



Important Questions/Conversation Starters for Parents to Ask Throughout the First Year of College
Office of Student Affairs

BEFORE THE ACADEMIC YEAR BEGINS

After Orientation

- ☐ What courses will you be taking during Fall Semester?
- ☐ Can you log into your North Central email account? (If not, contact helpdesk@noctrl.edu).
- ☐ Can you log into Merlin and show me what information is available there?
- ☐ Do you have any questions that you still need answered?
- ☐ Do you plan to sign up for a Cardinal Camp August 8-13? (NC encourages you to do so!)
- ☐ If living on campus—What residence hall will you be living in? Have you contacted your roommate?

July/Early August

- ☐ Important Topics of Conversation before arriving on campus: Academic Success Plan, Managing Time & Freedom, Relationships, Social Media, Making Smart & Safe Decisions (conduct), Effective Communication (about challenges) and Communication Plan with Family, Wellness (stress management, sleep, exercise, nutrition)
- ☐ Have you logged into Merlin to see what books are going to be required for your classes?

Welcome Week

- ☐ What kinds of activities have you been involved in during Welcome Week?
- ☐ Who is your First-year Seminar professor and what are you doing in that course? Who is your FYM (first-year mentor)?
- ☐ Are you ready for classes next week? Do you have a planner/calendar? Books? Supplies?

QUESTIONS TO ASK THROUGHOUT THE ACADEMIC YEAR

- ☐ How is living on campus or how is the commute?
- ☐ Tell me about some of the new people you have met.
- ☐ How are you doing balancing your studies with your other responsibilities? What strategies are you using to manage your time?
- ☐ Are you checking your NC e-mail at least once/day?
- ☐ Have you gone to office hours for your professors? (This is important for building relationships with professors).
- ☐ If you have questions or a problem, do you know who can help you on campus? (Office of Student Affairs in Old Main 501 is always great place to start!)
- ☐ Who are your professors? Favorite/most challenging class? Are they using Blackboard to post grades and other course info online?
- ☐ Are you reading the Get Involved e-mails you receive on Sundays and Thursdays?

FALL SEMESTER

August/September

- ☐ Are you planning to check out the Involvement Fair on September 5 (11:40-1:30 in Jefferson Plaza) to learn more about student organizations & other opportunities?
- ☐ Are you planning to stop by the Education Abroad Fair on October 1 from 11am-2pm in Stevenson Hall?
- ☐ What have you heard about Homecoming Weekend (September 27-29)?

October

- ☐ Fall Break is October 14 & 15. Do you have any plans over that long weekend?
- ☐ How are your grades (be cautious of “fine”)? What have you enjoyed learning? Who is your favorite professor? Why?
- ☐ Near the midpoint of the term, first-year students receive midterm progress notices through Merlin. Have you received your midterm progress notice? Are you happy with your midterm grades?
- ☐ If your son/daughter is struggling: What is your plan for improving your grades? Have you talked to your professors? Your academic advisor? Do you know how to find tutoring? Are you using your planner? (Center for Student Success – located in Larrance Academic Center is a great academic resource)
- ☐ For Financial Aid filers – have you submitted your FAFSA? (Recommendation is that it be filed by October 31).
- ☐ Family Weekend is October 25-27. What looks interesting for us on the schedule?

November/December

- ☐ How are your grades heading into finals? Do you have any particular concerns about them?
- ☐ What days/times are your final exams? (Final Exams will be December 6-11; exam times are *not* the same as regular class times. Schedule is available on NC website)

WINTER BREAK

- ☐ Were you satisfied with your classes and grades from Fall Semester?
- ☐ Have you logged into Merlin to see what books are going to be required for your Winter Semester classes?
- ☐ Are you accessing the services available through the Office of Career Development (e.g. career exploration, resume writing, Handshake, and Optimal Resume - see NC's Career Development CardinalNet webpage for more info)
- ☐ Student leadership positions are posted early in Spring Semester. Do you have any interest/plans to apply to be a Resident Assistant (RA), Commuter Advisor (CA), Orientation staff member? You'll need a resume.
- ☐ Start thinking ahead to Summer 2020 (many employers start hiring for summer early)

SPRING SEMESTER

January

- ☐ Are you interested in getting involved in something new on campus this term? Do you know how to do this?
- ☐ Do you have any plans for Spring Break (March 2-6)?

February

- ☐ Have you started thinking about your plans for summer? Have you checked out NC's Career Development office for summer opportunities/internships?
- ☐ Have you attended a resume workshop offered by Career Development office to create/update your resume?
- ☐ Have you started thinking about where you would like to live/or if you would like to live on campus next year? (There's a live-on requirement for first-year, sophomore, and junior students who are not living at their parent or legal guardian's permanent home address)
- ☐ When do you meet with your advisor to plan next year's schedule? When do you register? Are there any holds on your registration?

March

- ☐ Near the midpoint of the semester, first-year students receive midterm progress notices through Merlin. Have you received your midterm progress notice?
- ☐ How are your Summer 2020 plans coming along?
- ☐ Are you considering taking a course or doing a service trip over May Term?

April

- ☐ What are your summer plans? Will you be taking a course? Internship? Participating in a study abroad experience?
- ☐ Where will you be living next year? If living on campus - How did housing selection go? Where are you living for next year?
- ☐ Mid-May: Have you registered for next year?
- ☐ How are your grades heading into finals? Do you have any particular concerns about them?
- ☐ What days/times are your final exams? (Final Exams are April 24-29)