Welcome Family & Friends

You and your family are entering an exciting time. It’s a time to help your first-time college student plan for their future and make some important choices.

For students, choosing Northwest Missouri State University is the first step along the path to success. Northwest is an excellent choice for any student who wants to be challenged academically and be prepared for today’s highly competitive workplace. It’s also a perfect place for students to spread their wings and get involved in campus activities.

Northwest is ideal for students who desire personal assistance and support in their academic programs. The personal interaction from our faculty and students makes Northwest a wonderful learning environment for your student.

For family members, we realize that having a student start college is a tremendous time of change and growth. We recognize there may still be many questions left unanswered and many concerns still not discussed.

Our hope is to change all that!

The information provided throughout this handbook is meant as a resource guide. You will be able to find many of your answers in these pages. You will also find some helpful hints on how to handle situations that may arise. We believe that knowledge is power. With the information contained in this book, you will be able to ensure the success of your Northwest student!
The process of “letting go” starts in the first years of life. As a parent, we can remember the struggles of the early years, especially between the ages of one and a half and three, when our children see-sawed back and forth between acts of independence - a toddling strut accompanied by a “world is an oyster” smile - and clinging, whining periods of hanging on. Although this separation process continues throughout our children’s growing years, it is especially evident as they move through adolescence and begin to leave home, when we once again see their ambivalence acted out in puzzling ways. We were often more patient and understanding of the process when our children were small. We were also better informed. The “terrible twos” may not have been pleasant, but we all knew they were coming, and we knew they would end. Information and reassurance were readily available if we felt uncertain about our children’s development or our roles as parents. But when we send our sons and daughters off to college, there are no Dr. Spocks to reassure us, no guidelines for moving through this time of transition.

Some parents don’t see this as a time of transition at all. It is simply the end of child rearing for them and of childhood for their sons and daughters. “You’re an adult now; start acting like one,” they admonish. Others have trouble giving up their role. They still see themselves as necessary protectors and their sons and daughters as immature children rather than self-reliant young adults. “Don’t you worry about it, dear. I’ll call your dean and take care of it for you.”

Most of us flounder somewhere in between. We send our children off with a mixture of anticipation and anxiety, a sense of loneliness and freedom, fantasy and reality. Our child rearing days are ending. Our children are launched. We anticipate dealing with our own reaction to their leaving – time on our hands, financial belt-tightening, a quiet house – but we are caught off guard by the continuing launching. As they struggle to be independent and separate once again, as in their toddlers years, they venture forth with bravado and periods of newfound confidence and wisdom, only to retreat into times of anxiety and hanging on. They want Mom or Dad to be there when they want them. They call and pour out fears and hurts, hoping to be understood, or they withdraw into silence; advice and parental concerns become intrusions.

We shift gears constantly as we meet our offspring in an elusive dance of change. We find ourselves relentlessly retracing old patterns one week and discovering new ways of getting along the next. The temptation to tell our children how to be inde-
pendent is a compelling one. The contradictory, but all too familiar, parental message is, “It’s time for you to be independent, but I don’t trust your judgement.”

As our sons and daughters enter these college years, we have to come to terms with their strengths and their limitations. At the same time we realize that we too are at a watershed, entering into a new phase of our lives – growing older. We may find ourselves taking a new look at our marriage or career – our own limitations. And as they struggle with turmoil of conflicting emotions about leaving, we often are flooded with conflicting feelings of our own about being left.

It is common for parents who were eager to see their children leave, to lament their departure later. “Somehow there must be a biological process at work; my son is so impossible this year it makes it easy to see him go - in fact I can’t wait,” becomes, three months later, “It’s so quiet in the house; I have to hold back from wanting to call him and find out how his day went” – the same parent wanting to stay connected and wanting to let go.

Another parent, whose daughter struggled through several rebellious years in high school and emerged at seventeen as a delightful young woman and close companion to her mother, confessed, “I dreaded her leaving; we had just begun to enjoy each other again. But now that she’s gone, I have to admit I love the simplicity and freedom of living as a couple again.”

