Welcome to James Madison University

Congratulations! Your student has chosen to become a member of the JMU community, and we are extremely excited to welcome them to our campus community. You're probably a little excited, and a little anxious, about sending your student to college. To help prepare you for this new experience, we have an excellent opportunity for you this summer!

In the One Book (www.jmu.edu/onebook/index.shtml), you probably read about our award-winning orientation program here at JMU. All new students attend a one-day orientation, called Summer Springboard and we welcome parents to experience Summer Springboard alongside their students. During this day-long event, you'll have a chance to learn more about what your student will experience here at JMU, as well as attend programs specifically designed for parents. We'll also have plenty of opportunities for you to talk to campus representatives and get answers to your questions.

When your student moves to campus in the fall, we have a five-day welcome week, called 1787 August Orientation, to acclimate students to their new lives at JMU. These five days are filled with activities designed to help students understand what it means to be a member of the JMU community, explore the academic expectations and opportunities, and meet other new students.

Encourage your student to go online to make their Summer Springboard Orientation reservation. Visit the Orientation website at www.jmu.edu/orientation/ and click on “First Year” for a list of dates, more information on what you’ll experience during the day, a sample schedule, what to bring and a list of FAQs. We look forward to meeting you this summer!

Orientation Office:
Wilson Hall, Room 215
orientation@jmu.edu
(540) 568-1787
Fax: (540) 568-6719
Office hours: Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

QuadFest is one of the many activities during Orientation at James Madison University designed to help students discover why Madison is such a unique and welcoming learning community.
Welcome to the JMU family

Dear Parents:

On behalf of the Parents Council, we extend a warm welcome to all of you who are joining the JMU family as parents of freshmen and transfer students. We know this is an exciting time for you and your students. Settling into the college experience can present challenges. JMU offers extensive opportunities and resources to ease the transition; we encourage you and your students to take full advantage of them. Campus clubs, organizations, services, and assistance are outlined on the JMU Web site. You can obtain more specifics by attending the parent information session during Orientation this summer.

Two more key events for your calendar are your local First-Year sendoff in July or August and Family Weekend on Oct. 9-11, 2009. The sendoff is a great setting for you and your student to speak with current students, parents, and administrators and to meet other new JMU family members in your area. The sendoff schedule is published on the JMU Parents Web site and more details will be mailed to you. The Family Weekend brochure and registration will be posted online at www.jmu.edu/parents/Family_Weekend.shtml, on July 1, and a postcard reminder will be mailed to you in mid June, but NOW is the time for you to make hotel reservations. A listing of local accommodations can be found on the JMU Parents Web site. Thousands of families take advantage of this opportunity to get a taste of JMU campus life with their students and to further enhance their JMU family experience.

As spokespersons and advocates representing JMU in our communities, Parents Council members serve as a liaison between parents and the university. This is a great way to get involved in JMU and to learn first hand about its many diverse academic and extracurricular programs. In addition, the Parents Council has enriched our JMU experience because of the special friendships we have formed.

Current Parents Council members and the classes we represent are listed on the JMU Web site at www.jmu.edu/parents/parentscouncil.shtml. All of us are willing and anxious to answer your specific questions about the Parents Council and any general questions about JMU and its programs. Please feel free to call on us.

We encourage your involvement with your student in the JMU experience. Whether you serve on the Parents Council or participate in other activities supporting your student and JMU, your contributions are very welcome. Working together, we can assure the success of our students and further the advancement of this outstanding university. Welcome to the JMU family! Go Dukes!

Steve & Jane Smith (*10P)
Parents Council Chairs

Parent Relations Meet the staff

Sherry King
Director
(540) 568-9064
kingsf@jmu.edu

Tracey Kite
Assistant Director
(540) 568-3193
kitetl@jmu.edu

Deborah Centers
Administrative Assistant
(540) 568-3190
centerdj@jmu.edu
The JMU Madison Family Connection e-newsletter is informative ... it’s helpful ... and it’s FREE. Sign up today. You can register your e-mail address at www.jmu.edu/parents/. The newsletter will keep JMU parents and families informed of payment due dates, campus events, vacation and break schedules, deadline reminders and tips for student success.

