

## Entering College: A Big Step

*John W. Harp, Vice President for Student Affairs*

It's almost time for your son or daughter to take the big step of leaving home and entering college. This will be both an exciting and anxiety-filled experience for new college students (and for parents). When new students across the country arrive on their college campuses soon, it will start the clock on a critical six- to 10-week period in which they will engage in new experiences related to their immediate and eventual success in college. Adapting to new surroundings, new friends, new academic expectations, new routines, and a roommate are just a few of the transitional challenges that new students encounter. But rest easy, the faculty and staff at Cornell College are well-trained to assist your son or daughter with these and other transitions.

As you will soon learn, Cornell College is a special place; a place that makes differences in the lives of students, differences that last a lifetime. Students are expected to learn in a unique format, and live harmoniously in a close-knit and responsive campus community.

### Learning to learn

First and foremost, your Cornell student will be challenged to learn in a fast-paced, yet in-depth manner closely resembling the ways of the world of work and life. Most importantly, new Cornell students will enhance

their abilities to learn, a skill that will benefit them for a lifetime. The first few months may be trying, but with the right dedication and support, your son or daughter will get the hang of it and will meet this challenge.

### Finding their place

Secondly, your son or daughter will experience membership in the Cornell community. Almost immediately, he or she will realize that, along with learning, our community values involvement, leadership, service, diversity, and caring about others. New Cornellians will experience meeting people similar to and very different from themselves. Your son or daughter will reap the rewards of participating in student organizations and service outings, attending campus cultural events, and engaging in thoughtful conversations. He or she will reflect critically after listening to new ideas, being part of a team, and finding activities of interest. Experiences in this community will produce times of joy and celebration and times of pride and belonging. But along the way there may also be times of anxiety and self-doubt. Your son or daughter will learn from these experiences and will develop a deep connection that will cause them to consider the Cornell community as a second home.

### Developing as an adult

From the beginning, your son or daughter will be treated like an adult in progress. As you well

know, this means having both significant responsibility and freedom. With this freedom and responsibility, your student can expect support and challenge from staff, faculty, and peers. As your student joins organizations, participates in service or excels in class, he or she will receive positive feedback, support and advice. However, if your student skips class or meetings with an advisor, there may be consequences. Finally, if a student makes inappropriate, unhealthy, or dangerous choices, he or she will likely have more serious interactions with staff members. Responses will be firm, fair, and supportive of the development of personal responsibility leading to adulthood.

This is just a capsule of the unique challenges and experiences that lie ahead for your Cornellian this fall. We are proud that more than 8 out of 10 first-year students return for their sophomore year at Cornell; a success rate that is above average compared to similar institutions. We continually strive to provide an outstanding educational experience for Cornellians in and out of the classroom and to engage students in extraordinary opportunities with meaningful outcomes. We are very excited that you and your student will be a part of our community and hope you cherish the experience.

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### 6 ways parents can help students have a successful first-year experience

1. Encourage them to establish guidelines with roommates early, and to talk regularly with each other about how they are getting along.
2. Discuss the necessity to attend every class meeting, prepare before class, and turn in all assignments.
3. Stress the importance of effective time management, and discuss the dangers of spending too much time online.
4. Encourage them to meet with professors and advisors, and use resources including the writing studio, academic media studio, quantitative reasoning studio, and the counseling center.
5. Advise them to take in campus events, meet people, and get involved. Engagement outside of the classroom can contribute to learning and development.
6. Ask what they like most and least about college; help them build on the positives and develop solutions for alleviating the negatives.

## OPENING DAY SCHEDULE

Tuesday, August 24, 2010

### 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Move into residence halls

### 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon

Validation (Small Multi-Sports Center)

### 11:00 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

Campus Tours for parents and students (leaves from the kiosk behind Bowman-Carter residence hall)

### 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Lunch (The Commons)

Meal plans begin for new students. Two opening day lunch tickets will be provided for parents or guests at Validation. Otherwise, cost is \$7.00 for adults; \$3.50 for children under 12.

### 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Parent Orientation (your choice of location: Kimmel Theatre or Armstrong Hall) Same program in both locations.

#### What's Next?

Inside information about what your student's experience will be like and what you can do to support their learning and growth. Led by John W. Harp, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Joe Dieker, Dean of the College

#### Reality 101

Heidi Levine, Dean of Students and Chris Wiltgen, Associate Dean of Students/ Director of Residence Life will focus on the "reality" of residential living, alcohol use, healthy decision-making, diversity and more.

### 3:15 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Parent & Academic Advisors Info Sessions (locations will be provided at Validation) Meet your student's academic advisor and learn about Cornell's advising system.

### 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

New Student Convocation (King Chapel)

### 5 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Family Farewell

## Opening Day Information

Bringing a son or daughter to college, especially for the first time, can be stressful. This information is meant help you prepare for and execute this day with as little trouble as possible.

### Move in

Upon arriving in Mount Vernon, the first stop will be your student's residence hall. Your route will vary depending on which residence hall you need to reach, so print the move-in map from <http://www.cornellcollege.edu/nso/move-in-day/index.shtml> and look for signs as you approach campus.

