LESSON 1

Week 1 “So It Begins” (August 31-September 6)

Important Dates/Notes: August 30 (Sunday): Last day to withdraw with 100% refund
August 31 (Monday): First Day of Classes
September 4 (Friday): Add/Drop Ends
September 4 (Friday): Last day to withdraw at 90% refund

Topic A: Habits
To start off the year, we’ll go easy on parents. While it may be a huge change to have your student away at school, rest assured he or she is most likely making friends, learning his or her way around campus and understanding what it means to be a “college student.” The biggest thing a parent can do during this period of time is to give their student some space, but encourage them to begin setting up good habits for the year.

Time management is often a tremendous issue for students who are leaving home for the first time. The next couple of weeks are a great time to ask student if they can track their time and formulate a plan—at least for the school week—of when they go to class, when they study, when they socialize, when they exercise and maybe even when they’ll wash themselves, their clothes…and even their sheets! It’s quite amazing to give freshmen students the task of accounting for a 24-hour day and find they’ve not included brushing their teeth or showering.

It takes at least six weeks to establish good habits; encourage them to start now! The semester is only 15 weeks long. Buying a planner and using it can make a big difference in their lives. (It might make a great gift to give them.) Remember, no one is telling students when to study, when to sleep or when to eat anymore. No one is knocking on their door and inviting them to attend their courses. Help them learn how to self-regulate their time.

Topic B: Email
Information is critical in navigating higher education. Every student—although they’d more likely favor Twitter and Facebook and texting—must check his or her Eastern email regularly.

Official communication is conducted by the University through email; and, although it may have been different before getting admitted, most important information will come to their inbox through email! It may be a good idea this week to talk to your student about paying attention to their official, Eastern email account and deciphering what’s important and what can be quickly discarded. We also suggest setting up an “advising” folder on their email, so nothing is ever lost, even if your student finds no importance in something right away.

A student being on top of and up-to-date with their official, University e-mail account is non-negotiable. This cannot be stressed enough.

Topic C: Syllabi
Each professor gives their students a syllabus outlining the course, requirements and grade guidelines. These syllabi have contact information, important dates about tests and clarify everything from rules in the classroom to what may happen if students skip a day of class. Encourage your student to organize themselves for each course and hold on to those syllabi! Having a three ringed binder (with pockets) for all important documents per class is a good rule of thumb.
Assignment(s):

- Encourage your student to create a weekly schedule for himself or herself, at least one for Monday through Friday at minimum. Search the internet for many variations of weekly calendars. If you wish, ask your student to fill one out with everything their week includes.

- **Encourage your student to go to every single class,** to sit in first few rows, and toward the middle of classrooms. (It lessens distractions and puts focus on the student from his or her professor.) When your student starts making contact with professors later, they’ll already be easy for professors to recall. This relationship is important and can have huge payoffs down the line.

- Require your student read each professor’s syllabus fully, understand what is expected of them and learn how grades will be calculated. It’s all supposed to be there.

- Require your student go to class...every class. Every time it meets. When students miss a class meeting, the general estimated cost of the absence from a three credit course is expensive. It adds up! We’ll address the specifics in later weeks of the course. (Don’t forget…missed courses also mean missed information which may not be retrievable in a classmate’s notes and may potentially impact exam or overall course grades.)

**Points:** Give yourself 1 point for accomplishing each of the above assignments. Give yourself 1 extra point if you actually get to see a week’s schedule from your student!  (Total: 5 possible points)