

## Family Chat

Thursday, October 2, 2014

familychatadministrator(NSFP\_Arie): Good Evening Everyone! Welcome to our third Family Chat of the semester! Today we are talking about Staying Connected with your student. I will let my colleagues introduce themselves as they join the chat.

familychatadministrator(NSFP\_Arie): My name is Arie Gee and I am the Assistant Director for Family Programs and Engagement in New Student and Family Programs. My responsibilities include organizing the family chats, sending the Family Connection newsletter, and planning Family Weekend!

familychatmoderator(NSFP\_Kris): Good evening everyone! My name is Kris Klann and I'm an Associate Director with New Student & Family Programs in the Dean of Students Office at UF.

familychatmoderator(Daniel- Academic Advisor): Hello everyone! I am Daniel and I am an academic advisor in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

familychatmoderator(NSFP\_Jill): Hi! My name is Jill Faull and I am a graduate student working in the Dean of Students Office with New Student and Family Programs.

familychatmoderator(NSFP\_Sara): Hello! My name is Sara Empson and I am a Graduate Assistant with New Student and Family Programs within the Dean of Students Office.

familychatadministrator(NSFP\_Arie): What questions do you all have for us? Has anyone found a great way to communicate with their student?

natalie.jackson: Hi My name is Natalie Jackson and my daughter is a freshman at UF

CuriousMom: We communicate with our student by text and phone, but also in person as we live in town. Lately we've been communicating with her in person too much as she has a roommate problem that she can't

familychatadministrator(NSFP\_Arie): Hi CuriousMom, would you mind letting me know what she has tried in regards to the roommate situation?

simplertime: We really appreciate having this option to learn more about our daughter's school. One quick question: aside from asking how her grades are, what options do we have to see how she is doing instead of

CuriousMom: Just talking to the roommate. For some reason she does not feel comfortable talking to the RA.

nickherve2: It is better now compare to the beginning. he sounds better and more involved. Lately he's been complaining about not having time to do anything even to call home. How do I convinced him about slowing

CherylM: Hi, it's a cliche' but has worked for us for some quality communication: care packages have been warmly received, and I always receive a thank you call so I get to hear about what and how my freshman daughter is doing. I try to include something to share with her roommate. I am able to include pictures of local

familychatmoderator(Daniel- Academic Advisor): Hello Simplertime, Students have the ability to track the grades that they have received on assignments against their syllabuses. Unlike grade school, grades are not always fully calculated to date. I would encourage your daughter to speak with her professors, if she has questions about how she is doing.

familychatadministrator(NSFP\_Arie): @CuriousMom, if she doesn't feel comfortable talking to her RA, she is welcome to talk to her Graduate Hall Director. I've also found that students who have an easy way out (i.e.

CuriousMom: Yes, I think you're right about the lack of urgency. Trying to strike a balance between sympathy and tough love. Thanks for suggesting the Graduate Hall Director. Will she know who that is and how to get in

fkhc1148: Its hard when its your child's first time living away from home and its all on them. I had an identical situation when my oldest daughter was in college. if they are non confrontational it can be difficult

familychatmoderator(NSFP_Kris): Hi simplertime, many classes these days will use e-learning and updates students grades throughout the semester (i.e. when they complete assignments, quizzes/test, etc.). Unfortunately, UF doesn't do formal mid-term grade updates, so that will be the best way for students to keep up with how they are doing in classes.
familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): @CuriousMom, if she does not know who that is, you can contact me (ariieg@dso.ufl.edu) and I will find out who that person is!
familychatmoderator(NSFP_Jill): Hi nickherve2! College is a great time to get involved and meet new people. The Counseling and Wellness Center is a great resources that offers weekly group sessions on time management.
familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): @CherylM, that is a GREAT idea! Even when students don't call, they really do miss you and they are thinking about you. A lot of times, a lack of communication is really just a mix between a busy schedule and a longing for a little independence. Showing that you're thinking of them too gives them an excuse to call and say thank you!
CuriousMom: Great, Arie, thanks. As fkhc1148 said, it is partly a desire to avoid confrontation, plus partly a feeling that she does not have the right to dictate the roommate's behavior since it is her room too.
fkhc1148: that would be something for my daughter to look into. I really think that managing her time is an
fkhc1148: even in apartment situations it gets interesting with roommates
CuriousMom: Yes, you're right. I was lucky so I don't have any personal war stories I can share!
nickherve2: Thanks jill
familychatmoderator(NSFP_Kris): fkhc1148, time management is definitely a skill that takes developing. The UF Teaching Center has some great study skills videos you can recommend to your student. The one's on developing a calendar may be most helpful with regards to time management ( <a href="http://www.teachingcenter.ufl.edu/study_skills.html">http://www.teachingcenter.ufl.edu/study_skills.html</a> )
familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): @CuriousMom, you're absolutely right! It can be hard, especially for nonconfrontational students. It is sometimes helpful to talk with them about choosing their battles. Everyone has a right to be comfortable in their living environment. It is up to your daughter to decide which battles are worth fighting and which situations she can learn to live with. It is very hard but it ends up being a wonderful life lesson that will help her succeed later in life!
familychatmoderator(NSFP_Jill): No problem @nickherve2! Here's a link to some of the different wellness options UF has to offer. The bottom of the page contains links to group sessions: <a href="http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/wellness-resources">http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/wellness-resources</a>
simplertime: Thanks for the answers, but I was really trying find out how we as parents can check her grades, without just hearing from her she is doing okay.
fkhc1148: we have been really lucky with our youngest daughter there at UF. she has a wonderful roommate she knew from high school. such a relief not to have a repeat performance with living situations. she is also
familychatmoderator(NSFP_Kris): simplertime, the easiest way is going to be to maintain open lines of communication. Federal regulations protect most student records information, so getting it directly from them is best.
Winni: I vaguely remember hearing about a ride share program. Trying to get my daughter home for her grandmother's bday and Megabus has extreme times. Anybody know about that?
fkhc1148: that would be great to know about Winni..
familychatmoderator(NSFP_Kris): Hi Winni, which direction is home?
Winni: Tallahassee
fkhc1148: oh sorry I can't help

