ARTS
2015-2016 PARENT AND FAMILY GUIDE

Parents, keep this book on-hand as your resource

AN INVESTMENT IN KNOWLEDGE PAYS THE BEST INTEREST

Benjamin Franklin
WE LOOK FORWARD TO PARTNERING WITH YOUR CHILD TO HELP THEM ACHIEVE ACADEMIC SUCCESS.

As parents and supporters, you’re one of our key partners in assuring your child’s success, both academically and personally.

Knowing that you still have an extremely important role to play — supporter, resource, sounding-board, and loved one — we’ve developed this Parent and Family Guide to help you with the transition to university life. Helping you be the best support possible for your child will go a long way to helping us to be the best support we can be for your child.

Now that your child is a student in the Faculty of Arts, your role will change somewhat from the one you had while he or she was in high school. Our relationship with you will also change. To respect your child’s privacy, and in keeping with our Policy 19 (Access To and Release of Student Information), our communication will now need to be directly with your child. We always hope that students share information with their families, but the decision of what information to share rests with the student.

COVER ARTWORK: Victoria Stacey, BA 2015, Speech Communication and Honours Arts and Business, Digital Arts Communication minor, designed a series of posters for the Faculty of Arts in 2015. This cover design is one in the poster series. Victoria is currently working as a Digital Media Coordinator at Kohl and Frisch Ltd in the Greater Toronto Area.

BOAR HEAD ARTWORK – PORCELLINO – THE ARTS MASCOT Porcellino, a bronze statue of a wild boar, also the Arts mascot, represents courage and bravery in the face of adversity. This statue is one of a few replicas of the original in Florence, Italy. The boar head artwork was designed by Erin Leach, BA 2014, Fine Arts and Arts and Business. Erin is pursuing a career as a graphic designer.

JUST IN CASE

Arts Academic Advising Centres
» Arts Undergraduate Office
  519-888-4567, ext. 35870
» Renison Registrar’s Office
  519-888-4567, ext. 28650
» St. Jerome’s Registrar’s Office
  519-888-4567, ext. 28303
» Global Business and Digital Arts Office
  519-888-4567, ext. 32009

Student Success Office
  519-888-4567, ext. 84410

Health Services
  519-888-4096

Counselling Services
  519-888-4567, ext. 32655

Registrar’s Office
  519-888-4567, ext. 35378

Student Awards
  519-888-4567, ext. 33583

Tuition — Finance
  519-888-4567, ext. 38466

Waterloo Residences
  519-888-4567, ext. 32679
academic advice

In the Faculty of Arts, first-year advising is done in several offices — Arts Undergraduate Office; Renison Registrar’s Office; St. Jerome’s Registrar’s Office; Global Business and Digital Arts Office. Your child will know what office to use based on their program and where they are registered. The first-year advisors help students navigate first year and prepare for second year. Once your child declares their major or moves into second year, they may have a new advisor, but can use the resources of the Academic Advising Centres at any time.

What does an academic advisor do?
» partners with your child to help them reach their academic goals
» helps your child plan a program that matches their abilities and interests
» explains academic requirements and policies
» is knowledgeable about your child’s academic record
» helps your child develop realistic educational goals

What’s your child’s role in the academic advising process?
» be an active participant in their academic success
» communicate with their advisor on a regular basis
» understand their degree and major requirements and use the undergraduate calendar
» be open and honest with their advisor
» accept ultimate responsibility for their success at university

What’s the role of family and supporters?
» be a partner in your child’s success — listening and encouraging them to be proactive in their studies
» realize that your child will be the primary contact with the university and, because of this, empower them to actively participate in their own success

Students who seek advice on a regular basis are generally more successful in their studies. It’s less about getting help, and more about developing a plan for success. Plans change. **Encourage your child to build a strong relationship with their advisor.**
University Colleges
In partnership with the Faculty of Arts, the four on-campus University Colleges — Conrad Grebel, Renison, St. Jerome’s, St. Paul’s — offer living and learning opportunities. Students are part of a small community while having full access to all Waterloo offers. Your child can register at Renison or St. Jerome’s and be part of the residence and/or academic communities while completing their Waterloo degree.

ARTS 101 — Faculty of Arts incoming student web resource
This online community is a place for all new Arts students, regardless of program or campus, to begin the transition to university life, participate in several online activities, to become part of the Arts community, and to actively participate in the Arts smARTSpace site.

