

BELLARMINE UNIVERSITY

First-Year Focus

for new Bellarmine Families

Dear Bellarmine Families:

Welcome to the Bellarmine University campus community! I am happy to introduce this new newsletter for the parents of our incoming freshmen. Bellarmine provides students an environment of academic excellence, ethical awareness and valuable connections – with peers, professors, professionals, the community and the world – to help them prepare for successful lives of leadership and service.

You play an important role in helping your students make the transition to college life. And, as your children take on more responsibility for their own lives and their own learning, and even take up residence outside the home, you might have an adjustment to make, too -- from hands-on parenting to a role that is more like consulting.

In any event, we hope this newsletter will keep you up to date on the many opportunities, events and developments on our campus during the coming academic year. Please let us hear from you, too. We hope this will be a valuable conversation as your student embarks on this important journey.

Again, welcome to Bellarmine!

Sincerely,

Dr. Joseph J. McGowan
President

Bellarmine Welcomes Class of 2012!

The Bellarmine Community welcomes 567 new students in the class of 2012 to campus. Not only is the size of the class impressive, but, also the unique backgrounds and talents these students possess. With an average ACT score of 24 and an average high school GPA of 3.46, these students are among the most successful in their high schools. They come to us from 24 states and several foreign countries, and in fact, over 40% of the class resides out of state-- the largest out of state percentage Bellarmine has ever enrolled. The residence halls opened at capacity with 72% of the class residing on campus. The class is also the most ethnically diverse class, with over 13% students of color -- double the number in last year's class. We are very proud of these achievements, as it builds on our efforts to attract students from all backgrounds and locations.

Highlights on the Hill: Construction Updates and Top Awards for

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 4:

Student Organization Involvement Fair, on the Quad, 11 am

September 5:

Last day to change from Audit to Credit, or in reverse or letter grade to pass/fail at Registrar's office

September 5:

Louisville Connections: Professional cooking lessons, Caio Chow, 5:30pm

September 10:

SuRF Open House, SuRF Center, 4-6pm

September 17:

Non-profit Internship & Volunteer Fair, on the Quad, 10am-2pm

September 18:

Kip Fulbeck, guest lecturer and author as featured on CNN, Cralle Theater, 8pm.

September 19:

Last Day to register for Internship, Independent Study, Contract Course, or Music Lesson at the Registrar's Office; last day for 75% tuition refund.

September 25-26:

Tuition due at Bursar's Office.

September 26:

Sadie Hawkins dance, Frazier Hall, 9pm

October 3:

Bellarmine Birthday Bash on the Quad, 11am

October 11-14:

Bellarmino!

Returning and new students will no doubt notice the construction zones around campus. Scheduled for completion in early December are the \$1.5 million Miles Hall expansion with 4 new classrooms, 11 new faculty offices, and expanded restroom facilities -- and the completely new, \$8.5 million Siena Secondo residence hall with 146 new beds. Still in the design stages but scheduled for groundbreaking in 2009 are Sienna Quattro with 120 new beds and complete resident amenities, and a multi-use parking structure with a direct connection to Knights Hall. On the horizon, the \$40 million Horrigan Cluster will give students, staff, and faculty expanded and updated "living space" for work and play.

This summer, Bellarmine was nationally recognized for the excellence and innovation of its programming. We have been named No. 83 in the best colleges and universities in the nation in the first-ever rankings by Forbes magazine. The number 83 ranking places Bellarmine as just one of two Kentucky institutions to make the top 100. The rankings include 569 undergraduate institutions. ([more](#))... Bellarmine University has also been selected by the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) to receive the Wal-Mart College Success Award – a \$100,000 grant to help build on Bellarmine's demonstrated successes in enrolling, retaining, and graduating first-generation college students. ([more](#)) ...According to The Princeton Review, Bellarmine University is one of the nation's best institutions for undergraduate education. The New York-based education services company known for its test-prep courses features the college in the just-published 2009 edition of its annual book, "The Best 368 Colleges" ([more](#))

Primer for Parents: Understanding FERPA

Many parents have heard the term "FERPA" used but may have never been told exactly what it means. FERPA stands for Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, also known as the Buckley Amendment. This federal law protects the privacy of students' educational records. This includes information about students' grades, class schedules, and judicial files. We fully understand the often difficult position parents are in when considering their student's future and their student's academic track; however, only under special circumstances, or when a student has given written consent, is this information released. As a consistent practice we highly encourage students to establish and maintain communication with their parent(s) so that you remain informed. More information about [FERPA](#), is available at the [Department of Education website](#).

