What Parents Can Do...

August
» Reassure your student that the adjustments he or she is experiencing are common and expected for first year students.
» Suggest involvement in one of Auburn’s many student organizations — O Days offer great opportunities to meet people and get involved.
» Send lots of mail, especially in the beginning of the year. No matter how many times you call or e-mail, students truly want to receive tangible pieces of paper. Your student will be thrilled to receive a surprise package!
» Encourage your student to join a study group or contact Supplemental Instruction, a series of weekly review sessions offered for specific courses. For information, students and parents can go to www.auburn.edu/tutoring.

September
» Remind your student that attending class regularly — whether required or not — and keeping up with assignments are essential to academic success!
» If your student is experiencing homesickness, encourage involvement with a campus organization or a campus ministry.
» If your student is experiencing academic difficulties or trouble adjusting to a college course load, suggest that he or she contact Academic Support at www.auburn.edu/support to discuss their concerns — earlier is better than later.
» If other adjustment problems seem significant, encourage your student to talk with a counselor in Student Counseling Services. For more information, go to www.auburn.edu/counseling.
» Remind your student of the value of exercise and a healthy diet — suggest visiting the Student Activity Center, signing up for intramural sports or joining a club sport.

October
» Do have an open ear, but be careful not to provide too many suggestions on how to fix your student’s problems. Convey your confidence in his or her ability to find a solution. Do not overreact — by the time you have solved an issue, your student has moved on and you have lost sleep.
» Encourage your student to join service organizations like IMPACT, Habitat for Humanity or Project Uplift to meet fellow students while helping others. Service projects help keep students connected to their new community.
» Encourage your student to read “The Plainsman,” the weekly student newspaper. Parents can also access “The Plainsman” online at www.theplainsman.com, giving both of you something to talk about.
November

» Give your student encouragement and support. He or she is probably getting anxious about upcoming exams and projects.
» Encourage your student to take advantage of tutoring services offered at Study Partners, www.auburn.edu/tutoring, and encourage him or her to start studying early for finals — especially comprehensive exams.
» Encourage your student to visit professors during office hours to get help or discuss academic performance.
» Find other families in your area! For more information, visit the AU Parents’ Association website at www.auburn.edu/parents.

December

» Encourage your student to eat a balanced diet, exercise, get a reasonable amount of sleep and avoid too much caffeine. Even though the winter weather is not conducive to exercising, encourage your student to get plenty of physical activity, which will increase endorphins and keep your student energized.
» Offer your support by calling, sending e-mails or writing letters but avoid putting another demand on your student’s time unless absolutely necessary. Consider sending a care package with your student’s favorite snacks or goodies.
» Remind your student to check his or her grades before leaving campus for the holidays so that questions can be addressed with professors or an academic advisor in person before they leave.

January

» Encourage your student to set new academic and personal goals for the semester. What do you both agree are practical and obtainable goals for the end of the semester?
» If your student’s grades were not as high as he or she had hoped, both of you should review the AU Bulletin policies on academic warning and suspension. Encourage your student to visit with his or her academic advisor, www.auburn.edu/advising.
» If students are still feeling as though they do not fit in, discuss how they can become involved in campus organizations. Campus organizations provide terrific opportunities for camaraderie and leadership.

February

» Remind your student of the importance of visiting professors, especially if he or she has concerns about schoolwork. Establishing rapport with instructors is important early on, before problem arises.
» Encourage your student to meet with an academic advisor prior to summer and fall registration.
» Begin discussing summer plans with your student, including summer enrollment, study abroad possibilities, internships for credit and summer employment. Encourage your student to discuss various opportunities with his or her academic advisor to explore options that will be helpful with upcoming major coursework.
» Relationships are a focus during this month and your student may need you to listen to his or her experiences with friends and significant others.
March

» Take the time to discuss options for living arrangements with your student for next year. Listen to your student’s ideas about what he or she would like to do and what he or she thinks is feasible.
» Encourage students to speak to professors about difficult classes or exams on which they did not perform well. It is often more beneficial to have these discussions earlier in the semester as opposed to late in the semester.
» Encourage your student to think through choices regarding Spring Break activities and remind him or her that using the buddy system is a good idea.
» Encourage your student to sign up for new organizations for next year. Many organizations make appointments this month.

April

» Send care packages and messages complete with goodies, multi vitamins and encouraging notes.
» Stress to your student that he or she should approach finals with an attitude of doing the very best he or she can and not to worry about what has or has not happened so far this semester.
» If your student plans to attend summer school at another institution, make sure he or she speaks to an advisor and completes a transient form. Remind your student that courses taken at another institution are reflected only in credit hours earned, not in GPA.
» Summer jobs and internships should be lined up and confirmed. Remind your student to finalize all plans.

May

» Talk with your returning student ahead of time about your expectations while he or she is living at home.
» Make plans for how your student will move home or to a new location with all of his or her belongings at the end of the semester. If your student decides to remain in Auburn for the summer, you can look for accommodations using local realty agencies as on campus housing closes to students during the summer semester.
» This may be the first time your student has time to reflect on the meaning of his or her academic experience. This can be an occasion for increased motivation towards original goals or an opportunity to explore alternative plans.
» If your student gets placed on suspension, he or she should visit an academic advisor and then the Academic Support Office www.auburn.edu/success.
June
» Remind your student that maintaining good health by diet, rest and exercise is important.
» If your student has returned home for the summer, take some time to get reacquainted. Invite their new friends to visit.
» Establish clear expectations about house rules if your student returns home for the summer to live with you again. Acknowledge the possible differences in your lifestyles after living apart for the past year.
» As the summer progresses, your student may express loneliness for friends made at college. Encourage him or her to stay in touch with these friends.

July
» Review with your student his or her financial needs for the coming academic year. Evaluate changes that may be needed for money management and work together to establish a tentative budget.
» Explore the need for career counseling to establish career or academic goals. Encourage your student to visit Career Development Services, www.auburn.edu/cds, for guidance.
» Encourage your student to establish a tentative academic plan for the full academic year. He or she should set realistic goals that include a well thought out plan for achieving them.

August
» Make sure your student keeps the Registrar’s Office informed of any address and/or phone number changes for both local and permanent addresses. This will help avoid problems with grades and billing.
» Remind your student of the importance of finding effective ways to manage time and social activities.
» Remember that parental guidance does not mean trying to control your student’s decisions or actions from home. Try to keep criticisms to yourself and you will be better able to keep the lines of communication open.
» Encourage students to make new friends this year who are culturally or ethnically different than themselves. Learning about others broadens the college experience.