

# ***MichiganTech***

**Parent & Family Orientation  
August 23, 2009**

**Parents as Partners:  
Together in Transition**

## Michigan Tech Parent and Guardian Philosophy

Michigan Technological University views students as young adults who are in the process of becoming responsible, accountable, and capable. We respect their growing independence and hold them accountable for decisions they make. We also respect their privacy, but don't always promise confidentiality and if needed, we will get others involved to ensure their well being.

As such, Michigan Tech views parents and guardians as our partners and will collaborate with them to the best of our ability to assist their student. However, it is our preference to work directly with students in order to foster their growth and development. Parents and guardians are encouraged to continue to strengthen and build the relationship with their student by adding the role of mentor and coach.

## Suggested Readings

Letting Go: A Parents' Guide to Understanding the College Years by Karen Levin Coburn and Madge Lawrence Treeger, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, 2009

You're On Your Own (But I'm Here if You Need Me): Mentoring Your Child During the College Years by Marjorie Savage, 2003

Let the Journey Begin: A Parent's Monthly Guide to the College Experience by Jacqueline Kerman MacKay and Wanda Johnson Ingram, 2002

Don't Tell Me What to Do, Just Send Money by Helen Johnson and Christine Schelhas-Miller, 2000

## Michigan Tech Resources Especially for Parents

*COMPASS – Center for Orientation, Mentoring, Parents, and Academic Student Success* – Parents, guardians, and family members are an important factor in the success of first-year students. That is why COMPASS works to support students, parents, and family. By providing family related events and programs, and through keeping parents informed, we can help you support your Michigan Tech student. Visit [www.compass.mtu.edu/pages/parentSupport.html](http://www.compass.mtu.edu/pages/parentSupport.html)

*Family Weekend* – Family Weekend is a Michigan Tech tradition that allows you to visit your student(s) while participating in a variety of fun activities your whole family will enjoy. Spend quality time together while exploring campus and the Keweenaw each fall. Visit [www.familyweekend.mtu.edu/](http://www.familyweekend.mtu.edu/).

*Guest Access* – Account access for parents, also known as Guest Access, allows Michigan Tech students to grant individuals access to the students' private records. The Registrar's Office at Michigan Tech recognizes that parents, guardians, spouses, and others are important to students. Thus, we provide the opportunity for these important individuals to guide, encourage, and be involved in students' academic careers. By using Guest Access, the student may grant access to any or all of the following information:

- Electronic bill notification
- Tuition bill and associated holds
- Student's emergency contacts
- Financial aid awards
- Unofficial academic transcripts
- Midterm grades (for first-year students only)
- Term end grades
- Class schedules and course details

*ParentNet* – An online community for parents, guardians, and family members that includes a column written weekly by a Michigan Tech student about happenings on campus. You can view the current issue by visiting [www.mtu.edu/current/parentnet/](http://www.mtu.edu/current/parentnet/).

ParentNet also includes MTUParent-L, an email listserv for posting and reading responses to questions (or perspectives) of other Michigan Tech parents and how they “survive” their student’s college experience. Parents discuss a wide range of issues and frequently ask questions of Michigan Tech staff and administrators. You can subscribe by visiting [www.mtu.edu/parentsfamily/](http://www.mtu.edu/parentsfamily/) and completing the subscription boxes at the bottom left side of the page.

On August 31, ParentNet will launch a new online community where parents, guardians, and family members will have the opportunity to form groups, network with one another, and more!

### Frequently Called Offices and Phone Numbers

*Please note all phone numbers begin with the 906 area code.*

Office or Department	Location on Campus	Telephone
Accounting Office/Student Billing	Administration Building 224	487-2243
Campus Bookstore	Memorial Union – First Floor	487-2410
Career Services	Harold Meese Center	487-2313
Cashier’s Office	Administration Building 100	487-2247
Counseling & Wellness Services	Hamar House	487-2538
COMPASS – Center for Orientation, Mentoring, Parents, and Academic Student Success	Wadsworth Hall G28W	487-3558
Dean of Students	Administration Building 170	487-2212
Disability Services	Administration Building 170	487-2212
Financial Aid Office	Administration Building 160	487-2622
Health Insurance	Administration Building 200	487-1088
Houghton Community Health Center (Portage Health)	Student Development Complex	483-1860
Housing & Residential Life	Wadsworth Hall 153W	487-2682
Public Safety	206 MacInnes Dr.	487-2216
Registrar’s Office	Administration Building 110	487-2319
Student Affairs, Vice President’s Office	Administration Building 505A	487-2465
Student Activities	Memorial Union Building 112	487-1963
Tickets - Central Ticket Office (Athletics)	Student Development Complex	487-2073
Tickets – Rozsa Center Box Office	Rozsa Center Lobby	487-3200

### Important Dates for 2009-2010

View the full academic calendar with important dates at:  
[www.mtu.edu/registrar/students/calendars/academic/](http://www.mtu.edu/registrar/students/calendars/academic/)

Orientation	August 23-29, 2009
First day of classes (fall semester)	August 31, 2009
Homecoming	October 4-10, 2009
Family Weekend	October 2-4, 2009
Thanksgiving Break	November 20-29, 2009
Fall semester ends	December 18, 2009
Spring semester, first day of classes	January 11, 2010
Winter Carnival	February 3-7, 2010
Spring Break	March 5-14, 2010
Spring Semester ends	April 30, 2010

# Michigan Technological University

## Just Like Clockwork: The Rhythm of College Life

Certain times in the academic year tend to be universally challenging to students. Parents who understand the ups and downs of the first college year are better able to help their students negotiate the challenges of transition to college. Below are some typical adjustment issues faced throughout the first year:

### August/September

- Excitement
- Testing new-found freedom
- Frequent calls and visits home
- Homesickness and loneliness
- Anxiety about roommates, professors, classes
- First exams
- Love relationships from home remain strong
- Consequences of decision-making experiences

### October

- Roommate problems begin to arise
- Students question: "Do I fit in here?"
- First test grades returned
- Midterm exams

### November

- Midterm grades returned
- Roommate challenges become more clear
- Many exams and papers due before Thanksgiving
- First series of campus-wide illness (cold, flu, strep, etc.)

