



Parent and Family

OUTREACH AND EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM



Who We Are and What We Do

On behalf of the Office of Multicultural Student Success, I would like to welcome you to the OMSS family. My name is Jade Perry, and I will serve as your staff contact for our Parent and Family Outreach and Empowerment Program.

The mission of our office is to “cultivate success for students of color, low-income college students, and first generation college students through sustained developmental programming, financial resources, and advocacy.” We realize that comprehensive student success outcomes begin with facilitating a strong college transition for our students while building partnerships with their families.

Parents and families play a large role in the college transition and success process. Data from the 2007 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which was completed by 4,518 first-year students and 4,644 senior students, indicated that “about three quarters of all students followed the advice of a parent or guardian...” This means that students are consistently looking to parents and families for a sense of support, guidance and assistance throughout their collegiate process from start to finish. Strong support from parents and families can increase the chances of degree attainment and successful completion of college (NSSE, 2007). As we build development programs and initiatives for our student population, we also invest time and resources into building partnerships with parents and families.

We build partnerships with parents and families in a few different ways. First, we encourage parents to participate in our initiatives, which include the Next Steps program, Parent and Family BBQ, President’s Diversity Brunch, and online quarterly newsletters that highlight relevant topics for the parents and families of our target population.

We strongly encourage parents to engage with us through our programs, newsletters and the work we do in the Office of Multicultural Student Success. I look forward to hearing from you and sharing information that will contribute to your student’s success here at DePaul University.

Jade Perry

College Transition Team



Jade Perry, Coordinator

Jade joined the DePaul community and OMSS staff in the summer of 2014. She now serves as a coordinator, working with Parent and Family Outreach and Empowerment programs, Study Jams and the OMSS

EDGE Team (a collaborative partnership with the Office of Student Employment). Jade received her MEd in college student affairs from The Pennsylvania State University and lived and worked in Pennsylvania and South Carolina prior to joining DePaul. She is excited to serve as an advocate for parents, families and students as a coordinator in OMSS.



Andrea Arzuaga, Assistant Director

Andrea joined OMSS and the DePaul community in April of 2013. She currently oversees the area of college transition, which includes the STARS Peer Mentoring Program, Programming, Marillac Fellows and

Parent Outreach. Andrea is originally from Chicago and is an alumna of Lincoln Park High School. She is excited about not only engaging first-year and transfer students in the STARS Peer Mentoring program but also providing parents with tools necessary to navigate your involvement in the DePaul community as her own parents were extremely important in supporting her success as a first-generation college student.

Solid Starts: 5 Ways to Help Your Student Create an Academic Success Plan

By Jade Perry

One of the best precursors for four year degree attainment/graduation is how “academically successful” a student is in their first year of college. This is one of the most critical years because sets the tone for their comprehensive academic journey. DePaul University describes academic success in each year with two benchmarks: 1) Has your student received a minimum GPA of 2.5? 2) Has your student completed 16 credits each quarter? These two benchmarks are necessary for timely degree attainment. However, reaching those two goals requires our students to build skills in studying and researching information, time management and self-care strategies (i.e., health, wellness, fitness, stress management). Reaching these goals also means that students and parents need to work together to identify and utilize the resources provided by DePaul University that will help them to succeed. Thus, it is particularly important for parents, families and students to connect and build a success plan at the beginning of the academic year. Here are five ways to begin a first-year academic success plan:

1. Identify possible barriers to success and review resources.

Since a part of academic success is maintaining a minimum 2.5 GPA and completing 16 credits per quarter, it is worthwhile to brainstorm what might hinder your student's success in that area. Swail (2004) identifies that most obstacles to student success happen in three areas: a) cognitive (what you know both academically and in regards to the way the university functions), b) social factors (your network of support, meaningful faculty/staff relationships), and c) institutional resources (financial aid, university processes and protocol). Identify which factors stand out most to you.

For example, you may feel very comfortable with your student's social network of support, but might be very concerned about the institutional factor of financial aid support. Identify this as a potential barrier to success, and then review the resources that might be available to help with this particular barrier. Thus, familiarizing yourself with DePaul Central and your financial aid package might be two resources that will help to address this factor.

Perhaps you are more concerned about your student's social factors and network of support. You might identify that as a potential barrier to success and look up resources to help your student build up a healthy

network such as OMSS Stars Peer Mentoring Program or student organizations that seem to be a good fit.

