



Final Exam Survival Guide...for *Parents!*

Most students experience some period of adjustment when entering the college environment and facing final exams. Some suggestions for helping your child through this period are:

1. **Don't panic.** Careful listening to concerns and complaints is the most effective tool to help your child cope, while recognizing three things:
 - a) There may be other ways of looking at things, so keep an open mind.
 - b) After students have a chance to "vent" their frustrations and fears, they often leave things behind. A few minutes after they're off the phone with you, and while you're getting more and more worried, they may be feeling much better.
 - c) Take your time; don't act hastily or without being fully informed on all aspects of a situation.
2. **Encourage your child to seek assistance from the resources available on campus.** Let them set up appointments with faculty advisors; staff members; their professors; the Counseling Center; The Learning Center; the chaplain; the Student Health Center, etc. If you are concerned that they may not be following through sufficiently, and want to make a call to campus personnel yourself, it is a good idea to talk that over with your daughter or son before doing so. S/he may prefer that you not do so, and even if you decide you are going to make a call anyway, it is important for your student to be informed of that.
3. **During their first year at college, students sometimes allow fears of parental disapproval - real or imagined - to inhibit their academic explorations.** It is important to make it clear that you have confidence in your son or daughter's abilities to explore new horizons while improving knowledge in existing areas of interest. This should be a time of exploring new educational horizons.
4. **There will be times when you are not happy about something going on in your child's social or academic life.** Telephone disagreements can leave everyone feeling upset and demoralized. It can sometimes be helpful to gather information first, and then take some time to think and sort it all through. Decide what your reactions are, how fair they are, and how strong a stand you really want to take. Then reestablish contact and talk the issues through in as calm and reasonable way as you can.
5. **Having usually been accustomed to parental care, students often have a tendency to "tough it out" when they are ill or exhausted.** Encourage your child to take advantage of health and counseling services early, rather than risking their own or others' health.
6. **Expect that there will be low times for everyone, and particularly stressful periods of time.** Try to be as supportive, loving, and patient as possible at such times, reassuring your son or daughter - and yourself -- that there can be plenty to be learned from such times. Life takes unexpected twists and turns; people do not always behave as we might have hoped or expected.
7. **Letters and care packages from home always provide a welcome lift to anyone's spirits.**