Homecoming, Family and Friends Weekend, and UMaine’s 150th Anniversary Celebration
October 16-18, 2015

This year we are celebrating the 150th anniversary of the University of Maine during our Homecoming and Friends and Family annual celebrations. Below is a list of activities being offered through the weekend, with links to our websites at the bottom, for more information.

Friday, October 16
• 5:00pm-7:00pm “Visualizing Home and Homelessness”, part of the Maine Photo project across the state. Lord Hall Gallery. Contact laurie_hicks@umit.maine.edu
• 7:00pm “Stars” presentation at the Emera Astronomy Center. Admission $6. Call 581.1341 for more information.
• 8:00pm Broadway National Tour of “42nd Street” at the Collins Center for the Arts. Call 207.581.1755 or 800.581.8499 for ticket information.

Saturday, October 17
• 10:00am-12:00noon Pre-tailgate open house at the Buchanan Alumni House. Contact Diane Muir at 207.581.1146 for information.
• 10:00am-12:00noon Men’s basketball scrimmage in the “Pit” in the Memorial Union Gym.
• 10:00am-3:00pm Page Farm and Museum tour occurring every 20 minutes. Contact 207.581.4100 for more information.
• 10:00am-5:00pm Annual Homecoming Craft Fair and Maine Marketplace in the Field House. Call 207.581.1146 for more information.
• 12:00noon-2:00pm Annual Family and Friends Lobster Bake in Wells Conference Center. Tickets available for purchase through the CCA website. All tickets purchased will also include an accompanying ticket to the UMaine vs Yale football game.
• 12:00noon-2:00pm Women’s Basketball open practice in the “Pit” in the Memorial Union Gym.
• 12:30pm Tailgating for the football game begins in the parking area near the Alfond Stadium. Contact 800.756.TEAM for more information about tailgating permits and expectations.
• 1:00pm The Met: Live “Otello” at the Collins Center for the Arts. Call 207.581.1755 or 800.581.8499 for ticket information.
• 3:30pm UMaine Football vs. Yale. Visit goblackbeartickets.com or 800-756-TEAM for tickets.
• 7:00pm Author Tim Sample discusses his career and recent collaboration with Stephen King on the audiobook *Drunken Fireworks*. Sales and signing to follow. DPC 100. Call 207.581.1914 for more information.

Sunday, October 18
• 9:00am-11:30am Jazz brunch in Wells Conference Center. Tickets available through the CCA website.
• 10:00am-4:00pm Annual Homecoming Craft Fair and Maine Marketplace in the Field House. Call 207.581.1146 for more information.

150th Anniversary website, Homecoming website, Hotel information via the Family and Friends website
College Students and Alcohol

Asking your student about their use (or non-use) of alcohol or marijuana can be uncomfortable, but having the conversation is important. An easy way to start is to ask if the level of drinking and smoking at UMaine is about what they expected. Students often hear stories about the amount of drinking or drug use in college - much of it exaggerated - but some students might find that the use is more than they anticipated. This can be difficult for a non-drinker and non-smoker because they might feel they are the only one who is not involved in these activities. Please be assured that this is not true. According to national studies about 15% of students who live on campus report no use of alcohol or marijuana during their time as a student. At UMaine, we have 3,700 students living on campus, which means over 500 of our residential students do not drink or use other drugs.

Students might find that it’s not the drinking per se that is bothersome, but rather the accompanying noise or disruption. If this is the case, please encourage your student to alert a staff member to these concerns. He/she can speak with the RA, the Community Coordinator (CC) who oversees the building, or even report these concerns anonymously via our University of Maine Police Department Campus Eyes website.

This year we also have a student-run group available for those who do not drink or smoke or who do so infrequently. Members of the group get to know each other through informal meetings and go to functions both on and off campus. If you or your student is looking for substance-free activities, encourage them to contact the Student Wellness Resource Center who will then help them make the connection to the group.

Students also have the option of living in on-campus substance-free housing if they choose (called CHOICE Housing). It is best to allow the student to decide if this is the housing they desire, as they will be required to sign and abide by a contract as a condition of living in CHOICE housing. Students interested in this option can contact Kelly Beers.

