FAQ

Q: What should my student expect from the January 18 Orientation?
A: The Spring Orientation is designed to be as close of an experience to Fall Orientation as possible—with the exception of the chilly winter weather! Students will have an opportunity to network and bond with each other, discuss the Winter Reading books, and more. As in the Fall, students will also participate in a first-year evoLution seminar through the beginning of the Spring semester, designed with the same goals of networking, bonding, campus exploration, and professional and academic skill development. For more information on the Office of the First-Year Experience and the services and programs we offer to students (including a weekly email), please visit our website.

Q: Can my student park off-campus?
A: There is no first-year on-campus parking. Much off-campus parking requires special permits, which are very difficult to get. Students are advised to make use of buses and the Enterprise Carshare program. Contact Parking and Transportation Services with any special circumstances.

Q: Can my student join a Greek organization during this Spring semester?
A: No. All Lehigh students are required to have 12 Lehigh credits and a 2.25 (or higher) GPA before joining a Greek organization. We want all Lehigh students to build connections in the residential and academic words before being recruited. We think it is important that students first get comfortable, have time to excel academically (joining a Greek organization is a time commitment), and have the ability to fully evaluate where they will live for the next few years. Students will be able to join Greek organizations in the Spring of 2016 (and, for some organizations, in the Fall of 2015).

There are 31 chapters at Lehigh, 25 of which are on campus. The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Affairs works very hard to keep negative situations from occurring. Staff members are in the houses almost every day, and encourage accountability and education through the accreditation process. For more information, particularly regarding the cost of joining and the expectations of the University, visit their website, especially the Frequently Asked Questions page.

Q: When will my student learn about his/her housing situation?
A: Residential Services will be gathering a list of all of the open spaces between now and the winter break. Once they have a sense of the space available, they will find the best fit for your student. Your student should be contacted within the first week of January. We feel this gives them enough time to contact their roommate and determine who has/will be bringing what (mini-fridges, lamps, etc.). It is possible that students could be paired with a second-year student in a second-year residence hall.
Students do have access to basic cable. If they would like to get additional channels, it is possible for them to get a cable box—although we encourage them to limit their television time, especially during four o’clocks!

On Saturday the 17th and Sunday the 18th, someone will be at the Residential Services Office in Rathbone Hall to answer any of your questions during your student’s move-in. If you have heavier objects you need to move, contact them for support.

For more information about on-campus housing, please see the resources offered by Residence Life. You can learn more about the Gryphon Society and Assistant Directors, community development experiences, residential studying and tutoring, Residence Hall Councils, roommate agreements, and more.

Q: My student doesn’t have an academic schedule or is unhappy with their schedule. What can we do?
A: We encourage you to have students contact their advisor, college, or the Registrar’s Office directly (the colleges will provide them with advisor information) with any scheduling questions. We do pledge that students will get the classes they need, but we cannot promise that students will get the class times or instructors they prefer. Students have up until the end of the second week of class to add or drop courses.

For more information about degree requirements, classes, and advising, please visit each college’s website:

- College of Arts and Sciences
- College of Business and Economics
- College of Engineering and Applied Science

Q: My student wants to switch their academic college; how do they do this?
A: In order to switch colleges, students must have sophomore status (23 credits), at least one semester at Lehigh, and a cumulative 2.0 GPA. Even if he/she is not yet able to fill out the official paperwork, students can meet with an advisor from the college they would like to transfer into in order to ensure they are taking the right classes and not falling behind.

For more information and answers to other class-scheduling questions, please visit the Registrar’s Office.

Campus Resources 101

*Questions for Reflection:* What will the transition be like for you? Do you think it will be more difficult for you or your student? Do you feel confident that you can answer your student’s questions when they arise? Even if you know the answer to your student’s problem, how do you help them learn the skills of finding answers on their own?
College means **big changes**. It is a **new culture** for students, with new norms, rituals, language, and expectations. College is a time for **value system development** (see our [bLUEprint](#) program for details on how we encourage students to develop their own value systems). While **overwhelming** for some, it is also an occasion for **growth** and **independence**.

The college experience is different for everyone. Your student’s experience will be different from yours if you went to college—even if you went to Lehigh! If you have sent other students to college, the experience of this new Lehigh student will still be unique to them.

