



# PARENT INFORMATION

# It Was Only Just Yesterday . . .So What Now??!!

- Yes - it was just yesterday when your student was a toddler pretending to be whatever they thought they would be when they grew up - - -
- Now you are moving them to college.
- Recognize this is a time of ambivalence for all parents – talk with other parents.
- Know that you did a good job raising them and that is the part that will go with them. You have invested in their life.
- Your student is being pulled in many directions and they may have conflicting emotions. This is very common.

# Letting Go

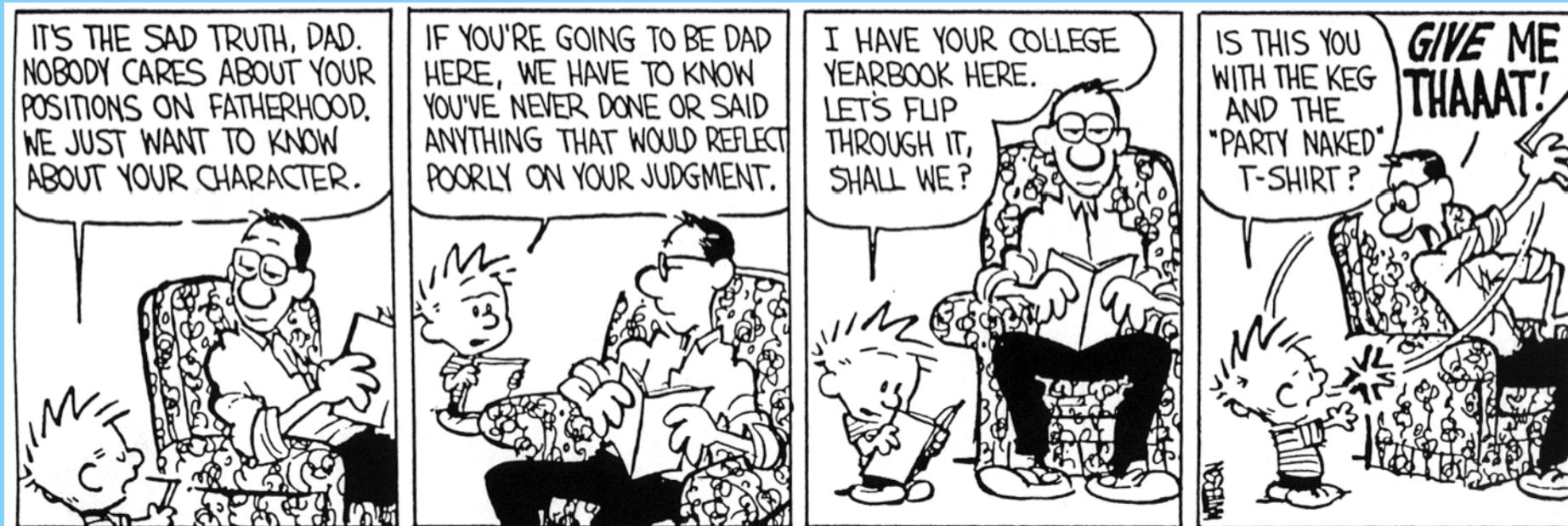
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*You have invested in their life.*