Also new this year is “Black Bears for Recovery” - a community of students who are in recovery from substance addiction or dependence. A room on campus is available where recovering students can meet and connect with others who are also abstaining. Funds are provided for the students to do activities or attend events on or off campus.

For more information about any of the topics included in this article, or if you or your student has any question about any aspect of alcohol, marijuana, or other drug use, or for additional tips about how to talk this issue, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Bud Walkup, Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor
Student Wellness Resource Center  207.581.1423  bud.walkup@umit.maine.edu

Roommates and the “Honeymoon Stage”

While we might hope that all of our students become best friends with their roommate(s), the reality is that not all roommate situations are ideal. Even in a situation where your student chose their roommate, they may be hitting the end of the “honeymoon stage” and realizing that their roommate isn’t as amazing as they originally thought. If you have a student who is experiencing a less than ideal roommate situation, here are some tips to help them address their concerns.

First, make sure that your student and their roommate completed a roommate contract. If they did not, your student can ask the RA for a blank contract, or even ask the RA to drop a blank contract off to the room when both students are present. If your student did complete a roommate contract but there are current issues that were not previously addressed in that roommate contract (i.e. there was no initial concern about guests, but the roommate now has a significant other), the contract can always be revisited. Your student can ask their roommate to discuss changes to the contract, or if they are uncomfortable bringing the subject up themselves, they can ask the RA to stop by and casually ask if they want to review the contract, thus giving your student a more natural opening to do so. All of our staff are trained to help students mediate these types of interpersonal conflict, so we’re also willing to sit down with students to help them figure out how to approach their roommate, how to verbalize their feelings and concerns, etc. if they would like to try on their own first.

Please note that at this time we do still have students living in triple rooms. Until all of these rooms have been able to convert back to double rooms (by moving a third roommate to an open space in another room) we will not be able to entertain room change requests from other students.

The University of Maine does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, including transgender status and gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran’s status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding nondiscrimination policies: Director, Office of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, 207.581.1226.
The First College Exam

At this time in the semester many students begin to feel increased stress and pressure as they become more aware of the full weight of their academic obligations. Adding to this stress and pressure, we are currently in the midst of the first round of exams and due dates for major assignments. For new students, this is the time when their preparedness for college level work is being tested.

Unfortunately, we will have students who find that the note-taking, exam prep and test-taking strategies that they’ve employed in the past are not going to pass the muster at this level. This first round of exams and assignments can be a very eye-opening experience for students, reinforcing the fact that they have to be actively engaged in their course-taking notes, reviewing their notes, reading the textbook, asking questions in class, following up on material or concepts that aren’t clear, and more.

A common theme in our conversations with students who are struggling academically at this time of the year is that they never had to study in the past. They may feel comfortable with the course content- they may be majoring in biology, have done well in biology in the past, and enjoy the subject of biology- but it’s their lack of academic skills that is their downfall. In fact, the instructor for Biology 100 cited a lack of note-taking as his main concern among first-year students; the average score on the first Biology 100 exam last year was a 53.

As a parent or family member you may see/hear/sense a spike in your student’s stress level regarding their academics. This stress may come from a variety of places; some students may have become disenchanted with the major that they have chosen, students who are used to getting top grades may struggle with shock if they receive a grade lower than they expected or desired, and some students can’t identify for themselves that they need to learn new study skills. If your student would like to speak with someone about their academic concerns, we urge them to do so as soon as possible. Our staff of Academic Support Coordinators in the First Year Center help students identify what issues they are having with their academics, and then work with the student to identify new strategies to try. They are also willing to meet regularly for students who want or need ongoing coaching.

We also want to recognize that some students will have a harder time managing their stress and anxiety than others. If you believe that your student may fall into this category, please encourage them to seek out services on campus to assist them (including the Counseling Center). Lastly, if your student is considering dropping a class, please refer them to the First Year Center or to their academic advisor to discuss how dropping this class may affect their status- their eligibility for housing, loans, scholarships, and more.