Issues your student may encounter include: homesickness, academic concerns, relationships (roommates, friends, professors, advisors, significant others), health issues, time management, campus involvement, academic major decisions, deciding to join a fraternity or sorority\(^1\), and financial/money/credit confusion\(^2\).

**How can you help?**

**Lehigh’s Family Philosophy**

At Lehigh, we believe **students** are primarily responsible for their educational experience. We also acknowledge the integral role parents and families play in the success of their students.

The **stronger the partnership** between families and the University community, the more we are able to help our students achieve their educational and personal goals.

As educators, our roles is to assist students in their journey to **self-reliance** and **independence** while understanding and supporting parents’ needs to be informed of their students’ progress.

The **Dean of Students Office (DOS)** is a resource for all LU students as they work toward greater self-reliance and independence. The DOS has two main branches:

- Academic Support &
- Campus Living and Student Involvement.

What follows is a list of scenarios you may encounter with your student, along with resources within the DOS that you can point them toward.

**Scenario 1**: What do you do if your child gets homesick?

a. Encourage them to transfer closer to home.

b. Invite them home for the weekend.

c. Send a care package.

d. Call the counseling center.

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\(^1\) 40% off campus are Greek.

\(^2\) This is one of the biggest issues facing our students. Students don’t know how to manage their money, figure out their money in vs. money out, or deal with credit cards.
Option b, inviting them home for the weekend, *seems* like a strong option, because it allows them to reconnect with friends and family, energize, and rejuvenate. Plus, you can offer them direct support. However, it may not be the best option because reconnecting at home can strengthen ties and make the return to campus *more* difficult. That is, it can intensify feelings of homesickness. What are things you can do to help your student problem-solve how to be more connected at Lehigh, to rejuvenate at Lehigh?

Is your student saying “there is nothing to do on campus”? Not true! DOS Social Adjustment Services include over 150 student clubs (some religious and faith-based) and fraternities and sororities. Students can attend the Club Expo on **Wednesday, January 21, at 4:00** for more information concerning student clubs. There are also over 30 club sports on campus, many of which have an open try-out process or rolling enrollment, if students want to get involved this Spring. Students can also begin their own clubs! Other opportunities include Make & Take, Lehigh After Dark, Dance Marathon, Lehigh-Lafayette, University Productions, International Week, and Lehigh Athletics. Check out the Student Activities webpage for information on the many, many ways to be involved. Campus activities help students develop intellectually and socially, and campus involvement leads to a happier and more enjoyable campus experience.

You can also encourage your student to make an appointment with Counseling and Psychological Services. In addition, the Office of the First-Year Experience and Residence Life staff will be happy to support your student.

Don’t forget about care packages, even if you are located near to campus! Students love receiving food, memories of home, and other goodies in the mail. Students will be notified by email when they have a package, which they can pick up at Mail at Campus Square.

**Scenario 2**: Your daughter calls to say she failed her first set of exams. You encourage her to:

a. find a study group.
b. go to the professor’s office hours.
c. get a tutor.
d. all of the above.

Did you answer d? Wonderful! We have many resources for academic support on campus. The Academic Life & Transitions department aids students with unique needs, such as underrepresent students, students of color, first-generation students, athletes, and more. They also provide support for students with disabilities. The department also helps students who are struggling with personal, health, or family crises that may impact student performance or to aid students who fill out petitions for withdrawals or a leave of absence. Students can visit the Center for Academic Success for free tutoring and group tutoring (relevant across all three colleges), as well as aid with time management and study skills. Tutoring is also available within the first-year residential halls. The Writing and Math Center provides additional tutoring and support. Of course, students should also take advantage of any office hours or conferences made available by their professors/TAs. Using resources is the biggest part of academic success; that’s exactly what successful students do. Encourage your student to take advantage of all the resources available to him or her.
We would also encourage students to contact Career Services as early as possible. A meeting with one of the career counselors can help students to forward-think. While your student may feel that he/she doesn’t need a résumé for another couple of years, getting feedback now will help him/her know what opportunities are out there and when/how to integrate these career-development pieces into his/her college experience. Career Services will provide help with résumés, cover letters, etc. They work on skill development, such as mock interviews. They also run career fairs and provide help finding internships, externships, co-ops, and jobs.

Scenario 3: Your son calls to say his roommate is a total slob and he can’t stand living like this. You:

   a. have him request a room change.
   b. pack your cleaning supplies and head to campus.
   c. encourage your son to talk to his roommate.