fkhc1148: we are in St Aug
CuriousMom: @Arie - I agree
fkhc1148: but the idea sounds great
<b>familychatmoderator(NSFP_Kris): Hi Winni, usually the coach busses, such as Megabus and Red Coach are the primary options for students. Asking a friend who may be headed in the same direction, whether someone in their Residence Hall/Apt Complex is a good option, or posting something on Facebook, are</b>
Winni: Yes, thank you. I thought there was something else.
simplertime: ok thank you Kris, and thanks again for this option to ask questions.
CuriousMom: Yes, these chats are a great idea.
fkhc1148: very helpful
<b>familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): I'm glad these chats are helpful! We will continue to do them every 2 weeks for the rest of the school year! You are also welcome to ask questions at anytime by calling our office!</b>
Winni: I just want to say that after the other two chats where I complained about lack of RA in my daughter's dorm, she now has one. The RA knocked on her door and when she answered they hugged twice. She attended the dorm meeting and rated it a 7 out of 10. I appreciate the responsiveness from Student Services.
CuriousMom: I saw that discussion and might like to see if I can arrange something similar. I will email you Arie
<b>familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): @Winni, I'm glad she was able to connect with the RA. I hope that her experience continues to improve!</b>
<b>familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): @CuriousMom, you're welcome to email me and I will see what I can do. Our housing staff are wonderful and very responsive when I reach out to them!</b>
Winni: It isn't what she expected but she is making it work for now. Thank you.
CuriousMom: Thank you Arie. We really appreciate the chance to have one on one help.
<b>familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): That's what I'm here for!</b>
Winni: I also wanted to say that as a result of the first chat, there was a group of parents who connected by email and 5 of their students met randomly and went to Gator Nights together. They loved it.
LAR18: It seems early in the school year to me, but my daughter is getting advice from older students that she should start looking now for off campus housing now 2015-16. Any advice on searching for off campus housing, and how to ascertain the safety and reputation of off-campus apartment management?
<b>familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): That's great! I'm glad something very positive was able to come out of these chats! The first few weeks can be especially challenging, but it sounds like your students are starting to find their place here!</b>
nancyrhoads: Do they have dorm dances and socials scheduled? Way back when I was at school there were a lot of planned activities in the dorms to help kids mix/mingle.
Winni: I have an idea that might be against fire code but what if RAs gave out door stoppers on a given evening? Prop your door open if you want to meet people. Have food in the lounges. The halls seem like
<b>familychatmoderator(NSFP_Kris): Hi Nancy, some Residence Halls will schedule socials or group outings, but I don't think they are necessarily as formal as they once were. Each RA is required to do so many activities a semester to get there students out of the rooms and interacting with each other. As the semester goes along, many of the students will begin doing this on their own as well.</b>
<b>familychatmoderator(Daniel- Academic Advisor): LAR18, the University actually has a department that with lots of resources on living off campus in Gainesville. You may try looking at <a href="http://www.offcampus.ufl.edu/">http://www.offcampus.ufl.edu/</a> to start with.</b>
fkhc1148: @LAR18 we started off with off campus housing. we did a lot of searching and looking. I am happy so
fkhc1148: also try swamp rentals.. thats what we used

familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): @LAR18, it is never too early to start understanding the responsibilities that come with moving off campus. Most apartment complexes won't know their availability until the spring semester so looking for an actual apartment probably won't work out right now. We have an office on campus dedicated to helping students who are moving off campus to understand what it means to be an off campus student, but also help them find the resources. Daniel added the web address above. I also recommend having Student Legal Services look at any lease that your student is considering signing.
mariedollfus: Is anyone's son or daughter pledging a fraternity or sorority? Did they change from eating in the dining hall to eating lunch and dinners at thefraternity or sorority house? NSFP Advisors: Since their dining hall fee has already been paid, How does the dining service work out the difference in the dining fees?
familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): @mariedollfus, the policy can be found here: <a href="http://www.bsd.ufl.edu/dining/files/Fraternity-Sorority_MP_Letter_20140508.pdf">http://www.bsd.ufl.edu/dining/files/Fraternity-Sorority_MP_Letter_20140508.pdf</a>
LAR18: Great advice all, thank you. I'll direct my daughter to those resources.
nancyrhoads: My daughter decided to join a sorority, but we chose not to do a meal plan until she knew for sure so we didn't have to transfer the meal plan at all. Now she just pays if she goes with her debit card. I am super glad she did the sorority, because it seems much harder to meet kids in the dorms than it used to. I think a welcome BBQ or "kickoff" dance or something would have been nice. With so many eating choices and long
CherylM: Before I have to leave, I wanted to express how much I appreciate the Seasons of Adjustment Calendar from Student Affairs. Many parents stop by my office and look for inspiration and ideas from it.
CuriousMom: Yes, I've been surprised at how hard it apparently is to meet people in your dorm.
familychatmoderator(NSFP_Kris): Hi Nancy, joining a Sorority or Fraternity can be a great way to meet people, but many student organizations and Residence Halls do a number of welcome events. I agree that eating habits have changed some and students don't eat in large groups as much as they may have previously. But there are still plenty of other options for forming communities.
familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): @CherylM, I'm glad you are enjoying the calendar! It is a great resource from the Vice President's Office and the Family Fund!
familychatmoderator(NSFP_Kris): Using Gator Connect ( <a href="https://ufl.collegiatelink.net/">https://ufl.collegiatelink.net/</a> ) is a great way to find clubs and organizations that might fit with a students interest.
CuriousMom: Good to know. Thanks.
familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): For those who have sent care packages to their students, what was their favorite thing to receive in the mail?
mariedollfus: Thank you for the Fraternity/Sorority dining letter, Arie!
Aamana: My daughter liked the pepper spray I sent, and asked for granola bars...lol
familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): Sometimes it is the simplest thing that can make a big difference!
familychatmoderator(Advisor Lynn): Hello all, my name is Lynn and I'm an advisor in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.
mariedollfus: Power Bars, peanuts, gum, mints, items that they needed and the clothes that they are required to wear for pledging their fraternity! Thank goodness for two day priority mail!
Aamana: Hi Lynn. My daughter also asked for more coffee - she has a coffee pot in her room.
familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): These sound like fun care packages! Has anyone made plans to visit campus this semester?
LAR18: I'll be there for Family Weekend. Looking forward to it. A little worried about parking...
mariedollfus: We just visited this past weekend (end of September) and are planning on visiting family
Aamana: I was just there last weekend! I'll be back in November for KKG family weekend! Won't be coming for UF Family weekend, as that's initiation weekend also.

familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): Hi LAR18, parking is lifted on the weekends so there will be plenty of parking! On Friday night and Saturday morning, you can park in the Reitz Union garage or in the lot across the street from there. For the Saturday BBQ, parking will be at the O'Connell Center, which is also a very
familychatmoderator(NSFP_Kris): Hi Aamana, that's great that you're going to be able to make it up a couple of times.
Aamana: I just live in Jacksonville. Very excited about the Waldo news this week!
Aamana: Hopefully I won't have to worry about the speed traps anymore!
familychatmoderator(NSFP_Kris): Yes, the Waldo news has been making headlines around here as well.
Aamana: Arie, is that the case with parking every weekend, or just on the special event ones?
familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): Most parking is lifted every day after 4:30 and on the weekends, with the exception of service drives and a few lots that are enforced 24/7.
Aamana: Is the commuter lot unrestricted on weekends? The large one behind Hume.
familychatmoderator(NSFP_Kris): Hi Aamana, yes except on home football game weekends
Aamana: Thanks Kris. Sorry I'm taking so long to respond, cooking dinner also.. :)
mariedollfus: Where can you park onhome football game weekends?
familychatmoderator(NSFP_Kris): No worries. I can appreciate the multitasking.
familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): Parking on Home Game Weekends is a little more challenging. Many lots are still open, just not the ones near the stadium. Where does your student live?
tm0304: @mariedollfus We like the garage at the hospital at the South end of Gale Lemerand, before crossing Archer. Usually plenty of space. A bit of a walk but there is a lawn area around it with large trees if you want to
Aamana: My dinner is ready. I'm going to step away to eat, and hope to be back before this is over!
familychatmoderator(Advisor Lynn): Enjoy!
mariedollfus: Thanks forhome football game parking tip,tm0304! Sounds like a plan!
familychatadministrator(NSFP_Arie): Thank you to everyone who joined us for the chat tonight! If you have any other questions, please don't hesitate to call our office! (352) 392-8396. We would also LOVE to see you at Family Weekend on October 24-26. Registration is open for one more week! Have a great night and Go
familychatmoderator(Daniel- Academic Advisor): It has been great chatting with all of you. Have a great