



a newsletter for parents & families

## January 2015

### 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:

- Feelings of happiness/restlessness from break
- A resolve to do better academically
- Renewed interest in classes
- New leadership skills starting to emerge
- Unwanted weight gain
- Cold weather blues
- Possible roommate changes
- Anxiety and uncertainty for those who just arrived at new school

### Approaching Academics in the New Year

Now that grades have been distributed and your student is preparing for a new term ahead, there may be some academic concerns to face.

**Reconsidering a Major.** As your daughter rethinks her major, some questions may arise. Talk through the pros and cons with her, while also suggesting that she discuss her thoughts with her academic advisor or another trusted faculty/staff member before making a decision.

**Failing a Class.** Does your student need to retake a course? If so, encourage her to be attentive from day one and to engage the professor should she need assistance.

**Shaken Confidence.** Not doing particularly well academically can shake students' confidence. Hard work and *smart* work will help her get back on track. The achievement center can help with a confidence crisis, too.

**Needing More Study Time.** Lower grades often mean that students need to study more – and to learn how to maximize their study time. Staff in the achievement center can provide tips. Help your student reconsider *where* she studies, too. If she sits on her bed, the temptation to nap can be great. If she studies in a noisy lounge, the distractions can be great. Brainstorm other options.

**Focusing Too Much on Grades.** If your daughter is only focusing on grades, rather than what she is learning, she's not getting the most out of her academics. So, ask her about classes from a "What are you learning?" perspective now and then. Sometimes having to verbalize this can help students really take a look at what they're getting out of a particular class.

**Not Approaching Professors.** Most faculty members have office hours and stick around after class because they want to be available to students. Encourage your student to seek clarification in person if she has questions. Face-to-face encounters are often much more valuable than emailing professors because students become *known* that way.

Help your student examine her current approach to academics, from the perspective of both what's working and what's not. With your assistance, she can dig into a more positive academic year.



## Being a Balanced Individual

In today's fast-paced and product-valued society, it's easy to get caught up in the frenzy of doing as much as we can in as little time possible. Many folks associate quantity with success, rather than quality. But who says your daughter has to be one of those individuals?

It's a new year. Now is the time for your student to take stock of all she has on her plate and make resolutions to add some balance to her life. This certainly is easier said than done, especially since it is mid-year and it is tough to abandon responsibilities. But now is the time for your student to assess all she is involved with — and whether those engagements are *truly* worth the associated time and stress. It's time for her to determine what is most important to her, so she can start making small changes now that will help her reach her goals.

### Self-Reflection

Encourage your daughter to start by asking herself the following questions:

- What am I really getting out of the activities with which I am involved?

- Am I truly focused on what is most important to me?
- In what areas am I spending most of my time? Are these areas most important to me?
- Am I really “present” when folks need me?
- Am I truly engaged in my life?

Give your student some time to really think about these questions. If she is happy with her answers, great! If she is not happy with her answers, encourage her to consider trying some of these strategies:

**Talk with her advisor/coach about her commitments.** They can offer her valuable advice on how to manage her time effectively, what activities will help her with her personal and professional goals, and more!

**Think about the things that seem to stress her out most.** Ask her what she does to take care of herself when she is really stressed. Suggest she pick three ways she can commit to “de-stressing” during these times. Perhaps she likes to run, watch movies and read a book. The next time she is stressed, encourage her to take five minutes or a half-hour to relax with one of these pastimes and clear her head.



**Start thinking about next year.** Now is the time when your daughter has to start thinking about running for leadership positions and applying for summer jobs. Encourage her to determine what is most important to her, what she enjoys most and then do her best to stick with commitments that match these terms. Remember, quality, not quantity, is what's important.

It's time we start equating success with those who take good care of themselves, lead balanced lives, and spend quality time with family and friends. Help your daughter become a more balanced individual today!

## Home CSM Athletic Events



- Monday, January 12: Basketball vs. Grace
- Friday, January 16: Basketball vs. Central Christian
- Saturday, January 17: Basketball vs. York

- Tuesday, January 20: Basketball vs. Waldorf (Student Senate Spirit Game with Prizes)
- Saturday, January 24: Swimming vs. Tabor College
- Saturday, January 31: Swimming vs. Iowa Lakes Community College

CSM Basketball is #6 in the most recent NAIA poll (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) — The highest ranking ever for CSM!

CSM Swimming is breaking many school records!

# Helping Your Daughter Ask for Help

Countless numbers of people have a tough time asking for help — even the most seasoned professionals. For some reason, asking for help makes many people feel weak or vulnerable. Yet, help-seeking is actually a true sign of strength.

It takes courage to say, “I’m not sure how to handle this” and to reach out. By helping students understand this, they’re more likely to take advantage of the wealth of services available to them, right here on campus.

So, how does a student who isn’t the most comfortable asking for help go about doing so? Consider sharing these thoughts with your daughter as she considers seeking assistance in the new year...



**Remember that even the best leaders have help.**

Even the president of the United States surrounds himself with the best staff he can.

We don’t view this as a weakness, do we? If he can ask for help, you most certainly can too.

**Recognize your strengths and your limitations.** Nobody is perfect. What do you do really well? In what areas do you typically struggle? Take stock of what you do well and let those around you know. This may help them feel more comfortable asking you for help when they need it. And find out what they do well so you can tap into their strengths, too. Remember, no one needs to go it alone.

**Be honest when you are in over your head.** There will be times when you can’t do everything alone. When this happens, be honest with yourself and others. When you communicate this to others, they are more likely to be supportive and understanding.

**Take stock of the resources on hand.** Campus communities are chock full of great resources and CSM is as well! More often than not — no matter what the issue at hand — an expert can be found right in front of you who can offer assistance. Why not take advantage of this? It’s a win-win for all involved.

**Let others know when you’ve asked for help.** Why hide it? When you let others see that you are willing to get help when you need it, you role model healthy behavior. Some folks really do have difficulty reaching out to others and admitting they need assistance. By being honest when you reach out, you are setting a great example for those around you.

## CSM Dates to Remember:

- \* Monday, January 5: University Offices Open
- \* Tuesday, January 6: Feast of the Epiphany—Holy Day of Obligation Mass
- \* Wednesday, January 7: Residence Halls Open at 1pm
- \* Monday, January 12: TEAS (Test of Essential Academic Skills) Math and Science Review Workshop for Nursing Students
- \* Wednesday, January 14: Classes Begin
- \* Wednesday, January 21: Last day to drop/add spring classes
- \* Thursday, January 22: TEAS Reading and English Review Workshop for Nursing Students
- \* Tuesday, January 27: Math Study Skills Workshop
- \* Tuesday, January 27: Spring Involvement Fair
- \* Thursday, January 29: Student Orientation Staff Interest Session



## Greetings from the Vice President for Student Development!

Dear Parents and Families,

I hope you enjoyed a wonderful Christmas and an extended holiday break! Here at CSM, we are refreshed from the time off and excited to welcome students back for Spring semester.

As we start the new year, please know that I am open to feedback for information you may want, and that you are always welcome to request a certain topic for the next newsletter!

Here’s to a great 2015!

Sincerely,  
Tara Knudson Carl, Ph.D.

