

Transition Tips for Parents

Students going off to college is a time of adjustment for parents as well. Here are three “R’s” to keep in mind to ease the transition.

Release. Letting go of expectations is one of life’s more difficult tasks. As students discover who they are and what they want to do in life, their discoveries might not align with your hopes and expectations. Acceptance and support as they chart their own course will lead to positive adult relationships.

Responsibility. Students often confuse newfound autonomy with lack of responsibility. Guiding and encouraging them to do things for themselves will help them gain the experience they will need to meet life’s challenges.

Renew. Now is the time to focus some attention on you, your partner, other family members and friends. Renew these relationships so you will have the support you need to transition to a new stage in your life.



There will always be laundry.



▶ Counseling Center

Westside Hall
Second Floor
Wilmington, NC 28403
Phone: 910-962-3746
Web: www.uncw.edu/counseling
Weekdays, 8 to 5

Division of Student Affairs



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA WILMINGTON

Counseling Center

University of North Carolina Wilmington

Navigating Through Your First Semester



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Embrace College Life

It is natural to experience a period of adjustment when you enter college. Being away from familiar faces and places can threaten your sense of security and comfort. These feelings

Put together a life that fits for you.



are usually temporary and will lessen as you meet new people, establish new routines, and become familiar with

your new surroundings. By embracing this time of change as an opportunity to experience new things, you will find things get easier as you gain a sense of confidence from adjusting to an independent life.

Each person responds to change in their own way. What works for your friends may not work for you. It may take you a few tries to find out what fits for you— the types of activities and level of involvement you enjoy, the types of classes you like, or the people you like to be with. Keep trying until you find what fits for you.

Transition Tips for Students

Challenge the way you are thinking about your transition to college. You have to be open to change in order to learn and grow. Accept that this is a time for mixed feelings—excitement, trepidation, uncertainty, etc. The more adaptable you can be with your expectations, the more able you will be to negotiate challenges.

Keep some familiar things around you. Moving into your new space presents an opportunity for new things, but a few items from your room at home can be comforting touchstones.

Stay in touch. Surround yourself with support by staying in contact with family and friends. Put up some pictures with familiar faces, but leave some space for new friends as well.

Stay put. Don't get in the habit of going home every weekend or your new home will never feel like home. Take advantage of activities on campus. Become a tourist and explore Wilmington— downtown and the beaches. The more familiar you are with your surroundings,



The direction you take is up to you, but you can ask for help along the way.

the better adjusted you will feel. And when your family and friends arrive for a visit you will have favorite places to take them.

Eat. Sleep. College food is not home cooking, but there are plenty of healthy eating options on campus. Explore and experiment so you can eat right. Sleep can be a precious commodity in a busy life, but, along with a healthy diet, regular sleep is a key factor in managing stress.

Get involved. Participate in class. Take part in campus activities. Check out a student organization. Getting connected with the campus and with other people on campus will help you feel a part of the community.

Communicate. Don't make tough situations tougher by waiting to talk about it. Talk to your roommate, a classmate, your RA. You may find that you are not the only one experiencing similar difficulties or feelings.

Ask for help. There are a lot of *first times* in adjusting to college life. Often the first time is the most challenging time since you don't have experience to draw on. Often we need a little help or guidance or an outsider's opinion dealing with unfamiliar or difficult situations. You can talk to a counselor about anything whenever you need some support. Stop by the Counseling Center in Westside Hall or call 910-962-3746.