



a newsletter for parents & families

## November 2014

### 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:

- Roommate problems and floor tension
- Academic pressures due to procrastination, workload and lack of ability
- Burnout
- Not feeling like they have the stamina to keep up the pace through finals
- Lack of initiative to find new friends or activities because it seems social groups are already set up
- Concerns about going home at Thanksgiving time—whether it's concern about seeing changes among old friends, how things will be with family members or dealing with a romantic relationship.

### Dealing with Roommate Concerns

At this point in the game, students living on campus may experience some roommate tension. The honeymoon is over and things are getting real.

It's part of the living on campus experience – learning to cooperate with another person in your living space. Some tips to share with your daughter if she is in the midst of roommate strife include...

**Bring Things Up.** Encourage your student to talk with her roommate directly instead of about her with others. That's so much more productive – and respectful.

**Get Help.** If your daughter isn't sure how to talk with her roommate or what to do in a certain situation, she can talk with her residence hall staff. They are trained and caring, and are there to help students, especially when it comes to roommate issues.

**Be Willing to Compromise.** When two people live together, no one is ever going to have things exactly how she wants it. The art of compromise takes practice and roommate situations are one of the key places where students get to practice it.

**Don't Bend So Much You Break.** At the same time, students shouldn't need to compromise so much that they are living in uncomfortable circumstances. Encourage your daughter to abide by her values and talk to her roommate so both of them are bending enough to make things work without giving up key things that are important to each of them.

Roommate situations can impact students greatly, so encourage your student to try these strategies and to tap into the helpful campus personnel available to her. Things can get better, often with the help of a good discussion or mediation, so your daughter can be comfortable in her living space.



## Getting Involved on Campus

By now, your daughter is racing her way through the fall semester. What seems like a flurry of rushed visits home will soon be long holiday stays spent with family and friends. For most students, the end of these extended holiday vacations creates some restlessness about getting back to the life that they are building on campus. The end of these vacations at home signals the perfect time to talk to your daughter about how involved she is on campus.

College of Saint Mary offers twenty student organizations that cover a wide range of academic and interest based opportunities. Whether she is looking for an opportunity to connect with those in her field of study, get more involved in community service or program planning, or save the environment through sustainable causes, we've got an organization that can fit her needs. Since parents play such a crucial role in their student's success at college, we ask that you consider talking to your daughter about her opportunities for involvement on campus.

Every semester, our student organizations plan upwards of 50 events on campus for students to take part in. Involvement in these kinds of organizations can help build skills in networking, program planning, budgeting, time management and leadership. Additionally, they provide practical examples that your daughter can share in job interviews and on her resume. Here are some helpful questions to make sure that she is selecting an organization that is best for her.

- Which organizations would you consider joining?
- Will this commitment contribute to your personal or professional growth? Both?
- What would the time commitment be for this organization?
- What other obligations do you have this semester or year?
- Are there opportunities for you to take on a leadership role?
- Do you know any members that you could talk to about becoming involved?
- What reasons do you have for wanting to join this organization?
- What might be some concerns you have about joining this organization?

For more information on the involvement opportunities available at College of Saint Mary, visit our website at [www.csm.edu/student-life/get-involved](http://www.csm.edu/student-life/get-involved).



Student Senate Members



## Making Room for New Traditions

With Thanksgiving on its way, your daughter is likely very excited to participate in family traditions that hold meaning to her.

However, she may also have some ideas about new traditions, based on things she has learned at school or concepts that new friends have introduced to her.

As such, consider how to stay open to these types of suggestions...

For instance, she might suggest something as simple as trying a "tofurkey" at Thanksgiving, because she is wondering about becoming a vegetarian. This may seem out of left field, yet it's pretty typical that students will experiment and try new things during their time at college. This is just one way that may manifest itself.

Or maybe she has some thoughts about involving younger siblings in community service during the holiday season. She may be engaging in this during her time at school and want to share the "rush" of doing good with her brothers and sisters.

New cultural and spiritual traditions may come up, too. Perhaps she has a Jewish friend who has introduced her to potato latkes, a food often prepared as part of Hanukkah celebrations. Try to be open to her sharing these with the family, as well as any other exciting things she may be learning.

New traditions don't trump the old ones – it's just part of including your student and the things she's finding interesting enough to share, based on her experiences at college.

## Residence Life Dates to Calendar



- Thanksgiving Break is Wednesday, November 26 to Sunday, November 30. Residence halls remain open.
- Christmas Break begins Friday, December 12 at 5:00pm. The residence halls close at this time and will reopen on Wednesday, January 7 at 1pm.
- From Friday, December 19 at noon to Sunday, January 4 at 1pm, the residence halls are CLOSED, as is the entire campus.
- Students may request break housing during the following times below and must be approved to stay.
  - ⇒ Friday, December 12 at 5:00pm to Friday, December 19 at noon for a total fee of \$25.
  - ⇒ Sunday, January 4 at 1pm to Wednesday, January 7 at 1pm for a total fee of \$25.
- During break housing, the dining hall is closed. The last meal is lunch served on Sunday, December 14 and meals resume with dinner on Wednesday, January 7.

