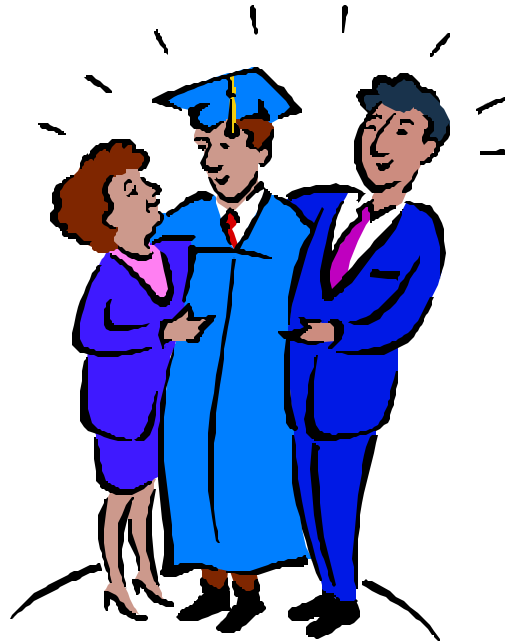


# *Handbook for Parents*



*Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing*

<http://www.nr.edu/cdhh>

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*Revised Sept, 2005*

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## **WELCOME**

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New River Community College (NRCC) is a two-year college which offers associate degrees in technologies and arts and sciences. In addition to five college/university transfer programs, more than thirty challenging occupational/technical programs are available which provide participants the instruction and hands-on experience necessary for career success.

The NRCC campus is located on 100 beautiful acres, providing an environment conducive to learning. The campus has ample parking, tennis courts, athletic fields, and a picnic area. The four main buildings, Godbey Hall, Martin Hall, Rooker Hall and Edwards Hall, contain state-of-the-art laboratories for vocational/technical programs, electronic classrooms, large lecture halls, a learning lab, a student center, an auditorium, and a modern library.

The college operates under an Open Door Policy which allows entry to any person who has a high school diploma, a General Education Development (GED) certificate, or who is 18 years old and, in any case, can benefit from a program. Persons applying for admission to a particular associate program should be a high school graduate, have earned a GED certificate, or have finished an approved developmental program.

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## **VISION**

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Through forward-looking leadership, efficient management and the deep commitment of faculty and staff to provide the best possible teaching and learning environment, New River Community College aims not only to meet the educational challenges of the coming decades, but to welcome them.

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## **MISSION/PURPOSE**

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New River Community College, a member of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS), subscribes to the tenets set forth in the VCCS mission statement. This statement is as follows:

The Virginia Community College System functions within the educational community to assure that all individuals in the diverse regions of the Commonwealth of Virginia are given a continuing opportunity for the development and extension of their skills and knowledge through quality programs and services that are financially and geographically accessible.

The Virginia Community College System, through comprehensive community colleges, provides leadership in determining and addressing both the needs of individuals and the economic needs of the colleges' service areas

Occupational/technical education, transfer education, developmental studies, continuing education, and community services are the primary avenues through which the mission is fulfilled. To assure that all students have the opportunity for success, each college shall provide a comprehensive program of student development services.

In addition, New River Community College believes that all people should have a chance not only to develop and extend their skills and knowledge, but also to increase awareness of their roles and duties as citizens. The college serves the educational needs of the public and assumes a responsibility to help provide the requirements for trained workers in the New River Valley through a combined effort with local industry, business, professions, and government, including economic development efforts. The college is also dedicated to organizing programs with senior institutions as well as with those of local public school systems.

New River Community College offers certificate, diploma, and associate degree programs. The college is also committed to assisting students with decisions concerning their occupational, educational, and personal goals.

*(Revised 7/98; Approved by NRCC Board 12/98)*

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## **BELIEFS**

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- That student learning is the ultimate priority for the college, and that the highest level of commitment must be maintained for serving students by focusing on the teaching/learning process and by providing all necessary support for the personal development of students;
- That instruction must remain the primary function of the college, with other college functions to be supportive of or complementary to the instructional program;
- That access to higher education must be provided to all who can benefit from it;
- That high quality must be maintained in all programs and services through instructional excellence, competency of faculty and staff, ongoing curriculum development and improvement, and effective processes for assessment of quality;
- That the college must foster a spirit of innovation through technological advancements and through continuous improvement of programs and services;

- That a positive institutional climate must be maintained which supports high ethical standards, professionalism, faculty and staff development, and an inclusive environment based on dignity and respect for all persons;
- That the college must be community centered as reflected by comprehensive programming, linkages and partnerships with other organizations, community outreach efforts, fostering of an appreciation for education in the community, and continued responsiveness to community needs;
- That the college must support multi-cultural diversity as well as equal opportunity for all persons, and that the institution must be outward looking as it fulfills its local mission;
- That the college must focus continually on institutional effectiveness with emphasis on accountability, assessment, good management practices, employability of graduates, comprehensive planning processes, and the overall improvement of organizational effectiveness.

