



# Monarch Family Connection

A publication from Student Transition & Family Programs  
An Office of Student Engagement & Enrollment Services

[odu.edu/family](http://odu.edu/family)

[familyconnection@odu.edu](mailto:familyconnection@odu.edu)

February Issue



Big Blue says "What's Up?": Check-in with your student about how their semester is going.

## Inside

- ◆ Early Alerts
- ◆ SEES Spotlight
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- ◆ Communication Tips
- ◆ Important Dates

## Check Out How to Check-In: Early Alerts Indicate Academic Progress

In the January edition of Monarch Family Connection, we discussed goal-setting and how communicating with your student leads to accountability and positive results. February is a wonderful time to check-in with your student on their academic goals as Early Alerts will be sent out this month. Early Alerts is a university-wide policy that requires professors teaching 100-200 level courses to post midterm grades. If a student is receiving a C- or below in a course, they are contacted via their ODU email by their academic advisor and a member of the Residence Life staff if they live on-campus. The Early Alert system is in place to let your student know how they are doing in their courses early enough for them to make changes necessary for their academic success. A doctoral study by Lori Jean Dwyer (2017) asserts that the Early Alert system can increase persistence and encourage students to seek academic support resources.

We recommend talking to your student about office hours and on-campus tutoring. All professors are required to have office hours, a designated time when students can stop by and meet with their professor,

posted on the syllabus. Students can also utilize [Tutoring Central](#) for free online or on-campus tutoring. Tutoring Central offers support for various subjects including Accounting, Biology, Math, and more.



◆ Students can receive free tutoring and academic support both on-campus and online.



Engage in open and supportive conversations with your student to support them through their college career.

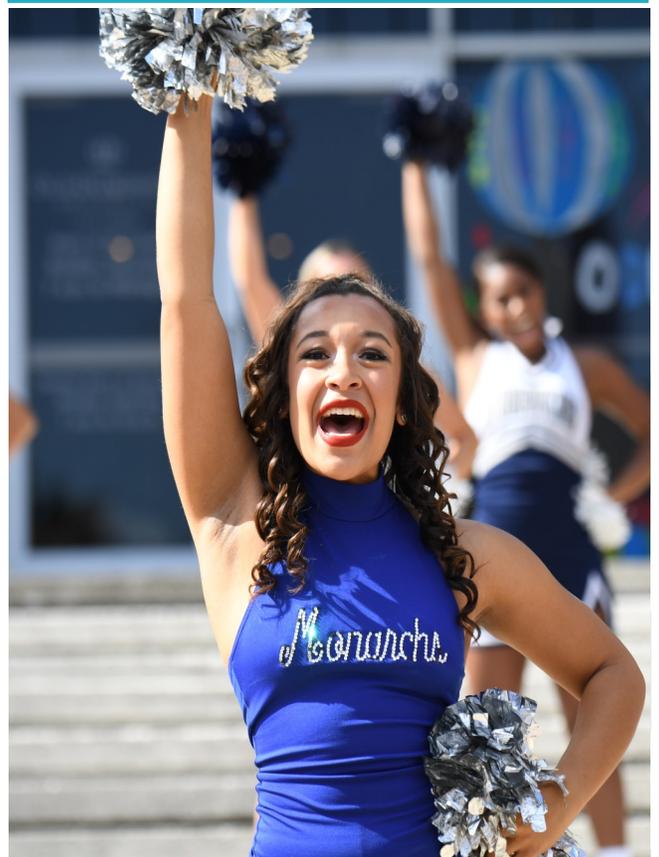
## Cultivating the Crown through Cultivating Conversation

Communication is the core of all relationships. We have an overabundance of ways to communicate with each other, everything from texting, FaceTime, social media, phone calls, letters, and even face-to-face. Because you may not see your student as frequently as you're used to, or as you'd like, communicating with your student may have changed and may feel a little bit more difficult. This is a completely normal feeling amongst families with students enrolled in college. Here is a list of principles to help guide conversations with your student.

1. **Prepare for the conversation.** Your student is adjusting to a new routine, so schedule a dedicated time to talk. Prepare by identifying topics you'd like to discuss and share it with them in advance. This allows your student an opportunity to gather their thoughts and leads to richer dialogue. Also, ask your student to add topics to affirm that the conversation is a two-way street and both parties are valuable contributors.
2. **Different questions yield different results.** Make sure you ask your student open-ended questions. These will provide a more in-depth answer. For example, instead of asking "How is class going?" try "Tell me about your classes. What do you enjoy about them?"
3. **Be an active listener.** Conversation can be compared to a game of catch—each person has to throw and catch the ball. Active listening helps the other person know they are being heard through techniques such as rephrasing, summarizing, and clarifying.
4. **Follow-up.** Think about conversations as a way to build a foundation, so always leave room to build upon previous conversation. If your student expresses concern about a certain class, remember that detail and follow-up with some resources that may assist. Consider sending a text saying, "I heard about tutoring for accounting, here's the website". This is a slight nudge to empower your student.

## SEES Spotlight: The Office of Counseling Services

As discussed in the January edition, wellness has nine dimensions that are all connected - no dimension is more important than the other. With that being said, as the semester progresses, you may notice that your student is experiencing stress, anxiety, change in diet, and lack of motivation. The Office of Counseling Services (OCS) supports the mission of the University by helping students resolve stressful circumstances. The Office of Counseling Services, comprised of trained professionals, provides mental health services such as individual and group counseling, psychiatric services, crisis intervention and workshops all free to students. Students are able to receive a maximum of 10 free individual sessions per calendar year and unlimited group sessions. OCS can also support students by providing outside referrals should a student need additional support. OCS focuses on building resiliency as it will help students through stressful times. Students are able to schedule consultations in-person. For more information on scheduling an appointment with OCS, please visit [here](#).



Continue to cheer your student  
onto success!

## Money Talks, Money Matters

Most of us learned about managing finances from our family, including spending, budgeting, saving, and credit. Building financial literacy is an important tool for everyone. ODU's banking partner, [PNC](#), has developed some tips to help you, help your student.

1. Involve your student in shopping. The next time you go shopping with your student, have your student calculate the expenses of the trip. Have them calculate the total cost of groceries for your family. This will engage them in the process while learning the cost of typical household items.
2. Help your student learn to budget. Once they have calculated the cost, have them stick to a budget once in the store. Budgeting is a form of discipline needed to effectively manage finances.
3. Make savings goals. Introduce your student to an automatic savings option. This makes the idea of saving not optional. By automatically transferring \$20 into a savings account every month, or paycheck, your student will not miss the money as it appears that it was never spendable.



## February Upcoming Events and Highlights

### Academics

**February 4:** Study Abroad Fair in Webb Center.

**February 6:** Housing Showcase. Students can tour different residences.

**February 14:** Return Housing Application Opens via ODU Housing Portal for current on-campus residents and Q&A session in Webb.

**February 21:** Housing hosts Parent Virtual Q&A on Facebook Live.

**February 28:** Return Housing Application Closes for Self Selection Period.

### Activities

**February 19:** Career Development Services hosts Effective Resume Writing workshop.

**February 22-23:** ODU Monologues at the University Theatre. Tickets can be purchased at the Women's Center in Webb Center.

### Athletics

Monarch Winter/Spring sports are in full swing. For a full schedule of sporting events, please visit [here](#). Students receive free entry to all Monarch home games.

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