Starting Right at TU
Helping parents help their student succeed quickly at TU
April 2017
Dear TU Family,

Congratulations on your student’s admission to The University of Tulsa, and welcome to TU.

Along with life-changing opportunities, the transition to college brings questions and a kaleidoscope of emotions for students and (probably even more so) for their families.

Be assured that our Enrollment and Student Services unit keeps working beyond the admission process and straight through to graduation day; we maintain a network of support offices to meet our students’ academic, extracurricular, social and health needs.

This publication offers tips for helping your student make a smooth transition to college. It also notes several important dates, useful web links, featured support offices and often-used phone numbers.

On behalf of all of us on campus, I wish your family our best as you close the books on high school and begin a new chapter of learning, friendship and growth here at TU.

Best regards,

[Signature]

Gerard P. Clancy, M.D.
President
Years ago, while sitting in the parent meeting with my daughter’s kindergarten teacher, I couldn’t have missed the message. Over and over Mrs. Rech repeated, like a chorus she had rehearsed for years, “Get involved.” Just like plenty of other parents, I got the memo: good parents get involved.

So I did what you did as a parent; I checked homework, went to meetings, filled out forms, bought extra school supplies, and even volunteered at the school. I got involved because I wanted to be a good parent.

But things changed when my daughter started college. I couldn’t be involved the way I was before. She had to get herself up in the mornings. I couldn’t check on homework getting done. I had no idea when her next meeting was, and not one professor invited me to any parent conferences (they just don’t do that in college).

The little girl I sat next to in that kindergarten parent-teacher meeting is now an adult. And my role has changed. Her big transition to college included a fair bit of transition for our family at home too. And with the transition comes a shift in the message:

**Stay connected.** Even in the midst of this big college-life shift your connection with your student matters as much as ever. Year after year, those of us who work in the college context see so much value and importance in parents staying connected to their students.

Yes, your student is setting out on their own, creating a new group of friends, and is studying a whole array of classes and topics that it takes a PhD to teach. However, after the first couple of months it turns out that my young, independent learner still needed to feel connected, almost as much as I did. She needed to see my commitment level to her was still as strong as ever, that our family would still support and believe in her, and that even from a distance we were still available to her as she made some big decisions.

So my advice is simple: don’t let physical separation turn into seclusion. Reach out with a text, a card, an email, a little care package, or just a phone call. Remind your student of how proud you are of them, of your confidence in them, and the wealth of opportunities and support available to them here at The University of Tulsa. Stay connected.
Suggestions for Staying Connected to Your TU Student:

• **Consider setting up a regular appointment for touching base.** Some students talk about texting their mom or calling home almost daily, but for other students a weekly appointment for checking-in works best.

• **Texting works.** Simply sending a “thinking of you” or “study hard” or a picture of the family pet helps your student still feel connected to everything at home.

• **Ask open-ended questions.** When you interact with your student ask questions, not necessarily as a problem-solver, but as someone who genuinely cares. Questions can be a great way to demonstrate care and compassion while also helping them know they’re being heard. (If you’d like to learn more, here’s a website with a quick comparison between open-ended and closed-ended questions.)

• **Help your student ask questions.** While today’s college students are as sophisticated and tech-savvy as any in history, they may still be inexperienced at how things get done in institutions. If they can’t find a quick answer through a Google search, they can sometimes be stumped for what to do next. Encourage your student make a phone call, talk with a professor, reach out to a student leader or seek support from a campus office. The University of Tulsa has hired some amazing professionals who are on campus for the sole purpose of helping students succeed, often just waiting to be asked how they can help.

• **Offer support and encouragement.** No one knows your student better than you and your family. Campus life is often very challenging – academically, socially and professionally. There is a convergence of responsibilities and an intensity in college like nowhere else. Students often wonder if something is difficult or challenging for them that might mean they’re doing it wrong. You and your family can help build their confidence and help them to press through challenges to new levels of academic and personal success.

• **Remind your student this work is theirs.** College is a bit of a crash course in independence. If they are going to get up on time, manage their schedule well, follow up on assignments, go to meetings, meet new people, eat healthy, start their own organization or study abroad, then all of that work is on them. The more they can walk onto campus ready to take charge of all the details, the easier the transition will be for them.

Want more practical suggestions on staying connected with your student? Consider visiting these articles for parents from Student Advisor and LendULink.

Want to know more about what’s going at TU?

Consider following these links to help you stay informed about things happening on campus:

Visit the TU Webpage occasionally, including: the calendar http://calendar.utulsa.edu/

And links provided for parents http://utulsa.edu/parents-welcome/

Join the TU Parent & Family organization on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/tupfa

Follow the Twitter feed for StartTU (New Student Orientation) https://twitter.com/StartTU17
A Semester At-A-Glance

The academic schedule has its own ebb and flow. Parents and family members of TU students can better support their student if they are aware of the events and general timeline of a typical semester.

