



VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS/DEAN OF ACADEMIC SERVICES AND RETENTION

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DATE: August 2010
TO: Parents of Entering Students
FROM: Dr. Molly Mott, Vice President for Student Affairs

Congratulations on assisting your son/daughter to this point in their life. I am sure it is a momentous occasion for both you and your child as they begin this new chapter. We are looking forward to an action-packed and exciting year. On September 25th, the Family and Community Day (Parents' Weekend) happens. Our hope is that you will return to campus for a fun-filled day. For accommodations, click on this link, http://www.canton.edu/about_canton/where_to_stay.html. Our new Convocation Athletic Recreation Center should be complete in Spring 2011. This building is going to house an ice arena, pool, fitness center, field house, basketball court and running track which heightens the excitement. We have also broken ground for a new 304-bed residence hall which will be open in time for the Fall 2011 semester.

If I could offer but one bit of advice to you to insure your student's success, it would be "Don't Be Afraid To Ask Questions." Far too often I encounter students who are in "crisis" for one reason or another. Had they only asked some simple questions early on in the incident, more than likely the crisis would never have occurred. They need not worry about who to ask because if a staff person can't answer the question, I am confident they will either find out the answer for your son/daughter or direct them to the appropriate individual or office.

Your son's or daughter's educational endeavor during their attendance at college will hopefully reflect positive experiences so necessary for good citizenship and personal development. Young men and women are drawn to SUNY Canton by its reputation as an institution of quality. We value this reputation, but we also recognize the importance of Canton's atmosphere -- the style of the place -- which contributes greatly to the intellectual and personal development of our students. This is a campus which encourages learning "in as well as out" of the classroom; a place in which to make valued and lasting friendships with a variety of people of many varied backgrounds and viewpoints; a place of energy and reflection; a place rich in opportunities for active involvement; a place to have fun.

It is, however, not a place which tolerates illegal use of alcohol, drugs or violence. I am sure that you are aware of the State laws restricting the possession and/or consumption of alcoholic beverages by persons under 21 years of age but what you may not be aware of is the College's **Alcohol, Drug and Violence Policy which can be found on page 15 of the online Student Handbook. Just click on this link for the Handbook - http://www.canton.edu/student_affairs/pdf/handbook.pdf** . The Village of Canton, St. Lawrence University and SUNY Canton have agreed to work together to curb underage drinking and drug usage in the Canton community. **Both universities will be pursuing disciplinary action against their**

students who behave inappropriately off-campus in the Canton community.

Bullying is a relatively new problem on campuses and SUNY Canton has updated its Code of Conduct to include Bullying in all forms. We will be working hard to educate the students about bullying, especially “cyber bullying” like text messages, Internet or chatrooms and informing them of the consequences.

In order for your son/daughter to maximize their education, the college offers many opportunities to GET INVOLVED. A wide range of clubs and organizations, leadership and community service opportunities are offered. They should be able to find some niche that fits their interests, needs and skills. Academics are important but that is only part of the picture. Employer after employer tells us they are looking for students who get involved and have developed leadership and communication skills.

We have found it most helpful when parents candidly discuss with their son or daughter their expectations concerning behavioral standards, encourage them to get involved with campus life, learn to put their inhibitions aside and ask questions. You might want to share this letter as a kick-off for discussion of his/her personal and academic responsibilities as a college student.

I would also like to draw your attention to a SUNY policy regarding hazing. It has not been a big issue at SUNY Canton but we need to be constantly vigilant. Hazing can occur in any kind of group, but all-male groups such as fraternities and sports teams seem to be the most prone, though nationally female groups increasingly are being hazed. It is a violation of the NYS Penal Law and a violation of the College’s Code of Conduct. If an individual is found to have violated the College’s Hazing Policy, the following action will be taken: the student will be suspended/expelled from the College and a permanent notation will be recorded on the student’s official transcript, they will lose all academic credit for the semester and they will remain liable for all the semester’s tuition and fees.

Lastly, I need to draw your attention to a Federal law which affects you and your child when they enter college. The law is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (F.E.R.P.A.) which protects the privacy of students. In effect the law prohibits the college from releasing most information pertaining to the student to anyone, including parents, unless we have written permission from the student. This includes student grades, health and counseling issues, and academic progress. The college does make every effort when dealing with students to encourage them to communicate with their parents/guardians, especially on major issues. Also, our webpage (www.canton.edu) can be a source of good and accurate information for you. It includes the *Student Handbook* and College calendar among other things.

If you would like to discuss the contents of this letter, please feel free to stop at my office in the Faculty Office Building, Room 604, or call me at (315)386-7120 or e-mail me at mottma@canton.edu. We are excited about your child’s decision to attend SUNY Canton and hope it will be a positive experience for them.

MM/jl