» Connect with their academic advisor
» Discover services to support their academic success
» Required online activities — earn points for completing these tasks
» Participate in online discussions and meet other new students
» Be prepared for their first term of study

smARTSpace on LEARN
smARTSpace is your child’s online advisement community. It’s a go-to resource for news and dates, course selection instructions, finding help and advice, and connecting with their advisor and other students. LEARN, their online classroom, is what most professors will use to supplement their in-person lectures, post assignments, build classroom community, and hold group discussions about course materials.

Student Success Office (SSO)
The SSO is a critical campus resource, offering a wide array of services including success coaching, university transition programs, academic success workshops, and peer-to-peer student support.
what else can you do?

You’re highly influential in your child’s life. While it’s their time to spread their wings, your advice and support will continue to be important.

» Listen intently when they share their experiences.
» Encourage your child to solve their own problems.
» Be familiar with campus resources.
» Understand that your child may change their mind about their program or major; first year is a time to explore and learn.

It’s a balancing act between giving too much advice while still allowing your child to grow. You know your child best.

Ask questions
Initially, your child may feel like you’re interfering, but then may grow to appreciate that you’re still interested in what they’re up to. Try to avoid “I have the right to know” statements and nagging. Learning more about your child’s university experience is important. Letting them know you’re interested and willing to listen will help keep you connected.

Become a coach
» Arts programs at Waterloo are known for their academic rigour. Help your child understand the benefits of the knowledge they are accumulating, even if the work is sometimes difficult for them.
» Time management is critical at university. Help your child find and use tools that work for them.
» Remind your child to use their support services on campus, such as the Arts Academic Advising Centres, the Student Success Office, and the Registrar’s Office.
» Every so often, ask your child if they’re attending classes, making use of their teaching assistants, dropping in for their professor’s office hours, how their assignments are progressing, and if they’ve checked-in with their advisor.

Become a cheerleader
» Email, Skype, send mail! Care packages with treats, clothing, pictures, and a note from home go a long way in helping your child feel connected.
» Halloween, Valentine’s Day, St. Patrick’s Day, or a day special to your family is a great excuse to send a care package.
» Text quick messages so they know they’re on your mind. They are thinking about you as well, even if they aren’t in touch all the time.
» Check in to hear about the results of exams, tests, and assignments. Congratulations and encouragement are always welcome.
How many courses? How many hours?
Normally students take five classes per term. Depending on their program, they may choose to take a lighter load. In consultation with their academic advisor, your child will be encouraged to take the number of courses (maximum of five) that will support their academic success. Taking five classes per term generally equals 15 hours of classes per week. We then expect that for every hour of class your child will spend approximately two hours studying, reading, and completing assignments. Going to school full-time is a full-time job!

Mistakes, challenges, and changes to come
First-year university is full of inspiration, discovery, exciting times, and new friends. Your child will also face indecision, disappointments, and mistakes. It will take time for them to accept that being thrilled, sad, confused, confident, and disappointed are part of growing up. Understand that not all students get good grades, are sure of what they want to major in, have fun-filled days all the time, or make lots of friends. Being prepared and open to discussing the ups and downs will go a long way in making your child feel supported. Your child's journey will be unique and you can be there to support them when they need it most.

Making new friends
It's not always easy to make new friends. Help your child understand that it can take some time to create new and lasting friendships. Encourage them to get involved in residence life or the off-campus don program, get to know some people in each of their classes, and take part in important social and academic activities like Fall Orientation and Fall Welcome Week.

Stress and studies
Stress can negatively impact academic performance if it gets out of hand. There will be slow, busy, and sometimes stressful times each term. There may also be stressful times at home as you adjust to your child being away, sort out finances, or establish your own new routines. Emails and calls from an anxious child can also be stressful. Be prepared to hear more from them when they're discouraged than when they're soaring with success. Listen to them, express your care and concern, and perhaps share some of your insight, experience, and advice.

What are some proven methods to combat stress?
» regular exercise
» adequate sleep
» managing time wisely
» healthy eating and regular meals
» scheduling time for relaxation and fun
» completing and submitting assignments on time

If your child ever shows serious signs of physical, emotional, or mental stress, please encourage them to speak to their academic advisor, visit Counselling Services, or Health Services. We have trained health professionals available to support your child.
Counselling Services — Occasionally students deal with unexpected issues and need help coping. Free counselling is included with full-time tuition fees. After a simple evaluation process, your child can meet with a counsellor in a confidential setting.

Health Services — This on-campus Student Medical Clinic provides convenient, confidential, and comprehensive medical care to all registered students.