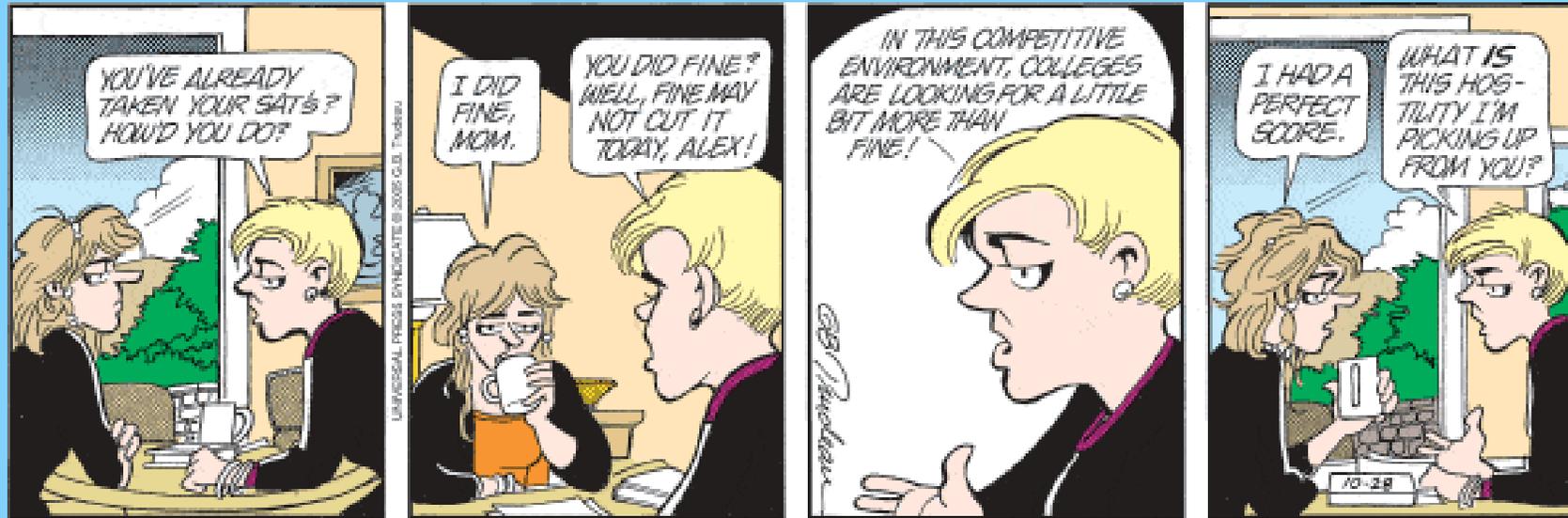


# Memories

- It is NOT your college experience – and you have fond memories of the best time of your life – BUT  
it is THEIRS and it may not be so great for them!
- Do you do things as a parent because your parents didn't or because they did? Just a thought.



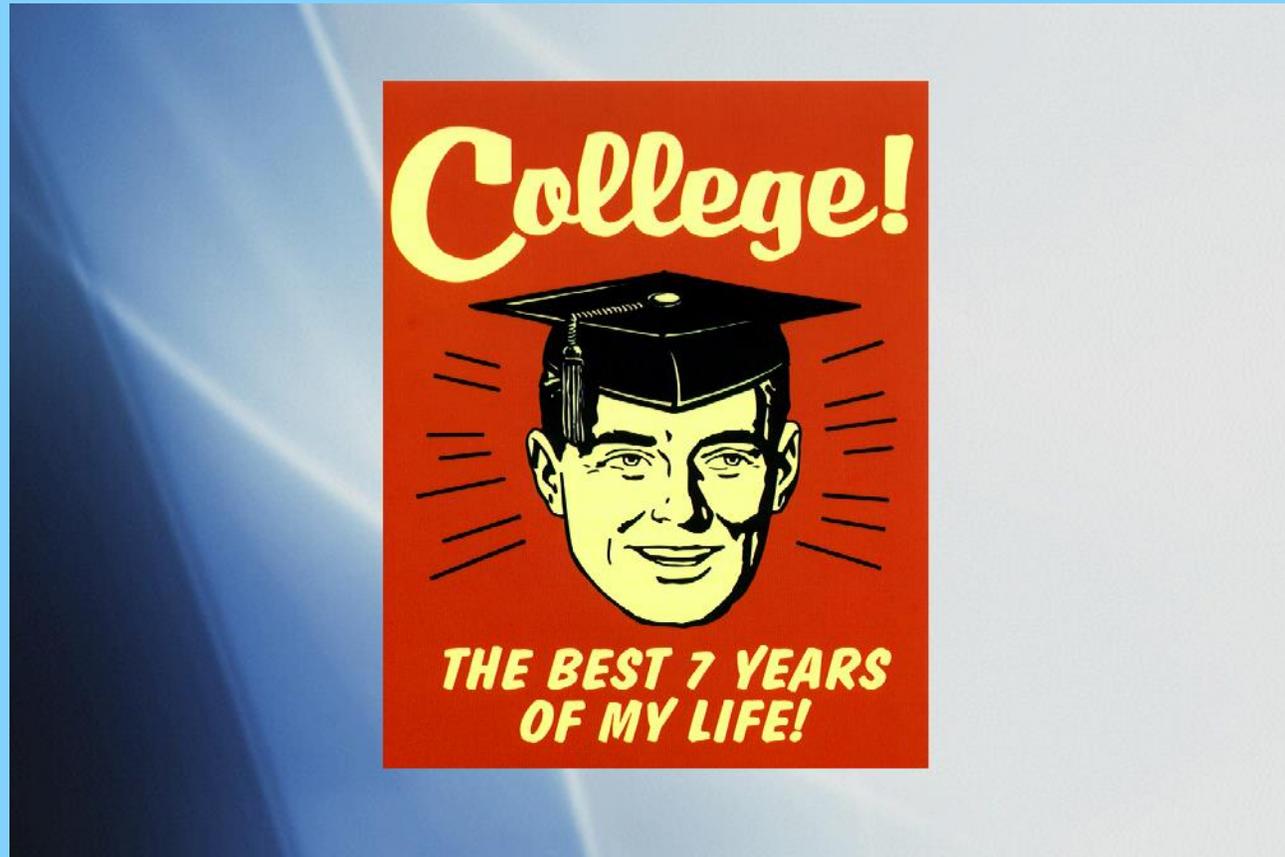
# Discuss Expectations (Yours)