If you would prefer to have the newsletter mailed to you, please e-mail your student’s name and home address to kitetl@jmu.edu, or call at (540) 568-3193 or toll free at (866) 399-8432.

A TIME OF TRANSITION
We realize that sending students to college is a time of tremendous transition for your family. All students go through an adjustment period and experience many ups and downs while living away from home. There are many resources here on campus available for students to manage this transition successfully.

While we do welcome parent input and questions, our goal is to deal directly with the student. Parents, we share your goal, to help students be successful, and we want to connect you to the resources you need to support your student.

It is important that students have support and encouragement from home while being allowed to mature through their own experiences. By all means, be there for your students as a sounding board, but let them handle their own problems as much as possible. Student success is dependent upon their ability to function independently.

LAST-MINUTE ADVICE
All across the country, as bright July days fade into sweltering August nights, parents of college-bound freshmen lie awake perspiring with dread as much as with the heat: “Can he balance a checkbook?” “What will she do if she gets sick?” “I don’t think she understands how much trouble she can get into for underage drinking.”

You only have a few more weeks to pass along all the advice your child needs to know. How will you cover it all, and what happens if you forget to mention something important?

There are things your student needs to know for the purely practical demands of coping with life in a new situation. There are things we want you to discuss with your child. There are even a few things your child would appreciate hearing from you. The trick is to figure out when you’re offering useful information as opposed to unwanted advice or an index of admonishments.

While parents are intimately involved in their children’s education from pre-school through 12th grade, as their child goes to college the parents role begins to change. This role change is greatly contributed to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. According to FERPA, college students are considered responsible adults and are allowed to determine who will receive information about them. For further details regarding FERPA, please visit the Registrar’s Web site at www.jmu.edu/registrar/FERPAOutline.shtml.

HIGH SCHOOL VS. JMU COMPARISON

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<td>Only authorized parents may receive academic records</td>
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<td>student academic</td>
<td>Students are responsible for class attendance; no parent</td>
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<td>progress reports</td>
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<td>attendance</td>
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<td>Parents and/or</td>
<td>Students request conferences with professors or advisers</td>
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<td>teachers may request</td>
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<td>a teacher conference</td>
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Health tips from the University Health Center
The University Health Center partners with students to encourage personal responsibility for their well-being by providing primary care and education in a professional and collaborative manner. The clinical staff includes physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses and a certified medical technologist.

Along with general health care, the clinic provides an allergy clinic, immunizations, gynecology and a laboratory. Health educators, counselors, and a nutritionist are a part of the staff, which coordinates university-wide health programs and provides counseling and crisis intervention.

All students who are enrolled for at least one credit hour and who have paid the student health fee (included in the university’s comprehensive fee with tuition) are eligible for services. To receive services, all eligible students must have a completed Health Record on file at the University Health Center. Students can complete the health record form online at www.jmu.edu/healthctr/healthrecord.shtml and send to James Madison University Health Center, MSC 7901, Harrisonburg, VA 22807. For additional information on health services, please visit www.jmu.edu/healthctr.

First-Aid tips
Students should keep a first-aid kit in their room with:
- a thermometer
- adhesive bandages
- gauze bandages
- antibiotic ointment
- adhesive tape
- tweezers
- a reusable hot/cold pack
- pain/fever reducer
- anti-inflammatory meds
- antihistamine
- decongestant
- antacid
- sore throat spray/lozenges
- cough medicine
- any prescription medications
When freshmen attend Summer Springboard, they will meet their freshman adviser in a small group of four to six students. The freshman adviser helps students make the transition from high school to college by guiding, answering questions, providing information and generally being a connection to the university. Within this session, the freshman adviser introduces students to the policies and procedures of the university, explains General Education, discusses the major (or possible majors), and assists students in selecting and registering for classes.

Although there are certain courses that students are required to take, this session provides the opportunity for students to begin the process of making their own educational decisions with guidance from the adviser. In fact, one of the main roles of the freshman adviser is to help students become more independent, resourceful and able to navigate the university system. Students begin this process when they work through the steps of the One Book Web site.

Thoroughly reading the material, taking the math placement test (and possibly the foreign language placement test) and providing their priority order for Cluster One classes are ways in which the student takes control of his or her learning.

