

HANOVER PARENT



Defining Student Success

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Grades. Isn't that what we as parents usually ask first, and for some perhaps that is the only question we ask our student; *how are the grades?* Perhaps you (or your student) eagerly check *MyHanover* at the end of each semester to discover if indeed the term was successful or not. But what exactly does success mean? As a mental health provider and therapist, I often find myself reaching beyond

the content of a student's reported experience to ask the critical question: *what does this mean to you?* Exploring student definitions of success seems to reveal a variety of themes often which not only include grades, but social involvement and autonomy as well. These themes of success also appear to change as they progress through these four years of discovery.

Generally, most students would say their grades are an important indicator of success. The meanings of grades, however, do seem to vary between students. For some students, grades represent the end goal of college. A student may say, *I need good grades simply to graduate and move on.* For others, grades reflect more personal

meaning, closely tied to self-worth and value. These students may say, *I am not musically, artistically, or athletically talented. I learn and study well, so it is important that I am in the top of the class.* These students to varying degrees may become quite discouraged and self-critical when they receive a less than acceptable grade. Likewise, definitions of *acceptable grades* vary considerably between students and they seem to be aware of these disparities. You might hear a student say, *my roommate was pretty upset when she received a B+ on her exam. I'm just shooting for a 2.5 GPA this term.* So, grades, as an indicator of student success, are both multifaceted and incomplete.

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Special points of interest:

Hanover College Parents' Association Merchandise is available at www.hanover.edu/parents/parentsassociation/merchandise

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Another student definition of success appears to focus on social integration and involvement with the college and with others. Again, generally speaking, students who put all their energy into academic pursuits at some point begin to feel isolated.

Feelings of isolation eventually lead to the thought of *not making it* – perhaps the antithesis of success. Students may enter college and

initially focus on attending their classes and structuring a study routine (both certainly essential for success), but fail to explore student activities. Eventually, a student may say, *I don't fit in anywhere. I am not Greek or an athlete. I am not comfortable with any of the church groups or the parties on campus. I really don't know anything about the student organizations either.* On the other hand, students that are involved in campus organizations and activities generally feel

they have awareness of current issues and a voice in college operations and culture. These students tend to feel valued on campus and therefore feel successful.

A third and final theme of student success seems to be autonomy, or a feeling of being both independent and responsible. Although students may struggle with autonomy, perhaps at times avoiding it, when they begin to achieve some form of independence it unambiguously feels good. A



student may report, *I'm proud that I figured out my program of study and decided on a major or I feel more confident after I talked to my roommate about that problem.*

Confidence in addressing the roles and responsibilities in adulthood outside of college builds with each hurdle a student overcomes in college.

“College is the time to pass the torch of advocacy ...”

So what can parents do to help facilitate their student's success? First, strive for an accurate understanding of your student's meaning of success. You may not agree with their definition of success, but a mutual understanding of their definitions of success guide expectations, behavior, reactivity, and communication. Also keep in mind that your student's notion of success may become redefined as they gain greater

knowledge and wisdom. It is important to recognize that autonomy does not mean distancing oneself or devaluing oneself or family, but rather together with family celebrating one's accomplishments and supporting one through setbacks. In fact, students with greater decision-making self-confidence tend to be genuinely more receptive to input from others, especially family. With thoughtful questioning, you can

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help your student evaluate their balance between having an active social life and achieving reasonable grades. This is a balancing act that lasts all four year, perhaps even longer.

Second, continue to encourage your student to be their own advocate. For the many years before your student attended Hanover College, you may have provided their primary voice in addressing their needs and concerns. College is the time to pass the torch of advocacy

and allow students the opportunity to struggle finding their self-advocate from within.

The bottom line is, encourage your student to explore the resources on campus! Hanover College offers a variety of support services to assist students in achieving their personal success in and outside of the classroom. The Learning Center offers peer tutoring and academic coaching. The Career Center assists students in exploring their vocational identity. The

Chaplin's Office provides students with spiritual guidance. Counseling Services help students acquire more effective skills for coping with the personal, interpersonal, and emotional challenges of achieving their success. Faculty, staff, coaches, and advisors are all readily available resources that can to offer guidance when requested.

