Putting Students First
Jo Young Switzer, President

We know you know.

You can't turn on TV or pick up a newspaper without reports of a struggling economy. Stock values have plunged, credit is crunched, houses linger on the sale block, and many of us worry about our jobs. Even on some campuses across the nation, colleges and universities are cutting budgets.

That's what you know.

Now here's what you might not know.

Manchester College is in good position to weather the economic storm. Yes, money is tight and we face many of the same economic challenges that other colleges do, but our prudent financial habits are serving us well. We have very little debt and we have always been careful with our spending.

We have a simple policy: Students first. To that end, we have asked faculty and staff to be smart and intentional in their spending and to try whenever possible to contain costs. It will be a campus-wide effort, buying only what we need, conserving where we can, and using energy wisely.

Be assured that we are working hard to hold down our costs—and yours. By being good stewards of our resources, we can continue to do what matters most—provide a quality education for your students.

Final Exams: How Parents Can Support Students
Danette Norman-Till, Director of Counseling/Success Net Team Member

Final exam time is here. Students are typically balancing many things as they go into their final exams. Perhaps they are trying to make sure they do “really well” to compensate for unsatisfying mid-term grades. Perhaps they question what a final exam will be like (particularly if he/she is a first-year student). Or maybe they are just focused on going home for the holidays and are finding it difficult to study.

As parents, we want to support our students and help them to do their best, while also looking forward to their upcoming visit home for the holidays. Here are some tips as to what your student may be experiencing, as well as some ideas how to help.

When preparing for final examination time, students may do one or more of the following:

- Cut back on sleep to get extra study time.
- Skip meals to allow for more sleep or study time.
- “Cut loose” to reward themselves for all of the extra studying.
- “Give up,” deciding there is no way to bring their grade up.
- Increase their susceptibility for catching the latest illness bug going around campus due to lack of sleep and regular meals.
- Decide to forego workout regimen to allow time for studies.
To offer support, you can:

- Encourage, not blame; for example, "Mary, I remember that you seemed to do better on exams in high school when you studied some each day and still made time for a fairly typical sleep schedule."
- Explore, ask questions; for example, "John, have you noticed if you feel different when you skip regular meals?"
- Offer affirmation; for example, "I bet it is easy to want to just go out with friends on the weekend and put all this studying behind you. In just a short time, classes will be completed and you will have the chance for a break and relaxation."
- Suggest campus resources; for example, "Can you talk with your professors or someone at the Success Center about what you can do to at least pass the course?"
- Listen and validate their experience; for example, "It must be overwhelming to have so many exams at one time and to want to do well on all of them. I feel that when I have multiple demands at work; do you think other students are feeling the same?"
- Encourage health and self-care; for example, "Maintaining a regular eating, sleeping, and exercise schedule must be difficult during this time. Can you eat something in your room or cut your workout time down some without cutting it out? I want you to stay healthy so you can do your best on the exams you are preparing so hard for."

Remember, as much as you may want to, you cannot rescue your son or daughter, but you can offer your non-judgmental support and encouragement as they learn from this experience of preparing for college finals. Even if your son or daughter learns he/she would like to do it differently in the future, it is indeed learning—and as a parent, praise and affirmation for what they’ve learned provides positive support.

Final Exams are Dec. 15-18.  
All times and locations are listed here.  
Fall semester grades will be available on MC Connect Dec. 24.  
Dean’s List recipients will also be available online!

Come and See  
Steve Crain, Campus Pastor

Think of the darkest night sky you have ever seen, filled with the brightest stars and a moon shining with such intensity that it casts shadows on the ground and lights up your path before you; the kind of night that kindles wonder and amazement, dazzling in beauty; the kind of night that convinces you that the universe is a mystery alright, but one that invites you farther up and farther into the heart of that mystery. And as you begin the climb, your heart dances.

That’s the kind of night depicted in Come and See: A Christmas Story, by Monica Mayper, gloriously illustrated by Stacey Schuett. It tells the Christmas story with starlight ... and with dancing. Yes, there are shepherds and sheep, angels and animals, and the holy family gathered around a manger and the baby Jesus. But what the story depicts above all is light—from the star of Bethlehem above and from the house where Jesus lies within. The people gathered around the Babe are about to feast, but with the Babe having fallen asleep, the joyous celebration moves outdoors, into the starlight. And the townspeople encircle the house, dancing in that starlight, revolving around the light streaming from the house that has witnessed the Babe's birth.

"Shepherds, strangers, travelers, townsfolk ... quietly in the starlight. Come and dance, take hands and dance. We all begin to dance. Around the sleeping baby we all, together, dance."

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As I write, our students, faculty and staff are hard at work. We all sense a deep inner need for rest and renewal. And we sense the approach of winter cold when the earth will begin to hibernate. My prayer for all of us and for all of you is that the season of Christmas will offer more than rest and renewal. I pray that all of us will be touched by the mystery and wonder of the Nativity; that we will stream to the light that sparkles overhead and shines out from within the house where the Babe lies; and that we will all dance before the mystery with joy and peace in our hearts.

A joyous Christmas to you and to your loved ones from Campus Ministry. May peace be with you and upon you and within you.

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**Recipe Corner: Italian Bruschetta**

President Jo Young Switzer is known for her warmth, intelligence, wit ... and great Italian cooking! Here is one of her favorite recipes for you to try.

**Ingredients**

- 1 lb. fresh tomatoes (preferably Roma)
- 3-6 cloves of garlic
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 loaf crusty bread
- 1/4 cup Parmigiano Reggiano cheese
- Fresh parsley for garnish

**Instructions**

- Mix and let stand: fresh tomatoes and garlic, peeled & chopped in 1/4 cup olive oil; salt and pepper lightly.
- Cut one loaf of crusty bread (crusty preferred) lengthwise.
- Brush with 1/4 cup olive oil and put under broiler until golden. Watch closely.
- Remove from oven. Can do this up to two hours before serving.
- Immediately before serving, remove the garlic cloves from the tomato mixture and spread the chopped tomatoes onto the bread.
- Sprinkle with finely grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese, cut into slices, garnish with fresh parsley, and serve.

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