# Expectations Conversation

- Make time for the conversation.
- The conversation may need to happen several times.
- Discuss expectations WITH each other.
- Hear what each other is saying.
- Be aware of assumptions you both are making.

# Discuss Expectations (Theirs)



# Parent Challenges

- Competence – trusting your child’s abilities.
- Identity– redefinition of yourself, role change from caretaker to mentor/advisor/refuge.
- Separation– anxiety for you!
- Communication
  - Talk with them about how you will stay in touch – what they prefer
    - text messaging, video chatting, Snapchat, Instagram.
- Intimacy– how to stay close with your child without being overly involved. (Don’t be a helicopter parent.)

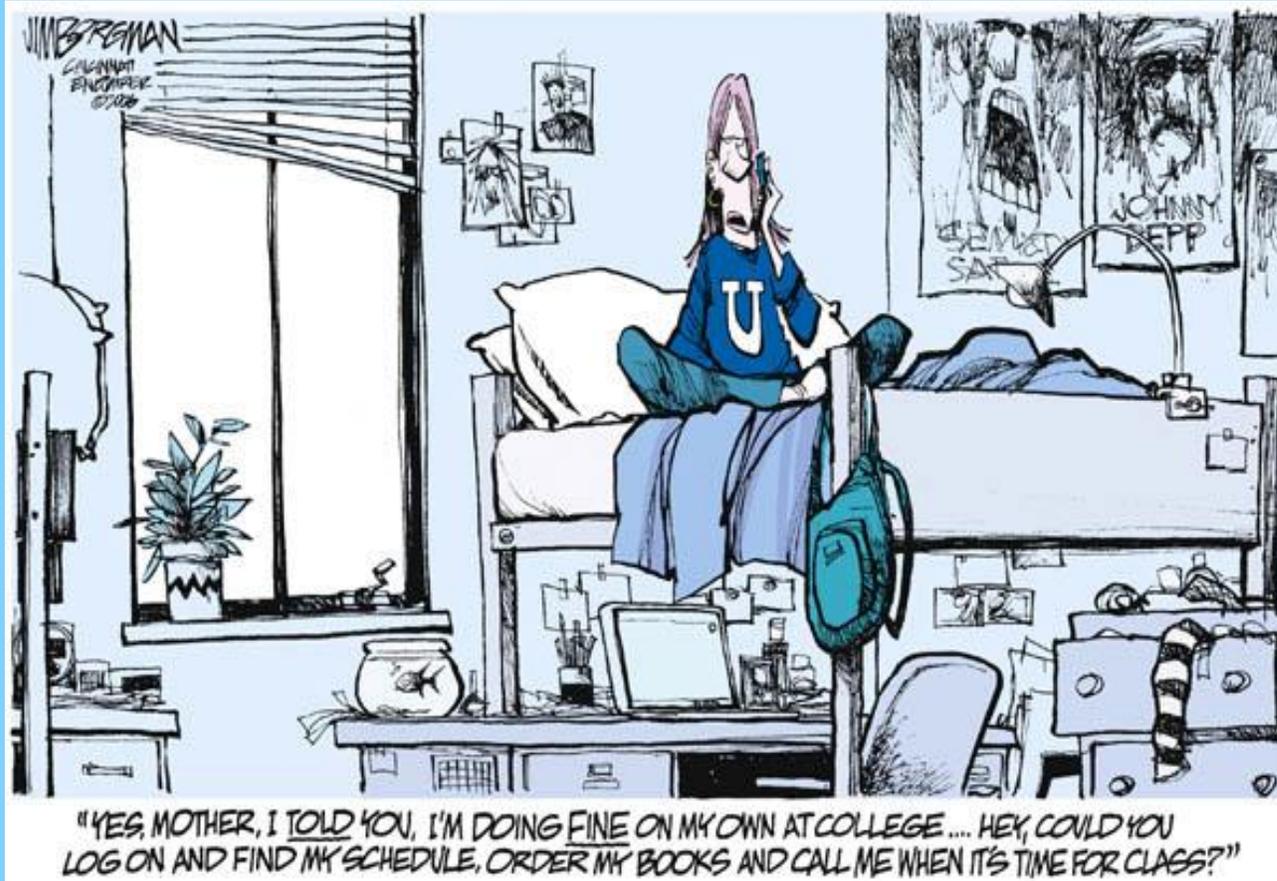
# Now that they are 18 – What now?

