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# MPCC Parent Connection

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## Up and Running

This year commences the second year of the MPCC Parent Connection Newsletter. The purpose of the newsletter is to provide you with information to help you and your college student(s) have a successful and exciting 2009-2010 school year! Each month the newsletter will offer you information to enhance your students' collegiate experience and help make the transition to college a smoother one for all involved.

The Newsletter will include such information as:

- ◆ Important college dates and deadlines.

- ◆ FERPA information regarding federal rights of students and FERPA website information for parents.



First All Resident Hall Student Meeting

- ◆ Upcoming athletics events and student activities.

We hope you find this newsletter helpful as you

communicate with your student here at MPCC. Please encourage your students to be active in the college community and proactive with their academic education. Remind them to take advantage of the many support services available at MPCC. A complete list of services can be found on the MPCC webpage. Services are designed to help students with issues they may come up against both in out of the classroom.

Welcome to the MPCC Parent Connection.

## Residence Hall Life Personnel

As students move into the residence halls for the first time, they will no doubt meet dozens of people. While the majority of residents are students, there are others who live and work in the halls. Here is a sampling of some titles you might hear:

**Director or Assistant Director of Housing**—At MPCC, these individuals are adults/student affairs professionals employed and onsite full-time, serving as administrative support and as resources for students. Some MPCC staff have family

members that live with them (husband, wife and children).

**Resident Assistant or (RA)** This person is typically an upper-class MPCC student who facilitates hall programs, posts campus information, engages students, does peer counseling, enforces campus



Need a little something special baked up for your student for a birthday or other celebration? Contact Jamie Mockry with Consolidated Management at [mockryj@mpcc.edu](mailto:mockryj@mpcc.edu).



## Residence Hall Life Personnel Continued

policies and is a general resource person for students. The RAs are the first line of support for students because they live directly on the floor with the students.

Students are encouraged to reach out to RAs to help make their journey on campus a smoother one.

**Residence Hall Office Support Staff**—You will find these staffers in the residence halls office area. They can typically help with a variety of tasks, from contacting someone to help your student if he or she gets locked out, to sorting mail, registering guests, and monitoring activity in

the building.

**Housekeeping Custodial Staff**—This staff is responsible for the day-to-day cleaning of the hallways, common areas and public bathrooms. It is the responsibility of the student to keep their community living area neat and clean. When situations occur that require extra cleaning (such as a food fight), a fee could be assessed.

**Maintenance**—This crew repairs general wear-and-tear in the residence halls, such as replacing lights or fixing a leaking shower. To request maintenance support, students put through a work-order request through

email. Similar to custodial staff, if repair work is a result of neglect or mischief, students may face additional fees. Check the MPCC student handbook for the policy on damages for more specific information on fines.

**Security/Police**—They are responsible for the safety of students on campus. They patrol the campus regularly. Encourage your student to establish a good working relationship with security officials who will help them if there are ever emergency situations.

## FERPA at a Glance

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA or the Buckley Amendment) is a federal law that was enacted in 1974 to control student records. FERPA is administered by the U.S. Department of Education, and maintains a website for parents at: ([www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/parents.html](http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/parents.html)).

*Under FERPA, all parental rights are transferred from you to your child once he/she either reaches 18 years of age or enters a postsecondary institution.* This means that you cannot access your child's college edu-

cational records even if you are paying the bills unless your child gives you written permission to do so or unless you meet one of the FERPA exemptions that may allow you to access your child's records without his/her permission.

### ***What information is protected under FERPA?***

FERPA covers "educational records" which are very broadly defined as "those records that are directly related to a student and are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution." Examples of FERPA records include grades, transcripts, test scores, I.D. numbers or social security numbers,

financial records, disciplinary records, and class schedules. While counseling and medical records are not covered by FERPA, almost every state has laws or policies governing the confidentiality of these types of records

### ***What information can be obtained without permission?***

Unless a student specifically requests that the college not release it, FERPA allows the college to release Directory Information which is information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy, if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to, the student's name,

## FERPA Continued



address, telephone listing, electronic mail address, photograph, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, grade level, enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate; fulltime or part-time), participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, degrees, honors and awards received, and the most recent educational agency or institution attended.

***Will the college let me know if my child gets in any trouble related to drugs or alcohol?***

Under FERPA a college MAY, without the student's permission, release certain information to parents or guardians of students under the age of 21 found responsible for violating any law, rule or university policy pertaining to drugs or alcohol.

***Will I be informed if my daughter or son is treated at***

***the Health Center or Counseling Services?*** Health and Counseling Services' records are subject to even more restrictions than are educational records, including keeping it confidential that a student even utilized those services. College officials recognize that confidentiality in this area is critical to encouraging students to talk openly and candidly with a physician, psychologist or other health professional without fear that this information will be shared with others.