For more information regarding questions or services available, please contact:



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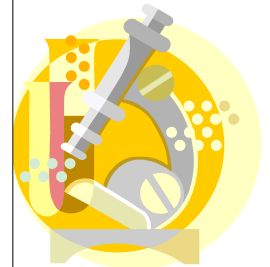
Career Center Offers Options

By David Harden, Internship and Career Connections Coordinator

Is the current economic crunch causing you to worry about your son or daughter's chance of getting a job after graduation? Has your student chosen a major but is unsure what to do with it? Does your child know exactly what his or her passion is and can't wait to get started? The Hanover College Career Center can help!

The Interns from last summer know how this feels, as they too were in the same position at this time last year. Many students had some type of internship last summer trying out different jobs and learning more about what they love. Some were affirmed in their decisions, such as Kim Lude, a class of 2010 Chemistry major, who worked in general dental offices in northern Indiana: “Because of this

internship, I am certain that I want to become a dentist.” Or Travis Perry '09, Philosophy major, who taught at the Madison Women's Correctional Facility: “I sort of suspected it before, but having done this internship I absolutely know that I want to teach...Each time I left the classroom, I couldn't wait to get back.” Other interns refined their ideas of what they wanted, using the opportunity to learn new off-



shoots and niches within certain study. “My internship has helped me realize how interested I am in not just science, but science education... in fact, this will be the focus of my independent study,” says Liz Otte `09 Biology major, who went to Alaska to do oceanographic research. The opportunity to do an internship also helped set interns up for their future career field by creating networks, as in Jen Caudill’s (class of 2009 Psychology major) case at the Louisville Science Center: “Learning to work, assist, and mentor individuals from such a wide age range has been a great asset to my career goals of counseling. I also made... connections for future jobs and references.”

In addition to internship and pre-professional experiences, the Career Center and its website provides students with tools to assist in finding the perfect career. Our services give students a means of exploring specific career options and broadening their vision of the world and its needs. Here is a short list of some of the things your student may find helpful:

Career Guidance: Not sure on what you want to major in or want to know what type of job is best fit to your student’s interests? The Career Center staff can give information about the types of inventories we offer at the Career Center. Call x. 7127 for an appointment!

Events and workshops: The Career Center presents and sponsors several workshops and events throughout the year, from job fairs and Graduate School entry exam workshops to workshops on “How to Land a Summer Job that MEANS Something” and honing interviewing skills, students are sure to find the career help they need from their first year to their senior year (and after).

Job Link: We have compiled a list of what we believe to be the best links into helping students find the jobs they want. Through our data bases and PantherNET, students can search jobs by field, location, and much more.

Career Connections: The Career Connections is designed to meet the needs of our students throughout their time at Hanover. With over 20 Career Connections program offerings, students are encouraged to explore their career choices, take academic electives that will augment their major studies, participate in various co-curricular activities and participate in meaningful summer jobs or internships. In addition, when students participate in Career Connections for at least two semesters, they are eligible to apply for a stipend if they find an unpaid internship during the summer.

Publications: Our printable publications will give you useful information about everything from ‘Interviewing’ to ‘Writing a Resume’, and you can access these .pdf files from anywhere. No need to trek up the stairs to the Career Center (even though we love it when students stop by!)

The Vault Online Career Library is a resource center for researching employers, industries, and career subjects. It contains career guides, career advice articles, industry and occupational profiles, and thousands of company profiles.

For more information about services offered through the Career Center, please contact:

Margaret Krantz, Career Center Director, krantzm@hanover.edu, 812-866-7126

David Harden, Internship and Career Connections Coordinator, harden@hanover.edu, 812-866-7129

Please send comments regarding Hanover Parent to Betsie Chilton at parents@hanover.edu

**Visit the Hanover College website often for up-to-date information
throughout the year
www.hanover.edu**