From the Academic Resource Center (ARC): First week challenges

The first few weeks of fall semester are an exciting time for freshmen, as a new world of demands, opportunities, temptations, and decisions awaits. Students negotiate this maze differently; however, all freshmen confront the same issues as they transition from high school into higher education:

Competence. Academically, students must adapt to college-level expectations in terms of reading, writing, speaking, and study skills. Outside of the classroom, freshmen struggle with meeting new people and wonder if they will be accepted by peers in this strange, new place.

Fall Break

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 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, jlikes@bellarmine.edu

Workstudy?

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

Students frustrated early on might complain to mom or dad, "there's nobody like me here!" or "I just can't do well on these quizzes!" It's important to remember that students can and do master these skills with time and practice. Joining a club, study group, or tutoring session are all methods of developing social and academic competence.

Emotions. It is inaccurate to assume college is only a time to kick back and take it easy. Certainly, students experience positive feelings ranging from joy to laughter to rapture (both inside and outside the classroom), but also struggle with how to cope with significant levels of frustration, anger, and sadness in response to building demands on their time and talents. Some students may need to visit the Counseling Center when coping levels are exceeded, but most students simply benefit from encouraging words.

Autonomy. One of the primary developmental tasks for a first-year student is to begin to set a course for career, interests, and values. Whether a student is a resident or commuter, college represents an opportunity for students to move away from the tendency to rely on parents. Some residential students struggle with serious homesickness within the first few weeks; commuters might quickly return home after class to seek the comfort zone of family. We recommend students try to "distract" themselves with campus activities and studying so they are too busy to miss home; before they know it, they have met new friends and feel a part of campus.

Relationships. In college, freshmen develop intimacies with classmates, significant others, and faculty/staff in a more complex, adult manner. Specifically, students are increasingly challenged to live with and/or work in class groups with others whose values and ideas may clash with their own.

How Parents Can Respond to Freshman Challenges

Parents who hear a child frantic or tearful over certain issues are tempted to jump in and solve the problem to make the pain go away. Ultimately, the healthiest response is always twofold: 1) *listen*, let your child know you care and understand what (s)he is going through, and 2) help him/her *problem-solve* and identify possible solutions.

Understanding the "Language"

When your child is discussing the first week of classes, it may sound like she is speaking in code. Here's a cheat sheet for just a few of the terms you might encounter:

Focus: the one-credit course that emphasizes college success skills: socialization, health/wellness, personal coping, and academic success. The focus instructor is the student's advisor for fall semester.

Add/Drop: during the first week of classes, students may still add or drop (delete) courses from their schedule without penalty. The student's schedule (and bill) is finalized at the end of this week. After this week, if students "drop" or withdraw from a class, a "W" is entered on the

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, mpsullivan@bellarmine.edu

Disability Accommodations?

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

A more general question about life on campus?

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

transcript. Students can ask their *Focus* advisor for advice.

Student engagement: this term refers to the degree that students are involved in clubs and extracurricular opportunities. Staff and faculty encourage freshmen to become involved in something early on.

Syllabi: a syllabus is a multi-page document that professors give students within the first week that outlines expectations, readings, assignments, textbooks, and due dates. When students have a basic question about a course, they should first consult the syllabus and then follow up with the instructor.

