

The
*Campus
Link*

*Niagara's newsletter
for parents and friends*

Seasonal Student Issues

There's a seasonal ebb and flow when it comes to student issues. Here are a few things your student may be experiencing this month.

- ◆ Anxiety and tension due to realizations that the year is ending and final exams are about to occur
- ◆ Senior panic about jobs, finances, etc.
- ◆ Good feelings are evident as summer is near
- ◆ Lots of cramming, studying and wrapping things up academically
- ◆ End of the year socialization, sometimes involving dangerous drinking
- ◆ Packing & checking out
- ◆ Saying goodbye to important people and putting closure on the year



NIAGARA UNIVERSITY
Education that makes a difference.



One "Transition" Year Older

At the start of the summer, your student may be celebrating a "birthday" of sorts! The completion of the academic year may signify students' growth and development into the next year of their college journey. Whether your student is transitioning from the first year and preparing for the second year in college, or is entering the final year of college and preparing a resume, congratulations. You now have a student who is one "transition" year older.

What can you do to support your student with the transition over the summer and into the next academic year? Consider some of these tips:

[From freshman to sophomore](#)

The second year of college can be filled with many questions and few immediate answers. As the summer progresses you may observe your now sophomore student considering what the coming year will bring.

[Common Second Year Reflections](#)

- ◆ Who am I?
- ◆ Who are these people I am hanging out with?
- ◆ What do my academic studies mean to me?
- ◆ What am I going to do with the rest of my life?
- ◆ How are my beliefs different than my parents?

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Common Second Year Issues

- ◆ Fear that initial success was just “lucky” and can’t be repeated
- ◆ Uncertainty about future profession
- ◆ Experimenting with relationships that include different types of people
- ◆ Desire to experience new communities
- ◆ Decrease in friendships back home
- ◆ Use of finances for immediate gratification
- ◆ Lack of a long-term financial picture
- ◆ Begin the search for purpose and meaning
- ◆ More personal emphasis on weaknesses, rather than strengths
- ◆ The “real world” still seems far away

Sophomore to Junior

Ah, junior year, when you know the ropes and he/she knows the ropes. Nothing unpredictable or new, no worries! However, it can be an exciting and productive year if a student takes intentional steps to start preparing early for the final year and all that comes with it.

Common Junior Year Reflections

- ◆ What are my goals for next year?
- ◆ What are some new challenges I want to take on?
- ◆ What do I want to do with my major?
- ◆ Do I want to start a career, or go to graduate school, after graduation?

Common Junior Year Issues

- ◆ Starting to seriously consider career options related to major
- ◆ May spend time conducting initial search of professions and graduate school programs
- ◆ Confident and comfortable with academic expectations—know faculty, the classroom routine and study habits
- ◆ Develop trusting and comfortable friendships and more mature relationship with parents
- ◆ Less need to go home for summers and breaks
- ◆ Confidence and ability to have philosophical conversations with family and friends regarding deeper issues such as: politics, spirituality, academic studies and controversial subjects
- ◆ Start to think about starting salaries for career options
- ◆ If living off campus, may experience new financial responsibility with costs related to food, rent, transportation and bills.
- ◆ Explore purpose in life and spirituality

- ◆ Seek new experiences and opportunities
- ◆ Confidence in making personal decisions

Junior to Senior

Your student is officially a senior! Only one more year—you hope—and you will be celebrating graduation. You may think your support is no longer needed, nor desired, but you can rest assured he/she still will be looking to you for guidance with the final steps of his/her college career.

Common Senior Year Reflections

- ◆ Many of the questions seniors reflect on during their final year are similar to the questions they will be asked in job interviews or in graduate school applications
- ◆ What do I want out of this life?
- ◆ That’s important to me—what I am doing, or how much I am making?
- ◆ Why did I decide to pursue this major and career field?
- ◆ Do I want, or need, to continue my college education? When and how?

Common Senior Year Issues

- ◆ Take the first step in job or graduate school search
- ◆ Renewed awareness of academic strengths and weaknesses
- ◆ Priority on developing relationships with professors for purpose of career advising and job referencing in the coming year
- ◆ Fear of leaving the comfort and stability of college relationships
- ◆ Redefine relationship with family
- ◆ Feel a sense of “job search” competition with peers
- ◆ Anxiety about paying loans
- ◆ Worry about immediate costs such as insurance, car and living arrangements
- ◆ For some, realizing the credit debt that has piled up
- ◆ Realizing that maybe what he wanted to do when he started college isn’t necessarily what he wants to do now
- ◆ Pressure of living up to expectations of parents, family, peers or faculty

Each student is unique and each student transition is different. However, you now know some of the feelings, experiences, challenges and rewards your student may be experiencing as he transitions from one year to the next.

10 Things Your Student Needs to Hear During Finals Week

1. "We're behind you."
2. "Do your best and show them what you've got."
3. "Sleep, fresh air and eating well are important, too. You can't study ALL the time!"
4. "Call if you need to talk."
5. "We believe in you."
6. "Focus during these last few weeks and summer break will feel even more worthwhile."
7. "I KNOW you've got it in you!"
8. "We're looking forward to having you home."
9. "We'll celebrate when you're done!"
10. "You can do this. I know you can."

Encourage Your Student to Spring Into Action!

As students get into the spirit of spring weather and the school year coming to a close, they often get more lax with their personal belongings. Unfortunately, thieves count on this mentality to make their move. End of the year thefts can be easily prevented with a few simple precautions:

Textbooks. By writing his/her name near the binding of a certain page in each textbook, a student can tell public safety what to look for if a book is stolen.