Brainstorm with your student to check in about potential barriers and resources that you both learned about through peers or programs such as DePaul Premiere, Next Steps, or the Parent and Family. Finally, encourage your student to take it a step further by identifying the resources that their academic department, library and academic advisor can offer them.

2. Encourage your student to articulate their major declaration or major completion plan.

The first year is a great time to talk about what majors the student is looking to fulfill or explore. Each major has different course requirements that they must fulfill in order to complete their degree program. Knowing how and when to declare a major can make the difference between obtaining a degree in four years, five years, or even six years. Understanding how many major courses are required, if declared, can help students to see their pathway to graduation. Thus, encouraging your student to articulate what their major declaration or completion plan looks like will prompt them to gain the necessary information that they need to know about their course work in the first year and beyond.

A few example questions might include:

Have you declared your major? If so, what have you declared and why?

Have you talked with an academic advisor to develop your major completion plan and review how many credits you will take each quarter and what courses those credits might fall under?

If undeclared: Have you reviewed the list of majors that are available at DePaul? Which majors have you thought about exploring and why?

Have you met with an OAAS advisor to draft up a major exploration and declaration plan?

3. Talk with your student as they set time management goals.

Time management is essential toward building a successful first year. First year students will be expected to choose their classes, formulate a balanced academic schedule, and leave time for extracurricular involvement/building positive peer networks. In addition to that, they

may be factoring in on or off-campus jobs, attention to familial obligations, and/or traveling and commuting time. In order to obtain and maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA, first year students will also need to set aside some intentional time for studying. Talking with your students about familial expectations and academic expectations helps them to strive for a balance and build on their time management skills. Students also may come to the OMSS office to meet with one of our staff members to create a time management plan. Following up with your student about these types of plans is important in navigating the new environment they are experiencing.

4. Set expectations for winter and summer intercessions

Intercessions are often a time for students to relax, travel, work and gear up for their next quarter. However, intercessions are also a time that is available for students to make up any dropped credits and courses that they may need to obtain for graduation. A part of the academic success plan that you build with your students should contain some expectation setting around how the intercessions will be utilized, and what the cost implications for each of those options might be.

5. Check-in with your student about their social connection and academic connection.

Scholars suggest that students have a higher likelihood of staying engaged at the university if they are connected academically (i.e., developing professional relationships with faculty members, utilizing office hours to work out academic struggles) and socially (i.e., getting involved with student organizations, participating in peer mentorship programs) (Tinto, 1993). These kinds of connections allow students to access a community of support at the institution that can serve as resources for them during their first year and in subsequent years, as well. Checking in with your student about these types of connections helps you to understand how your student is engaging with the campus community and may open up additional areas of discussion for you and your student.

Building a first year academic success plan is a proactive step to student success that will reap benefits for you and your student.

Resources

Swail, W. S. (2004). *The art of student retention: A handbook for practioners and administrators*. Austin, TX: Educational Policy Institute
Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition* (2nd Ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Upcoming Events and Initiatives

President's Diversity Brunch

Hosted by OMSS

October 18, 9-11 a.m. (Check in will begin at 8:30 a.m.)
Lincoln Park Student Center 120 AB

What is it?

This program serves as the only diversity event offered to parents and families of first-year students color during DePaul Universities' Parent and Family Weekend. This event features an address by the President and other outstanding speakers and student performance groups.

Why is it important?

Parents and families will have a chance to enjoy brunch while connecting with OMSS and DePaul students, staff, faculty and university executives.

Registration is required.

Visit eventbrite.com/e/the-presidents-diversity-brunch-tickets-13233051413 to register for this event.

Parent and Family Weekend

Hosted by New Student and Family Engagement

Friday, October 17, 11:30 a.m.–Sunday, October 19, 4:30 p.m.
DePaul University Student Center, 2250 N. Sheffield Ave.,
Chicago, IL 60614

What is it?

Family Weekend is a university-wide event intended to welcome parents and family members to (or back to) campus during the fall quarter. This is a great opportunity to experience campus in the heart of the quarter and during a lovely season in the city.

Why is it important?

The Office of New Student and Family Engagement affirms that "through our programs and resources our goal is to help you stay connected with the university, while supporting you as you take an active role in your student's experience."

Registration is required and is now open!

Visit new-student-family-engagement.ticketleap.com/dpufamily/ to complete the registration form and pay online.