After Summer Springboard, most of the faculty freshman advisers leave the campus to take a break and to work on their research and class materials. When students return in August, they will meet with their freshman advisers and have the opportunity to make adjustments to their schedules, if needed.

Starting college is an exciting time for students and families alike, and the freshman advisers are instrumental in helping students begin this new chapter in their lives.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5 SIDEBAR
You’ve been dreaming, planning and saving for years, anticipating with pride the day your son or daughter arrives on campus to start their college career. While you may be the one funding this “major life event,” there are important things to know about how student financial accounts are handled at JMU.

Student bills are the legal responsibility and property of the student. Your child controls who has access to his or her financial account and they are personally liable if the account is not paid. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) assures the privacy of student records and therefore, because the account is listed in the student’s name, he or she become legally responsible for the account. Don’t worry – we have 3 quick tips to help both you and your child through this process.

TIP #1
Get to know QuikBILL
JMU student accounts operate through an electronic billing system called “QuikBILL.” Student account bills are not mailed. They are presented electronically each semester. Students access their bills through their eCampus account and it is their responsibility to monitor the account for outstanding balances and due dates. Don’t worry, JMU will send them an email when the bill is ready to view and place a reminder “hold” on their account if there is a past due balance.

TIP #2
Become an Authorized Payer in QuikBILL
Your child can set you up in the QuikBILL system as an “Authorized Payer” so that you have access to their student financial account through the University Business Office web site. As an “AP,” you will also receive email notification each time a new bill is processed and will have 24/7 access to your child’s student account “real-time” activity. The JMU bill includes itemized charges, the semester class schedule, balance due, due date and, if applicable, any anticipated financial aid, installment payment plan budget and Virginia Prepaid Plan. There is a PDF format of the bill which can be easily printed for your records. Remember that only the student can set up an Authorized Payer in QuikBILL. JMU will walk your child through the setup process by phone, email or at one of our computers if you send them to the University Business Office.

TIP #3
What to expect if you are not an Authorized Payer in QuikBILL
If you call the University Business Office to discuss your child’s financial account and you are not listed as an Authorized Payer in QuikBILL, you will be asked for the JMU ID# or social security number of the student. No information can be given to you without one of these numbers and you may be asked to verify additional information such as birth date or home address. With one of those two identifying numbers, we will be able to give you basic information on the account, however, we will not be able to discuss anything considered confidential or mail you account information or the 1098T tax form. Your child should be happy to take a few minutes and set you up in QuikBILL the first time registration is blocked because of an unpaid balance.

All kidding aside, you can get detailed information on QuikBILL, including payment methods and due dates, in the JMU One Book, on the University Business Office web site – www.jmu.edu/ubo or at freshman orientation this summer.

UNIVERSITY BUSINESS OFFICE
Warren Hall, Room 302, MSC 3516
Harrisonburg, VA 22807
(540) 568-6505

Important Financial Information
The balance on all fall semester student accounts is due in full by Friday, Aug. 28, 2009.

If you intend to use financial aid, your student must have accepted any loans by the payment due date. If you plan on using the monthly installment payment plan, you must have a current contract set up by the payment due date.

The Commonwealth of Virginia has mandated late payment fees on delinquent accounts. If your student has an outstanding balance without payment arrangements, a late payment fee will be applied to the account that cannot be waived.

For additional information or assistance, please contact The University Business Office at (540) 568-6505, ubo@jmu.edu or www.jmu.edu/ubo.

Direct Lending (CONT. FROM PAGE 4)
the Financial Aid Office staff conducted extensive research to determine which program would be in the best interest of student and parent borrowers. That research led to the conclusion that the Direct Loan Programs offer a better, more affordable, product.

Instructions for how to apply for a Federal Direct Loan (subsidized and unsubsidized), Federal Parent PLUS Direct Loan, or Federal Grad PLUS Direct Loan will be provided with the financial aid award notice.

Please go to www.jmu.edu/finaid/directloans.shtml to learn more about why JMU is making this change.
Letting go  Tips for parents of new college students
BY KAREN LEVIN COBURN AD MADGE LAWRENCE TREEGER

After 18 years of parenting, it can be hard to let go. Here is a sneak peek at the challenges of the transition ahead and advice for preparing.

