



ARKANSAS
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Parent Relations

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Thanksgiving

There will be
no classes
from 7:00 am
Wednesday,
November
23rd – Sunday,
November
27th.
Classes will
resume on
Monday,
November
28th.

INSIDE TRACK

October 2011

MID TERMS. WHAT ARE THEY?

Mid-term grades are currently posted on your student's OneTech account. What are mid-term grades? These are grades that only **freshmen** and **sophomores** receive and are a measure of how the student is doing half-way through the semester. Grades are **no longer** mailed to the permanent address but can be accessed through OneTech (<https://onetech.atu.edu/cp/home/displaylogin>).

If the grades are not satisfactory, remind your student that there are tutoring and help labs for them. For example, the Doc Bryan Tutoring Center is open from 6-9 pm Monday through Thursday. For more information about the center, feel free to call 479-964-3281 or email lheffley@atu.edu. Also, ask them to visit with their professor about tips on how to do better.

The back page of this newsletter shows how to calculate your student's grade point average (GPA). Your student can check and print their grades from OneTech.

COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENT

How often do you communicate with your son or daughter at Arkansas Tech University? Once a day? Twice a day? More? Arkansas Tech University's Parent Relations office is conducting a survey to see how often parents and family members communicate with their students. During this day and age, communications between student and parents are happening far more frequently than in days gone by. The once-a-week pay phone call from the lobby has been replaced with cell phones, text messaging, emails, tweets, and social site networks.

Please take the following survey; it will take less than one minute of your time. The survey is strictly voluntary and completely anonymous, and you can access the survey at the following link. <http://questionpro.com/t/ABhz6ZLq16>

Keeping your family connected!

AND THEN THERE WERE THREE:

Helping Siblings through the College Transition

You never thought the day would come that your children who argued over clothes, divided their shared room down the middle with masking tape, and avoided each other at school would actually be sad to say good-bye.

Sibling relationships can be enduring, and a sense of loss can be felt when an older sibling heads off to college.

Staying Connected

Whether a sibling is feeling lonely or confused about their new perceived role in the family, there are a variety of ways that parents can help those children at home stay connected with an older sibling at college.

Plan family gatherings

Plan a dinner out for just family when the college student comes home to visit.

Explore a new city by meeting halfway between home and college for a day.

Have the younger sibling(s) and college sibling(s) collaboratively plan a family weekend getaway.

Virtual connection

Plan weekly phone calls for younger siblings to talk with their older sibling.

Provide access to email for siblings back home.

Help a sibling prepare a college care package.

Snail mail is always fun to get, so encourage siblings to write each other regularly.

Plan a campus visit: **Sibling Weekend, Homecoming, Athletic Events**

Opportunities to Reconnect with Siblings Still at Home

Multiple changes are happening for the college sibling, and similarly, the siblings left behind are experiencing change in a newly constructed family unit. Consider how you can:

Anticipate the new “family order”

The middle child or younger child will now take on the role of the oldest in the family.

Resources such as transportation, bedroom space, computer, etc. may need to be reallocated appropriately amongst those siblings still at home.

This is the time to give special attention and support to the siblings still at home.

Be careful not to send a “guilt trip”

It is easy to try to “make” an older sibling spend time with a younger sibling, but allowing the reconnection to happen naturally will lead to a long-term renewed relationship.

Be careful not to make a returning student feel guilty for wanting to spend time with friends, bringing new college friends home, or needing alone time, rather than spending time with family.

Family Reconfiguration When College Student Arrives Home

A homecoming will require adjustments.

Younger siblings experience mixed emotions and may need support from parents if they feel that a returning college student is monopolizing family time and resources.

Younger siblings may be confused by perceived and real changes in their college sibling. Once able to talk about everything and anything, siblings have led different lives over the past few months and may need to become re-acquainted.

The middle or youngest sibling has become comfortable with his role as the “oldest” the past few months, and will need to adjust to the adapted family hierarchy once again.

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SOPHOMORE YEAR ISSUES:

Ways to Provide Support

Often referred to as the “sophomore slump,” the second year of college can be filled with many questions and few immediate answers. Sometimes the questions are related to academic studies, or peer and family relationships. Sometimes, feelings related to values and beliefs can raise internal questions. And, of course, the ever so popular, “What am I going to do with my life?” question comes more frequently throughout the second year. These questions, coupled with the physical return to a campus that isn’t quite as new or adventurous as it was in the first year, can create a stressful and overwhelming time for second-year students.

