



section 02

Independence and Transition

Independence and Transition

Introduction by Jason Harville

Assistant Director of the Office of Student Success Programs

“I am delighted to welcome you and your student to UTC. Your student is not the only one going through a big life change right now, you are as well. And with any transition, there will be changes and the stress that comes with that. UTC has many resources to help you and your student adjust to college life. Encourage your student to reach out to one or several of the offices listed in this guide when they need help. The sole focus of many staff members is to help students. We’re here for you and your student anytime.

As your student is starting a new chapter in their lives, you may have some feelings of excitement and uneasiness. All of this is normal. Remember that just because your child is entering an exciting new phase, it doesn’t mean that they don’t need you. The support and guidance from their family makes a huge difference in the success of a student. Use this guide as a resource to keep yourself informed and help your student. With all of us working together, your student will have a much better chance of having a great college experience.”

| Independence

For many students, college is the first time that they live away from home for an extended period of time. Now they're in charge of their own time, budget, chores, living space and more. College is a time for students to explore their newfound independence, experience personal growth and learn to handle new responsibilities.

While it may be hard, trust that you've done a good job parenting your child and they are ready for college life. When your child starts this new phase of their life, there may be some stumbles, but that's okay and all part of the process of learning who they are.

Your time as a parent is not over, but your role is changing a little bit. Be supportive and engaged with your student, but also realize that they need to take responsibility for their own decisions. Think back to when your student was learning to drive. They were in the driver's seat while you provided support and guidance from the passenger seat. You are now in the passenger seat as your student drives their own decisions, goals and habits.

| Homesickness

Your student will most likely be very excited to attend college when they first arrive on campus, but it's not unusual for them to experience homesickness at some point. This feeling is normal. College can be challenging and some days your student will long for the comforts of home. The best way to help your student is to offer your support. Be available and supportive, letting them know what they're feeling is normal and helping them feel confident that they can work it through.

Encourage your student to build more connections on campus. UTC has more than 120 student organizations, so no matter what your student is interested in, there's a place for them. Student organizations are a great way for your student to make friends and often, the more friends they have, the less homesick they'll feel.

| **Returning Home**

The transition from campus back to home can be challenging. For the past semester, your student has been living an independent life and living under your roof (and rules) again will be an adjustment. Take care to ease back into an everyday relationship with your student.

Before your student moves back home, have a conversation about expectations. Will your student need to abide by a curfew? What chores will they be responsible for? How often can their friends or significant other come over? Be flexible and compromise where you feel comfortable. Your student is now an adult and will appreciate having a say in their living situation.

| **Student Outreach and Support**

utc.edu/sos

The Office of Student Outreach and Support (SOS) advocates for and supports students experiencing challenges in their personal and/or academic lives. SOS staff help students navigate university administrative processes; connect with university and community resources; and develop coping, resiliency, and self-advocacy skills. SOS also educates faculty and staff on how to work with students of concern, including how and when to make appropriate referrals.

| **Scrappy's Cupboard**

utc.edu/scrappys-cupboard

Scrappy's Cupboard is the on-campus food pantry that provides emergency food assistance and referrals to all registered UTC students who are experiencing food insecurity. Scrappy's Cupboard is coordinated by the Office of Student Outreach and Support, and run by faculty, staff and student volunteers from the UTC community.

| Student Emergency Fund

utc.edu/sef

The Denise and Tim Downey Student Emergency Fund was started to provide limited emergency funding students experiencing financial hardship (e.g., accident, emergency, illness, other unforeseen event).

Funds may be utilized to cover expenses such as:

- Essential academic needs (e.g., books and supplies).
- Replacement of lost personal items due to fire, theft, flood, etc.
- Housing needs (e.g., securing short-term housing, security deposits, assistance with utilities, etc.).
- One-time / non-recurring medical expenses.
- Emergency expenses related to dependents (e.g., childcare).

Students enrolled in the current semester as a part-time, half-time or full-time student (or have pre-registered if between semesters) are eligible. Students are only eligible to receive funding from the Student Emergency Fund once per year and twice overall.

| Fall Family Weekend October 20-22, 2023

Please join us for our annual Fall Family Weekend this October! Fall Family Weekend is the ideal opportunity for families to spend time with their student, explore Chattanooga and enjoy a weekend of great events that showcase what UTC has to offer.

VISIT THE LINK:

utc.edu/ffw

Living with Someone with a Different Background

Sharing a living space with roommates for the first time can be challenging. And what should your student do if they find out their roommate is very different from them? Here's some tips from Kathryn Mortensen, associate director for residence life, and Chris Stokes, assistant director of multicultural affairs.

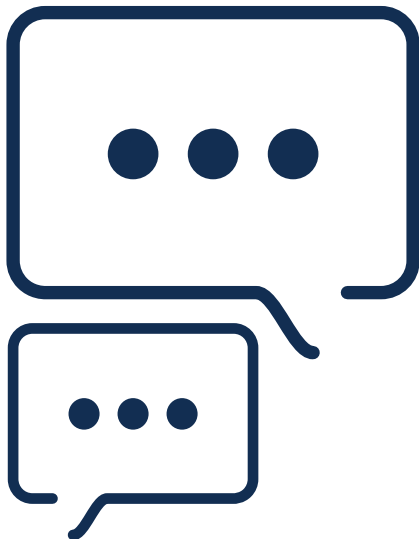
Keep an open mind

The UTC student body is diverse. There's a very good chance your student's roommates may be from another race, ethnicity or culture or have different abilities, lifestyle or ideology. Remind your student that diversity will enrich their college experience and encourage them to be open to and respect the differences between themselves and their roommates.

Communicate early

Encourage your student to reach out to their roommate(s) before move-in day. Have your student take time to get to know their roommate as a person. Learn what their roommate needs or expects from their living situation. Establish guidelines and boundaries on cleanliness, visitors and late night noise early will help prevent issues later in the school year.

Building a sense of respect in the space your student will be sharing with their roommates will lead to a healthy and safe environment for learning and development. Living and learning with others who may be from different backgrounds can also allow students to develop skills they will need as they enter the workforce in the global economy.



Conversation Starters

What are you looking forward to most about going to college?

What are some of your goals for your first semester?

How will you go about managing your time and tracking assignments to stay on track?