The Emotional Roller Coaster:
Recognize that this is a time of ambivalence for all parents. The excitement and joy about opportunities awaiting students are mixed with waves of nostalgia and a sense of loss. Talk with other parents who are going through the same thing. Recognize the student’s conflicting emotions. The student, like the parent, is being pulled between past, present and future. One day he may exclaim, “Leave me alone; I’m 18 years old. I’m independent.” The next day, he may complain, “You’re never around when I need you.” These ups and downs are typical of this transitional time.

Take comfort in the knowledge that part of the parent goes with the student. The foundation parents provide accompanies students across the miles and throughout the years.

Don’t tell a student, “These are the best years of your life.” No one is happy all the time between the ages of 18 and 22, and when a student is homesick or overtired from studying all night, it’s not reassuring to have parents imply that this is as good as it gets.

Enjoy this time of celebration. Try not to focus so much on the upcoming departure that the joys of high school graduation and summer fun are missed.

Communication – Keeping in Touch: Talk to the student about keeping in touch. Would a planned time to talk or a spontaneous call work better? A cell phone can be a wonderful way to keep in touch, or it can be, as one student described, an “electronic leash.” Encourage students to use phones with discretion and not just to fill in the spaces. E-mail and instant messaging are also wonderful ways to keep in touch. However, don’t count on a reply to every message.

Be a coach. Parents often hear more about the problems of college life. Students usually call their parents for reassurance when things aren’t going well, and call their friends with the latest exciting news. When parents get those late-night phone calls, they can encourage their students to use the appropriate campus resources — to go to the health or career center, to talk to an advisor, dean, a counselor or tutor. Read resource information and be an informed coach.

Be an anchor. Keep students informed about changes at home. College students want their parents to accept all the changes they are making but want everything at home to stay the same. So it’s important to communicate about changes at home, whether it’s moving a younger sibling into their room, or, on a more serious note, about illness in the family or the death of a pet. They need this from their parents in order to feel secure and to maintain a sense of trust.

Acknowledge that college today is different. Although century-old buildings look untouched by time, college life today is different from the campus scene 25 or 30 years ago. For those who went to college, think twice before begining a sentence with, “When I was in college...”

Ask about courses, rather than focusing on grades. Invite students to share the discovery of new ideas, academic interests and intellectual passions.

Send care packages. Early in the year, sharing popcorn or chocolate chip cookies is a wonderful way for a student to meet floor mates. Photographs are personal reminders of home. Holiday decorations, baskets of treats at exam time, and even everyday necessities like shampoo and quarters for the washing machine are reminders that say, “I’m thinking of you.”

When Students Come Back Home: Renegotiate expectations. Students have been making decisions on how they will spend their time for many months. Parents, however, may have strong feelings when students come in late at night, sleep late in the morning or arrive late for dinner. Most students respond well if parents treat them with respect. For example, a parent might say, “I know you’re used to being out until all hours of the night at school, but I can’t sleep when I wake up at 2 a.m. and you’re not here. Let’s talk about how we’re going to handle this so that we’ll both feel good about it.” It takes flexibility and communication to find a common ground.

Understand that the college years are a time for exploration. Students may come home with a “new look,” someone else’s clothes, new politics, philosophies or eating habits. Most of these changes are not permanent. Take a step back, have a sense of humor and pick battles.

Don’t over-schedule. Tell students ahead of time about family plans, especially over the holidays, so that they can make plans accordingly.

Throughout the College Years: Expect change. Students will change the way they think and the way they look. Many will change their majors and career goals. They need parents to stick with them, have patience when they are uncertain and support them as they chart the course of their own lives. College students care more about what parents think than they are likely to say. They quote their parents, talk about them and look to them for encouragement. As they journey toward adulthood and independence, sometimes students want advice and sometimes they just want parents to listen. And as one student put it, “We just won’t tell you which time is which.” Welcome to the delights and dilemmas of being a parent of a college student.
Roommates, conflict, and resolutions

One of the biggest fears of coming to college for the first time is not getting along with a roommate. While the many different people who live together in college make the experience entirely unique, this community living experience can be one of the most difficult aspects of college.