Move In

If your student will be living on campus moving in can be a hectic and emotional experience. Parents and families can sometimes find this process filled with a host of emotions – excitement for this new chapter in their student’s life, challenging as everyone deals with unexpected questions, stressful as financial decisions get made, and sometimes a little awkward with constantly meeting so many new people. There will occasionally be a couple of long lines, and if there are any hiccups in the paper trail, maybe even a few extra things to do.

This is one of the times that we as parents are used to taking over if anything is difficult or stressful. But, the more you can let your student handle the documents, appointment, work the checklist, and decisions about arranging their room, the more you can communicate how confident you are in them about the new freedoms and responsibilities that lie ahead of them.

The First Weeks

The first 30 days on campus can be a roller coaster for your new student. They’ll meet hundreds of new people, discover how challenging their new classes can be, work out living arrangements with new roommates, be invited to join new organizations and discover they have more independence than they had imagined. These first weeks can include waves of excitement, anxiety, loneliness, homesickness and anticipation. And life at home will start to feel different as their reality of their absence sets in.

Communication with your student can be a helpful coping skill for both your student and your family. Your student may text frequently, or call home, or send out an email that sounds a little distant or maybe a little frantic. It is not uncommon to see many of today’s students still developing their coping skills or conflict resolution skills, so they may turn to you to solve problems for them. Research suggests that whatever you can do to encourage your student to resolve issues without your involvement can pay dividends for both of you in the future. Asking questions, recommending campus resources and offering a listening ear can be helpful responses. And remember that very often, the issues and emotions your student is experiencing are normal and generally temporary.

It’s also fairly predictable that some students will become so engrossed in their studies, so involved in campus organizations and so engaged in new relationships that these early weeks are a whirlwind for them and parents hear little or nothing from their college student. If you don’t hear anything for a while, a quick “Hope things are going well” text can be both a positive encouragement and a reminder that they are in your thoughts.

[continues on the following page]
The Middle of the Semester

Near the middle of the semester students often have a number of exams across many of their classes in a short period of time. Their performance on these exams may comprise a large portion of their final grade in the courses. And for some students, this can be a disquieting experience, both in the workload and in the results. If your student has a difficult time preparing for their midterms, or is upset or surprised by their results, encourage them to reach out to the Center for Student Academic Support (CSAS). This campus office can help students with tutors at minimal cost, provides free workshops on study skills and academic counseling, as well as addresses special needs of students and more.

Around the same time, your student will also be meeting with advisors to enroll for the next semester’s classes. They have to juggle course prerequisites, weekly schedules, long-term goals and class availabilities. With all this happening in such a short amount of time, your student may express some anxiety or worry. It’s a demanding time, but can also funnel their energy, focus and talents in impressive ways.

Semester Breaks

Whether its Thanksgiving week or Spring Break, both semesters include a week-long break. Some students are eager to get back home, sleep in their old bed and reconnect with family and friends. Other students may be reluctant to leave either because of pressing assignments or new relationships they don’t want to separate from. Whatever a student is feeling, they sometimes approach breaks with different expectations from family members which may lead to confusion or tension. Additionally, college life is busy so students are often fairly exhausted. And finally, students have just spent weeks in an environment where there are no curfews or family rules and they can do almost anything they like with their time, so working back into family patterns can be difficult. It can be helpful for everyone to communicate expectations (before the break) and to be willing to work together.

End of the Semester

Perhaps the most stressful time of the semester will be the last month. Projects and papers will be due, and final exams can be daunting. Students sometimes are pressing hard to make up for a missed assignment or for underachieving on earlier tests. During the final week there are lots of late nights. Provide encouragement as best you can and maybe even a care package from home!
“This is Why I Work Here”

In addition to our world-class faculty, and our amazing student body from across the globe, The University of Tulsa includes a wealth of passionate, deeply committed staff members who work in offices and programs uniquely designed to welcome, empower, encourage and support students through the challenges of college life. These experts leverage years of education, professional training, and on-campus experience to help students succeed quickly and overcome obstacles. Here are just a few of the offices where first-year students will find resources, connections and encouragement for success.

**Career Services**

With a couple of big job fairs and internship interviews happening in September, one of the campus offices our first-year students visit is Career Services. The career specialists in this office can help TU students prepare for their future career with résumé services, business cards, internship listings, practice for interviews and more. Career Services even has inventories and assessments that first-year students can take that will help with finalizing a decision about their major or career path. To learn more, reach out to Career Services at 918.631.2549 or careerhelp@utulsa.edu.

**Alexander Health Center**

College life can be filled with a wide range of challenges and difficulties. The professionals who work in the Alexander Health Center provide a wide range of services to support student health – whether a student is struggling with a sinus infection, or wants to talk with one of our staff psychologists about some test anxiety they’ve experienced. Most services at the Alexander Health Center are provided free or at a minimal cost to students. Reach out to Beth Park at 918.631.3717 or ecp9291@utulsa.edu to learn more about both the medical and psychological services available to students.
Student Activities

The University of Tulsa believes deeply in student leadership. One place this is most visible is in our student government, SA (Student Association). SA includes both our student senate (elected student legislative body) and the SA cabinet, where students plan campus-wide events and oversee a all-encompassing range of student-led organizations on campus. These student orgs provide tremendous co-curricular opportunities and experiential education for students, and are one of the places new students can find leadership opportunities early in their campus experience.

