



# **Parent & Family Orientation Resource Guide Fall 2017**

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

## ***Dear Parents and Families,***

Welcome to the Connecticut College family! This guide provides a brief overview of orientation resources and information for parents.

Central to your student's Connecticut College experience will be learning to make the connections among the choices they make, the communities they will inhabit, and the work they will do in the class and in the world. The Orientation program, scheduled for Aug. 24-28, will introduce your student to the core principles that define how we, at Connecticut College, learn and live together as a community.

As a result of participating in Orientation, parents and families of new students will:

- Discover the depth of Connecticut College resources for student success, while developing a realistic perspective about the types of challenges students may face during the first year of college
- Recognize their role as partners with Connecticut College in an effort to help students achieve the best possible education
- Learn about expectations for behavior related to a student's academic and social development

As a result of participating in Orientation, new students will:

- Understand the mission and core values of Connecticut College
- Learn about academic and co-curricular campus resources and ways to become an involved citizen
- Understand the educational and social benefits of engaging with diversity
- Design a balanced academic schedule for the fall semester in conjunction with their advising team and dive deeply into the Connections Curriculum

- Embrace the importance of the Connecticut College Honor Code and articulate the expectations of the Honor Code
- Recognize the connection between well-being and academic success
- Learn how to live in a community with peers and how their behaviors/actions have an impact on the entire community
- Understand what it means to be an active bystander
- Forge new friendships through fun and enjoyable social interactions.

Events are mandatory for all new students.

Students at Conn take an active role in their education, which comes with both freedoms and responsibilities. Taking advantage of all the Orientation program has to offer is the first step. We encourage you to discuss this with your student in advance of their arrival on August 24.

In this guide, you will find the following information:

*Expectations of Connecticut College Students*

*Communications to Parents/Guardians*

*Support for New Students*

*Conversations About Alcohol and Other Drugs*

*Important Dates and Phone Numbers*

*Overview of Parent/Family Orientation Schedule\**

\*final schedules and campus maps available on move-in day

We welcome you to Connecticut College!

-Emily Morash, dean of first-year students, and  
Geoff Norbert, assistant dean of student life

# Expectations of Connecticut College Students

The relationship between students and the College (and between parents/guardians of students and the College) is different from that in high school. While we are here to give support to students, we see them as emerging adults who will take responsibility for their conduct in their academic and personal lives. Students will have the guidance of faculty advisers and the dean's staff, but they will make the primary decisions about the courses they take, their academic path, and their co-curricular activities.

The Connecticut College Honor Code sets the tone for campus life and acts as a philosophy to live by through demonstrating a commitment to personal participation in improving the quality of life in our community.

## The Honor Code

*"I accept membership into Connecticut College, a community committed to cultural and intellectual diversity. I understand my obligation to this community under the Honor Code and pledge to uphold standards of behavior governed by honor. I pledge to take responsibility for my beliefs, and to conduct myself with integrity, civility, and the utmost respect for the dignity of all human beings. I pledge that my actions will be thoughtful and ethical and that I will do my best to instill a sense of responsibility in those among us who falter."*

All Connecticut College students sign this pledge during orientation to demonstrate their commitment to the campus community.

*What do these ideals mean on our campus?*

**Integrity:** Our students exemplify honesty, honor, and respect for the truth in all of their conduct.

**Civility:** Our students are just and equitable in their treatment of all members of the community and act to discourage and/or intervene to prevent unjust and inequitable behaviors.

**Respect:** Our students show positive regard for each other, for property, and for the community.

Among the questions you and your student may want to consider before arriving are:

- What is the purpose of an Honor Code?
- How will your student take responsibility should they violate the Honor Code?
- How will your student address his/her peers if they are violating the Honor Code?
- As a parent, what do you want to know about when your student has a conduct violation?

The Honor Code places a good deal of responsibility for both social and academic life on our students, and the correctness of some of the decisions they may have to make will not always be immediately obvious. If a student violates our code of conduct, we expect the student to own the mistake and take responsibility for it. As a College, we recognize students make mistakes, we expect them to own those choices, and we are committed to supporting students in taking responsibility for the choices they make. When evaluating a student's conduct at the College, we consider both the academic and social choices made by the student. We want to be certain that all of our students and families understand our holistic approach to the student experience.

# *Communications to Parents and Guardians*

College staff communicates openly and candidly with students about their progress and difficulties and encourages students to communicate routinely with their parents/guardians about both. The College recognizes that parents and guardians have a legitimate and abiding interest in their student's progress, especially in understanding when they may be failing to meet the College's academic and social expectations. The College balances this consideration not only against our legal obligations but also with our educational philosophy.

The following principles inform the relationships between faculty and staff, and students with whom they work:

- The College is committed to assisting students to become effective agents for lifelong learning and to enhancing their capacity for self-reflection, self-reliance, and self-direction.
- The College respects students' capacity to make decisions on their own behalf and to take responsibility for their successes and failures.
- Students' capacities for self-reflection and self-reliance are fostered in strong and supportive networks of family, friends, teachers, counselors, and advisors.
- The College seeks to reinforce existing friendship and familial networks and to help forge additional ones upon which students may draw for advice, counsel, and support.

