



NIAGARA UNIVERSITY
Education that makes a difference.



The Campus Link

*Niagara's newsletter for
parents and friends*

Making the Final Push

Encouraging students through midterms to the finish line

Midterm is around the corner. They've almost made it to the halfway point. Whew!

Now comes the trick of pushing forward in order to finish up the year on a high note.

There are a few little things you can encourage them to do that can make a BIG difference!

Do a Mind Dump. Your student likely has a million things on her/his mind, like starting that 30-page paper and figuring out what kind of job to can get for the summer. Help by doing a Mind Dump. It involves grabbing a notebook and jotting down everything on the To Do List. It doesn't have to be orderly—that can be done later. It just needs to capture what's on her/his mind, get organized and move forward with the things that need to be accomplish.

Knock Off a Few Lingering Tasks. Once a week, encourage your student to pick a task or responsibility that has been lingering too long on the To Do list and get it done! By picking

just one of these things per week, it becomes more doable and he/she will feel better about not having all these tasks hanging around.

Plan Some Fun. We all need things to look forward to, whether it's a spring break trip or taking a walk with friends after dinner. So, it's a good idea for your student to plan some fun stuff that breaks up all the "have tos" and "shoulds" on the list.

Step Away from the Computer. It's easy, especially during the midterm push, to spend a lot of time in front of the computer. The eyes sting, the back hurts and sitting all the time stinks! That's why it's important for students to step away from the computer now and then so it doesn't feel like it's running their lives. It'll be okay if your student doesn't check Facebook today, emails can be returned tomorrow. Writing, researching and studying are important, there's no doubt. Yet, everyone needs to step away from cyberspace now and then to get back into real time.

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Stay Connected. Students need to reach out to family and friends regularly in order to feel in touch and in tune. So, encourage your student to take time for campus friends, even if it's studying together or quickly grabbing coffee to catch up. Keeping up with community service efforts is also important. Staying connected to others increases our well-being and our desire to keep on going.

Take Care of Body & Soul. Students need to eat healthy food on a regular basis and get into some solid sleep patterns. A body that is working well supports a healthy heart and mind.

There are a few intense months left this term and your student can really use your encouragement and support to make it to the finish line.

Niagara University offers free tutoring support service staffed by knowledgeable, dedicated, enthusiastic and energetic students who are ready to help you become independent, confident students in your 100 and 200 level courses. The link to request a tutor is http://apps.niagara.edu/forms/request_tutor.php The last day to request a tutor is April 1st.

*“Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least.”
~ Johann Von Goethe*

Mid-Term Ends Friday, March 18th

Believe it or not the half way mark for the spring 2011 semester is almost here! This is an opportunity for students to determine their course of action for the remainder of the semester. The mid-term grade reports, which only list grades that are C- through F, are mailed to the student's preferred mailing address on record and the grades are available through their myNU account. Not all students receive mid-term grades, so do not panic. Also, mid-term grades are not part of the permanent record but are a progress report. If your student receives a deficient grade, you should encourage them to have a discussion with the professor.



Why is My Student So Busy?

March can be a busy month when students may not be in touch with you as often as you're used to. The reasons are numerous:

- ◆ Student organizations they've joined are busy planning end-of-the-term activities
- ◆ Midterm exams and papers are fast approaching
- ◆ They've made more friends on campus and are spending time with them
- ◆ They are knee-deep in job searching for the summer or after graduation
- ◆ Community service involvements have deepened, as folks learn how reliable and competent they are



Try not to take it personally, as being busy and engaged is what helps many students stay—and succeed—in school. Reach out to let your student know that you're there and interested in hearing about his/her busy life.

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:

- * Low energy levels and restlessness
- * Mid-semester slump and sickness
- * Making plans for next year—housing, classes and financial aid
- * Hidden conflicts between roommates and friends begin to arise
- * Drug and alcohol use may increase
- * Mid-term anxiety
- * Seniors thinking about graduation
- * Excitement or depression about break plans

A Safe Break

We are in the middle of spring break and the Easter break is not far away. If your student is traveling somewhere for break, you can offer the following reminders:

- Use the buddy system—In a new place, you'll stay safest if you stick together.
- If you choose to drink, know where your drink is coming from and don't trust strangers—A colorless, odorless liquid "date rape drug" like GHB or Ketamine can be slipped into the drink with ill intent.
- Don't do anything illegal—The consequences are dire if you get arrested, especially in a foreign country.
- Protect your eyes and skin—Wear sunscreen, use sunglasses with proper UV protection and also have a hat.
- Don't go off with people you don't know—Trusting unknown people can end in tragedy.
- Keep your wits about you—Be smart with your personal safety and your property. Carry your wallet close to your body in the front pocket. Don't get so intoxicated that you make bad decisions and put yourself in dangerous situations. Keep a clear head in order to keep yourself—and your friends—safe.
- Copy the front and back of all credit cards so you have the phone numbers to report lost cards.
- Call your credit card companies before you leave to let them know you'll be out of town, so they don't freeze your card due to irregular use.