- All males with US citizenship must register for the selective service.
- It is a great time for them to register to vote.
- They make their own health decisions – even if they are on your insurance. Hopefully they will talk with you about their health decisions.
- FERPA law says you no longer have access to their grades or transcript.

# Student Challenges

- Achieving Sense of Competency
- Achieving Identity
- Separation/Independence
- Managing Emotions
- Achieving Intimacy

IT IS TIME!!!



# Independence

- They know how to set an alarm on their phone or even an alarm clock – **do not** call them to wake them up for class.
- Laundry – they can do their own laundry – You have done enough! – You may need to teach them before they leave for college. ( Even if they make mistakes and their White sweatshirt is now pink! They will learn.) If they live on MUW campus they do not have to pay for laundry services.
- It is time for them to make their own appointments which includes –
  - Meetings with a professor or advisor – For heavens sake don't you call them!
  - Appointments – they have a voice and know their schedule.
  - To let their professor(s) know they are sick and what they will need to make up.

# Independence -

- The smallest inconvenience can be an earth-shattering event.
- They live in the world of extremes.
- They expect the college experience to be perfect from the first day!
  - When it isn't perfect unsettling happens –
    - Misunderstanding with the roommate. Roommates don't always become their best friend – it may just be a friend. They need to communicate (in person) with their roommate about issues.
    - Bad exam grade
- Students are connected to anyone via the phone by text, Instagram etc. – Their parents, grandparents, best friend at another university, roommate, friends. Watch how much you interact with your student.
- They are just a quick text away – it won't take long to just ask (someone else) "what should I do?".
- It may be better for you as a parent to give them time, allow them to work out their own answer to problems. And then hear their excitement when they tell you how they took care of the situation.
- Let them know that you are available, you love them, but you can't solve all their problems.

# Transitioning to MUW: The Beginning

## Issues

- New freedoms and responsibilities
- New and more demanding academic requirements
- Changing relationships with peers, family and self
- Challenges to beliefs and values
- Develop a new social group
- Separate from friends from home
- Cope with feelings of anonymity

## Suggestions

- Have contact
- **Be a good listener-what do they need**
- Provide reassurance
- Note common experiences
- **Encourage to use resources**
- **Encourage to keep fit, sleep, eat (self-care)**

# Transitions are Important



# The FIRST Time Home (and others)

- The FIRST trip home after going to college can be the most difficult. It may be for just a weekend but you will have made some changes. They were not a part of the changes. If possible prepare them. (For example – Be careful not to redecorate too soon even if little brother wants to moved into their room.)
- Let them know what is changing at home – they may expect everything to be status quo. Send updated photographs – especially of the pets.