Visiting campus
Visit your child, but not too often. If your child has not been quick to invite you to visit, you may want to suggest a trip to campus. In all likelihood, your visit will be very much appreciated, especially if it includes a treat, such as dinner out or a trip to the grocery store. Visits are a chance to bring news from home, but more importantly, to have a glimpse into your child’s life at school.

Surprise visits are not usually appreciated, making plans in advance is best.

Trips home
Often families find it a bit of an adjustment when their child returns home for the first time or at the end of the school year. Just because they’ve been away doesn’t mean that life at home has stopped. You’ll have developed some new routines and habits.

Changes at home can be disconcerting for your child (and for you). While you work to respect the individual your child is striving to be, your child still needs to know that you have, and will enforce, established rules and household expectations.

Having conversations early about summer jobs or internships, studying abroad, and living arrangements for the summer or while on work terms will allow everyone to plan ahead — discuss finances, and understand expectations.

Homesickness
Being homesick is often as much an issue for you as it is for your child. It’s okay to admit you’re missing them! The first few weeks of school are full of events designed to help your child become part of campus life. Meeting new people, learning about life at Waterloo, and getting used to the pace of classes can take a lot of time and energy. Remember, even if they don’t tell you, they do miss you. Let them enjoy these first few weeks without having to worry too much about you.

Have “how-to” conversations about ...
» laundry, cleaning, and cooking healthy meals
» ironing a shirt or pants ... maybe for the first time
» credit card use and your expectations around finances, and who will pay for what
» getting around town and your expectations — bus, car, foot
Transportation — With the payment of student fees, your child will have a fully paid city bus pass. The Federation of Students bus, the Go Bus, and Greyhound have regular, daily departures from campus, and the VIA train runs from the downtown Kitchener station.

WatCard — It’s the most important piece of student ID your child will have. They’ll use their WatCard to write exams, participate in Waterloo activities, sign books out of the library, and get student discounts on-campus and off-campus.

a year at a glance

JUNE, JULY, AUGUST

It’s exciting and a bit frightening. The summer before school begins can often bring mixed emotions for the whole family. Everyone is excited in some way about the adventure ahead, but there are a lot of unknowns as well. Talk to your child about how you can help them with this transition in their lives, share your excitement for them as they take on new challenges, and be sure to tuck some special reminders of home in their suitcase. If your child is living at home, look into the resources we have to connect off-campus students with the University of Waterloo community.

What’s important now?
» prom, graduation, and saying good-bye to high school friends
» choosing classes and where to live

» explore ARTS 101 our online new student transition community
» register for Fall Orientation
» enjoying summer vacation

ARTS NEW STUDENT TRANSITION

First-year course selection — June to August
We walk our first-year students through the online course selection process for Fall and Winter. Your child’s academic advisor reviews and approves their selections. Your child is emailed detailed, step-by-step instructions and specific deadlines to meet.

Note: this may be the only time we email your child at an email account other than their @uwaterloo.ca email account.
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» Participate in online discussions and meet other new students

September

Orientation — September
Orientation is a week of social and academic programming designed to help students meet other new students, get used to campus, and get off to a good academic start. All students are expected to attend the academic events and are highly encouraged to participate in all Orientation week activities. You’re welcome to attend Parent Orientation and Family Send-off on Labour Day weekend!

Communication from Waterloo — We’ll normally communicate with your child through their University of Waterloo email address, through LEARN (online classroom), and on Quest (student registration system). We’ll post important dates and announcements on the Registrar’s Office website. It’s critical that your child checks their @uwaterloo.ca email account on a regular basis. Take some time to review Important Dates online at uwaterloo.ca/quest/undergraduate-students/important-dates to learn when classes begin and end, when fees are due, when students can add and drop classes, and when official University holidays take place.

What’s important now?
» social life — new friends, relationships, parties
» living with a roommate — the good and the bad
» academic demands — homework, tests, assignments
» experiencing newfound freedom
» money — spending, saving, keeping track

Daily Bulletin — The Daily Bulletin is the University of Waterloo’s online news source. It’s a great place to learn about your child’s new school.

Student Portal — This mobile-friendly, communication tool delivers UWaterloo information students need, when they need it. Students customize their portal content so they get the UWaterloo information most important to them. uwaterloo.ca/student-portal
OCTOBER

Ask questions. Most students want their parents to express an interest in what they are doing at school and will welcome some advice or discussion about their plans. Ask open-ended questions, such as, “What are some of the assignments you’re working on?” or, “What are you learning in a particular class right now?”. Make opportunities to share your thoughts and opinions and allow your child to express theirs.

