Welcoming Your Daughter Home for the Holidays

As college parents we worry about our student’s transition when she heads off to college. We know that it will be a big adjustment and that she will be facing challenges and undergoing changes. Sometimes, however, we forget that there will also be a big adjustment and some challenges when our college student returns home again for her first real vacation. Whether it is Thanksgiving break or winter break, the first longer visit home will be a time of readjustment and reacquaintance for everyone.

Your student is probably anxious to come home and settle in, but she may also be worried about what things will be like when she gets home. You are excited about having her home, but you may also be nervous about what to anticipate. Parents who expect that everything at home will return to the way things were before your student left for college may be caught off guard and will have difficulty. Here are a few things to consider before your student comes home for her first visit.

• Holidays are a stressful time. Remember that everyone may be feeling the normal stress of the holidays in addition to the transition of readjusting.

• Remember that not only has your student changed over the past few months, but the family dynamic may have changed as well.

• Your student has been independent at school. Reentering the family routines may feel restrictive and will require compromise on everyone’s part.

• Your student will probably come home exhausted from the last few weeks of classes and final exams.

• Remember that the final few weeks of the semester are busy with school papers, projects and exams. Your student may not yet have focused on the holidays or family.

• Your student will want to catch up with her home-town friends. She’s anxious to tell them about her new life, hear about theirs, and spend time reconnecting.

Article from College Parent Central, see complete article at www.collegeparentcentral.com/2009/11/welcoming-your-college-student-home-for-holiday-visits-%E2%80%93-what-to-expect/

First Generation Fall Semester Recap

In the second year of existence the First Generation Program has 150 CSB students registered. Students this fall have participated in monthly socials; volleyball and a picnic; cards making, attending the Festival of Cultures event; and climbing the SJU climbing wall. In addition to our monthly workshops on stress management, studying abroad, internships, study skills, and starting your resume. We also kicked off the mentor program with First Generation Faculty and Staff and interested sophomore students.
**Sending Care Packages!**

College can be a very stressful time for students—especially first year college students. Adjustments to roommates, residence halls, harder academics, and the dreaded finals week can really wear out a student. Sending your college student care packages from home is sure to be appreciated. Here are just a few ideas:

1. **Student Athlete Care Package.** If you student plays a sport for the college, their care package can include things like massagers and IcyHot for sore muscles after practice. Energy bars, and nutrition drinks; athletic gear such as sweats, shorts, t-shirts and pony tail holders; and music for running and lifting weights would help your athlete.

2. **Winter Survival Care Package.** College can be the first time your student is away from the fireplace at home during winter months, and it can be especially brutal if your student has gone to a university in a cold region. Be sure to include: hot chocolate mix and mugs, a blanket, an electric heating pad, warm socks, scarf and mittens, and cookies to make them smile.

3. **Homesick Care Package.** Most college students feel homesick at least one time during the year. Send things to make their new environment a little more like home. Think about pictures of family, homemade cookies, and decorations for their room to make it feel more like home.

4. **Spring Finals Week Care Packages.** If you are sending your student a care package for finals week, be sure to include items that will help them study. Think about energy drinks or coffee for those late nights, highlighters, note books, music to listen to, and candy for breaks. Send some food if possible—students eat a lot and if they already have food it will keep them from having to make a trip to pick up some ramen noodles.

**Study Abroad Questions:**

Since the start of the First Generation Program we have continually received many questions about study abroad opportunities from students and parents in the First Generation Program. Below are two questions many parent have asked.

**Can my daughter study abroad and graduate in four years?**

Yes! Some majors with extensive requirements or sequential classes may take more careful planning than others. It may be that a semester program does not fit into the four-year plan, but a short-term program is always a great alternative.

**My daughter would like to study abroad more than once. Is this possible?**

Certainly! Students should meet with their academic advisors early in their academic career at CSB|SJU to map out a plan to ensure they utilize all of the opportunities available to them, while still graduating on time. With the flexibility of our short-term study abroad opportunities, students often opt to take a semester-long study abroad and visit other countries during a short-term study abroad trip.

For more information about Education Abroad including parent resources check out the website: [www.csbsju.edu/internationaleducation/Parents.htm](http://www.csbsju.edu/internationaleducation/Parents.htm)