



Framingham State University

# PARENT & FAMILY CONNECTION



**FALL 2019**

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FSU PARENT AND  
FAMILY  
NEWSLETTER

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## Greetings Parents and Families!

Welcome to the Parent and Family Connection Newsletter. Our goal for this newsletter is to provide you with current, relevant information that applies to your first-year student. This will be issued several times throughout the year. College is a busy time and we want you to stay informed as much as possible about all that is happening at FSU. We aim to provide you with details on University initiatives, important resources, and events on campus. This information not only keeps you involved and informed, but also allows you to recommend resources and events that you feel would be important for your student. We consider you our partners in helping your student have a positive, successful experience here at FSU. We hope this newsletter helps to keep you informed!

Ben Trapanick  
Director of New Student and Family Programs

David Baldwin  
Associate Dean of Students

## Important Dates

### **Thanksgiving Recess**

November 27-29, 2019  
(Begins @ 4:30pm Wed, Nov 27)

### **Last Day of Classes**

Friday, December 13

### **Final Exam Period**

M-F December 16-20

### **Last Resident Move-out day**

Friday, December 20

### **Resident Move-in day (spring semester)**

Monday, January 20, 2020

### **Classes resume**

Tuesday, January 21, 2020



# Growth Mindset and the Power of YET

Students can easily become discouraged and overwhelmed when college courses do not result in the grades students may have been used to getting in high school. This can lead students to want to give up in certain academic areas, believing themselves to be unintelligent or not good enough to make it in college. Nothing could be further from the truth! All students here at FSU belong and we want your student to succeed—and there are ways of doing so.

All students should believe they have to work hard for their grades and be discouraged from believing they are simply good or bad in various academic areas. By constantly exploring areas for growth and understanding, success in any area is possible. If a student is not good at something now, they should believe they are not good in that area YET.

Carol Dweck, a Professor Of Psychology at Stanford University is best known for her work on the mindset psychological theory of the Fixed Mindset vs. the Growth Mindset. Students with a fixed mindset tend to believe their intelligence is predetermined and believe their capabilities are limited. “I’m not good at math” is a common type of thing someone with a fixed mindset might say, and in doing so, they are confining themselves to restricted capabilities. “I’m not very good at math, YET” is the type of comment someone with a growth mindset might say, believing that with effort, persistence, and adaptability to different approaches in learning—there can be positive outcomes. Neuroscience has shown the brain to be extremely malleable and science has proven that abilities are not inherent, but developed instead. We are not always naturally “smart” at everything we first try, and sometimes our brains need to be stretched and “trained” in different areas. Growth is possible! The resources linked below are available if you would like to learn more about the Growth Mindset:

<https://www.edutopia.org/topic/growth-mindset>

<https://www.mindsetworks.com/science/>

**Carol Dweck on YouTube:**

<https://youtu.be/J-swZaKN2Ic>

<https://youtu.be/hiiEeMN7vbQ>

## THE FORCE

### Growth Mindset

Intelligence can be developed

Leads to a desire to learn and therefore a tendency to ...

If you hold a Growth Mindset, you believe that intelligence can be developed, that the brain can be grown and strengthened, like a muscle that can be trained. This leads to your desire to improve.

- ... embrace challenges  
And how do you improve?  
First you embrace challenges because you know you'll come out stronger on the other side.
- ... persist in the face of setbacks  
Similarly, obstacles or external setbacks do not discourage you. Your self-image is not tied to your success or how you will look to others. Failure is an opportunity to learn and so, whatever happens, you will win.
- ... see effort as the path to mastery  
As a Growth Mindset individual, you see effort as necessary to grow and master useful skills and knowledge; you do not view effort as something useless or to be avoided. You are not turned away by fears that you might make an attempt, or even work hard, and that failure is possible.
- ... learn from criticism  
Criticism and negative feedback are sources of information. That doesn't mean that all criticism is worth integrating or that nothing is ever to be taken personally. As a Growth Mindset individual, you know that you can continue change and improve, so negative feedback is not perceived as being directly about you as a person but rather about the current state of your abilities.
- ... find lessons and inspiration in the success of others  
You see the success of others as sources of inspiration, information opportunities to learn. Growth mindset individuals do not view success as a competitive, zero-sum game with others.

As a result, you reach ever-higher levels of achievement. All this gives you a greater sense of free will.

As a Growth Mindset individual, you note your improvements and this creates positive feedback loops that encourage you to continue learning and improving. Most people do not have a 100% Growth Mindset or a 100% Fixed Mindset; most of us have some of both. The good news is that it is possible to change your worldview from Fixed Mindset to Growth Mindset. Carol Dweck's research indicates that both children and adults can be taught to change their mindsets.

GRAPHIC BY HIGEL HOLMES



## Family Communication

The transition to college is an exciting time. It is a time full of exploration and new experiences that lead to a new sense of independence for your student. This can make regular communication a bit different between you and your student while they are away at school. Having a conversation early on about expectations for a communication schedule can be helpful for all. Setting up standards for how often and by what methods you will be communicating with them can ensure you are staying involved with your student – that is a benefit to you both!

The following articles:

[Communicating With Your College Student: Six Principles to Help You Make the Most of Opportunities](#) and [College Students Tell Parents How to Communicate With Them](#) provide helpful tips for talking to your college student that will result in the most productive conversations while your student is away at school.

We recommend giving them a read!

# Continuing Successful Strategies and Handling Stressful Times

Parents, students have been very busy working hard this semester and engaging in strategies for success here at FSU! We also recognize that college life can be somewhat of a rollercoaster, and as well as they are doing, it is not always easy. Just when your student seems well-adjusted to their class schedule and campus life, it will suddenly be the last half of the semester when your student will start preparing for finals. Staying organized, studying hard, and writing papers can become a heavy weight for students—especially first-year students who have yet to experience this aspect of college life. Your student may call and seem stressed out—and these are the times they may need some extra support! Being prepared for this with the understanding of how to handle these situations can help dramatically. Remind your student that there are resources available on campus to help and should be taken advantage of. CASA is there for assistance in writing their best paper, learning good study skills and study habits, and for tutoring if your student feels they could benefit from added instruction. The Counseling center is also available if your student feels they could use someone to talk to! College life can be tough at times but the tools your student needs to get through this are there and are accessible. Your student will get through it, and so will you!

Click below for some helpful articles on this subject:

<https://www.collegeparentcentral.com/2018/10/when-your-college-students-class-isnt-going-well/#more-4874>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/college-life-how-to-reduce-stress-3145176>

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/what-mentally-strong-people-dont-do/201708/the-1-skill-college-students-wish-their-parents>