For more information about New River Community College see the New River Community College catalog.

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## **CENTER FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING (CDHH)**

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The Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CDHH) is ready to assist students in any way possible during their education at New River Community College. The CDHH is state supported and funded in part by a federal grant administered by the University of Tennessee-Knoxville (Postsecondary Education Consortium), and offers many services, including:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| • Interpreting                                  | • Assistance in locating housing           |
| • Tutoring                                      | • Financial aid/scholarships               |
| • Notetaking                                    | • Job placement assistance                 |
| • Advocacy                                      | • American Sign Language training          |
| • Personal, vocational, and academic counseling | • Complete computer and library facilities |
| • Developmental studies                         |  |

Feel free to contact the Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing for more information or assistance relating to these or any other services the college may offer.

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## CDHH SUMMER ORIENTATION PROGRAM

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Orientation programs are conducted each summer for high school juniors, seniors, college freshman students and transfer students planning to enter college in the fall. Students who are accepted:

- Are given a general introduction to the college community
- Are informed of the various support services available for deaf/hard of hearing students
- Should become familiarized with the academic regulations of New River Community College (NRCC).

For students who need accommodations to access services and programs, the transition to college can be more difficult. Your son or daughter may ask, “As a student with disabilities, what can colleges offer me in the way of assistance? What questions should I ask when I approach colleges? How can an individual college best serve my interests?”

Prospective students are invited to arrange campus tours by contacting the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CDHH) prior to the Summer Orientation Program.

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## STUDENT SERVICES

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In addition to the Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, New River Community College offers the following support services for all students:

- Counseling and advisement
- Orientation (STD 100)
- Career Planning Center
- Cooperative Education
- Learning Achievement Program for Learning Disabled Students (LEAP)
- Academic Support Center (Tutoring Services and Computer Managed Instruction Lab)
- Handbook for Students
- Developmental studies
- Student activities
- Testing
- Center for Single Parents and Home makers

These services are accessible to students who are deaf or hard of hearing through the use of interpreting services. For specific details regarding any of these services, see the NRCC Catalog or contact the Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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## THE TRANSITION TO COLLEGE LIFE

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A student's first year at college is a year of transition for the entire family. A son or daughter will be adjusting to a new and different academic environment as well as to the daily responsibilities of living on his or her own. The college student must learn to balance his or her time between academics and social and personal pursuits. All of these changes, along with the homesickness that may develop, can lead to frustration and stress for both the student and the parents.

New college students may also exhibit changes in their attitude and the way they communicate. This may manifest itself in many ways but is often a result of the increased freedom and responsibility of living on their own. As they go through this period of change and adjustment, you can provide support, understanding, and encouragement. It is natural for parents to be concerned about how their son or daughter will respond and adapt in this new environment. Parents will be able to provide valuable support for their child by being aware of these expected changes. Discussing the issues of communication, finances, and parental expectations with your son or daughter ahead of time will help to minimize some of the problems that might arise once the semester begins. Parents can assure students that they can achieve the success they desire at New River Community College if they apply themselves to their studies.

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## TIPS FOR PARENTING A COLLEGE STUDENT

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The following tips are offered to foster effective parental support of a child enrolled in college.

### **Tip #1 - Don't Ask Them If They're Homesick**

The power of suggestion can be a dangerous thing. (Someone once said, "The idea of being homesick didn't even occur to me, what with all the new things that were going on, until my mom called one of the first weekends and asked >Are you homesick?< Then it hit me.<) The first few days/weeks of school are activity-packed and friend-jammed and the challenge of meeting new people and adjusting to new situations takes a majority of a new student's time and concentration. So, unless they're reminded of it by a well-meaning parent, they'll probably be able to escape the loneliness and frustration of homesickness.

And, even if they don't tell you so during those first few weeks, they do miss you - some homesickness is normal.