We all know intellectually that this is a time for our children to separate and assert their independence. But long after they have become taller or stronger than we are, our primal protective feelings are easily unleashed. We carry images in our heads of the curly-haired toddler, the gap-toothed six-year-old, and times when a caress or hug could make their world all better. As they get older the problems they face have increasingly greater consequences. The stakes get higher. The mature, rational part of us wants them to solve their own problems and believes they can, but the scared child within us wants to stay connected, be in control, feel needed, and protect them from the pain we know they will have to face.

We tend to see the years of college as the calm before the storm – the safe, contained bastion of learning that will provide a protected environment for our children as they prepare for the “real world.” But college is no more a “calm” or a “storm” than all the years that follow. College students are confronted with a host of the pressures and societal constraints that are part of the ongoing process of human experience.

Our expectations of college life are often large-scale and grandiose. They are born of many factors; our own hopes and dreams, images from the media, a need to justify the large financial investment we are making. The fire is fanned by the big build-up
of years of planning and positioning so that our children can compete in the furor of “getting in.” We are courted with a marketing blitz from the institutions themselves, all promising dreams fulfilled, horizons waiting to be discovered, unencumbered bliss. The effect of all this is to raise colleges and universities to a larger than life, once in a lifetime opportunity that will make or break our children’s future. Both parents and students feel the pressure and push to make this myth their reality.

Most of us have the same hopes and goals for our children as they have for themselves. We want them to be happy and successful, self-confident and self-reliant. The trouble is that the specific notion of what constitutes success or self-reliance is often very different for a parent than it is for their offspring. Although the goal is valued, actual steps toward independence are likely to make parents nervous. Intellectual exploration tends to threaten established family values and ideas about life’s meaning. Sudden shifts in behavior and ideas are confusing, and sometimes exasperating, to even the most patient, understanding parents. Too often, parents inhibit their children’s growth without realizing how their good intentions are backfiring. It doesn’t have to be that way, but as counselors, we’ve seen it happen again and again, and as parents, we have felt this dilemma ourselves.

The college years are a time of transition for young people and their parents. There is no way to move through such an important passage without some feelings of dislocation and loss. But information and insight can help parents negotiate this significant and often neglected phase of their children’s lives.

Understanding what we and our children are going through reduces our fear and validates our reality. It opens our eyes so that we can see what their world is like; it allows us to listen more clearly and communicate more effectively. It frees us to help our children become themselves.
Differences Between High School and College

High School

- **Teacher/Student Contact:** Teachers/student contact is closer and more frequent (5 days per week).

- **Competition and Grades:** Competition for class ranking is not as competitive as in high school. Students who attend class regularly, hand in assignments on time, and spend 1-2 hours per week per credit hour studying will do well with grades.

- **Status:** Students establish a personal status in academic and social activities based on family and community factors.

- **Counseling and Dependence:** Students can rely on parents, teachers and counselors to help make decisions and give advice. Students must abide by parents’ boundaries and restrictions.

- **Motivation:** Students get stimulation to achieve or participate from parents, teachers, and counselors.

- **Freedom:** Students’ freedom is limited. Parents will often help students out of a crisis, if one occurs.

- **Distractions:** There are distractions from school and home.

- **Value Judgements:** Students often make value judgements based on parental values. Many of their value judgements are made for them.

College

- **Teacher/Student Contact:** Faculty members are available outside of class during their office hours or by appointment to address students’ concerns. Students are responsible for meeting with their professors as needed.

- **Competition and Grades:** Academic competition is much stronger, minimum effort may produce poor grades.

- **Status:** Students can build their status as they wish; high school status can be repeated or changed.

- **Counseling and Dependence:** Students rely on themselves; they see the results of making their own decisions. It is their responsibility to seek advice as needed. Students set their own restrictions.

- **Motivation:** Students supply their own motivation to their work and activities as they wish.

- **Freedom:** Students have much more freedom. Students must accept responsibility for their own actions.

- **Distractions:** The opportunity for more distractions exists. Time management will become more important.

- **Value Judgements:** Students have the opportunity to see the world through their own eyes and to develop their own opinions and values.
The Freshman Year

Phase
Your student’s first year is going to be one of many ups and downs. Being aware of what your student may be going through will better enable you to help ease them into their college transition.