We hope you chose c! Encourage your student to talk to his/her roommate—and by “talk” we mean talk in person, not through texting or Facebook chat! The Gryphon (Lehigh’s residential advisor) can always help facilitate the conversation.

When your student calls you, they might need some space and time to vent; let them express their frustrations! Once they have cooled down, see what you can do to help them see their roommate’s side and imagine the impact of their own habits.

What other resources are available? We try to set up successful dialogue from the beginning of the living period through roommate and community agreements. There are also regular floor meetings, and students can meet with the Assistant Directors as well as their Gryphon. Room changes are possible, but they are a last resort. After all, students will still likely be living with someone, so communication issues will not go away even after a successful room change.

Scenario 4: Which of the following is NOT available at the Health and Wellness Center?

   a. Gynecological exams.
   b. Allergy shots.
   c. Self-diagnosis area.
   d. Massage chairs.
   e. Filling of prescriptions.

The answer is e, filling of prescriptions. There are pharmacies off campus in walking distance, including both a CVS and a Rite Aid.

The Health and Wellness Center is open Monday-Thursday, 8:15 AM to 4:30 PM, Friday from 9:15 AM to 4:30 PM, and Saturday 10 AM to 1:45 PM. They do have a medical staff and offer a variety of services, including a “doctor on call” for non-emergency medical questions. For emergencies, there are hospitals in the area and there is always a Dean on Duty to handle emergency situations.

What other community resources do we offer?
Encourage your student to visit:
Multicultural Affairs
The Pride Center, for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, & Ally (LGBTQA) services
The Women's Center
Gender Violence Education and Support
Chaplain's Office

Most of these offices are on the second floor of the University Center, although the Chaplain’s Office is located by Taylor Gym.

Which of the following have you discussed with your student before today?
   a. Alcohol and drugs
   b. Sexual decisions
   c. Financial issues
   d. Academic expectations
   e. Safety issues
   f. All of the above

Be sure to share your expectations with your student. Remember: regardless of your student’s background, he/she will have new alcohol, sexual, financial, and academic pressures. Discuss with them how they will handle this new environment.

We have a number of resources dedicated to keeping our students safe. Encourage your student to sign up for LU-Alert to receive text messages about cancelled classes or safety issues. The University Police emphasize mutual respect and safety as a partnership. Students will also receive regular emailed Safety Bulletins. We encourage all students develop smart safety habits: lock all doors, don’t walk alone, etc. Students should always swipe in to their residential halls, and do not let others in without swiping. Any information about suspicious behavior should be reported to the University Police immediately. At night, students can use both the Police escort and TRACS bus services to keep them safe. Students should also keep an eye out for the Blue Lights around campus; if they need help, they can hit a button on the Blue Light to immediately call the University Police. Students are also encouraged to stay alert, look around, and walk with cell phones in hand, with the number to the University Police pulled up, (610) 758-4200. (Calls to 911 will have to be re-routed to the University Police, adding time to their response; call the University Police first when on campus.) Finally, we strongly suggest that students download the EmergenSee phone app.

The University Police Service is a fully-accredited police department, which means they can respond to any type of call. The University Police also have a Community Policing Unit, working in a three-block radius around campus. The University Police see themselves as educators in addition to officers; they want to help students be successful and use common sense. They offer a number of prevention programs, computer and PDA registration, and more. Read more about the services offered on their website. The Police Department, located in Johnson Hall, is open 24/7.
Remember:

- Every student will adjust to this transition differently.
- Encourage involvement.
- Discuss major topics like money, academic expectations, and social pressures, such as alcohol and sex.
- Discuss expectations for break (it is difficult to go from freedom back to the rules of your home!).
- Set a communication plan for when you will talk (don’t forget to utilize texting or email . . . students use them all the time!)

Three Big Takeaways:

1. The first year of college is a major adjustment period for everyone; **be patient** with one another and the adjustment period!
2. When your student calls to tell you about an issue, listen to them, and then lead with the questions, “**What do you want to do about this?**”
3. We are **here and ready to assist** your student. Our offices work with students and their families in partnership and our primary goals are to promote student success and help students “own” their experience and advocate for themselves.

Questions? Contact the Dean of Students Office at (610) 758-3000 or the Office of the First-Year Experience at (610) 758-1300. You can follow the OFYE on twitter or Instagram: @LehighOFYE.