### December

- Anxiety over preparations for finals
- Excitement and/or anxiety regarding going home for holidays
- Sadness about leaving new friendship and/or love relationships
- Roommate challenges continue

### January

- "Fresh Start" mentality sets in with new term
- Satisfaction and/or disappointment with fall term grades
- Homesickness
- Loneliness for love relationship back home
- Relief being away from home and back at school

### February

- Feelings of claustrophobia and depression set in with winter
- Potential increase in alcohol and other substance abuse
- Challenges with love relationship back home
- Valentine's Day brings out loneliness, isolation

### March

- Anxiety regarding finding roommate(s) for next year
- Excitement and/or disappointment regarding Spring Break plans
- Midterm exam stress
- Concern over summer employment
- Concern over winter weight gain

### April /May

- Excitement with arrival of spring
- Concern over declaring major
- End of semester pressure
- Final Exam anxiety
- Apprehension about returning home for summer
- Sadness over leaving new friendships and/or love relationships at school
- Realization of how college influences life decisions

*From Mullendore, R.H., & Hatch, C. (2000). Helping Your First Year College Student Succeed: A Guide for Parents. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.*

# MichiganTech

## Major Differences between High School and College

### High School

### College

*Teacher/Student Contact-* Contact closer and more frequent (5 days a week).

*Teacher/Student Contact-* Faculty are available during office hours (only a few hours a week) and by appointments to address students' concerns.

*Competition/Grades-* Academic competition is not as strong; good grades can often be obtained with minimum effort.

*Competition/Grades-* Academic competition is much stronger; minimum effort may produce poor grades.

*Status-* Students establish a personal status in academic and social activities based on family and community factors.

*Status-* Students can build their status as they wish; high school status can be repeated or changed.

*Counseling/Dependences-* Students can rely on parents, teachers, and counselors to help make decisions and give advice. Students must abide by parents' boundaries and restrictions.

*Counseling/Dependences-* Students rely on themselves; they see the results of making their own decisions. It is their responsibility to seek advice as needed. Students set their own restrictions.

*Motivation-* Students get stimulation to achieve or participate from parents, teachers, and counselors.

*Motivation-* Students apply their own motivation to their work and activities as they wish.

*Freedom-* Students' freedom is limited. Parents will often help students out of a crisis should one arise.

*Freedom-* Students have much more freedom. Students must accept responsibility for their own actions.

*Distractions-* There are distractions from school, but these are partially controlled by school and home.

*Distractions-* The opportunity for more distractions exists. Time management to students will become more important.

*Value Judgments-* Students often make value judgments based on parental values; thus many of their value judgments are made for them.

*Value Judgments-* Students have the opportunity to see the world through their own eyes and develop their own opinions and values.

*From Mullendore, R.H., & Hatch, C. (2000). Helping Your First Year College Student Succeed: A Guide for Parents. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition.*

## Major Differences between High School and College

<b>High School</b>	<b>College</b>	<b>Tips</b>
Each day you proceed from one class to another.	You often have hours between classes; class times vary throughout the day and evening.	Use any free time during the day to prepare your assignments. Don't wait until nighttime.
Teachers check and often grade homework.	Professors may not even collect assigned homework, but they will assume you can perform the same tasks on tests.	Do assignments. In fact, do more than just assigned problems - work until you understand the concepts presented.
Teachers remind you when assignments are due.	Professors may not remind you when work is to be completed. You are responsible for keeping track of assignments.	Use the Michigan Tech student planner that you receive at Orientation to keep track of all assignments, tests, quizzes, and even outside activities.
You may study not at all or as little as one or two hours a week.	You need to study at least two to three hours outside of class for every hour in class. You will need to review your class notes regularly in addition to doing assignments.	Find out how to study effectively and find a place where you can concentrate to get your work done.
Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.	Testing is usually infrequent and often covers large amounts of material. You are responsible for organizing the material to prepare for the test. A course may have only two or three tests in a semester.	Look at a term's worth of material and organize it in a way that makes sense to you. Use outlines and pictures to help you remember the material.
Mastery of a subject is usually seen as the ability to reproduce what was taught in the same manner it was presented to you.	Mastery of a subject is usually seen as the ability to apply what you have learned to new situations or to solve new kinds of problems.	Aim to understand material. Don't simply memorize it.
You will be told what your responsibilities are, and you are corrected when you are out of line.	You are responsible for what you do and don't do.	Accept the consequences of your decisions.
You may graduate as long as you have passed all required courses with a grade of D or higher.	You may graduate only if your grade point average is a 2.0 (C average) or better.	Don't settle for just getting by.

*This page has been adapted from Southern Methodist University.*