1. **Early summer anticipation**
   This is when high school seniors graduate and begin to look toward the future. They may have feelings of sadness, accomplishment and anticipation.

2. **Midsummer anxiety**
   Now they begin to realize that they will soon be leaving home, family, friends and the security that each offers. This probably will occur immediately following SOAR, as they realize that they will be leaving for college soon.

3. **Late summer panic**
   The student is plunged into the collegiate environment complete with a new roommate, university bureaucracy, classrooms, homework and a foreign social world.

4. **The honeymoon**
   A couple of new friends and no tests for at least three weeks. Let’s go have some fun! For some, they may use this as an opportunity to join a handful of organizations and be just as involved as they were in high school.

5. **The reality check**
   Where did all of this work come from? What do you mean I have to read the textbook? This paper has to be how long and it’s due when? And where did all of the time go? Homesickness may appear during this phase. This would be a great time to send a care package!

6. **The grass is always greener...**
   They are sure that transferring somewhere else will solve their problems. No doubt they would be doing better at another university.

7. **You can’t go home again**
   This starts the first time they come home to visit. They are hit with the harsh realization that life for the rest of the family goes on without them.
8  **Primitive coping behavior**
Well into the first trimester, they finally learned to use the library and hold reasonably intelligent conversations. They are excited about the things they have learned.

9  **Realization**
This phase usually precedes finals. They realize the great amount of work ahead and know that the future depends largely on their ability to balance academic activities with social activities.

10  **Putting it together**
Sometime during the second trimester (we hope) they see college as a total experience. They realize that hard work and achievement must be priorities but do not totally exclude time for having fun. They have learned what it takes to make the most of the college years. Then again, there are some students who graduate in spite of themselves!
Your student may have some things to learn before coming to Northwest

Financial Limitations
- Be clear about what you can contribute toward expenses in advance.
- Talk to your student about what their financial responsibilities should be, whether it is working a part-time job, applying for financial aid or taking out a student loan.
- Be sure to remind them that every family is different and therefore their friends may have different financial obligations and responsibilities.
- Parent’s homeowner insurance usually covers the personal belongings of a full-time student while living in a college residence hall. Check with your insurance company for how much insurance, if any, you have.

Managing Money
Depending on your financial plan, your student may need to learn to:
- Budget money
- Write a check
- Balance a checkbook
- Use a credit card responsibly
- Pay bills
- Use an ATM

Knowing the Basics
Students should know how to:
- Do laundry
- Clean
- Cook

Sharing A Room
Having a new roommate can be a big adjustment that requires new social skills. Contacting the new roommate over the summer can be a great way to ease into the transition. It also allows for them to discuss class schedules, study habits, and a great opportunity to discuss who can bring what. That way your student won’t end up with two stereos, two televisions and no refrigerator.

Managing Time
Talking to your student about time management may help with the transition from high school to college. Scheduling time for studying, outside interests and family obligations can help reduce stress – and improve academic success. Encourage your student to use a planner. Better yet, purchase one for them or pick up their Northwest Planner provided to all students, and write down any important dates your family may have such as holidays and birthdays. This also helps your student stay connected to what is going on back home.
Ten Tips for Parenting a Bearcat

Tip #1 – Don’t ask them if they’re homesick

The power of suggestion can be dangerous. The idea of being homesick usually doesn’t occur until someone suggests it. The first few days/weeks of college are activity-packed and friend-jammed and the challenge of meeting new people and adjusting to new situations takes a majority of a freshman’s time and concentration. So, unless a well-meaning parent reminds them of it, they’ll probably be able to escape the loneliness and frustration of homesickness. And, even if they don’t tell you during those first few weeks, they really do miss you.