Home for more than a weekend -

- Things will be different – they will have been taking care of their needs and making their own decisions i.e., Bedtime, where they go and with whom, and time management. Talk with them as to what you expect now that they are back in your home.
- When they are at home there will be people they want to see and people you will want them to see. Try not to overschedule.
- Be prepared to see less of your child. They will want to spend as much time as possible with friends.

# Friend Group

- First year students want a friend group – similar to the group they had in high school.
- They want it immediately – if they have been ditched, or they don't have one it can be very lonely.
- Humans typically want to feel connected to others who care about them.
- It is like a different country – different language, culture, customs as we encourage them to become independent, self-confident, thoughtful, and fully educated.
- The lasting friendships may or may not be determined in their first semester – but they will happen.

# Ways to Stay Connected to your Student

- Communication
  - Talk with them about how you will stay in touch – what they prefer - text messaging, video chatting, Snapchat, Instagram.
- Don't wait for you child to call.
- Don't call too much.
- Be (or get) Tech-Savvy.
- Send care packages – snacks, photographs, toiletries, holiday decorations etc. Even if they do come home on a regular basis it is always fun to get a package!
- Visit.

# Some Things NOT To Do

- Don't call a professor – They need to learn to take care of their own problems
  - So they didn't get the grade they thought they should have gotten
  - They failed to tell the professor they were sick and didn't ask for an extension
  - Because they didn't ask for clarification on an assignment
- Fixing "IT" – let them fix whatever "IT" may be. They can – you don't need to fix their problems.
- Behind closed doors – where conversation about your concerns need to happen – not in front of peers.
- It is their experiences NOT "our" experiences.
- You do not need to know everything they are doing.
- Don't check their email or their assignment grades. Grades at the end of the semester – sure.
- Try not to beg them to come home. Encourage them to do it on their OWN because they want to come home.

# Finances

- A financial plan should be discussed with your students along with academic goals and expectation.
- You may be paying for their college experience and you will be tempted to control their activities and behavior.
- However, try not to be overprotective.
- Don't cut them off (i.e. financially) – or try to “punish” them if there is a problem – they will learn to get help if there is a problem

# Transitioning to MUW: Mid-Semester

## Issues

- ✦ Homesickness
- ✦ Disenchantment (reality strikes)
- ✦ “Small fish in a big pond”
- ✦ Worry about family problems
- ✦ **Academic reality sets in**
- ✦ Conflicts
- ✦ **Choosing a major**

## Suggestions

- ✦ Pay a visit, bring a treat, take them out to eat
- ✦ Reassure them that their feelings are normal
- ✦ Balance responsibilities and social life
- ✦ Use resources
- ✦ Help them manage time
- ✦ **Be supportive (don't try to fix it)**
- ✦ **Convey confidence in their ability**

# Transitioning To MUW: Ending of Semester

## Issues

- ✦ Coping with academic and other stress
- ✦ Manage feelings about the holidays
- ✦ Study for finals; complete term papers
- ✦ Separation from new friends

## Suggestions

- ✦ Encourage them to discuss experiences
- ✦ Encourage self-care
- ✦ Discuss holiday plans
- ✦ Familiarity with home

# Throughout the College years

- Expect CHANGE! You would not have been there to see/experience yet be aware of the change(es).
- College students **do** care about what you think more than they would like for you to know.
  - They quote you.
  - Talk about you.
  - Sometimes want your advice.
  - Many times they just want you to listen – without trying to “fix” whatever might be wrong.

# Tips for helping your student

- **Do** stay in touch
- **Do** listen
- **Do** encourage
- **Do** be realistic
- **Do** allow space
- **Do** be prepared for change
- **Don't** panic
- **Don't** tell them what to do
- **Don't** take over and assume responsibility
- **Don't** insist on frequent visits or phone calls
- **Don't** press your student on what they will do after college

# College Student Mental Health

- Top 10 Impediments to Academic Performance
- 32.4% **Stress**
- 25.6% Cold/flu
- 24.6% **Sleep**
- 18.1% **Concern for troubled friend**
- 15.9% **Relationship**
- 15.3% **Depression/Anxiety**
- 13.4% **Internet use/Computer games**
- 8.6% **Death of family/friend**
- 8.5% Sinus/Ear Infection
- 7.6% **Alcohol use**