The Spring Cleaning Season

Yes, it will be spring soon! And that means it's time for spring cleaning. Students can spruce up their spaces with a few easy tips, including:

- Moving furniture to do a thorough sweep and vacuum
- Thinning out their winter clothes as they realize what they haven't been wearing this season, so they can donate those pieces
- Disinfecting items that get a lot of use—and germs—such as phones, door-knobs, handles and more
- Wading through collected papers so they can shred certain items, file others and recycle the rest
- Washing their blankets and comforters
- Scrubbing out their wastebaskets

Spring cleaning gives students an opportunity to start fresh and get to some of those tasks that get lost in the shuffle at the end of the year when they're trying to juggle final exams and move-out.



Overtired & Overwhelmed

The National Sleep Foundation says that most adults 18 and older need between seven and nine hours of sleep. Yet, college students don't always make this a priority—and it impacts them. They get overtired, which can lead to stress and a sense of being overwhelmed.

Being overtired can cause:

- Moodiness
- Higher susceptibility to illness
- Lack of energy
- Stress
- Anger
- Motor vehicle and machinery-related accidents
- Lack of concentration
- Difficulty retaining new information

Lack of adequate sleep often causes their grades to drop—sometimes dramatically. And, yes, staying up late to study and then getting up early in the morning to do it again are counter-effective strategies. What about the practice of sleep-deprived all-nighters? That creates a sleep debt that can be tough to overcome.

Getting Quality Sleep

So, the experts suggest a few simple tactics to help increase quality sleep:

- Get to bed around the same time each night so the body gets used to a regular sleeping schedule.



- Don't make the bed a key study space because then it'll be associated with stressful activity.
- Steer clear of alcohol before bed, as it can cause the drinker to wake up several times during the night, which can be just as detrimental as only getting a few hours in the first place.

- Avoid watching the clock.
- Establish a relaxing routine to do about a half hour before bed, like taking a shower, reading or listening to music, plus turn off the TV and computer ahead of time, too.

- Consider using “white noise”—like a fan—to help fall asleep.

- Try to make the bed as comfortable as possible.

- Finish eating about two hours before bed so the body won't be working on digestion.

- Avoid exercise right before bed, since a dropping body temperature is what the brain associates with sleep.

Many students are unaware that their sleep deprivation can cause them serious problems—they may be so used to being consistently sleepy that they don't realize their lack of sleep is unhealthy or abnormal. Good, quality sleep can go a long way in making her/him a

sharper, healthier, happier and more in-control individual.

Sources: The Centers for Disease

How Students are Spending Their Money

The economy may still be in trouble, yet U.S. college students continue to spend money on everyday needs—to the tune of approximately \$60 billion, according to eCampus.com. That's more than any previous year, except for 2007.

Back to School Items

How are they spending this money? Not counting tuition, room, board, fees or textbooks, students spent \$33 billion on back to school items such as:

- Electronics and computer-related equipment—\$12.99 billion
- Clothes/accessories—\$6.63 billion
- Residence hall room furnishings —\$5.31 billion
- School supplies—\$3.45 billion
- Shoes—\$3.41 billion
- Collegiate branded gear, like sweatshirts—\$1.99 billion

Non-Essential Items

Plus, they spent about \$27 billion on non-essential items throughout the school year, including:

- Snacks/drinks—over \$11 billion
- Alcohol—\$5.5 billion (avg. about \$50 per student/per month)
- Clothes/shoes—\$5 billion
- Personal care items—\$4 billion

Entertainment

And then there's the \$2.4 billion spent on entertainment including:



- Movie tickets—\$658 million
- On demand movies—\$600 million
- Music—\$474 million
- Video games—\$341 million
- Renting DVDs—\$326 million

Better understanding what students are spending their money on can help you discuss finances with your student. These statistics can also help acknowledge the money-spending peer pressure students may face. Going out to eat seems to be a big draw, and students with limited funds may feel left out if they don't go along. Shopping for clothes, shoes and collegiate wear is also a major expenditure—the culture of shopping as recreation can cause some students to overspend when they don't have the funds. Discuss these cautionary tales with your student now, before credit issues become a problem!

Happy Saint Patrick's Day

A green leprechaun hat with a gold buckle and a green shamrock.