Tip #2 – Write (even if they don’t write back)

Although freshman are typically eager to experience all the away-from-home independence they can in those first weeks, most are still anxious for family ties and the security those ties bring. This surge of independence may be misinterpreted by sensitive parents as rejection, but most freshmen (although 99% won’t ever admit it) would give anything for some news of home and family; however, mundane it may seem to you. There’s nothing more depressing than a week of an empty mailbox. (Warning: don’t expect a reply to every letter you write. The “you write one, they write one” sequence isn’t always followed by college students; so get set for some unanswered correspondence.) Many Northwest students and their parents keep in contact by using e-mail. E-mail access is a free service to all Northwest students.

Tip #3 – Ask questions (but not too many)

College freshman are “cool” (or so they think) and have a tendency to resent interference with their new lifestyle, but most still desire the security of knowing that someone is still interested in them. Parental curiosity can be obnoxious and alienating or relief giving, depending on the attitude of the person involved. “I have a right to know” tinged questions with ulterior motives or nagging should be avoided. Honest inquiries, however, and other “between friends” communication and discussion will do much to further the parent-student relationship.

Tip #4 – Don’t worry (too much) about distressed phone calls or letters

Parenting can be a thankless job, especially during the college years. It’s a lot of give and only a little take. Often when troubles become too much for a freshman to handle (a flunked test, end of a relationship and a shrunken t-shirt all in one day),
the only place to turn is home. Be patient with those “nothing is going right I hate this place” phone calls, letters or e-mails. You’re providing a real service as an advice dispenser, sympathetic ear or punching bag. Granted, it’s a service that makes you feel lousy, but it works wonders for a frustrated student.

Tip #5 – Visit (but not too often)
Visits by parents (especially when accompanied by shopping sprees and/or dinner out) are another part of the first-year events that freshman are reluctant to admit liking, but appreciate greatly. And, pretended disdain of those visits is just another part of the new student syndrome.

These visits give the student a chance to introduce some of the important people in both of their now important worlds (home and school) to each other. Additionally, it’s a way for parents to become familiar with (and, hopefully, more understanding of) their student’s new activities, commitments, and friends. Spur of the moment “surprises” are usually not appreciated. (Preemption of a planned weekend of studying or other activities can have disastrous results.)

Tip #6 – Don’t tell your student that “these are the best years of their lives.”
The first year can be full of indecisions, insecurities, disappointments and mistakes. It’s also full of discovery, inspiration and good times. It takes a while for some students to accept that being unhappy, afraid, confused, disliked and making mistakes are all part of the show, all part of this new reality and of growing up.

Parents who believe that all college students get good grades, know what they want to major in, always have activity-packed weekends with thousands of close friends and lead carefree lives, are wrong. So are the parents that think college-educated means mistake-proof. Parents that insist upon the “best years” stereotype are working against their student’s already difficult self-development. Those who accept and understand the highs and lows of their student’s reality are providing the support and encouragement where it is needed most.

Tip #7 – Take time to discuss finances
Most college students are still financially dependent on their parents to some degree. Sit down and discuss your family’s financial situation with your son or daughter. Students need to know how much money will be available to them and how much of the financial responsibility is theirs.

Tip #8 – Prepare for their return
When the school year ends and your student returns home for vacation, sit down and discuss the rules of living at home. Parents need to respect the individuality their students have worked hard to achieve and students need to know there are rules and courtesies to be observed.
Tip #9 – Trust them
Finding oneself is difficult enough without feeling that the people whose opinions you respect most are second-guessing you. One of the most important things you can do as a parent is to let your child know that you trust his/her judgment.

Tip #10 – Expect change
In any event, your student will change (either drastically within the first months, slowly over the college years or somewhere in between). It’s natural, inevitable and it can be inspiring and beautiful and often it’s a pain in the neck.

College, and experiences associated with it, can affect changes in social, vocational and personal behavior. An up-to-now wallflower may become a fraternity sweetheart; a pre-med student may discover a stronger love for drama or literature; or a high school radical may become a college preppy. You can’t stop change. You may not even understand it, but it is within your power to accept it.

Remember that your student will remain basically the same person you sent away to school, aside from the interest and personality changes. Don’t expect too much too soon. Maturation is not an instantaneous or overnight process, and you might well discover your student returning home with some of the habits and hang-ups, however unsophisticated, that you thought he or she had “grown out of.”

