Families are an integral part of a student’s life and whether students admit it or not, they value their family’s support. Knowing how to support your student may be difficult at times, but we are here to help direct you to resources which will enrich your student’s experience. Here are just a few of the many resources available to support your student. Often, students wait until too late in the semester to seek out help, so please encourage your student to ask for assistance as soon as possible.

Academic Advising

Each UF college offers major-specific advising for students who plan to pursue a degree in one of its departments or areas of study. These advisors offer a wealth of knowledge to students, from course selection to college and university policies to what options are available to them under virtually any circumstance they encounter. Please encourage your student to discover what the college advising office has to offer. A helpful place to start is the UF advising Website, ufadvising.ufl.edu. Contact: (352) 392-1521

Tutoring

UF’s Teaching Center offers free tutoring to students in many of the subject areas in which students frequently experience difficulties, including math and chemistry. The Teaching Center, located in Broward Residence Hall is also the home of the UF Reading and Writing Center, which provides additional assistance to students who are interested in improving their college-level reading and writing skills. The Teaching Center Website address is teachingcenter.ufl.edu. Contact: (352) 392-2010

Academic Departments and/or Individual Instructors

Many UF academic departments offer help that is tailored to the specific course in which your student is enrolled. In fact, among the most helpful resources for students are their course instructors, who are available for office hours and by appointment throughout the week. Though many students are reluctant to approach their instructors with questions, most professors are concerned about their students’ academic success and will go out of their way to assist students. Please encourage your student to either go to their instructors’ office hours, or to schedule an appointment to meet with them in person. Phone calls and emails are never as productive as face-to-face interaction.

Changing Majors

If your student decides to change majors, we recommend that he or she makes the most informed decision possible by utilizing the Career Resource Center (CRC) provides help in many areas, including developing a résumé, finding internships, searching for a job, interviewing, and preparing for graduate school. In order to officially change their major, your student needs to meet with their current college academic advisor. For a complete list of colleges advising departments, please visit registrar.ufl.edu/soc/advisers.html

The University of Florida is committed to equal treatment of students without regard to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national or ethnic origin, political opinions or affiliations, or veteran status.

Machen Florida Opportunity Scholar Checklist

Be sure your student completes the following to ensure that he or she is able to renew this scholarship next year:

- Maintain a 2.0 GPA
- Earn a minimum of 24 UF credit hours by the end of spring semester 2014
- Take First-Year Florida, the first year student seminar course at UF, in their first year at UF
- Connect with their MFSO peer mentor
- Attend two Financial Literacy Workshops, one in the fall semester and one spring semester
- Renew the FAFSA by March 15, 2014

Notes from the Director: Leslie Pendleton

I am delighted that the University of Florida is able to provide the Machen Florida Opportunity Scholarship to so many talented first-generation college students.

You should be proud of what your outstanding student has already accomplished. I am certain your student will leave a mark upon this university.

As a family member of a Machen Florida Opportunity Scholar, you probably have a number of questions. In addition to wanting to know about UF policies and procedures, you may be wondering how you can best support your student and what your student can expect in college.

It is my hope that this Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Family Newsletter will provide you with useful information that will enable you to begin to answer these questions.

Sincerely,

Leslie Pendleton
Director of the Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Program

MFOS Fun Facts

Florida Opportunity Scholars are from all over the state of Florida, representing 60 out of 67 counties.

There are currently 40 FOS alumni in professional degree programs at UF: 17 Pharmacy; 7 Medical; 7 Nursing; 5 Law; 2 Vet Med; 1 Physician Asst; 1 Physical Therapy.

Florida Opportunity Scholars are leaders on campus. One of our recent graduates even served as Student Body Treasurer managing more than $13 million for students.

For questions regarding MFOS please contact:
Leslie Pendleton
Director of the Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars Program
155 Tigert Hall
P.O. Box 113250
Gainesville, FL 32611-3250
(352) 392-1265
lesliep@ufsa.ufl.edu

The MFOS Family Newsletter is produced by the: Division of Student Affairs

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This publication is available in alternative print formats upon request.
Talking about how classes are ufl.edu/prescriptions and pharmaceutical needs. Encourage your student to visit the SHCC if they are sick and to check the Web site at Student Health Care Center contact 352-392-8565 or visit taking environments and additional time to complete tests if it's determined that a student needs such accommodations. Learn more - DRC educates students about their legal rights and responsibilities so they can make informed decisions. The DRC provides quiet test environments and additional time to complete tests if it's determined that a student needs such accommodations. Learn more -

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides services to students with physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities. DRC educates students about their legal rights and responsibilities so they can make informed decisions. The DRC provides quiet test environments and additional time to complete tests if it's determined that a student needs such accommodations. Learn more -

