

St. Olaf College Disability and Access

Dear Parents:

Welcome to the exciting, sometimes overwhelming world of becoming a parent of a college student! As Access Specialists, we are here to provide guidance, advice, and support as your student navigates the college experience. This information will serve as a guide to you as parents as you prepare for this new chapter in your family's life.

To get started at Disability and Access, your student needs to schedule an initial appointment. This appointment can be scheduled during the summer (online or in-person, if you are within driving distance of campus); in the days immediately preceding move-in day; or during New Student Orientation. The earlier the better! Visit our Getting Started page to learn more! (http://wp.stolaf.edu/asc/getting_started)

In order to help ease the transition to independence for both you and your student, please consider these tips:

1. Encourage your student to be **responsible** and **accountable** for their own education experience. You can foster independence and responsibility in a variety of ways, including **encouraging your student to:**
 - a. Check their email daily, and respond to all emails in a timely manner. Email is the primary communication of the college
 - b. Meet with instructors right away when questions or difficulties arise
 - c. Maintain contact with their academic advisor and Accessibility Specialist throughout the semester
 - d. Seek out and become familiar with college resources (below)
 - e. Comply with all college policies
 - f. Self-advocate, especially when it comes to the disability
2. If your student contacts you because they are very upset about something, don't panic! Listen, then advise your student to seek help from the available college resources. These could include instructors, academic advisors, the Dean of Students office, the Registrar's Office, Residence Life staff, and Disability and Access.
3. Ask your student to keep you informed about academic progress. Please remember that grades and other academic information are not mailed to students' homes, and there is not a parent portal where you can check grades.
4. In addition to the classwork, college is about students learning to be independent citizens who can function effectively in the workplace and in their private lives. Allowing them to learn to problem-solve, struggle with disappointment, and take care of all the tasks required of them will have lasting, positive effects.

Here are a few pointers about what **not** to do:

1. Please do not ask your student to give you their St. Olaf password. This information is confidential, and your student could lose internet privileges for sharing it. Instead, encourage your student to keep you informed of important academic information (such as grades).
2. Please do not call faculty members and ask for information about your student. Instead, talk directly with your student. Encourage your student to be in close contact with the faculty member, the Registrar, and/or the Dean of Students office.

Campus Resources:

There are many resources available to St. Olaf students. Here are some with which you may want to be familiar:

- Registrar's Office: wp.stolaf.edu/registrar
- Dean of Students Office: wp.stolaf.edu/deanofstudents
- Academic Success Center (formerly Center for Advising and Academic Support): wp.stolaf.edu/caas
- Disability and Access: wp.stolaf.edu/asc/dac
- The Piper Center: wp.stolaf.edu/pipercenter
- Counseling Center: wp.stolaf.edu/counseling-center
- Residence Life: wp.stolaf.edu/residencelife

Resources for Parents:

Here are a few books that you may find helpful as you navigate through this new process:

- College to Career Road Map: A Four-Year Guide to Coaching Your Student (Parent Edition) by Terese Corey Blanck, Peter Vogt, and Judith Anderson (Paperback – Aug. 25, 2006)
- Letting Go (Sixth Edition): A Parents' Guide to Understanding the College Years by Karen Levin Coburn and Madge Lawrence Treeger (Paperback – Jun. 28, 2016)
- Ready for Take-Off: Preparing Your Teen With ADHD or LD for College by Theresa E. Laurie, Ph.D. Maitland and Patricia O., M.D. Quinn (Paperback – Nov. 2010)
- The Parent's Guide to College for Students on the Autism Spectrum by Jane Thierfeld Brown, Lorraine Wolf, Lisa King, G. Ruth Bork (Paperback – Jan. 2012)

Whom to Contact:

Please encourage your student to communicate independently with instructors, advisors, and other college personnel if they have a question or concern. If you have further concerns, please contact:

- Disability and Access– 507-786-3288
- Dean of Students Office – 507-786-3615

Best to you as you begin this exciting journey!