SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION
TO COLLEGE

The Counseling Center
Students and parents are often concerned with different aspects of college . . .

- **Students**: with fitting in (making friends) and having a good time (partying)

- **Parents**: with success (grades) and preparing for a bright future (getting a well-paying job)
Why is Transition Difficult?

- Abrupt assumption of personal responsibility
- Managing independence/freedom from parents
- Time management/priority management
- Deciding what to do with one’s life/future
- Sorting values, politics, faith, worldview
- Fitting in to a large, diverse “weird” group
- Culture of drug/alcohol abuse as entitlement
- “Hookups” vs. lasting relationships
- *68% of college freshmen require remedial training in math or English or both

What’s underneath the iceberg

Poor Academic Preparation
Emotional Struggles
Poor Organizational Skills

Handout: “The College Student Mental Health Crisis”
Survival Skills They Need

• Ask for Help, Ask for Help, Ask for Help
• Stand up for themselves
• Get a calendar and use it – get organized
• Get connected but be realistic
• Know you love and support them
• Know you will hold them accountable for their decisions and behavior

Review, “Student Success Tips: everything you need to think about and do to help you be more successful in college”
Key Things Parents Can Do

• Get your student’s ID # and password so you have access to their grades
• Get a copy of each class syllabus: quizzes, papers, test - due dates, faculty office hours
• Get dates for first add/drop date and final add/drop date for classes
• Get to know their roommates/suitemates parent’s – emails and phone numbers
• Get name and number of RA’s, RHD’s
What is the Contract – Your Expectations?

- Is it OK to spend 1-6 years figuring out what they want to focus on? Why not 2 yr schools?
- **Do you expect them to live out your values, or is college their Las Vegas?**
- Is the bottom line their GPA?
- Is there balance between studying and fun?
- When do they lose your financial support?
"Yes, mother, I told you, I'm doing fine on my own at college... Hey, could you log on and find my schedule, order my books and call me when it's time for class?"
• Happens to almost all Freshmen
• Worse the first 4 weeks
• Encourage them to be patient-realistic
• Encourage them to establish “social roots”, and use the many supports here
• Revisit why they are here – in a 4yr college

Direct your student to our web info with skills to help address homesickness:
http://counseling.cofc.edu/counseling/self-help-resources.php
The “Big Picture” is keeping the relationship strong. No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care.

- A listening ear, “I know that must be very hard.”
- Encouragement, “I know you can do it.”
“I Just Need Someone to Talk To”

- Talk to your RA
- Talk to your “Big” if in sorority or fraternity
- Talk to your roommate or suitemate, they likely have similar feelings and concerns
- Introduce yourself to someone else on your floor (in the dorm).
- Talk to a Cougar Counseling Team member, 843-953-7411
- Talk to a professional at The Counseling Center, 843-953-5640
Your Team Here to Help

- Academic Advising
- Career Services
- Office of Disability Services
- Their Residence Assistant or the RHD
- Center for Student Learning
- Counseling Center
- Undergraduate Academic Services
- Dean of Students
- Their Professor during office hours

There are MANY others!!!
When to Consider Professional Help

- If they had counseling before they can benefit now
- If they benefited from medication before
- Social withdrawal and they are not usually shy
- Marked change in appearance, hygiene
- Excessive self-criticism, catastrophizing
- Tearful calls home outnumber the others
- Talk of hopelessness, helplessness
- Missing classes, not completing school work
- Extreme increases in energy, rapid speech
- References to suicide or self-harm (cutting), vague or not

(Substance abuse can mimic mental health concerns - their use CAUSES mh problems, it’s not a coping issue)
Counseling Center

To make an appointment...

please call 843.953.5640

Your first appointment will be 30 minutes focused on getting to know your concerns and helping you get to the right source of help, either here at The Counseling Center or a counselor in the community.

* All services are completely confidential.
* The Counseling Center counselors are not "responsible authorities" (employees) for Title IX. This allows students to seek counseling for a victimization confidentially.

- How are you feeling? Take an online mental health screening - anonymous, confidential.
- Are you in crisis? Please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK.
- Don't wait until it's too late. Click on a box under Our Services below to learn how we can help.