The good news is that this challenge can help students to learn to understand each other, and may develop them into more effective colleagues or supervisors in the world after college. Through JMU’s Office of Residence Life, resources are available to help students navigate their new living situation.

Sometimes students go out of their way to find someone they already know to be their roommate to avoid the dreaded “random” roommate. This allays the initial fear, but it doesn’t guarantee a good roommate situation. Great friends, unfortunately, don’t always equal great roommates. Even at age 17 or 18, friends don’t always communicate their needs or wants as effectively as they could.

In an effort to be friendly or helpful, some students put aside their needs to accommodate their room buddy. Putting aside needs or wants can work in the short term, but eventually, students can start to feel frustrated. When such a conflict emerges, it is almost always both students who feel this way — they just haven’t discussed their needs and they haven’t come to any agreement.

Does it have to be so tough? No, it doesn’t. Many students get along well and they don’t have a serious conflict the whole academic year. However, some roommate pairings experience conflict because of differences. When this occurs, the following resources can help your student get through the conflicts that may arise.

The first of these is the resident adviser. The RA is a student who lives in the section or floor with your student. The RA will introduce him/herself to each resident on the floor and offer an ear and advice to any students who are having trouble adjusting to college life. This adjustment includes understanding and getting along with a roommate’s habits, lifestyle and personality.

Next, the RA gives each roommate (and suitemate) a Roommate Agreement Form (or Suitemate Agreement Form). This form asks 15 specific questions about sharing personal items, noise levels, study times, study times, message taking and other common roommate issues. These are the “biggies” that cause conflicts. The RA will try to avoid such conflicts by having the roommates discuss them the first week of school. If the students take the conversation seriously, they can figure out each other’s needs and wants before having an argument or a move out.

So, if all the students complete these forms, why are there still conflicts? Perhaps one of the participants didn’t answer honestly. Maybe the problem they are facing isn’t on the sheet or they never actually answered the questions. What happens then? The RA will go to that room with the Roommate Agreement (or a new one if they didn’t do it) and help the residents figure out what is causing the issue and how they can resolve it. RAs are trained to do this very early in the year, and it can help!

Here’s where you can help. This is a new situation for your student (usually). They are going away from home and are going to be living with a new person (even if it is their best friend, this is a new situation). Talk to your son or daughter about how they are going to communicate their room wants and needs and encourage them to be serious in completing the Roommate Agreement Form. Secondly, if your son or daughter finds himself or herself in a roommate conflict, encourage him/her to see the RA to ask for roommate conflict mediation. Learning how to deal with conflict is a valuable skill that they will use throughout the rest of their lives.

The residence life staff looks forward to partnering with you in helping your student make this major transition in his or her life. If you have questions or concerns about housing and residence life, please call (540) 568-4663 for housing questions and/or (540) 568-3501 for information about mediation, RAs and roommate conflict.
JMU Access Card information

JMU Access Card (JAC)
Resources and Services
- ID Card (JACard)
- Meal Plans
- FLEX Deposits for on and off campus purchases.
  No need to carry cash, credit cards or checks.
- Most services available online.
- Look for our informational brochure that was mailed in early June.

Card Services
MSC 3532
Harrisonburg, VA 22807
(540) 568-6915
www.jmu.edu/cardctr/

See you back here at Family Weekend

Families are invited to JMU for Family Weekend. This annual event offers a taste of campus life, an opportunity to visit your son's or daughter's campus home, to meet other JMU families, as well as attend a variety of exciting events.

Family Weekend 2009 will be held Oct. 9-11.
Remember, hotels and motels fill up quickly, so make your reservations early! Visit the accommodations website at www.jmu.edu/parents/accommodations.shtml for a comprehensive listing of hotels/motels in the local area.

Family Weekend postcards, containing new brochure and registration information, will be mailed during the middle of June. Family Weekend event tickets go on sale July 1. You will be able to order your tickets online or by printing the online brochure registration form.
To view the brochure, register or for more information visit the Family Weekend Web site at www.jmu.edu/parents/Family_Weekend.shtml.

Football tickets are available and can be ordered through the JMU Athletics Ticket office by phone (540) 568-3853 or online at www.jmusports.com/.

Parents and students sharing their Madison Pride at Family Weekend.