Moving in may be the most challenging part of the day, so dress for hot weather and hard work. Plan to unload quickly near the residence hall (volunteers will be there to

help) then move your car to one of the nearby parking lots.

When packing, remember that on-campus storage is not available and that college furniture must remain in the room. Label all boxes with your student's room number. New students should plan to arrive at Cornell on Tuesday, Aug. 24 between 8:30 a.m. and noon. Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate early arrivals.

### Validation

Validation will be from 9 a.m. until noon in the Small Multi-sports Center Arena. This is where administrative details are completed. The entire process typically takes less than 30 minutes. Students who will participate in work-study should have a driver's license or passport and birth certificate or social security card.

### Questions and Answers

Many of your questions, particularly regarding financial aid, registration and billing, will be answered during Validation. A range of information will be provided and your questions answered at Parent Orientation sessions with administrators and faculty academic advisors. Parents of upperclass students, who are part of the Parents Advisory Council, will even be on hand to assist.

Please refer to the NSO webpage (see link below) for your student's checklist, a parent's schedule for Opening Day, and much more.

Can't find answers to questions that need to be addressed before your arrival? Use the enclosed Resource Guide and call us. Still not sure where to call? Just phone The Commons Info Desk at (319) 895-4334.

New Student Orientation Website <http://www.cornellcollege.edu/nso>

Important links are included for parents and incoming students.

## Academics

### Focus on Academics during NSO Grade Reports

A significant portion of NSO sessions are dedicated to introducing and immersing students into Cornell's academic culture. Most sessions are led by faculty members, and include:

- Introduction to the liberal arts
- One Book, One Community reading program
- Individual and small group meetings with academic advisors
- Registration assistance
- Academic expectations (led by upperclass students)
- Blockbuster lectures
- Pre-Law and Pre-Health interest lunches
- Interactive Library Tour
- 1st block course preview

Students should participate fully in the academic and social components of orientation.

Students receive a grade for each course taken and the grades are available to students on a secure web site by the first week of the next term. A student's academic information, including grades, is considered confidential information by federal law. Students can share their grades via email with parents (and others) by following instructions found here: <http://www.cornellcollege.edu/information-technology/software-training/self-service/sharing-grades.shtml>

Additionally, Cornell personnel cannot necessarily discuss academic information with parents, even if you receive grade reports. Your student must also grant College personnel permission to discuss their academic progress by filling out a "Parental Release" form at [http://www.cornellcollege.edu/registrar/pdf/Release\\_grades\\_form.pdf](http://www.cornellcollege.edu/registrar/pdf/Release_grades_form.pdf). If you have questions, please contact the Registrar.

## Student Physicals

All students are required to submit health information forms (<http://www.cornellcollege.edu/student-health/newstudent-healthforms/index.shtml>) by July 31. **Students who have not turned in the required health forms cannot attend class beginning second block, until the information is complete.** Please make sure that the medical history, immunizations, and physical forms have been sent in.

## Health Insurance

Although students are not required to carry Cornell insurance, all students must carry health insurance that covers them in the state of Iowa. We encourage you to review your current policy so that you are aware of your student's coverage away from home. To view information regarding the additional student accident and sickness insurance plan offered to Cornell students, go to

<http://cornellcollege.edu/student-health/health-insurance/index.shtml> Questions about student insurance can be directed to the Student Affairs Office at (319) 895-4234. All students will be automatically enrolled in the College student insurance plan, which will be billed to their account, unless they decline. If they wish to decline they must go on line to <http://www.eija.org/cornell/StudentWaive.asp> and provide proof of comparable coverage and waive enrollment by October 1, 2010.

## Meningitis Vaccine

The Centers for Disease Control highly recommends immunizing all incoming freshmen against meningococcal disease. The meningitis vaccine can be obtained from your family physician or at the Cornell Student Health Center. Sign-up and prepay (\$100) for the vaccine at Validation on August 24, or later at the Student Health Center.

## Emergency Planning

Family, campus or regional emergencies may occur while your son or daughter is at Cornell. Have multiple options for communicating (e-mail, cell, text, designating a friend of family member outside your hometown and Mt. Vernon through which to relay messages) in case one mode is down.

## Rapid Alert Messaging

All new students should register for Cornell's emergency text messaging service that notifies them of safety concern situations on or around campus. Students can register at <http://www.cornellcollege.edu/student-gateway/emergency-information.shtml>

## Smoke-free Campus

State law requires all indoor and outdoor spaces to be smoke free.

## Renter's Insurance

Cornell highly recommends that you should obtain a renter's insurance policy to cover replacement of your student's belongings while living away from home. Just like in your home, destructive events (like pipes bursting) can destroy property. Cornell, like other colleges, does not insure students' personal property, but we do provide immediate assistance. Think of us like the Red Cross; we'll intervene right away to place students in safe and secure places to live and help meet immediate needs (e.g., textbooks, clean clothes). But replacing entire wardrobes, computers, etc. is the purpose of insurance. Check with your agent or research online to obtain a policy to cover your student's belongings on and off campus.

