

Then (Good Manner) must be inspired by the Good Heart. There is no beautifier of complexion, or form or behavior, like the wish to scatter joy and not pain around us.

*****Ralph Waldo Emerson*****

Newsletter Date: February 2007



FGCU Parents & Family Newsletter

February 2007

Important Dates

<i>Spring Break</i>	3/5–10
<i>Last day to drop w/o Academic Penalty</i>	3/23
<i>Last day of Classes</i>	4/23
<i>Finals</i>	4/24–27
<i>Commencement</i>	4/28

Dear FGCU Parents and Family,

All the students and classes must be all in order....they say “No News is Good News”. I have not spoken to too many students since the 3rd week of January or so.... The spring semester is well under way and students seem to be studious and focused on their courses!

Believe it or not, I can feel the early spring around here in SW Florida. The cypress trees seem to be fashioning new light green needles and the air is crisp and dry with gentle breeze. Before you know, it will be the first day of Spring in a month or so.

Have a great February!

Sincerely,

Paula Machlin

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Coordinator of Advising and Parent Relations
Parent Office



Paula Machlin



Celebrating Valentine's Day Creatively

Who says Valentine's Day is just for those who are dating or married? Valentine's Day is about love! You can show your love for your student this month by...

- * Sending a gift basket with your student's favorite treats from home. **(From-mom.com).**
- * Making a CD mix with songs your student loves or songs from his/her childhood.
- * Calling or writing to share some of your favorite stories from your student's childhood.
- * Sending a fun “romantic” movie and some microwave popcorn, a pair of cute heart pajamas or a T-shirt, or cool room decor .
- * Putting together a family newsletter dedicated to your student—have siblings and extended family members write “articles,” submit fun pictures and more!
- * Sending a creative e-card or monkey mail message
(www.careerbuilder.com/monk-e-mail for information on Monk-e-mail) or create and send a multi-media “photo story” using these directions—<http://technology.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=153185>

Registration Dates for

Summer & Fall 2007 Enrollment

3/26	—Honor Program Students, Graduate, Athletes, Post-Baccalaureate, Seniors, Teacher-Certification students
3/29	—Juniors
4/2	—Sophomores
4/5	—Freshmen, High School Dual- Enrollments

In-Person Registration:

4/9	—All Degree-seeking students
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Spring Break Travel Planning is Underway

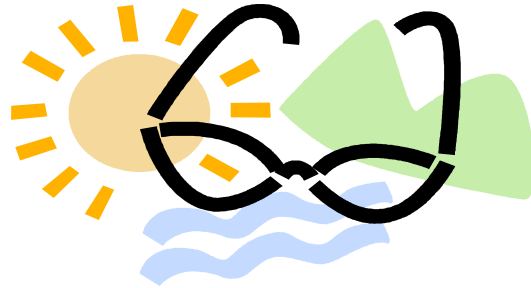
Students are preparing to pack their bags! Chances are, your student has already had conversations with peers about Spring Break plans. Students' itineraries will include everything from relaxing at home or working as many hours as they can to make extra cash, to volunteering in a remote country or vacationing in a sunny destination.

What are your student's plans?

Beach Time

If your student has plans to travel to the beach, don't be surprised. Every year, thousands of college-age students swarm sunny destinations for a chance to have fun with friends. According to the Travel Channel website (<http://travel.discovery.com>), the top 10 spring break destinations are:

1. Panama City, Florida
2. Cancun, Mexico
3. South Padre Island, Texas
4. Lake Havasu, Arizona
5. Jamaica
6. Mazatlan, Mexico
7. Daytona Beach, Florida
8. Key West, Florida
9. Rosarito Beach, Mexico
10. The Bahamas



Alternative Spring Breaks

It's important to know that not every student spends Spring Break partying on the beach. While these sunny destinations are popular for many, so are alternative trips. These trips offer opportunities to conduct service work or to immerse oneself in another culture. Here are just three—of many—resources to get the conversation started:

Cross-Cultural Solutions

www.crossculturalsolutions.org

Volunteer abroad for one week in Brazil, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Peru or Russia by working side-by-side with local people and making meaningful contributions.

MTV's and United Way's Alternative Spring Break 2007

www.mtv.com/thinkmtv/asb/2007/

Volunteer to provide hurricane relief by working in Gulf Coast communities. Or, visit the website to find out ways to make a difference in a local community or region. Volunteers can even create their own alternative Spring Break experiences!

Habitat for Humanity

www.habitat.org/

Volunteer with four other friends or as part of an organized group to spend a week building a house for a family in need. Habitat for Humanity builds all over the world!

Most colleges and universities sponsor alternative Spring Break trips. These trips are usually organized by individual academic departments, a community service office, student groups or the student affairs staff. Suggest that your student talk with folks on her campus to find out what opportunities are available. It's likely that she will need to apply to participate and sometimes the application process can be intensive.

No matter what plans your student has for Spring Break, remind him to stay safe, supply you with contact information and have fun. And help students remember that getting the most out of college does not have to include Spring Break travel. Students can also broaden their horizons right in their own backyard.

Have a Fun-filled and Safe Spring Break!!





Spending an Extended Break with Your Student

The top three areas that usually cause conflict between families and college students during this extended break are...