Academic Resources

Disability Support Services
• Work with students with documented disabilities to identify appropriate accommodations, including temporary accommodations for injuries.
• Students with documented disabilities can sign up for a mentor.
• East Annex, 207-581-2319

The Tutor Program
• Tutoring is offered for many 100 and 200 level courses and is done in small groups with other students who are in the same class with the same professor. No 1-1 tutoring provided.
• 104 Dunn Hall, 207-581-2351

Drop-in Tutoring
• Offered through the Tutor Program at the library Sunday-Friday.
• Specific subjects and times for fall semester found on their website: umaine.edu/tutorprogram/

The Math Lab
• Offers open hours for students to walk-in and get help with any math work.
• 110 Neville Hall, 207-581-3902

The Writing Center
• Provides 1-1 feedback on writing- whether academic or creative writing, and for any class/subject. They will take walk-ins if staff is not already busy, but it’s best to make an appointment.
• Make an appointment online: http://maine.mywconline.com/
• 402 Neville Hall, 207-581-3828

Computer Science Lab
• Provides assistance with 100 and 200 COS courses.
• Schedule and locations: http://umaine.edu/tutorprogram/academic-resources/

Economics Lab & Advising Center
• Provides assistance with many ECO courses.
• 305 Stevens Hall
• More information: http://umaine.edu/tutorprogram/academic-resources/

Physics Learning Center
• Provides assistance with beginning Physics courses (108, 111, 112, 121, 122).
• 116 Bennett Hall
• More information: http://umaine.edu/tutorprogram/academic-resources/

First Year Center
• Providing academic coaching and skill building help (test taking, time management, etc.).
• 016 Androscoggin Hall
• More resources can also be found on our website at: http://umaine.edu/fye/resources/
SALT—Helping Students Understand Finances

The University of Maine has teamed up with American Student Assistance® (ASA) to offer SALT—a unique membership program that is helping students and alumni get money savvy for life. We’re giving this program to our students for FREE as a supplement to a well-rounded education. We chose SALT because they know how, when, and where to speak to students. As a matter of fact, students helped build the program! That user insight, plus ASA’s 50+ years managing student debt, sets SALT up for success. And their integrated approach to education debt management, financial education, and member benefits drives positive student behavior.

With SALT, your student will enjoy benefits such as:

• Student loan advice from the experts.
• An engaging take on financial education. There are educational modules designed in varying ways to help meet student’s learning styles. There are comics, videos, fact sheets, and more.
• Help finding jobs, internships, and scholarships.
• Tips on building smart financial habits. There are links to apps and other tools that help students learn to budget and get better at money management in general.

When your student is closer to graduating, there is also the option to load in their student loan data from the federal government, compare that to their potential income, and look at what sort of payment plans are available to them. They can also see how they’ll need to budget their money based on their income, student loan payments, and projected costs for living expenses (rent, insurance, etc.) based on what sort of city they want to live in. It’s a great tool to really get them thinking about their future, and the impact of investment that they’re making in their education now.

Please join us in encouraging your student(s) to take advantage of all that SALT has to offer. They can sign up at any time online. Together we can help an entire generation take control of their debt and own their finances, now and after college.

Jessica Hickernell, Assistant Director of Financial Aid and Job Locator for Student Employment

Withdrawal and Refund Deadlines

In the event that your student is struggling with their decision to attend college, or something about your family or financial situation has changed that now brings into question whether or not your student can continue at the university for the semester, I want to make sure that you are aware of the various deadlines that we have for refunds for the parts of your student’s bill.

To the right you will see two charts. The top chart shows the refund rates for tuition costs, based on withdrawal date. The bottom chart shows the refund rates for the room costs, based on withdrawal dates. The meal plan (also known as “board” costs) will be prorated based on the meal plan your student chose and their usage to date of that meal plan.

If you and your student are considering the option of withdrawing, I encourage you to speak with your student’s advisor, someone in the Dean’s office of your student’s academic college, someone in the Dean of Student Life office, or even myself. We want to make sure that all other options that we have for supporting you and/or your student have been exhausted before pursuing this option.

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Tuition Rate Refunds for Withdrawals

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