To sign up for Christmas Break Housing with the Director of Residence Life, the deadline is: Friday, December 5.

\*\*Your daughter must have made her spring semester financial arrangements to sign up for break housing.

## Safety and Security at CSM

We want all of our students, faculty, staff and visitors to be safe on our campus. That's why we provide 24/7 campus security. We patrol the campus regularly, enforce College of Saint Mary policies, and continually assess our safety and security practices, policies and requirements.

We are federally required to share our crime statistics, and are pleased that they reflect our efforts to make our campus safe. To view CSM's crime statistics from 2011-2013, please visit:

<http://csm.edu/student-life/campus-living/campus-safety-and-security>

If you have any questions, contact CSM's Director of Safety and Security, David Ferber, at [dferber@csm.edu](mailto:dferber@csm.edu) or (402) 399-2319.

## Writing Tips to Share



As end-of-the-term papers and projects loom large, here are some writing tips to share with your daughter...

**Avoid the Passive Voice.** Instead of writing "The program was planned by Darla," write, "Darla planned the program." This makes it clearer and less awkward.

**Be Concise.** There's no need to be long-winded. Get to the point and steer clear of too much "fluff" in your writing.

**Get Things Right.** Take great care when spelling people's names, getting their titles correct and other specifics. Also do some careful proofreading. Spell check doesn't catch everything!

**Attribute the Words of Others.** When quoting someone, put quotes around their words and tell where the information came from.

**Don't Go "And" Crazy.** When trying to cram a lot of information in, it's easy to insert "and" many times. However, this makes for a real run-on sentence that is poor form and hard to read. So, if there are more than two "ands" in a sentence, consider turning that long sentence into two shorter ones.

**Make Things Match.** When referring to one person, don't use "they" later on. Also, make tenses match throughout a piece, instead of using "did" one time and then "does" the next. Singular/plural references should jive, too.

**Read It Out Loud.** One very effective way to self-proof is to read out loud. This will help determine the use of incorrect words, run-on sentences, mismatched tenses and more.

**Sources:** [www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/WritingSkills.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/WritingSkills.htm), [www.arc.sbc.edu/writingerrors.html](http://www.arc.sbc.edu/writingerrors.html)

### Punctuation Tips

Here is a university site that offers helpful punctuation tricks:

From Purdue University:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/1/6/>

# A Happy, Healthy Thanksgiving Break

How can you and your daughter navigate a happy, healthy family visit during the Thanksgiving break? Here are some things to keep in mind...

**Discuss the Rules.** Students who are used to being on their own timetable at school and making their own decisions may feel restricted by “house rules” when they return home. Consider sitting down with your

student right away to talk about respectful ways of doing things that can work for both of you, such as the use of a vehicle, household chores, curfews and the like.

### Share Expectations Early.

If you expect your student will visit a relative or be part of an all-day celebration during break, share those expectations now. That way,

she can also plan her time with friends so there are no misunderstandings or hurt feelings.

### Provide Time

**to Unwind.** Chances are that your daughter has been working very hard and could use a bit of downtime during break. So, don't be surprised if she sleeps in or craves some unstructured time. Having time to unwind, especially right before finals kick in, can do your student a lot of good.

You'll all enjoy your break and your time together more if you put these simple things in place.

**Happy Thanksgiving!**



## CSM Dates to Remember:

- \* Monday, November 3—Focused Registration for Spring and Summer 2015 Classes Begins
- \* Monday, November 3—Campus Activity Board's Karaoke
- \* Friday, November 14—Last Day to Withdraw from Classes
- \* Friday, November 14—Focused Registration for Spring and Summer 2015 Classes Ends
- \* Friday, November 14—Campus Activity Board's Mystery Bus Trip
- \* Tuesday, November 18—Native American History Month Event featuring Native American Dancers
- \* Monday, November 24—Thanksgiving Luncheon for Students followed by Interfaith Prayer Service
- \* Wednesday, November 26 to Sunday, November 30— No Classes for Students
- \* Thursday, November 27 to Friday, November 28— College Offices Closed



## Greetings from the Vice President for Student Development!

Dear Parents and Families,

As a parent, you play an important role in helping your daughter handle issues they face by providing suggestions and offering guidance. Our newsletter, sent most months, will offer information and resources for you to use during these important conversations, as well as current information about campus events and deadlines.

At this time of year, allow me to share my gratitude to you for allowing us to care for your daughter while she is on her college journey here at CSM. Here's hoping you have a wonderful and blessed Thanksgiving holiday!

Sincerely,  
Tara Knudson Carl, Ph.D.

