systems and people.

Please do not hesitate to contact me personally if you have concerns about your child’s well-being. I promise... “I will leave a light on.”

Randy Hook, LCSW
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