What’s important now?
» time management, setting priorities, boundaries
» excitement about Thanksgiving weekend
» mid-terms, assignments, first grade results
» feeling that university may not be what they expected

Each term is 16 weeks long, including the final exam period
Thanksgiving weekend is mid-way through the term. Often students are caught off guard by how quickly the term passes. Before your child returns for Christmas holidays, they’ll have completed all of the requirements for their first term, including their final exams.

November

Phone calls or texts about unexpected grades or challenging relationships are tough to listen to, but it’s not the end of the world! Be patient when you get a “nothing is going right” or an “I hate this place” call. Your child needs a sympathetic ear at this time.

What’s important now?
» increased academic responsibilities with end of term assignments, papers, and reports
» missing home and old friends
» final exam schedule posted

Early November — Has your child checked in with their academic advisor?
A proactive student is often a successful student. Encourage your child to contact their academic advisor to discuss any concerns and to get advice well before their final assignments are due and exams begin.

Every successful athlete has a team to support them. University is no different and their academic advisor can be seen as their coach. Encourage your child to get the right advice.

December

Your child is changing. This is to be expected. At Waterloo, they’ll experience new friendships, academic expectations, and cultural and social activities which will broaden their world-view and contribute to their emerging understanding of the world around them.

What’s important now?
» concern about final projects and exams
» extra-curricular activities usually decrease at the end of term
» looking for letters, treats, and news from home; perhaps send an exam care package
Exams — The final exam schedule is set approximately six weeks before exams begin. Travel plans are not an excuse for missing an exam. Be sure that your child (or you, for that matter) does not make travel plans before knowing the day and time of each of their final exams.

> talk about expectations for Christmas Break and discuss family traditions
> unofficial Fall Term grades available on Quest late December

JANUARY

A fresh start! Some students find their first term at University to be a challenge, others breeze through; but it is more likely that your child has experienced both highs and lows. When they return to studies in January, they’ll be ready to explore a new set of classes, and for some, turn over a new leaf.

What’s important now?
> re-adjusting to being away from home again
> level of campus involvement in extra-curriculars. Is it time to get more involved or time to pull back a bit?
> official Fall Term grades available mid-January

The Winter term starts with a bang
There’s no “Orientation Week” in the Winter term to ease back to student life. Classes begin and expectations are outlined as soon as the term begins.

FEBRUARY

Your child will hear from their academic advisor about Fall course selection and if they need to declare an Arts major for 2nd year. Honours Arts and Honours Arts and Business students declare their major for second year at the end of first year. Social Development Studies and Global Business and Digital Arts students are already in their major. Don’t be surprised to learn that the area of interest your child has chosen is not the one they had in mind when they started university.

The Faculty of Arts has many different majors and minors to choose from. Up to 70 percent of students change their mind by the time they declare their final major. It’s a great benefit for your child to decide on a major or minor after they’ve studied some of the subjects.

What’s important now?
> Reading Week — discuss your child’s plans for their week-long study break
> keeping-up with tests and assignments

MARCH

Any warmer days on campus, even if you think it’s still a deep freeze, prove to be a real distraction for students. Understanding your child’s desire to relax a bit is helpful, but do remind them to keep giving their best to their classes. Exams begin in April!
What’s important now?
» mid-term grade results
» finalizing course selection for next Fall
» final exam schedule posted

APRIL

First year is almost over! Your child has experienced so much, has had success and some challenges, and is already looking toward second year. While they still may seem like “kids”, they have changed and are well on their way to adulthood. It’s a time to celebrate accomplishments and to encourage them to look forward to the next steps.

What’s important now?
» final assignments and exams
» academic pressures increase
» unofficial Winter term grades available late April; official grades available mid-May
» moving home, summer jobs, and family vacations — discuss your expectations and your child’s expectations around moving home, expectations for summer employment, and family holiday plans so everyone is on the same page
» saying good-bye to friends at school

The University of Waterloo operates 12 months of the year, offering Fall, Winter, and Spring study terms. Consequently, it’s possible for students to take a course over the summer or during a co-op work term. If your child is interested in studying in the Spring term, either on-campus or online, have them contact their academic advisor in March to discuss.

RESOURCES AND GUIDES


National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.

Naked Roommate: For Parents Only.
Harlan Cohen.

Don’t Tell Me What To Do, Just Send Money: The Essential Parenting Guide to the College Years.
Helen E. Johnson & Christine Schelhas-Miller, publ. St. Martin’s Griffin.

Letting Go: A Parents’ Guide to Understanding the College Years.
Karen Levin Coburn and Madge Lawrence Treeger, publ. Quill.

You’re On Your Own (But I’m Here if You Need Me).

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