Students have to make many important decisions while in college about career, friendships and their future. It is normal for students to experience some stress during their college years. However, if you notice your student withdrawing from friends or family, acting abnormally, or engaging in unhealthy patterns of behavior, recommend that he/she speak to a counselor. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides free and confidential counseling for students. Learn more: contact 352-392-1575 or at counseling.ufl.edu

Workshop   The Perfect Paper   October 30 in Matherly 18
Workshop   Volunteering & Getting Involved   November 7 in CSE E119
Workshop   Stress Reduction   November 12 in Little Hall 109
Workshop   Credit Cards & Credit Scores   November 20 in MAEB 211
Workshop   Living Off Campus   December 2 in Matherly 18

The First Generation Student Organization is open to all UF students, but caters to first generation university undergraduates. The purpose of the group is to build diverse community among the scholars through social events and campus awareness, give back to the Gainesville and UF community, and provide students with the necessary skills to have a smooth transition into and out of college. Membership is free. Students can activate their membership by emailing BeauB@ufsa.ufl.edu.

The Student Health Care Center (SHCC) responds to students who need treatment for illness, shots including the free flu vaccine, and prescriptions and pharmaceutical needs. Encourage your student to visit the SHCC if they are sick and to check the Web site at shcc.ufl.edu for flu shot updates. Contact: (352) 392-1161

U Matter, We Care
U Matter, We Care extends UF’s culture of care by providing those in distress with the appropriate resources. If your student is in distress or they know a friend, classmate, teammate, or a roommate who needs support, please have them contact U Matter, We Care at 352-294-CARE or email umatter@ufl.edu. Learn more about U Matter, We Care at umatter.ufl.edu.

The Office of Academic Support has been charged with the mission to provide academic and personal enrichment programs and services for all UF students who are interested and would benefit. A primary objective of OAS is to serve students who are first generation, low income, AIM, or from underrepresented groups at UF. All UF students are welcome to participate in the activities of OAS. OAS’s services support the success of students who participate and the broad diversity of the student body, which are important to the achievement of UF’s educational, research and service mission. Learn more online at oas.ufl.edu/

Student Health Care Center
The Student Health Care Center (SHCC) responds to students who need treatment for illness, shots including the free flu vaccine, and prescriptions and pharmaceutical needs. Encourage your student to visit the SHCC if they are sick and to check the Web site at shcc.ufl.edu for flu shot updates. Contact: (352) 392-1161

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Larry Dorilus
UF class of 2014; Civil Engineering major; Homestead; Naples
The MFOS program has provided Larry with the skills to lead the team of two people close to him. Within his Civil Engineering major, Larry frequently finds himself working with faculty in the department. Dr. Lindner and other faculty in the department helped Larry decide on his major, after learning of his love for math, and he was selected in pursuing civil engineering specifically.
As for his future, Larry will graduate and pursue his dream job at Disney World, developing the planning and construction of roller coasters and rides.

Ana Barbic
UF class of 2012; Anthropology major; Home town: Miami
The Machen Florida Opportunity Scholars program offered a way for her to leave home and take part in experiences she never imagined possible. While at the University of Florida, Ana experienced a myriad of unique opportunities, including traveling abroad to Haiti and Morocco, while studying Arabic, Latin, and Italian.
Today, Ana attends Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pennsylvania, where she is pursuing her master’s degree in Applied Intelligence. After completing the program, Ana will have an opportunity to work in various government areas including business intelligence, national security, law enforcement, and more.

Christopher Cruz
UF class of 2008; Finance major; Hometown: Miami
As MFOS's first graduate, Chris made his way through UF in two and a half years. After starting out in private banking in South Florida, Cruz decided to attend graduate school at the University of Rochester (N.Y.), something he says he probably couldn’t have done without the program’s support. Cruz credits FOS with helping him to maintain a 3.95 GPA at UF and graduate as an Outstanding Four-Year Scholar. The workshops and career guidance offered by the FOS program also made a difference.
He’s now working as an auditor for Ernst & Young in New York.

Leaving home for the first time may be exciting at first, but for many students, homesickness hits sometime during the fall semester.
How can you help your student?
Listen to your student’s concerns. Be encouraging. Let your student know she or he is not alone by sending letters or care packages. Suggest your student visit home periodically, but don’t encourage that they come home every weekend. It is important that students start to feel connected to UF and to Gainesville during their first year. Going home every weekend does not allow for this connection to happen. Be patient as your student adjusts to a new environment; encourage your student to get involved, but recognize that it may take time. Suggest they discuss this with their peer mentor or meet with Leslie Pendleton, director of the program.
How can students help themselves?
Getting involved helps combat homesickness. Students can participate in campus activities, resident hall activities, and other events where they can begin to feel more at home at UF. GATORIGHTS! is one of our more popular events which takes place every Friday night at the Reitz Union. It's a great opportunity for your student to make new friends or try new activities. Also, if your student wishes to talk to someone, counseling services are available. Contact the Counseling & Wellness Center at 352-392-1575 or online at counseling.ufl.edu.