

First-Year Focus

for new Bellarmine Families



Dear Bellarmine Families:

By now your son or daughter is probably starting to feeling comfortable in a new environment, but the first month of classes often presents challenges nonetheless not the least of which was the unexpected campus closing last week! Below, please find information and news about important issues for first year students. And, as always, if you have questions please feel free to contact directly any of the offices listed following the Calendar of Events.

What about that whole week of class students missed?

Instructors will each address the extended absence differently; there is no single university policy for making up cancelled classes. Therefore, it is important for students to read their email, go to class, and meet with professors if there is any confusion about assignments. Students should **not** presume that assignments will be postponed or cancelled unless they are told that directly.

The First Round of College Tests: Meeting the New Challenges

Usually occurring around the third or fourth week of the semester, the first round of major tests in college courses is a significant hurdle for freshmen. Compared to tests in high school, college-level exams:

- cover a broader range of topics and material;
- may cover material from handouts, the textbook, or other sources that were not specifically discussed in class lectures; and
- require students to demonstrate a deeper level of comprehension. Tests may move beyond simple recall of information and demand application, analysis, evaluation, and other complex skills.

Many students adjust well to the transition. However, receiving a less-than-stellar grade on an initial exam is a common freshman experience. Such students are often shocked that the preparation methods that consistently produced As and Bs for them in high school no longer work. Fortunately, there are many things students can do to quickly turn around performance in a course after a poor exam. To rebound from a low test grade, students should:

- *Examine where and why they did poorly on a test.* By far, the most common mistake freshmen make is to spend too little time preparing by "cramming" a few hours the night before the exam.

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 26:

Last day to register for Internship, Independent Study, Contract Course, or Music Lesson; last day for 75 percent tuition refund.

September 26:

Sadie Hawkins dance, Frazier Hall, 9pm

October 3:

Tuition Due at Bursar's Office

October 3:

Bellarmino Birthday Bash on the Quad, 11am

October 11-14:

Fall Break

October 20:

Mid-term grades posted from faculty (mailed out by end of week)

October 24:

Last day for 50% tuition refund

October 24-26

Family Weekend *Knights, Camera, Action!*

October 29:

Last day to withdraw from a course or all courses ("W" grades) at the Registrar's Office.

Do you or your student have a question about?

Living in the residence halls?

Leslie Maxie-Ashford, Director, Residence Life; 502-473-3000, lmxie-ashford@bellarmine.edu

Trouble with a class or an assignment, or making a change in class schedules?

Dr. Catherine Sutton, Dean of Advising and

- *Maintain a consistent, weekly study schedule* to counteract the tendency to procrastinate and cram. For each hour spent in class, at least one to two hours should be spent studying outside of class—many professors suggest more. This is a major shift in academic expectations from high school. After an honest look at how their time is typically spent, most students will admit that they can cut back on things like TV and Facebooking.
- *Read all assigned materials and review notes after each class.* Some students find it helpful to type up notes after each lecture; this serves as an additional mini-review session and makes test preparation more organized.
- *Initiate informal study groups.* Hopefully, students know several other class members by now, or if not, should introduce themselves to those sitting nearby and ask if others would be interested in meeting once a week in the library at a convenient time to review notes.
- *Attend weekly tutoring review sessions* Weekly tutoring and test review sessions are available for many freshman courses and are led by upperclass students who have, in many cases, had the same professor. A schedule is posted on the ARC page of the student portal.
- *Talk with the professor during his/her office hours about ways to improve.* Extra credit is largely absent from college-level courses because the emphasis is on demonstrating ability on core course assignments, but instructors are more than happy to share suggestions with students who demonstrate the initiative to seek them out.

--- Jennifer, Schum, M.Ed, Developmental Advisor

Working Off-Campus

Today it's just about impossible for a student to "work his way through college" because of the accelerated costs of higher education in the United States; however, it's more common today than a generation ago that full-time college students work off-campus while they're in college.

Some students indicate that their parents urge them not to work at all in order to devote all their time to their studies. Such advice has its validity; however, we should consider a few contrary facts: student athletes do better academically during their season; students who work fifteen hours or less a week do better academically than students who don't work at all.

The truth seems to be that many students may manage their time better if they have some other major commitment to meet—a team practice at a certain time, a job expectation, an on-going volunteer commitment, a leadership position in a campus organization, etc. These sorts of extra-curricular involvements discourage procrastination. If students have to be somewhere at 3:00, then they are more likely to start that assignment in the afternoon, instead of putting it off until later.

In addition to helping students structure their time, obviously some jobs provide the benefit of teaching students new skills. This aspect of the workplace becomes especially important for upperclass students as they

Director; 502-452-8071,
csutton@bellarmine.edu

How to find something fun to do on campus?

Sarah Fromm, Assistant Director of Student Activities; 452-8433, sfromm@bellarmine.edu

Financial Aid?

Jennifer Likes, Financial Aid Assistant; 502-452-8124, jllikes@bellarmine.edu

Workstudy?