# College – Transition and Mental Health

- If there are issues you know your student has – be forthright and let the college know – accommodation needs etc.
- They may be encouraged to experience social-internal activities they may not be ready to handle.
- Drinking, drugs, and sexual activity are concerns they may not be ready to cope with.
- The first trip to the Counseling Center may be due to:
  - First set of tests and perhaps low scores
  - Genuine academic difficulties
  - Romantic concerns – a break-up can be devastating
  - Homesickness – they may call more than usual.
    - It is a temporary condition
    - Transition leads to growth
    - Be patient
    - Be authentic
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
  - Self Esteem
  - Eating Disorders
- As a parent it can be helpful to listen and be supportive.

# Signs Your Student Is Not Thriving

- Significant change in appetite or excessive fatigue or lethargic mood
- Change in sleeping habits, level of energy, or mood.
- Marked change in appearance, hygiene
- Decreased or increased contact with you.
- Decreased interest in school and other activities.
- Lack of motivation or difficult focusing on academic work.
- Social withdrawal.
- Anxiety.
- Sadness.
- Poor academic performance.
- The use of alcohol or other substances.
- Excessive self-criticism.
- Talk of hopelessness.
- Extreme increases in energy, rapid speech.
- References to suicide or self-harm.

# What should I do?

- Listen.
- Express concerns directly.
- Encourage him or her to seek help.
- Tell your daughter/son about MUW Counseling Center.
- Look for leverage: health, career, academic.
- Normalize the idea of seeking help and let him/her know it is not a sign of weakness.
- Seek professional consultation: call us – Counseling Center 662.329.7748.
- Whenever possible, allow your child to take the next step on his/her own

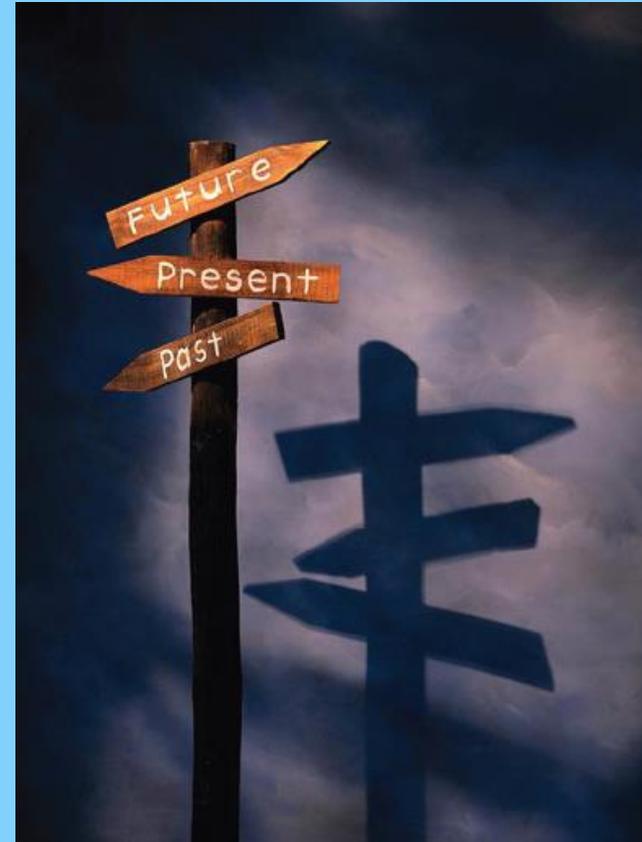
*Know that without your student's consent to share information, unless it is dealing with their safety, the college personnel nor the Counseling Center may not be able to acknowledge your concerns or share theirs.*