### **Tip #2 - Write (Even If They Don't Write Back)**

Although new college students are typically eager to experience all the away-from-home independence they can in those first weeks, most are still anxious for family ties and the security those ties bring. This surge of independence may be misinterpreted as rejection by

sensitive parents, but likely most first-year students (although 99% won't ever admit it) would give anything for some news of home and family, however mundane it may seem to you.

There's nothing more depressing than a week of empty mailboxes. Warning - don't expect a reply to every letter you write. The "you-write-one, they-write-one" sequence isn't always followed by college students, so get set for some unanswered correspondence.

### **Tip #3 - Ask Questions (But Not Too Many)**

First-year college students are "cool" (or so they think) and have a tendency to resent interference with their newfound lifestyle, but most desire the security of knowing that someone is still interested in them.

Parental curiosity can be obnoxious and alienating or relief-giving and supportive depending on the attitudes of the persons involved. "I-have-a-right-to-know" tinged questions, with ulterior motives or the nag, should be avoided. But honest inquiries and other "between friends" communication and discussion will do much to enhance the parent-student relationship.

### **Tip #4 - Expect Change (But Not Too Much)**

Students will change, either drastically within the first months, slowly over several years, or somewhere in between. It's natural, inevitable, and it can be inspiring and beautiful. Often, it's a pain in the neck.

College and the experiences associated with it can affect changes in social, vocational, and personal behavior and choices. An up-to-now wallflower may become a fraternity sweetheart, a pre-med student may discover that biology's not her thing after all, or a high school radical may become a college egghead.

Parents can't stop change, and may not ever understand it, but it is within their power (and to both parents' and student's advantage) to accept it. Your son or daughter will be basically the same person who went away to school, aside from some interest changes and personality revisions. Don't expect too much too soon. Maturation is not an instantaneous or overnight process and perhaps a student will return home with some of the habits and hang-ups, however unsophisticated, that it seemed he/she had grown out of before. Be patient.

### **Tip #5 - Don't Worry (Too Much) About Manic-Depressive Phone Calls or Letters**

Parenting can be a thankless job, especially during the college years. It's a lot of give and only a little take.

Often when troubles become too much for a first-year student to handle (a flunked test, an ended relationship, and a shrunken T-shirt all in one day) the only place to turn, write, or dial is home. Unfortunately, this is often the only time that the urge to communicate is felt so strongly. You may never get to hear about the "AA" paper, the new boyfriend, or the domestic

triumph. In these crisis times your student can unload trouble or tears and, after the catharsis, return to the routine, relieved and lightened, while you inherit the burden of worry.

If your son or daughter is a commuter student you may look forward to the almost daily challenge of being aware of and understanding his or her swings of emotion.

Be patient with those nothing-is-going-right-I-hate-this-place phone calls or letters. Parents provide a real service as advice dispenser, sympathetic ear, or punching bag. Granted, it's a service that makes you feel lousy, but it works wonders for a frustrated student. As has been said before, parenting can be a thankless job.

### **Tip #6 - Visit (But Not Too Often)**

Visits by parents (especially when accompanied by shopping sprees and/or dinners out) are another part of the first-year events that new students are reluctant to admit liking, but greatly appreciate. Pretended dislike of those visits is just another part of the first year syndrome.

These visits give the student a chance to introduce some of the important people in both of his/her now-important worlds (home and school) to each other. Additionally, it's a way for parents to become familiar with (and, hopefully, more understanding of) their student's new activities, commitments and friends.

Spur-of-moment surprise visits are usually not appreciated. (Preemption of a planned weekend of studying or other activities can have disastrous results).

### **Tip #7 – Don't Tell Your Students That These Are The Best Years of Their Lives**

The first year of college (and the other years as well) can be full of indecision, insecurity, disappointments, and most of all, mistakes. It's also full of discovery, inspiration, good times, and people but except in retrospect, it's not the good that stands out.

It takes a while (and the help of some good friends) for a student to realize that he is normal and that the afternoon movie/paperback novel perceptions of what college was all about are inaccurate. It takes a while to accept that being unhappy, afraid, confused, disliking people, and making mistakes (in other words, accepting himself) are all part of the show, all part of this new reality, all part of growing up. It takes a while longer for parents to accept it.