Be Patient!
Care Package Suggestions

Sending care packages to your student is one of the nicest things you can do. Receiving a package in the mail not only will make your student the envy of the residence hall, but it will also let them know you care. There are many times when a small gift can brighten up a bad day, a bad grade or a bad situation. Here are some popular suggestions:

Anything Edible
cookies, granola bars, chocolate, crackers, macaroni & cheese, candy, dried fruit and nuts, soup, cereal, microwave popcorn

School Supplies
pens, pencils, computer disks, binders, erasers, index cards, Post-it notes, paper, rulers, highlighters

Toiletries
soap, shampoo, towels, toothpaste, Q-tips, toothbrushes, deodorant, soft toilet paper, laundry detergent, quarters for washers, dryer sheets, stain remover, Febreze

Anything Family
pictures, letters, cards, drawings from younger siblings, newspaper clippings or a subscription to the local paper

Anything Fun
board games, computer games, deck of cards, crossword puzzles, yo-yo’s, crayons and coloring books

Special Occasions
gift certificates for local restaurants, gift cards, money, CD’s, DVD’s, posters, prepaid calling cards or flowers
A family portrait for their residence hall room to remind them that you’re still there and that, even when they’re busy and far away, they’re an important part of the family.

A large laundry bag (so they will have something to carry their dirty clothes in when they bring them home for mom to wash).

Care packages (cookies, school supplies, clean underwear with their name written on the label and clippings from hometown newspapers).

A card once a week to let them know how things are at home.

Cleaning supplies (with a manual on how to use them).

A 1-800 number for yourself or prepaid calling cards for them (so the old excuse, “I can’t afford to call you back” won’t work).

A planner with important family events and obligations already filled in, as well as a phone book with family and friends' phone numbers already listed.

A box of pre-stamped envelopes.

If your student is not writing you back, send them a check list
( Please check all that apply!)

☐ Everything is great
☐ I got an A on my test
☐ My roommate and I are fighting
☐ The food is great
☐ I'm making new friends
☐ Times are tough
☐ I need money

☐ Everything is awful
☐ I got an F on my test
☐ I enjoy living with my roommate
☐ The food is terrible
☐ I miss you
☐ Everything is cool
☐ Leave me alone

Your love and support!!
It's Thanksgiving weekend, and here they are, your children, home from college. This, however, is no ordinary Thanksgiving. It's the Thanksgiving of their first year at college, and although neither of you knows it yet, it's going to prove to be a milestone for both of you.

What do you do when this exuberant son or daughter of yours arrives on your doorstep with a bizarre haircut (or none at all)?

In the three months since you last saw them, they've been telling their new friends about the home they came from and about the successes they enjoyed in high school. Uneasy in the new leveling environment of college, they're pointing backward in order to present an identity: star quarterback, editor of the paper, prom queen, etc. They've probably made several calls home (the late-evening kind, asking you to send some of the things they decided not to bring), which you belatedly realized were cries of homesickness.

By the time they leave home again at the end of Thanksgiving break, the pointing backward will have changed to pointing forward. Now they will be almost eager to get back to the residence hall and hear how their friends' weekends went, and in the following four weeks they will be anguishs their way through their first college final exams and term papers.

In the few short weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas – as any professor or dean can tell you – they will settle into their new lives.

Parents don't usually realize, however, that although their children's perceptions of home will necessarily change during the weekend, the quality of this change is pretty much up to the parents. In her book, Necessary Losses, Judith Viorst points to parents who are change-resisters, who “defy the realities of time by hanging on to their power and to their non-negotiable ways of doing things.”

Thanksgiving weekend presents an opportunity for the final stage of parenting: the blessing, the letting-go as grown children are cheered on with affection and respect toward full autonomy.

So, now it's Wednesday evening or Thursday morning. Your child has arrived – unexpectedly thin or pudgy, sporting facial zits from too much midnight junk food, and lugging a duffel bag full of books and a basket full of clothes. What now?

We offer some points which, admittedly, emphasize verbal restraint (“Bite your tongue.” “Grit your teeth.”).

Say positive things.