# The Counseling Center - First Appointment

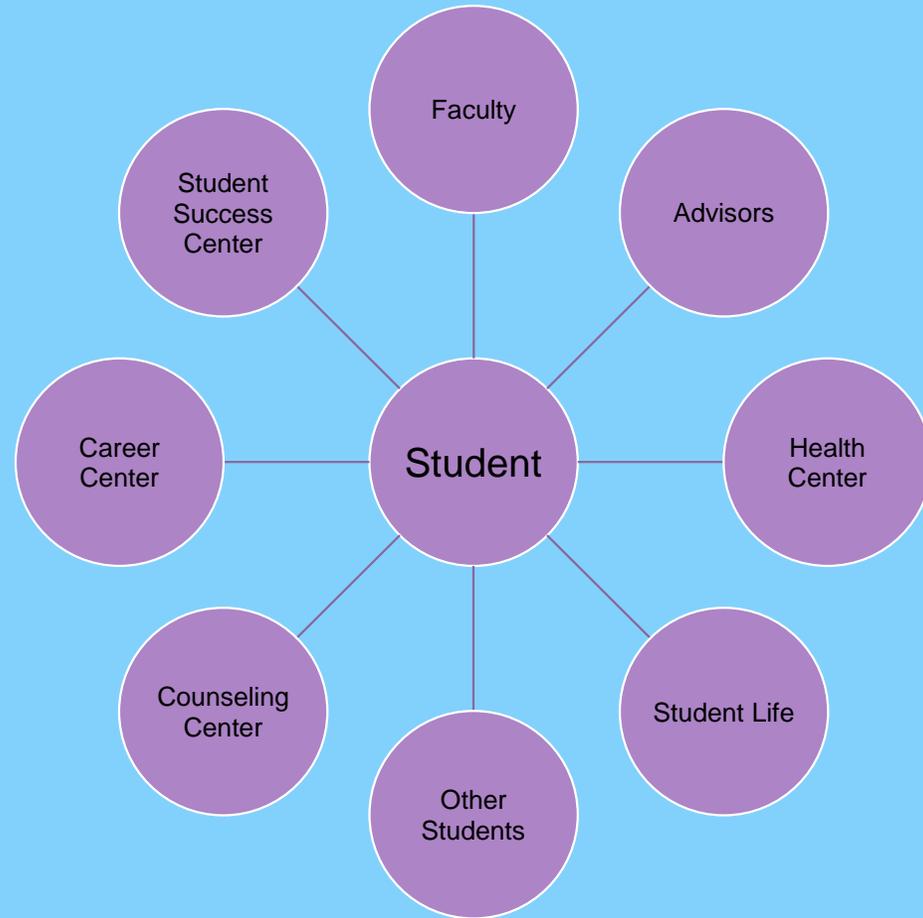
- If your student has never been in counseling it can be very frightening. They can contact the Counseling Center by calling, walking in or emailing to set up an appointment.
- Initially for any appointment, they will be asked to go online to our website <https://www.muw.edu/centers/counseling/appointments> and fill out the intake form under appointments. This information goes directly to the Counseling Center.
- When they come into the Center they will be asked to complete an “Informed Consent” form telling them of our practices and exceptions to confidentiality. **Otherwise all sessions are confidential.**
- In the first session the counselor will connect with the student and ask them what is happening with them and why do they think it is happening now.
- Usually if the student has come on their own accord they are very open to talk and connect with a counselor.

# Counseling Center Services

- ✦ Location: 324 11 St. South (the Little Blue House)
- ✦ Open 8am- 5pm, Monday – Friday (After hours by appointment)
- ✦ Professional Counselors with expertise in college student issues
- ✦ Counseling is FREE
- ✦ Individual counseling for personal, academic and career issues
- ✦ Group Counseling
- ✦ On-Line Counseling
- ✦ Crisis intervention
- ✦ Consultation/Referral
- ✦ Confidentiality
- ✦ Make appointment by calling or visiting
- ✦ Contacting us  
(662)329-7748



# A Caring Environment for Students



# Your Dream and Our Goal

- MUW Counseling Center is here to help your student have a terrific college experience while gaining knowledge about themselves, their relationships and their future goals...



# Resources for Parents

- Letting Go: A Parents' Guide to Understanding the College Years, Karen Levin Coburn & Madge Tregger
- Empty Nest: Full Heart: The Journey from Home to College by Andrea Van Steenhouse
- Your On Your Own (But I'm Here If You Need Me): Mentoring Your Child During the College Years, by Marjorie Savage
- Don't Tell Me What To Do, Just Send Money: The Essential Parenting Guide to the College Years, by Helen E. Johnson, Christine Schelhas-Mille
- When Kids Go To College: A Parents Guide to Changing Relationships, by Barbara M. Newman & Philip Newman