- Expressing newly-developed or developing ideas surrounding religious, political and lifestyle beliefs. One of the benefits of college is the opportunity to interact with people from all walks of life. Students may come home with new or different thoughts and values than those instilled in them while growing up. Sometimes students are struggling with the pressure of reconciling old and new ideals. Given their increased ability to think and process differences of opinion, this is an excellent opportunity for you to engage in productive dialogue and debate, rather than arguments.
- Trying to balance reconnecting with friends and spending quality time with family. Students sometimes struggle with this over the extended break because they are receiving pressure from multiple people. Additionally, students need to adjust to the changes that have taken place in friends—and themselves.
- Readjusting to house rules and routines after living independently. While colleges and universities do have rules, students are used to making their own decisions and dealing with the consequences. As a parent, it may be difficult to allow this process to happen without interference. Sometimes a little bit of negotiation at the beginning of break can go a long way towards maintaining a conflict-free household.

Overall, the key to a successful break is treating your student like an adult. Communicating openly and honestly, listening with care and interest, and working together to establish boundaries will help you and your student continue to develop a more mature relationship.

“Weight”-y Concerns

Beyond the “Freshman 15”

You have probably heard the term “freshman 15” used to describe the amount of weight a first-year student typically gains while away at school. Recent research studies show, however, that first-year students are not gaining as much weight as previously thought.

The research shows that the “freshman 15” is more like 5-7 pounds, with an additional gain of 2-3 pounds during the sophomore year. While folks are happy to hear that the idea of the “freshman 15” is a myth, the trend of gradual weight gain could be even more problematic.

Two recent studies, one funded by the federal government and the other by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, measured weight gain among male and female students: the first spanned the freshman year and the second included the sophomore year. In both studies, students were weighed four times during the year—at the beginning of the school year in September, at the end of the first semester in December, after the holiday break in January and at the end of the year in May. Those who participated in the second study were also weighed at the end of their sophomore year.

The studies included more than 1250 students—382 from a private school in the Northeast and 907 from a public university in the Midwest. Results indicated that males tended to gain more weight than females, with much of that weight gained during the first semester. For those who participated in the study including the sophomore year, results indicated that males were an average 9.5 pounds heavier and females 9.2 pounds heavier than when they started college.

Researchers continue trying to determine the reasons for this weight gain. Some possible explanations include more drinking, more socializing, eating higher-fat and greater quantities of food in the cafeteria, and less physical activity.

If this trend continues, students will be at risk for developing serious health problems—no matter what the reasons are for the weight gain. You can help offset these concerns by educating your student about how to eat healthfully and take care of his/her body.



Summer Possibilities Abound

Many students will be talking with advisors, professors and peers throughout the semester about how to get the most out of summer break. Some will take classes, while others will choose to get academic credit in an internship or volunteer for an organization. If your student is interested in spending his summer in an academic-related internship, job or volunteer position, there are plenty of resources available to help make this happen!

The process of deciding what to do can be challenging for students. Sometimes, they end up so overwhelmed with the possibilities that they procrastinate. Often, this results in missed deadlines and opportunities. Encourage your student to start the decision process early.

The first stop your student can make is the campus career development office. Typically, the office will have access to internship listings in every field. The staff can also offer students guidance on what types of experiences will help them gain the best professional experience and where to go to get more information.

If your student is interested in doing some research on her own, the Internet is invaluable! Here are some websites to begin gathering ideas:

Idealist.org: Action without Borders

www.idealist.org/

Idealist.org features jobs, internships and volunteer opportunities in 165 countries, primarily in the non-profit sector. In addition to offering internship and job listings, Idealist features information and advice for careers in the non-profit sector.

Intern Web

www.internweb.com

Intern Web is a free service that lists internships in a variety of fields and for students at all levels.

Book Jobs

www.bookjobs.com

Book Jobs, created by the Association of American Publishers, offers listings for jobs and internships in the field of publishing. The searchable database includes opportunities for college students and graduates at every level of their studies.

GreenBiz: Environmental Jobs

www.greenbiz.com

This website offers a database of jobs and internships in the environmental field for all levels of professional and educational experience.

Hill Zoo

www.hillzoo.com

This website lists a variety of internships and jobs available on Capitol Hill and around Washington, D.C., as well as resources for finding housing or part-time jobs. Students who want to work in Congress should contact their Senator or Representative directly, as most have internship programs.

Students need to be encouraged to go after what they want out of their summer experience. The opportunities are out there for those who seek them! Students should never be afraid to contact organizations directly, even if they are not advertising open positions. It's likely that they will contact your student if a position becomes available... and sometimes even create an opportunity for those who are persistent.

Special Note: Allison Chandler, a current senior at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, NY, contributed to this list of resources.



Parent Office
Paula Machlin,
Coordinator of Advising and Parent Relations
10501 FGCU Blvd. S.
Ft. Myers, FL 33965
Phone: 239-590-7744
Fax: 239-590-7862
E-mail: pmachlin@fgcu.edu
Website: <http://enrollment.fgcu.edu/parents/>

Computer Workstation Tips

As we all spend increasing hours at our computers, ergonomic issues become even more important. Here are a few things for you and your student to keep in mind as you stay healthy in this technological age:

- Make sure the top of your monitor is at or just below eye level
- Keep your head and neck balanced and in-line with your torso
- Relax your shoulders
- Keep elbows close to your body and supported
- Support your lower back
- Have wrists and hands in-line with your forearms
- Make adequate room for your keyboard and mouse
- Keep your feet flat on the floor

By getting into better ergonomic habits, you and your student can continue Instant Messaging and emailing without pain and discomfort.

For a detailed checklist that you can use to assess your computer workstation, go to www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/checklist.html

Source: www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/computerworkstations/



Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS)

According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), nearly 80 percent of those working at a computer for more than two hours a day suffer from the symptoms of Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS). Symptoms include:

- headaches
- loss of focus
- burning/tired eyes
- double/blurred vision
- neck and shoulder pains