***Will I be notified if my child is hurt or in danger?***

In the event of a potentially life-threatening emergency, FERPA does allow parents or guardians to be notified without prior consent from the student. If a hospital or police agency is involved, they will have their own protocols for notifying you.

***Why does the college make it almost impossible to get any information about my child?***

In addition to the legal constraints FERPA places on us, most colleges operate within a student development framework that recognizes that the college years are when students are transitioning from

late adolescence to adulthood. One of the most effective ways to help with that transition is to treat students as adults, granting them both the rights and responsibilities which go along with that status. This includes communicating directly with them rather than with the parents. Most college officials recognize the important role parents also play in this transition to adulthood, including providing emotional and financial support, and reinforcing good behavior and habits. Students are consistently encouraged to share information with their parents and include them in key decisions and situations they face during their college years.

For the official word on FERPA see their website at: (<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/index.html>).

*Adapted from a report written by Karen L. Simpkins, J.D., Interim Associate Vice President for Human Resources, Eastern Michigan*

### What's Happening?

#### September

- 26th-MCC Baseball vs Mark Johnson Select
- MCC Volleyball @ WYO-Braska
- NPCC Volleyball vs Johnson Co
- 27th-MCC Baseball vs Play Ball Sports
- 28th-MCC Volleyball vs Colby CC
- 29th-MCC Banned Book Reading
- NPCC Volleyball vs Hastings JV

#### October

- 1st-MCC Volleyball vs Trinidad
- NPCC Volleyball vs Eastern WY
- 2nd-MCC Volleyball vs Otero
- 3rd-MCC Volleyball vs Lamar
- 4th-MCC Baseball vs Hastings
- 6th-MCC Volleyball vs WNCC
- 7th-MCC Volleyball vs Northeastern
- 8th-MCC Blood Drive
- 9th-NPCC Volleyball Raider Invite
- 10th-MCC Baseball vs Garden City
- NPCC Volleyball Raider Invite
- 11th-MCC Baseball vs Colby CC
- 12th-MCC Volleyball vs NCTA
- 14th-NPCC Volleyball vs SECC
- 15th-MCC Volleyball vs Otero
- 16th-MCC Volleyball vs Trinidad
- NPCC Volleyball vs CCC

It's almost flu season, encourage your students to wash their hands and take extra precautions.

## Keys Issues in the First Year: Ways to Provide Support

The first year is a time filled with a variety of emotions, for both parents and students. Multiple emotions create numerous internal questions, which are often intermingled with the more immediate, practical questions regarding living and learning on campus. These questions can create a stressful and overwhelming time for first-year students, and their families. You are your students' most valuable resource. Use the information on the following page to help you support your student.



# First-Year Issues:

## Academics

- The difference between high school and college work
- Pressure to select a major
- More free time
- Selection of courses
- Getting to know faculty
- Self-responsibility for keeping up with studies
- Exposure to new ideas, information, and debates

## Relationships

- Fear of losing contact with friends and significant others back home
- Wondering what family life is like without him/her
- Roommate relationships

- Exposure to people unlike him or herself

## Finances

- Worries of tuition costs
- Consider the need for a job
- Learn how to spend money – wants vs. needs

## Self-Awareness

- Exposure to new kinds of groups and interests
- Exploring differences in family values, and exposure to new beliefs and values
- Confidence being challenged
- Explore opportunities and challenges

**Ask your student about the new MPCC Emergency Notification System!**

## What Can I Do to Support My Student in the First Year?

- **Write and call**, even if he or she doesn't write or call back. A care package or letter from home can make his or her day.
- **Visit**, but not too often and never unannounced! Attend campus sponsored events for families.
- **Expect the best**. Trust that he/she is now ready to lead his/her own life journey. He/she will make decisions you might not, however sometimes those poor decisions are the best life teachers.
- **Let them solve their problems**. At some point, you will have the urge to "help" by making a call to campus. Before you pick up the phone, think about how you can help them without doing it *for* them. Help by asking them the questions, referring them to resources and helping them learn independence and responsibility in solving their own problems.
- **Share expectations**. Just because they are now a legal adult, doesn't mean you can't share your expectations. They may know them, but may not want to hear them again, but research shows that they are listening and it will influence her future choices.
- **Encourage campus involvement**. There is a fine balance here, as some students are prone to get over involved. However, research has proven that students who get involved on campus have a higher retention rate, are more academically successful, and are more satisfied with their overall college experience.
- **Provide These General Tips To Your First-Year Student**
  - Attend all classes
  - Get to know professors
  - Make at least two friends in each class
  - Manage time and priorities
  - Get involved in at least one organization
  - Take advantage of campus support and services
  - Keep finances in check



Source: *eCampusTours.com, Start Off Your Freshman Year the Right Way*