Jennifer Schum, M.Ed
Developmental Advisor, ARC
jschum@bellarmine.edu

Roommate Concerns 101

The Residence Life office does its best to match students who are compatible; however, roommate conflicts are inevitable, especially, when many students have never shared a bedroom in the past. Families are often the first to hear about problems between roommates. Perhaps your son prefers "organized chaos" and finds his roommate's cleanliness nearly pathological. He may choose to host card games in the room, while his new roomie is only concerned with off-campus keggers. Your daughter may insist on the use of earbuds in the room, while her roommate seems to always be cranking up the music. If your son or daughter calls home frustrated with the living situation, consider encouraging the following:

- *Communicate:* Most roommate situations quickly escalate to epic-like dramas because the two parties do not speak to one another. While it is difficult to confront someone about concerns, frustrations or peeves, not doing so is even worse. If your son or daughter is not comfortable speaking with a roommate, he or she should ask for help with the conversation. The Resident Assistant (RA) or Hall Director can help get things going.
- *Don't Villainize:* Encourage your child to focus on what a roommate does that is bothersome and not attack the whole character. It is unreasonable to ask someone to stop being "perky" but much easier to ask for some personal space before 10 AM.
- *Use "I" Language:* "I am frustrated when you push snooze for 45 minutes," opens up a conversation, while "You won't let me sleep in," may close the door on compromises.
- *Ask About a Roommate Contract:* If a roommate is taking food, allowing guests during study time or insisting the lights are out by 9 PM, perhaps the two have not discussed their expectations honestly together. Residence Life uses roommate contracts to help students negotiate some of these topics. Ask your son or daughter if one has been completed. If so, was he or she honest about preferences when it was created? If not, perhaps this is a good time to create one. The RA will be happy to provide a copy and even walk the roommate pair through the process. Remember, roommate contracts are always up for re-negotiation

if terms are not working out!

Residence Life believes it is important for students to learn to live with others and encourages students to attempt to work out problems themselves before a staff member intervenes. However, the RA and the Hall Directors are available to help mediate conflicts and build bridges between even the most polar opposites of roommate pairings. If your child has communicated with a roommate, sought help from the building staff and still has concerns, please suggest he or she call the Residence Life Office at 502-473-3000.

---*Jessica Randall,*
Assistant Director of Residence Life

Work Study Program

If your son or daughter receives an offer to become a work-study student, please encourage him or her to accept this offer. In the first place the federally financed program called "Work Study" offers certain financial awards and academic advantages:

- Students usually work about twelve hours a week before, after, or between their classes. Working on campus allows students to establish work schedules that don't conflict with their class schedules.
- While students must report earnings from the Federal Work-Study program on the FAFSA, they are later deducted on a worksheet, so they don't count against the student as income from work. Other income from work must be included, and does count against the student.

Equally important, the work-study program offers students an effective means of establishing a connection with a group of people at Bellarmine. Generally:

- Supervisors most often take a personal interest in students, serving as a mentor to them.
- Students meet other students and form connections.
- Working on campus gives students a greater knowledge of the university, its resources, and its people.

Students should receive a list of work-study openings on campus. Please urge your student to begin applying for these positions during the first week of classes. If students or parents have questions about this program, please contact Lindsey Downs in the Financial Aid office at 502-452-8124.

The Center for Campus Ministry and Service (CCMS) oversees all faith-based initiatives on campus, encouraging students *to live and grow in faith and service*. While deliberately promoting our Catholic identity, we are equally dedicated to ecumenical and interfaith experiences through faith-based organizations and events. Mass is celebrated on Sunday evenings at 6 in Our Lady of the Woods Chapel; throughout the week, daily prayer, scripture studies, and social activities also welcome new participants. We also promote service throughout the year, by organizing

domestic Alternative Spring Break trips. Our office is located in Horrigan Hall, room 113 and our telephone number is 502-452-8051.

SAVE THE DATE: Family Weekend October 24-25

Knights, Camera, Action! Make plans to join us for a full weekend of excitement with your student and the Bellarmine community. Reserve your hotel room today at Holiday Inn Airport East (502) 452-6361 and be sure to mention BU's Family Weekend for the reduced rate.

More information especially for parents is available at our [Parent Association page](#).