Key Issues In The Sophomore Year

Academics:

- _ Fear that initial success was just “lucky” and can’t be repeated
- _ Pressure to choose, and succeed, in a major and/or minor
- _ Uncertainty about future profession
- _ Take courses with upper-class students
- _ Need to build relationships with professors
- _ Surprised by the increased challenge in studies

Relationships:

- _ Include more people
- _ Decrease in the need to go home
- _ Decrease in friendships back home
- _ Include different types of people
- _ Experience new communities
- _ Involvement in new “types” of groups/organizations

Finances:

- _ Use of finances for immediate gratification
- _ Lack of a long-term financial picture
- _ Guilt about financial investment being put into someone with no future plans
- _ Lack of finances could lead to dropping out

Self-Awareness:

- _ Low energy and drive
- _ Feel invisible on campus
- _ Lack of motivation—doing the same ole’ thing
- _ Bittersweet—provides personal freedom AND creates internal anxiety
- _ More personal emphasis on weaknesses, rather than strengths
- _ The “newness” is gone
- _ The “real world” still seems far away
- _ Begin the search for purpose and meaning

What Can My Student Do to Get Out of the Slump?

- _ Visit the **Career Services Office** (479-968-0278, Doc Bryan, 234) to take career assessments, talk to an advisor, and explore possible major and career options.
- _ Visit the **Student Services Office** (479-968-0276, Doc Bryan, 233) to explore involvement opportunities.
- _ Visit the **Counseling Center** (479-968-0276, Doc Bryan, 233) to discuss feelings and stressors, and gain ways to resolve them.
- _ Visit a professor or academic advisor to determine if there is a need for tutoring or academic support; assess current course-load, and research “fun” classes to continue the exploration of potential areas of interest.
- _ Talk to an upper-class mentor to learn that the “slump” is natural and you can get over it. The “sophomore slump” is real and can be successfully addressed. These resources can help your student discern where he is now, where he wants to be and what he needs to do to get out of the “slump.” He will become more self-aware, personally developed and prepared to move on in his higher education.



HOW IS GRADE POINT AVERAGE CALCULATED?

How is Grade Point Average (GPA) calculated?

Arkansas Tech University has provided a website that will automatically calculate GPA. It is http://www.atu.edu/acad/advisingcenter/GPA_Calculator.htm

Each letter grade is worth a specific number of points: A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1, F = 0. For each course your student has taken, multiply the number of hours (credits) for the course by the number of points for the grade your student received. For example:

CLASS	COURSE #	# OF HRS.	GRADE	TOTAL
ENGL	1013	3	C (2)	6
BIOL	1014	4	C (2)	8
HIST	1503	3	B (3)	9
MATH	1113	3	D (1)	3
		13 Units		26 Grade Points

Now, divide the number of grade points by the number of units to get your student semester GPA. **26 divided by 13 = 2.0 GPA.**

SERVICES FROM THE H & W CENTER

The Health and Wellness Center has a wonderful service for the students called the *Online Healthy Life Students' Self-Care Guide* which is on the Health and Wellness website. By going to www.atu.edu/hwc, and clicking on **Students' Self-Care Guide**, your student can find out what to do for hundreds of symptoms. Also you and your student can keep up with what is happening at the Health Center by becoming a fan on Facebook. They are listed under Arkansas Tech University Health and Wellness Center. Also, don't forget about the **Health 101 Parent website**. Once you have signed up, at the first of each month you will receive a reminder for the next issue and a link. It's as easy as that! By the way, the parent version contains a link that will provide access to the full 20+ page student issue. You can opt out of receiving the link at any time.

Health 101 Parent Website: <http://readsh101.com/go2atu-pp.html>

UNDECIDED? NO PROBLEM!

Is your student unsure about his/her major and career? Consider suggesting career development. Interim Director of Career Services, Jeff Hudnall will provide a series of personality assessment tools that will be used to help your student find his/her ideal major or career based upon interests, motivational traits, personality, values, abilities, aptitudes, personal work style, and work environment preferences. Have your student contact our Career Development office at (479) 968-0278 or email

jhudnall@atu.edu for more information.

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ON CAMPUS COUNSELING SERVICES

Did you know that the University has counseling services that are FREE to the students? Located in Doc Bryan Building, room 233, counselor Dr. Lori LeBahn would be glad to speak to your student about academic situations, behaviors, relationships, and feelings that students might be having. Office hours are Monday—Thursday, 8:00 am until 4:00 pm.

479-968-0276.



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