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.

Florida Opportunity Scholar Student Organization

The FOS Student Organization is open to all UF students, but caters to first generation university undergraduates. The purpose of the group is to build 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 out of college. Membership is free. Students can activate their membership by emailing skyge@ufsa.ufl.edu.

Summer 2013 Campus Housing

If your student will be attending classes during summer 2013, encourage them to live in campus housing. The Department of Housing and Residence Education is currently accepting housing contracts from current students for Summer A, B, and C!

To learn how to secure campus housing for summer 2013 please visit: www.housing.ufl.edu/

Career Workshops in Fall 2013

Looking forward to events and opportunities in fall 2013, your student will be required to attend two career workshops. You’ll recall that first year FOS students were required to participate in financial literacy workshops. In their upcoming second year, your student will attend workshops specifically designed to prepare them to search for internships, focus their major around their desired job field and practice business etiquette.

Counseling & Wellness Center

The Counseling and Wellness Center provides free counseling and consultation services. The Center offers individual, group and couples counseling, outreach, consultation, teaching, medication consultation, biofeedback. In addition, the building houses GatorWell Health Promotion Services. These services are available to help students confront personal, health, academic and career concerns.

Learn more at www.counseling.ufl.edu.

For questions regarding FOS please contact:
Leslie Pendleton
Director of the Florida Opportunity Scholars Program
155 Tigert Hall
P.O. Box 113290
Gainesville, FL 32611-3250
(352) 392-1265
lesliep@ufsa.ufl.edu

The FOS Family Newsletter is produced by the Division of Student Affairs

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This publication is available in alternative print formats upon request.

Seven out of 10 Florida Opportunity Scholars are women.

Upcoming Critical Dates

- Renew the FAFSA
- Drop or Withdraw without Failing Grades
- Classes End
- Finals
- Final Grades Available Online
- Fall Classes Begin
- No Classes, Labor Day
- No Classes, Homecoming
- No Classes, Veteran’s Day
- No Classes, Thanksgiving
- Classes End

March 15
April 12
April 24
April 27, 29-30, May 1-3
May 8
August 21
September 2
November 9-9
November 11
November 27-30
December 4

FOS Requirements

- Maintain a 2.0 GPA
- Earn a minimum of 24 UF credit hours by the end of spring semester 2013
- Take First-Year Florida, the first year student seminar course at UF, in their first year at UF
- Connect with their FOS peer mentor
- Attend two Financial Literacy Workshops, one in the fall semester and one spring semester
- Renew the FAFSA by March 15, 2013

This is an annual deadline.

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:

- Complete a minimum of 24 credit hours
- Maintain a 2.0 GPA
- Attend two Financial Literacy Workshops, one in the fall semester and one spring semester
- Renew the FAFSA by March 15, 2013

This is an annual deadline.

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1. Be their biggest fan. Show support in their academics and student involvement. - Angel Cheong

2. Encourage your student to seek advising support early in their career. Advisors can help your student select classes and stay on track to graduate in four years. - Leslie Pendleton

3. Be their guidance, not their decision maker. - Angel Cheong

4. Be supportive of your student's career choice. If your student isn't sure what he or she "wants to be when they grow up" encourage regular and early visits to the Career Resource Center. - Leslie Pendleton

5. Let them be independent. Call every few days instead of everyday. - Angel Cheong

6. Encourage your student to do an internship, volunteer or study abroad. Practical experiences like these can help your student find a career path. - Leslie Pendleton

7. Surprise them. Send them love packages or greeting cards every once in awhile. - Angel Cheong

8. Stress the importance of doing well in all classes. Your student's GPA will matter when applying to jobs or graduate school after UF. - Leslie Pendleton

9. Help them save money. Make sure they know how to make at least five different basic meals of their choice. - Angel Cheong

10. Tell your student that you love them! Your love and support means the world. - Leslie Pendleton

At the conclusion of the spring 2013 semester, FOS scholars will automatically be evaluated for renewal of their scholarship and have must met the academic progress standards as described below:

- Overall GPA of a 2.0 or higher
- Have earned at least 24 credit hours or more for the current year
- Earned at least 75 percent or all credit hours attempted

Students will be notified in writing if they did not meet one or more of these criteria after the submission of grades for Spring 2013. Depending upon the circumstances, a student may petition the Office of Student Financial Affairs if they experienced extenuating circumstances that led them to not fulfill the academic progress standards for the scholarship. Extenuating circumstances are generally medical in nature and are considered to be beyond the control of the student.

Students are also given the option of going to school during the summer 2013 semester in order to improve their academic standing with the University. If the inclusion of those courses helps to meet the minimum academic standards required to renew their scholarship, then a student will regain eligibility. Please note that if a student elects this option they would not receive the Florida Opportunity Scholarship while taking these courses, however they may be eligible for alternative types of financial aid. Students who may be considering this option are encouraged to meet with their financial aid advisor in Criser Hall.

Congratulations to your student and you! You have almost made it through the first year of college. The end of the school year goes by in a flash. There is lots of excitement about summer, but figuring out to do with the summer break can be daunting.

Many Florida Opportunity Scholars choose to do internships, travel, study abroad or participate in service-learning experiences.

Dominique Whitehead elected to combine options for a unique summer experience.

As a Health Science major with a track in Pre-Occupational Therapy, Dominique found her passion in helping to mentor young students and hopes to become an Early Intervention Specialist. This past summer, Dominique had the opportunity to travel to Hawaii, at the Pearl Harbor Hickam Joint Navy and Air Force Base. She worked with Camp Adventure Youth Services. The camp works specifically with military children. "It was one of the most stressful, busy, yet fulfilling experiences of my life," she said.

Gaining experience from an internship is the key to success and will allow students to become more competitive in their chosen fields.

Students can talk with their advisor or visit the Career Resource Center (http://www.crc.ufl.edu/) in the J. Wayne Reitz Union to learn about summer internship and jobs that complement their academic interests.

"There was a point in time where I didn’t realize I could go to college," he explains. "But the fact that the FOS program was offered opened up my eyes and allowed me to spread my wings and fly."

- Kenny Sanders, University of Florida Computer Science Graduate

Kenny Sanders graduated magna cum laude in Spring 2010. Today, he writes software for the Amazon Kindle and related products in Seattle. Some of the projects he works on will be used to help raise literacy in American schools and in third-world countries.

Alumni Spotlight