



# PARENT TO PARENT

A Message from the  
Parents Leadership Council

## Dickinson

It's August, and the countdown to Orientation, fall athletics, and the start of classes has begun! It's an exciting and busy time as you prepare your students for their first semester as Red Devils. In previous [Parent to Parent newsletters](#) we talked a lot about logistics, including moving onto campus, residence halls and roommate selection, meal plan selection, Declining Balance Accounts (DBA), mailing packages and, of course, getting involved on campus. In this edition, we are going to focus on a few things that you may not yet have thought about. These are things our friends shared with us before Rachel's arrival at Dickinson that we found helpful, so we are now passing them along to you.

### ***How important is my student's email?***

We know that your students prefer texting over email ... but they are just going to have to get over it! Your student will receive a lot of important and, in many cases, time-sensitive information from the college via email. Also, professors and athletics coaches tend to communicate through email, and notifications that packages are ready for pick-up at the mail desk are also delivered via email (and no one wants those homemade cookies sitting in the mailroom getting stale!). Your students will receive a lot more information than we will as parents and, when information is sent to us by the college, we usually receive the information a few days after our Red Devils do. Dickinson prides itself on supporting our students' development into responsible adults, and that includes their being responsible for checking their email for important communications. Encourage your student to routinely check their Dickinson.edu mail—it really is important to their success at Dickinson.

### ***Does your student remember their key?***

Okay, this may seem silly, but we are just going to say it—your student will need to carry their room key and student identification card whenever they leave their dorm room. Yes, even during an evening bathroom trip just down the hall! Unlike when we went to college, most room doors at Dickinson **automatically lock** when closed. If your student does get locked out of their room, they can contact the resident advisor (RA) on call or Department of Public Safety through its non-emergency telephone number for assistance, depending on the time. Your student will receive this contact information during their first floor meeting with their RA. The RA or Public Safety will come quickly and open your student's door, but after the first two weeks of the semester, your student will be charged \$25 for each lock out! As for the student ID card, it is needed for your Red Devil to enter their residential building, swipe into the Dining Hall for meals, pay for food at other permitted locations and purchase items on your student's DBA account. Our daughter carries her student ID and room key on a lanyard, which she places on a hook right next to her dorm room door to ensure she sees and takes it with her when leaving the room. At \$25 a pop for each lock out, that hook by the door can save a lot of money!

### ***What are bathrooms like in first year residence halls?***

After several Facebook questions on this subject, we think this is worth a mention! First year residence halls have community bathrooms with multiple toilets, sinks and showers. The [Residence Life & Housing website](#) lists information about each residential space, including the bathroom gender designations. The showers in each bathroom are separated with a small private dressing area. Most bathrooms also have cubbies where your student can leave their belongings if they so choose. Note that the bathrooms are not always air conditioned, so many students choose to get dressed in their rooms. Bathrooms are cleaned daily on the weekdays only.

***How will my student make it to class that first day?***

Every first-year worries about finding their way around campus, especially on the first day of class. Here's an easy suggestion to reduce your student's concern: They can walk their schedule before classes begin. Our daughter and her roommate "walked" their class schedules together on the Sunday before their first class day. Doing so not only helped them know where to go the next day, but also further familiarized them with the campus.

***Are there any important documents my student should have with them at Dickinson?***

Although you have already provided the school with a lot of contact and medical information, there are a few additional pieces of information your student should have available to them on campus, including health and dental insurance cards and duplicates of eyeglass/contact or other medical prescriptions. Be sure your student is familiar with their medical history, including allergies, past illnesses or any major surgeries. Hopefully your student knows their Social Security number, but, if not, now is the time for them to memorize it. Also, your student will need to have a medical release form on file with the school if they want the Wellness Center staff to speak with you directly in the event of an illness or medical emergency. Once students are over 18 years old, their medical information is protected under HIPPA. Therefore, medical professionals are not permitted to share medical information with you unless your student has granted permission by means of an appropriate medical release form. If your Red Devil wants their medical information shared with you, now is the time to get a medical release form signed and, upon arrival on campus, delivered to the Wellness Center.

***What is the best way to get those class textbooks?***

Once your student has their final class schedule, they can check about textbooks on the Gateway under their Student Service Banner (SSB) at Student > Course Selection > Online Textbook Ordering. After providing some preliminary information, your student will have access to the book list for each of their classes. Books can be purchased or rented through the Dickinson College Bookstore, but we have also had luck with rentals from Amazon. Our daughter does all the price comparisons to determine which textbooks to purchase or rent from the Bookstore and Amazon. Once your student receives a syllabus for each course on the first day of class (or sometimes earlier online), they should confirm their purchases. There are times that a book required by a professor may change or an additional textbook added. *Here's a money saving tip:* With their Dickinson.edu student email, students can access Amazon's Prime Student program, which provides a free six-month trial to students for books and other items and a discounted Prime membership rate (about 50% of the standard rate) for up to four years.

***What if my student did not get all their requested classes for the fall semester?***

Concern over your student not receiving every class they requested is understandable. But honestly, this is not something you should be overly worried about, especially before your student has even started their journey at Dickinson. Our daughter, Rachel, had semesters when she was able to take all her requested classes and semesters when this was not the

case. In the end, Rachel is now a rising senior, and between a few AP credits and two summer elective classes, she is eligible to graduate a semester early. Rachel worked with her academic advisor and took her classes in a planned but adjustable order. The best thing your student can do is work with their academic advisor to develop a plan for meeting their graduation requirements, while also remaining flexible and understanding that they may have to change the timing or order of the classes.

### **Conclusion**

As your family's Dickinson experience is about to start in earnest, we hope this newsletter has answered some of your most important questions and provided suggestions that will make the transition to college life a bit easier. We know that there are many other questions we have not thought to, or had room to, address here. Remember, Dickinson's website has lots of additional information, including "[Frequently Asked Questions for Incoming Students](#)" and information about the Dickinson Gateway, Orientation and much more. Specifically for us parents of Red Devils, there is an "[Information for Parents of Incoming Students](#)" page.

By the time you receive the next edition of this P2P newsletter, your student will be on campus in Carlisle as a member of the class of 2025, and you will be a "P'25" (translated: "parent of a member of the class of 2025")! So good luck with move-in day and making that dorm room your first-year's home away from home. Be proud, be excited and be supportive of the young adult that is your student. Oh, most importantly, remember to enjoy every minute of it!

Welcome to the Dickinson family!

Andrew and Lori Flame P'22  
Chairpersons, Parents Leadership Council

### **Future Editions of This Newsletter**

In future editions of this newsletter we plan to cover additional items we think you will find helpful, including:

When Your Child Wants You to Visit! – Information on Family Weekend, such as where to stay, things to eat and what to do. *First tip:* Hopefully you have already done so, but, if not, make your hotel reservation *now* for Family Weekend.

The Top Things I Learned From My Daughter About Being Successful at Dickinson



Office of Parent Relations | [parents@dickinson.edu](mailto:parents@dickinson.edu) | (717) 245-1687  
© DICKINSON COLLEGE | P.O. BOX 1773 | CARLISLE, PA | 17013

[Make A Gift](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Email Preferences](#)