Academic Counseling

The workload and academic rigor in college can be quite demanding. Frequently the coursework and scholarship at The University of Tulsa requires more planning and intensity than students experienced in high school. To help students succeed, the professionals in the Center for Student Academic Success (CSAS) offer free Academic Counseling. This includes one-on-one mentoring on studying habits, time management, academic strategies and more. Feel free to contact Sarah Robinson in CSAS at sarah-robinson-90@utulsa.edu or 918.631.3814.

The Collins Fitness Center

TU students love our 67,129 square foot modern facility dedicated to student health, recreation and fitness. There are intramural sports, fitness classes, personal trainers, a café, and even employment opportunities. The Collins Fitness Center is a favorite way for students to sweat out a little stress or to maintain personal health through pick-up basketball games, personal workouts and intramural competitions throughout the academic year.

The Office of Student Affairs includes all of these offices, as well as Greek Life and New Student Programs & Services. The Office of Student Affairs is filled by knowledgeable, passionate professionals who are here to help your student succeed. Our Student Handbook and Policies are available online. If you would like to know more about these policies or the Office of Student Affairs, please contact them Administrative Assistant Brenda Kemp at Brenda-Kemp@utulsa.edu or 918.631.2327.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequently requested on-campus phone numbers</th>
<th>Frequently requested on-campus phone numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Advising</td>
<td>(918) 631-2244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Sciences</td>
<td>(918) 631-3297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>(918) 631-2223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering/Natural Sciences</td>
<td>(918) 631-2619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Sciences</td>
<td>(918) 631-2307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>(918) 631-4688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletics Ticket Office</td>
<td>(918) 631-2206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore</td>
<td>(918) 631-2600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Office</td>
<td>(918) 631-2549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Security</td>
<td>(918) 631-2315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Services</td>
<td>(918) 631-3229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Student Academic Support</td>
<td>(918) 631-2546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Global Education</td>
<td>(918) 631-2241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaplain’s Office</td>
<td>(918) 631-2527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Center</td>
<td>(918) 631-3516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>(918) 631-2241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Life</td>
<td>(918) 631-2241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Center</td>
<td>(918) 631-2241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing &amp; Dining</td>
<td>(918) 631-2516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID/Parking Center</td>
<td>(918) 631-3360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Student Services</td>
<td>(918) 631-2329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mail Center</td>
<td>(918) 631-2211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural Student Center</td>
<td>(918) 631-2966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Student Programs and Services</td>
<td>(918) 631-2707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration and Records</td>
<td>(918) 631-2254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
<td>(918) 631-2327</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parent & Family Weekend each fall is held in conjunction with Homecoming. We create an opportunity for parents and family members to join their college student on campus, including a catered tail-gate meal, a t-shirt and more.

Parent & Family Weekend is **Friday, October 14**\(^{th}\)!

http://utulsa.edu/parents-welcome/parents-programs/parent-family-weekend/

Stay in touch with the TU Parent and Family Association! Sign-up for occasional emails about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities:

sign-up at Mail Chimp here

One of the best ways to stay in touch with TUPFA and stay connected to what’s happen on campus is through our Facebook page. Like the page to stay current with us and campus events!
There are helpful and informative programs for parents and family members of new students at the start of New Student Orientation on **Sunday, August 13th**.

### 8:30 am – 2:00 pm: Move-In Appointments
Our drive-through check-in system and campus-wide volunteers will make your move on to campus quick and as painless as possible.

Starting mid-July the Office of Housing will send out invitations to students moving into a Residence Hall will to select their move-in time.

### 2:00 - 3:30 pm: Parent Information Session
Meet and interact with staff members and campus leaders from various offices and organizations, held in the Lorton Performance Center (**building 24 on this map**).

### 2:00 - 3:45 pm: Welcome for Multicultural Students and Families
Hosted in the President’s Suite of the Reynolds Center.

### 4:00 pm: “Oh the Places You’ll Go”
Interactive storytelling and the official start of Orientation.

### 5:00 pm: Matriculation Exercises
Ceremony celebrating the Class of 2021 officially joining the academic community.

### 6:00 pm: President’s Dinner
Dinner is free and open to all students & families.
If they haven’t done so yet, have your student get started working their way through the **New Student Checklist**, which helps organize all the steps for the start of their first semester on campus.

Your student will need to:

1. Log-in to Campus Connection with their TUNetID & Password at [https://cc.utulsa.edu/](https://cc.utulsa.edu/)
2. Then, click on the “Admitted Students” tab.
3. Look in the center of the page for the link titled “New Student Checklist”

One of those steps includes registering for New Student Orientation. The link in that step will send your student to [CaneLink](https://cc.utulsa.edu/) to register for our week-long program that helps them be ready to succeed quickly at TU. If they have any questions, they can contact us at [StartTU@utulsa.edu](mailto:StartTU@utulsa.edu).