## Information Technology

### Personal Computers Security and Virus Protection

- It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that their personal computer which they will use on campus is virus-free and has an updated version of one of the following Anti-Virus software packages when they arrive to campus: Microsoft Security Essentials (Free), McAfee, Free AVG, Trend Micro, or Norton.
- In addition to having current virus protection, it is extremely important that your student's computer is up-to-date with the latest available security patches. Please use the appropriate update method for your operating system. The two most popular methods are by running Windows Update on your Windows based computer or Software Update on an Apple system.

### ResNet, Telephone, and Cable TV

- All on campus residence hall rooms have network access, both wired and wireless. To connect a personal computer to the Residential Network (ResNet), students must have a computer with a network card. If the computer does not have a network card already installed, one can be purchased at any local computer store. Once you have a working computer with a network card installed, simply connect it to the network port in the room using an Ethernet cable, or in the case of a wireless connection, follow the connection instructions at <http://www.cornellcollege.edu/information-technology/gb-students/wireless-networks/index.shtml>. When your student opens a web browser, they will be directed to Cornell's online registration page. If needed, IT will assist in connecting a working computer that is virus-free and spyware-free to ResNet.
- All residence hall rooms are equipped with a telephone line that will allow for free local calls. Students need their own handset and voicemail system if they wish to use one. All students need to provide their own long distance access. Due to Cornell's location, some brands of cell phones do not receive a reliable signal on campus. The four providers that we have found to provide the best reception are US Cellular, Verizon, iWireless, and Nextel, but there may be campus trouble spots for those providers as well.
- All on campus residence hall rooms are cable television ready. To connect, all that is needed is a cable ready TV and a standard coax cable. Once connected, don't forget to have the TV automatically scan for available channels. There are 51 cable channels available through Cornell's cable system. [http://www.cornellcollege.edu/information\\_technology/tv/](http://www.cornellcollege.edu/information_technology/tv/)

Questions?  
Contact Cornell's  
Information  
Technology (IT)  
Department at  
319-895-4357  
OR  
[www.cornellcollege.edu/information\\_technology](http://www.cornellcollege.edu/information_technology)

**Office of Student Affairs**  
**600 First Street West**  
**Mount Vernon, IA 52314**  
Phone: 319-895-4234  
Fax: 319-895-5672  
E-mail:  
Student\_Affairs@cornellcollege.edu

## Dates at a Glance

August 24 - 29	<b>NSO</b>
August 28	<b>Residence halls open for returning students</b>
August 30	<b>Term 1 begins</b>
October 15 - 17	<b>Homecoming</b>
November 5 - 6	<b>Family Weekend</b>
November 25 - 28	<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>
December 17	<b>Term 4 ends</b>
December 18	<b>Residence Halls Close at 11 a.m.</b>
Dec. 18 - January 2	<b>Winter Break</b>
January 2, 2011	<b>Residence Halls open at 9 a.m</b>
January 3, 2011	<b>Term 5 begins</b>
March 24 - April 3	<b>Spring Break</b>
May 25	<b>Term 9 ends</b>
May 26	<b>Residence Halls close for underclass students at 11 a.m.</b>

Add us to your favorite links: [www.cornellcollege.edu](http://www.cornellcollege.edu)

### Parents Advisory Council

The purpose of the Council is to share information, provide feedback, and facilitate parent-to-parent interactions and learning.

Cornell's Vice President for Student Affairs coordinates the group which meets once in the fall on Family Weekend and again in the spring on the weekend of Student Symposium.

Members assist with greeting parents at new student orientation and family weekend events, contribute ideas and articles to parents newsletters, and speak at admissions events in or near their hometowns.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact the Student Affairs Office before September 6, 2010.

### Transportation to airport or bus station

Mount Vernon is just 20 minutes from both the Eastern Iowa Airport and the bus terminal in Cedar Rapids. New students who need transportation from one of these points should call in advance to the Airport Shuttle Service at 1-800-725-8460. Once the academic year begins, students who need transportation to and from the airport or bus terminal should check [www.cornellcollege.edu/info\\_desk](http://www.cornellcollege.edu/info_desk) for information about local shuttle services.

### Money matters

There are three local banks in Mount Vernon (links on NSO webpage); one has an ATM in The Commons. Iowa Banking laws require anyone using it be charged \$1.50 per transaction with the exception of Mount Vernon Bank & Trust customers or Shazam Privilege Status card holders. Students may cash checks for up to \$100 in Old Sem during business hours Monday-Friday.

### Stay Connected with Cornell

- All future parent newsletters will come to you online only (thus the title *Parents E-News*). Please sign up to receive these via email at [www.cornellcollege.edu/parents-gateway/](http://www.cornellcollege.edu/parents-gateway/). Archived issues can be found on the Parents webpage.
- Read *Today@Cornell*, a daily notice of happenings on campus [www.cornellcollege.edu/news-center/today/index.shtml](http://www.cornellcollege.edu/news-center/today/index.shtml).
- Watch the student portal for announcements that students get <http://www.cornellcollege.edu/student-gateway/index.shtml>.