Comment six times in five days. “You look wonderful!” or “It's great to see you!”

The corollary is that you make no remark on the weight gain, the miserable hair, or the ragged clothes.
Get information gently.
“Tell me about your friends” is a good opener to help your children see their new acquaintances somewhat objectively as they describe them.

Use your third ear.
Listen, listen, and listen some more. Behind the extra pounds and the overly loud voice lurks more self doubt than they’ve experienced in a long time. Your son or daughter’s unexpressed, but overriding anxiety this first trimester is, “Can I make it? Will people like me?” You can help by listening and reassuring.

Don’t ask.
Drugs and sex are very much a part of your worries, but don’t pry. Your children already know your wishes, and grilling them may force them into lying. Restating your opinions may make you – and even them – feel better, but outright probing and threatening will be counterproductive.

Keep calm.
Despite your valiant efforts, flare-ups may erupt during the long weekend. Your new student has had some difficulty learning how to deal with emotions this trimester (the creepy roommate, the “stupid” professor) and the sudden temper loss may be due to college stress or to outright irritation with you. Hear it out calmly, filing away for future reference any apparently irrelevant accusations. (“And you were really horrible to Aunt Martha at high school graduation.”) These may be important keys to another issue, and a day or so later you can invite conversation on this concern.

Ignore unopened book bags.
As Friday turns into Saturday and these supposed college students still have not touched the book bag, they continue to mention, “I have a Chem test next week.” Bite your tongue. You want them to succeed academically, but they have to want it before anything can happen. And truthfully, it may not happen until the second trimester – if then.

Grin and bear it.
Limit yourself to one (good-natured) comment over their appalling loss of table manners. One day, these will return. Meantime, grit your teeth.

Respect their new status.
On the matter of curfew: three months ago you sent your nearly grown child to a community where students are respected as full adults by faculty and staff alike. Your daughter has been deciding for herself when (or even if) to quit socializing and go to bed. Your son has had to discipline himself – without your help – to hit the books.
But you are entitled to demand consideration too,
which is the trait your student has been practicing in dormitory life. The issue, you can explain, is that you worry about their safety just as you would worry about that of any guest under your roof. “Call us if you'll be later than 2 a.m.” is a reasonable request, and when they call in at 1:59, ask that they call again at 4:30 “so we won't worry you were in an accident.” Fair is fair.

Give.

Hug them hard when they leave at the end of the weekend. And give them something to take away, like cookies. Or a little extra cash!

No other species on planet Earth has the difficulty humans do in releasing their young. Thanksgiving weekend provides a specific four-day period in which parents can, with forbearance, courtesy, and good will, practice treating their own children as the adults they are becoming.
Many times your student will call home questioning a University policy or having difficulty finding the resources they need. Instead of listening with no answers, this detailed list is an opportunity for you to take a proactive approach in helping your student get their questions answered, in addition to guiding them to the proper office. When you give your student the number they need, it will empower them to make their own best decisions.

**Area Code: 660**

### College of Arts & Sciences
- Art: 562-1326
- Biological Sciences: 562-1388
- Chemistry/Physics: 562-1388
- Communication & Theatre Arts: 562-1279
- English: 562-1265
- Geology/Geography: 562-1723
- History, Humanities, Philosophy and Political Science: 562-1290
- Mathematics/Statistics: 562-1230
- Modern Languages: 562-1279
- Music: 562-1315
- Political Science: 562-1290

### College of Education & Human Services
- Curriculum & Instruction: 562-1239
- Educational Leadership: 562-1231
- Family and Consumer Sciences: 562-1168
- Health, PE, Recreation, & Dance: 562-1713
- Psychology/Sociology/Counseling: 562-1260

### Booth College of Business & Professional Studies
- Accounting/Economics/Finance: 562-1835
- Agriculture: 562-1155
- Computer Science/Information Systems: 562-1600
- Marketing/Management: 562-1837
- Mass Communication: 562-1361