In practical terms, that means that students are responsible for informing family members about their accomplishments, disciplinary issues, or health or mental health concerns. In general, College officials will share that information with parents/guardians only with the student's knowledge and consent. However, as permitted by FERPA, the College will notify parents and guardians in the following circumstances:

- **Conduct** - a dependent student's violation of the Honor Code and/or Student Code of Conduct results in disciplinary probation level 2, loss of housing, suspension or expulsion.
- **Academic Progress** - when a student is placed on warning, very serious warning, advised to withdraw, directed to withdraw.
- **Academic Achievement** - parents of new students will be notified if their student achieves Dean's Honors or Dean's High Honors. Please note that the College will not release grades to parents or guardians.

A few tips:

- Encourage your student to check their email regularly. Email is the primary means of communication used at the College and they will receive important information regularly in their email.
- Email or call the Dean of First-Year Students if you are concerned about how your student is doing academically at the College. We do not recommend that parents or family contact advisers or faculty members directly with concerns, but instead reach out to the Dean's office first.

# *Support for New Students*

## **The First-Year Program**

Connecticut College thinks about our students' first year in an integrated way. By intertwining their work with the dean of first-year students, the Orientation program, the first-year seminar program and the team advising structure, we assist in their transition and provide support throughout the year.

Students can seek out support and guidance from a number of offices on campus, which work together to support student well-being and academic and social success.

## **Office of the Dean of the College**

The Dean of the College and the class deans—of first-year students, of sophomores, and of juniors and seniors—oversee the academic progress of students and coordinate academic advising. The dean of juniors and seniors initially assists with transfer students as well. The deans are available to meet with students throughout the year about any issue related to their college experience.

## **Office of Student Life**

The Dean of Students, the Senior Associate Dean of Student Life and the staffs in Student Health Services, Student Counseling Services, Residential Education and Living, Student Engagement, Campus Safety, Student Wellness, Alcohol and Other Drug Education, and Sexual Violence Prevention and Advocacy work together in myriad ways to advance and support students' educational experiences.

## **Academic Support Services**

Academic Support Services encompasses the Academic Resource Center (ARC), the Writing Center, Student Accessibility Services, and our Office of Career and Professional Development. The programs are available to all students so

that they may reach their maximum academic potential. Distinct support services offered by ARC staff include individual and small group tutoring, individual academic coaching, dean's alert counseling and referral, and academic interventions for students on academic probation.

## **Division of Institutional Equity and Inclusion (DIEI)**

The Division of Institutional Equity and Inclusion contributes to the educational mission of the College by providing leadership and support for advancing the College's commitment to diversity and inclusion. The division has three student-focused branches: Gender & Sexuality Programs, Race & Ethnicity Programs, and Religious & Spiritual Life, each of which offers direct advising and support to students as well as educational and social programming for the broader campus community. There are also several safe spaces on campus for people who share identities, beliefs, and common interests to gather. These include the LGBTQIA and Womxn's Centers (both in Smith-Burdick Hall), Unity House (a multicultural center), Harkness Chapel, and the Zachs Hillel House.

## **CARE Team**

The CARE (Concern, Assessment, Response, Evaluation) Team provides coordinated support for students in distress and addresses concerns about student behavior, academic progress, and personal issues, including mental health concerns. The class deans, staff from Student Life, and the dean of Academic Support Services meet regularly to discuss students of concern.

Additional information about the CARE Team may be found online at: <http://www.conncoll.edu/campus-life/dean-of-student-life/care-team/>

## *Conversations About Alcohol and Other Drugs*

The legal drinking age is 21, which means that some students on campus are of legal drinking age. All students will have to make choices about alcohol use as well as other social behaviors. Over the summer, we will prompt your student to begin thinking about these decisions. Your student will receive an email in mid July to complete an online educational tool to prepare them for managing their own choices.

We know that many of you have concerns, particularly about alcohol use and how your student may respond to the new freedoms and greater responsibility for their own behavior. Students may want to decide ahead of time whether or not to drink at college.

- What will they do if they find themselves at a party with only alcohol to drink?
- What if their roommate likes to drink and party?
- Will they feel comfortable stepping in if a friend has too much to drink?

We have found that the majority of students make responsible decisions about alcohol use, but if you do have concerns about your student's use, we encourage you to have your student talk with our Director of Student Wellness, Alcohol or Other Drug Education (860-439-2286).

**Parental Notification:** The College retains the right to notify parents about alcohol or drug incidents involving students under age 21 but our practice is as follows for violations of campus policy

**First violation:** the College will work solely and directly with student

**Second violation:** the College may choose to notify the parent/guardian,

**Third violation:** the College will notify the parent/guardian