Dr. Budd Welcomes You
Focused on short-term (8 visits per semester), we build skills/self-reliance

Students with significant or long term mental health concerns may be referred to the community

Plus, evaluation and treatment of substance abuse concerns, assessment of learning problems and limited psychiatric services

For pre-existing medication, it is best if the family physician continues care
Self Help Resources

Sometimes You are Just Looking for Some Information

CASAS likes to share information that might be interesting to CofC students. Please check out the videos and links shared below. These items will be changed periodically.

Homesickness

- How to Handle Homesickness
- Can’t Leave Home Without It
- Local grief groups

Healthy Relationships

- Is this Unhealthy
- Breaking Up
- When the Relationship Ends

How to Live with Purpose

- Mastering Stress
- How to Relax
- Anxiety
- Panic Attacks
Cougar Counseling Team

We have TEXTing for help available: “4support” to 839863

Or just walk in to RSS 319:
Monday through Thursday
4:00 pm until 9:00 pm
College can be a wonderful experience, but...
We need your help protecting your kids from themselves.

34% of incoming freshmen to CofC already drink heavily, vs. 22% of national average
College students spend more time drinking alcohol than they do studying.

First Year Students Who Use Alcohol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hours Per Week</th>
<th>Percentage of Drinkers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drinking</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

49% of Drinkers spend more time drinking than studying.
What are the “Facts*” About College Drinking at CofC?

• Never Used Alcohol = 27% vs. perception of 4%
• 72% of students <21yo drank in the prior 30 days.
• Drink < 10 drinks per week = 86.3%
• Percent who binge drink at least 2 days a week, or “typical” Fri and Sat partying = ONLY 23% of men, & 14% of women
• Every year 50+ students are transported by ambulance to hospitals to avoid alcohol poisoning deaths

Help Your Student Know THE MINORITY Drink Frequently or Drink to Get Drunk
What’s the Big Deal About Drinking?

- 45% did something later regretted
- 43% experienced memory loss
- **38% missed a class**
- 38% got in an argument or fight
- 33% drove a car while intoxicated
- 31% performed poorly on a test
- 21% have been hurt or injured

EVERYTHING is worse if they are also smoking marijuana!
What About Weed?

- Marijuana interferes with the very skills you need to be successful at school. **Poor**: concentration, short-term memory, knowledge acquisition, ability to organize thoughts, and judgment/decision-making.

- Cognitive impairments resulting from smoking marijuana can last up to at least 28 days after an individual last smoked the drug.

- Marijuana used these days is much stronger so the negative effects are much stronger (ex. psychosis)

29% of CofC students (vs. 20% of national comparison group) use marijuana at least monthly, 11% use almost daily (vs. nat. avg. of 8%).
Stress Management Out of the Box:

Allow Them NOT to Go to a 4 year College

First 2 yrs are truly “finding yourself”
Explore **ALL** the Options with Them

- Take time off, explore the world, find passion - “gap year”
- Engage in community service/volunteer
- Get a job and find out what they do and don’t like to do – interests may not match talents
- Join the military – good training, pay and benefits
- Start off at a community college or Tech School
- Ease into it: Take classes or get a degree online,
  - Ex. Western Governors College, [www.wgu.edu](http://www.wgu.edu)
57% of college students drop out – but keep the debt
53% of college graduates are under or unemployed
- 42% working jobs not requiring a college degree
53% of 18-24yo’s are living at home

Law School grads only have 50% chance of finding law job <9mths after graduation (WSJ, 6/25/2012)
MANY High Paying Careers Exist

**Associate Degree Only**
- Paralegal, median income: $49,500
- Wind Turbine Tech, median income: $52,260
- Geological or Petroleum Technician, median income: $56,470
- Physical Therapy Assistant, median income: $56,610
- Web Developer, median income: $66,130
- Registered Nurse, median income: $68,450


**No College, Vocational/Technical/Certification Only**
- Medical Records Technician, median income: $38,040
- Broadcast Technician, median income: $42,550
- Industrial Machine Repair, median income: $49,100
- Plumber, median income: $51,540
- Electrician, median income: $52,720
- Executive Assistant, median income: $55,860

SUMMARY

• The first semester can be very difficult for many reasons
• Your job is as coach or consultant
• Help them use all campus resources
• Help them make good choices and step in when they don’t

• Call the Dean of Students, 843-953-5522, with concerns about any student
God Bless Parents!