Lindsey Downs, Financial Aid Counselor; 202, 502-452-8134, l downs@bellarmine.edu

Getting a terrific summer job or internship?

Ann Zeman, Director of Career Development and Counseling, 502-452-8151, azeman@bellarmine.edu

Todd Reale, Assistant Dean, Career Services and Experiential Learning; 502-452-8242, treale@bellarmine.edu

Joining an intramural sports team?

Chuck Vogt, Director of Intramural sports; 502-452-8348, cvogt@bellarmine.edu

What to do when sick or injured?

Alice Kimble, Director, Campus Recreation and Health Services; 502-452-8493, makimble@bellarmine.edu

Who to talk to about personal problems?

Dr. Gary Petiprin, Director of Counseling Center; 502-452-8480, gp etiprin@bellarmine.edu

Studying abroad?

Hannah Holler Egea, Study Abroad Advisor; 502-452-8423, hholler@bellarmine.edu

Spiritual programs, service, or faith-based networks?

Dr. Melanie -Prejean Sullivan, Director of Campus Ministry and Service; 502-452-8051, m psullivan@bellarmine.edu

Disability Accommodations?

Ronda Purdy, Coordinator of Disability Services; 502-452-8480, rpurdy@bellarmine.edu

consider applying for internships related to their major.

The red flag of warning, however, should go up when students work more than twenty hours a week. The time demands of full-time students at Bellarmine will mean that they spend on average sixteen hours a week in class—more if they take science classes or studio art classes. In order to succeed academically students need to devote at least twenty hours a week to their studies—more at mid-term and finals. If they work another twenty or more hours a week, they are already involved in a sixty hour week without devoting any time to sleeping, eating, socializing or involvement with family. Students who commit to more than twenty hours a week before the beginning of the semester often find that they simply cannot sustain that level of involvement and make the necessary grades for their classes.

These decisions are never easy or to be taken lightly. When students are ready to throw up their hands and scream, we urge them to see the counselors in the Financial Aid office and the director of the Career Center who will help students find different part-time jobs.

If a possible conflict between a job and academics currently concerns your son or daughter, please encourage him or her to discuss the matter with his or her advisor or drop in the Academic Resource Center and meet with one of the advisors there.

--- Dr. Catherine Sutton, Director, Academic Resource Center

2008 Family Weekend: Knights, Camera, Action! October 24-26

This year's Family Weekend, October 24-26, offers students and their families both formal and informal opportunities to enjoy the Bellarmine community as well as to explore the surrounding Louisville neighborhood. A variety of Hollywood-themed events – from a "Red Carpet Trivia" contest Friday evening to the annual "Amazing Race: Hollywood Edition" or the Saturday Knight Live Talent Review -- will allow families to make new friends, discover the rich traditions of spirit and scholarship at Bellarmine, and, most importantly, says Dean of Students Helen Grace Ryan, "The weekend allows families to get a glimpse of Bellarmine through their students' eyes, understanding their students' transition while getting acquainted with their new Bellarmine family."

Check-in begins in the Campus Center Lobby at 2 pm on Friday, October 24, followed by a pre-show party at 4 pm at Hilary's, also located in the Campus Center. Families can choose from among the events offered, and they are encouraged to register for events they anticipate attending. Complete information as well as registration may be found at: <http://www.bellarmino.edu/familyweekend/>

Introducing: The Pioneer Scholar Program

The Pioneer Scholar Program is a new Bellarmine initiative for students who are first in their families who plan to graduate from a four year college. This program offers students greater support and direction as they navigate the academic, social, emotional, and financial challenges of

A more general question about life on campus?

Helen Grace Ryan, Dean of Students; 502-452-8426, hryan@bellarmine.edu

college. The 121 students enrolled in this first cohort receive special attention and guidance in the form of extra advising and interventions from peer mentors and the First Generation Student Advisor, Amy Siegel. (Siegel also serves as the Assistant Coach for the women's basketball team) Dr. Catherine Sutton, Director of the Academic Resource Center, advisors Andrew Schroeder, and Jennifer Schum, as well as Dr. Pam Cartor, and Dr. Christy Kane have all been instrumental in the conceptualization of the program as well as the implementation and programmatic aspects of the program. Dr. Sutton remembers the challenge of being a first generation college student: "As the first in my family to attend college I remember feeling the need for immediately creating connections with other students and faculty. A program like the Pioneers would have supported and directed me in this effort."

Amy Siegel, herself a first generation 1998 graduate of Bellarmine works closely with twelve peer mentors who are a mix of sophomores and juniors to establish and maintain the academic and community links for the students. The Pioneer Scholar Program has many benefits for the peer mentors as well as the students involved. Sophomore Peer Mentor Joey Blue states "As a first generation student, I fully understand the importance of the Pioneer Scholar Program. Having peer mentors available to talk to about difficulties as well as triumphs, inside and outside of the classroom is significant. I really wish that this program would have been around when I was a freshman!"