Locking Doors. For both personal and property safety, encourage students to keep doors locked. Thieves become familiar with people's patterns.

Unattended Goods. Leaving a book bag on the study table or failing to lock it up during a workout increases the chances of it walking away.

Laptops. These are BIG targets. Does your student have a laptop safety device? Is the computer engraved with an ID number? These precautions can help track down laptop thieves more easily.

Cash. It's never a good idea to have large amounts of cash on hand.

Gently remind students that the end of the year is one of the hottest times for thieves to strike. By taking some simple precautions, they can avoid some complex headaches.

Oh...The Possibilities of Summer

Since your student is in the academic mindset, talking about a "summer curriculum" might make a lot of sense. This just means being intentional about the things to learn and experience this summer.

Maybe there is talk about how she/he misses reading "real" books because of all the reading that is done for classes. This can go on the curriculum. Or maybe there is a desire to learn how to kayak or knit or ride a horse... put it on the curriculum!

And make it a partnership by suggesting that the whole family write out your summer curriculums. Then share them so you can support one another in pursuit of these goals. Here's to a summer filled with learning!

Low-Cost Ideas for Summer Learning

Summer involvement doesn't have to be costly! Encourage your student to take advantage of:

- ◆ continuing education classes
- ◆ library, garden center or home improvement workshops
- ◆ free events happening at local colleges
- ◆ websites such as about.com or ehow.com to learn how to do something new
- ◆ cooking demonstrations at grocery stores
- ◆ volunteer opportunities with local shelters, agencies and organizations
- ◆ town sports and recreation leagues such as kickball, basketball, volleyball and more



Other Move-Out Considerations



- **The Way Home.** How will your student get home? In his/her own vehicle? Will you borrow a truck or van? Make sure plans are made to be out prior to the final closing of the residence halls.

- **Storing Belongings.** Niagara allows students to store items over the summer only if they are returning to residence the following year. So, if your student is moving off campus, can he/she leave some bigger items—carpets, furniture, etc.—in that rented space, even if he/she isn't yet paying rent? Or will you need to rent a storage space?

- **Having Enough Containers.** Boxes, trash bags and other containers are often at a premium during the end of the year. Make sure your student is well-equipped to start packing so that doesn't need to happen on the actual move-out day! Consider using suitcases and duffel bags, too.

- **Stuff Disposal.** It's important that students find out how to discard and recycle unwanted items within the halls. They can't just leave items in their room or the hall so, encourage your student to talk with residence hall staff ahead of time. Many discarded items which can still be used will be donated to local charities.

- **Emotions May Surface.** Saying goodbye to friends and moving on can be emotional for many students. Be prepared that move-out day won't be all about the tasky things—it'll likely involve seeking out friends, swapping addresses and more.

And leave time for goodbyes. Your student will likely want to see friends before she/he goes and, although

you may be chomping at the bit to hit the road, this wrap-up time is important. Students are transitioning from one of their worlds to the other during move-out. Some things just can't be rushed.

Supplies to Have on Hand

- ◆ boxes or plastic bins
- ◆ packing tape
- ◆ a few thick markers
- ◆ car carrier (in case everything doesn't fit inside the vehicle)
- ◆ broom
- ◆ dustpan
- ◆ dusting rags
- ◆ window cleaner
- ◆ paper towels
- ◆ water (don't count on vending machines as they can run out when lots of folks are around)
- ◆ a fan (if it's really warm)



Celebrating the 350th Anniversary of the Deaths of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac.

The year 1660 was an epochal one for the Vincentian Family. It saw the deaths of its founders, Vincent de Paul and Louise de Marillac, two saints who closely collaborated in works for the poor for over 3 decades and who died in Paris within 6 months of each other. Their followers today, 2 million strong around the world, are marking this 350th anniversary by a series of projects and celebrations. As an organization founded in Vincent and Louise's shadow, Niagara has joined in the commemoration with much variety and enthusiasm.

The campus observance began with the opening Mass in September and will continue through October 2010. Through the spring semester, a lecture series directed itself to aspects of the Saints lives. In February, Dr. Stephanie Wichhart and Fr. Thomas McKenna addressed "Vincent de Paul and History." March saw Sr. Margaret John Kelly speaking on "St. Louise and the Catholic Human Rights Tradition." In April, Dr. Jonathan Sanford took up the topic of "The Friendship of Sts. Vincent and Louise seen from a Thomistic Viewpoint." Around the same time, Fr. Gregory Gay, Superior General of the Vincentians, visited from Rome to give an illustrated account of the activities of the world-wide Vincentian Family.

During the same semester, two concerts were performed in Alumni chapel, one organized around St. Vincent's writings and the other focused on the place of Mary within the Vincentian tradition.

In the fall of 2010, the Castellani Museum on campus will inaugurate a semester-long exhibit featuring the art of the poor. On the opening weekend (September 11-12), Sr. Loretta Hoag, D.C from the O'Roarke Center in Troy, N.Y., an agency that serves the homeless, will bring clients to give workshops about the role that art plays in their lives. Taking a title from St. Vincent's words, the exhibit is called "Inventive to Infinity: The Vision Continues," and aims among other things to break down stereotypes between poor and those less so.

On October 15th, Niagara will present "The Business of Charity," a day-long program aimed to assist those who operate human service organizations. Dr. Ellen Benjamin from DePaul University will give the keynote and faculty and staff at Niagara will offer workshops in their areas of business expertise.

The 350th celebration will culminate in the many activities during Niagara's annual Vincentian week, this year running between September 27th and October 3rd.