Any parent who believes that all college students get good grades, know what they want to major in, always have activity-packed weekends, have thousands of close friends, and lead carefree, worry-free lives is wrong. So are the parents who think that "college educated" means mistake-proof. Parents who perpetrate and insist upon the "best years" stereotype are working against their child's already difficult self-development. Those who accept and understand the highs and lows of their student's reality are providing support and encouragement where it's needed most.

### **Tip #8 - Trust Them**

For a student, finding oneself is a difficult enough process without feeling that the people whose opinions he respects most are second-guessing his own second-guessing.

One of the most important things a mom ever wrote during her child's years at college was this, "I love you and want for you all the things that make you the happiest, and I guess you, not I, are the one who knows best what those things are." She wrote that during her child's senior year. If you're smart you'll believe it, mean it, and say it now.

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## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

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New River Community College operates on the philosophy that no qualified student should be denied the opportunity of attending college because of a lack of finances. NRCC offers various financial aid programs for students who need assistance, including grants, on and off campus jobs, scholarships, and student loans. A listing of available scholarships can be obtained from the Financial Aid Office or from the NRCC website (<http://www.nr.edu>).

Tuition rates are established annually by the State Board for Community Colleges. Parents may obtain a list of in-state and out-of-state tuition rates from the Admissions Office. In-state tuition rates apply to Virginia residents who have been domiciled in Virginia for at least one year before the start of the semester for which they are enrolling.

In addition to tuition, students must pay a facilities maintenance fee for constructing and maintaining board-approved facilities at the college. The fee is \$3.00 per semester credit hour (not to exceed \$9.00 per semester or the summer session). Students taking non-credit classes will be charged \$2.00 per class in addition to their tuition. If the student withdraws from college during the add/drop period or the number of credits taken drops below three during the add/drop period, the fee is refundable.

A student activities fee to subsidize approved student activities and publications is charged to all on-campus students registered for credit classes offered by the college. This fee is \$3.00 for each semester or the summer session and is refundable if a student withdraws from college during the add/drop period. In addition, a technology fee is charged of \$1.50 per credit hour.

Tuition and fees must be paid at the time of registration. Payment can be made by cash, check, VISA, or MasterCard.

Please refer to the college catalog or contact the Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing for specific information regarding Delayed Payment, Waived Tuition, Books and Materials, Third Party Costs, Field Trips, Refunds, and the various types of Financial Aid available.

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## ACADEMIC CALENDAR

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The *NRCC Student Planner & Handbook* has a schedule of all the important dates in the New River Community College school year. You can find the dates classes begin and end, the last day to drop or add classes, faculty in-service dates, holidays, and graduation dates. If you haven't received a copy of the current Academic Calendar, refer to the NRCC Catalog, the NRCC website (<http://www.nr.edu>), or contact the CDHH.

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## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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New River Community College considers each student a responsible adult and it is assumed that men and women of college age will maintain standards of conduct appropriate to membership in the college community. Emphasis is placed on standards of student conduct rather than on limits or restrictions on students. Guidelines and regulations governing student conduct are developed by representatives of the students, faculty, counseling staff, and the administration. The Student Code of Conduct is the set of standards that has been established as the guideline for the behavior of those in the student community.

When each student signs the Admissions Application, he or she agrees to abide by the following Code of Conduct:

*As a member of the New River Community College Student Body, I will act in a responsible manner with the utmost integrity at all times. I will obey all college rules and regulations. I will respect the rights and privileges of others.*

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 allows the student to have access to all college records regarding him or her except those considered to be confidential under the act. Under this act, grade reports are available only to the student unless he or she gives specific permission for such information to be released. Students may request a release form from the college.

It is the policy of New River Community College to promote equal opportunity in educational programs and activities, admission, and employment, without regard to race, creed, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or any other non-merit factor. More details regarding NRCC's Policies and Procedures can be found in the Student Handbook.

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## **HOTEL LISTING**

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When visiting the area, many parents will need a place to stay. You may want to try one of the following hotels (approximate mileage to NRCC campus is in parentheses):

Best Western Radford Inn – Radford  
(540) 639-3000  
(Eight miles)

Comfort Inn – Radford  
(540) 639-4800  
(Eight miles)

Comfort Inn – Dublin  
(540) 674-1100  
(Three miles)

Hampton Inn – Dublin  
(540) 674-5700  
(Three miles)

Holiday Inn Express - Dublin  
(540) 674-1600  
(Three miles)

Super 8 Motel - Christiansburg  
(540) 382-7421  
(Twenty miles; offers special rates to NRCC visitors)