

# Guiding our students during a time of need

## What is happening

Resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Sophomores, juniors and seniors abruptly departed from campus last spring, with little to no opportunity to say goodbye to friends.
- First-years experienced an unexpected end to their high school careers.
- Students experienced a variety of challenges (sick family members, parents losing jobs, more family responsibilities like caring for siblings, etc.).

Additionally, years of racial injustice were brought to national attention, leading to protests and demonstrations throughout the U.S.

## Why this is important

St. Norbert is a Catholic, liberal arts and Norbertine college that embraces *communio*, the ideal of a community united as one. Our mission calls us to cultivate a supportive community that allows all to flourish and to provide an educational environment that fosters intellectual, spiritual and personal development.

As we welcome students to the Fall 2020 semester, it's essential that we re-engage them with the campus community, keeping our mission at the forefront and reminding them of who we are as Green Knights. We also can look at this moment as an opportunity to help students build skills such as resilience and adaptability as well as reflect on the role faith plays in their lives during times of crisis.

## What we can do

### Listen

- Be present with the person in front of you.
- Be willing to listen to students about their academic lives and non-academic lives.
- Lean into the discussion: Be willing to ask questions, then be prepared for the responses. (*See reverse for conversation starters.*)
- Understand that if a student has experienced trauma, needs related to that trauma must be the first to be addressed. If a student is exhibiting an immediate risk (such as showing signs or sharing statements of self-harm), get him or her connected with help right away.

### Acknowledge

- Recognize the abnormality we've all been through; don't act like it wasn't hard.
- Acknowledge and show compassion for what students have been through.

### Validate

- Allow students to tell you how they feel, and remember that feelings are valid. Don't label a feeling or judge it.
- Remember that students, like all of us, will process differently and will be coming from different places and perspectives. We cannot force a certain way of thinking.

- Bear in mind that the concerns of first-year students (who experienced abrupt ends to their high school careers) will be different from sophomores (who have not yet experienced a full year at SNC) and from juniors and seniors (who may be concerned about lost internships and finding employment after graduation).
- Don't assume there is a problem: It may be that the student has adjusted very well to all that is going on. Don't fish for a problem where none exists.

### Connect

- Remember that you don't need to solve all the problems or have all the answers, but you should be able to point students in the right directions. (*See reverse for possible responses.*)
- Know what resources are available and guide students to the next step as appropriate. (*See reverse for resources.*)

### Recognize your own needs

- If you have questions, concerns or frustrations with how SNC is responding to the crisis, address them with your supervisor before talking with students.
- Know your triggers: There is a delicate balance in how much of your own experience you should share with students.

## Conversation aids

### Possible questions or prompts to begin conversations with students:

- “It seems as if you’re concerned about something.”
- “It seems that you have some feelings about this topic.”
- “Did I answer all of your questions about \_\_\_\_\_?”
- “We recognize this has changed everyone’s lives. How do you think life is different now?”
- “What do you think will be different now? And how will you plan for it?”
- “How can we make your return to campus positive?”
- “In what ways were you connected with campus before you had to leave?”
- “How are you connecting with campus now? Who are you connecting with?”
- “How did your SNC experience thus far prepare you for the forced break and adjusted summer?”
- “What did you learn about yourself?” Create a space for students to share their successes and support others who had success.
- “How did you lean on your faith, or how has your faith grown during this time?” Recognize that not all students practice a faith tradition. Before asking this question, be sure to understand from students the role that faith plays in their lives.

### Possible responses when you may not have the answer:

- “I may not have all the answers, but I’m here for you. Help me to understand, and I will connect you with someone who can get you the information and help you need.”
- “I don’t have the answer right here, but I will be the person who gets back to you to help you.”

## Resources

### General contact for all student needs

- Corday Goddard, Associate Dean of Student Development  
920-403-1351 • [corday.goddard@snc.edu](mailto:corday.goddard@snc.edu)

### Health and wellness

- Counseling & Psychological Services  
920-403-3045 • [counseling@snc.edu](mailto:counseling@snc.edu)
- Health Services • 920-403-3266 • [health@snc.edu](mailto:health@snc.edu)
- Food insecurity • 920-403-3266 • [health@snc.edu](mailto:health@snc.edu)
- You@SNC • [you.snc.edu](http://you.snc.edu)
- Wellness by Design • [snc.edu/wellnessbydesign](http://snc.edu/wellnessbydesign)
- Safe & Sound • [snc.edu/safeandsound](http://snc.edu/safeandsound)

### Diversity and inclusion

- Diversity Affairs • 920-403-3039 • [diversity@snc.edu](mailto:diversity@snc.edu)
- Multicultural Student Services  
920-403-4023 • [multicultural@snc.edu](mailto:multicultural@snc.edu)
- SNC’s Commitment to an Anti-Racist Culture  
[snc.edu/antiracism](http://snc.edu/antiracism)

### Community-building

- #ForeverSNC • [foreversnc.knight.domains](http://foreversnc.knight.domains)
- SNC social media accounts • [snc.edu/go/socialmedia](http://snc.edu/go/socialmedia)

### Reflection and contemplation

- St. Norbert College Parish  
920-403-3010 • [parish@snc.edu](mailto:parish@snc.edu)
- Emmaus Center for Spiritual Life & Vocation  
920-403-3155 • [emmaus@snc.edu](mailto:emmaus@snc.edu)

### Other

- Financial Aid • 920-403-3071 • [financialaid@snc.edu](mailto:financialaid@snc.edu)
- Career & Professional Development  
920-403-3040 • [careers@snc.edu](mailto:careers@snc.edu)
- SNC’s COVID-19 response and updates • [snc.edu/covid19](http://snc.edu/covid19)

## Share a Concern

If there is a concern about a particular student’s well-being, or for their success or retention, use the Share a Concern Reporting Form at [snc.edu/shareaconcern](http://snc.edu/shareaconcern). The Behavior Intervention Team will determine how to address the situation.