### Deciding Majors
- Advisement Assistance & Resource Office: 562-1695

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Library Services: B.D. Owens Library 562-1193
Notary: Cashiering 562-1578
Financial Assistance 562-1363
Parking Permits/Tickets: Campus Safety 562-1254
Post Office: Mail/Copy Center 562-1109
Publications (Student): Northwest Missourian 562-1224
Tower Yearbook 562-1528
(University Relations): Northwest This Week 562-1143
Radio Station: KDLX Radio 562-1165
KXCV Radio 562-1163
Student Senate: (student government) 562-1218
Television Station: KNWT Television 562-1953
Theft Reports: Campus Safety 562-1254

PERSONAL ASSISTANCE
Alcohol Problems: Counseling Center 562-1220
Health Center 562-1348
Career Planning: Career Services 562-1250
Complaints
Contact the department chair or director of the area involved as the first step in resolving the situation.
Culture of Quality Card 562-1122
Student Affairs 562-1242
Provost’s Office 562-1120
Counseling
Health Center 562-1348
Counseling Center 562-1220
Career Services 562-1250
Death or Illness in Family: Student Affairs 562-1242
Disability Services
LAP/S Office 562-1726
(learning disabilities)
LAP/S Office 562-1348
(physically challenged)
Eating Disorders: Health Center 562-1348
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Escort Service: Campus Safety 562-1254
Health/Medical/Wellness: Health Center 562-1348
Health Insurance: Health Center 562-1348
Homesickness: Resident Assistant or Counseling Center 562-1220
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New Student Resources

Admissions & Visitors Center/Admissions Office
Located at the main entrance to campus, the primary purpose of the Mabel Cook Admissions and Visitors Center is to serve students seeking admissions information. During regular hours, personnel in the Mabel Cook Admissions and Visitors Center can arrange campus tours, conferences with faculty, demonstrations of the Electronic Campus, financial assistance and other general information. You can reach them by calling 800-633-1175 or 660-562-1562.

Other admissions functions are carried out by the Office of Admissions processing division in the Administration Building. The Office of Admissions processes all freshman, transfer, returning and non-degree applications for admission. Questions concerning transfer of credits, transcript evaluations, residency determination, admission procedures and standards may be addressed to this office. Phone (660) 562-1148 with any questions or concerns.

Summer Orientation Advisement and Registration (SOAR)
SOAR is the first academic contact a freshman student will have with Northwest. The mission of SOAR is to provide the student with the tools for success at Northwest. SOAR is a combination of an initial orientation to the campus community and registration for fall trimester courses. Orientation is not only for the new Northwest students, but also their family members. This is an opportunity for any last minute questions to be answered for either group. The registration portion of the day starts with a student reviewing a prepared fall schedule that was created based on the students’ academic major, ACT sub-scores, extracurricular activities and previous college credit earned. At that point students may either accept their schedule or modify it to meet their needs.
Advantage
Advantage is a four-day program prior to the fall trimester that welcomes all new students to Northwest. Students take part in a variety of activities which include: residential life, social/personal programs, multicultural and diversity awareness, the first meeting of Freshman Seminar and TIPs (Transfer Information Programs) Seminar, opportunities and time for a little fun. During this week, students are encouraged to become comfortable with their new home and prepare for a successful fall trimester.

Questions about SOAR, Transfer Student Orientation and Preregistration or Advantage can be directed to (660) 562-1951.

Freshman Seminar
Freshman Seminar is a one trimester, one credit hour course general education requirement for all first-time freshmen. This course assists students in making the transition into Northwest community life and coursework by focusing on values, critical thinking skills, academic preparation techniques, helping them understand their personal responsibility for both their academic and living/learning environments, and integrating them into the Northwest community by taking part in campus activities and organizations.

The course includes an on-line Valuing Component, which is a part of the state mandated general education competencies. A Northwest faculty/staff member, who serves as the academic advisor, delivers instruction for the course and an upper division Northwest student serves as a Peer Advisor and mentor. Students learn about Northwest’s Covenant for Learning and the values of the Northwest living/learning environment. They respond to these by writing their own Student Plan Valuing Capstone.

The course also promotes a bonding between the members of the class to facilitate a smooth first-year transition. Questions about the program can be directed to the Freshman Seminar office (660) 562-1616.