Good morning folks and Season's Greetings!

Yikes, winter arrived this morning as it was 7 degrees at my home when I woke up today. Happily, Colorado got some much needed snow in the mountains last weekend. We don’t have any snow in Boulder and it’s going to warm up to the mid-30's today. The forecast is for dry conditions and temperatures in the 40's and 50's for the next week or so.

I probably don’t need to tell or remind you about this...but we are beginning the last week of classes...final exams start on Saturday! I suspect that many, if not most, of you have heard from your student and their anxiety and stress was probably palpable! I'm sure this elevated your stress level as well. All I can say is don’t worry, what you're experiencing is normal and it is fleeting. Finals are over December 20th and the three-week winter break begins. As you consider ways to support your student, remember, a certain level of stress is a positive thing...it can elevate performance. Your goal is to help your student manage their stress so it doesn't turn negative. You can do this by reassuring and encouraging them. Sometimes all it takes is the willingness to listen. Before you know it, finals will be over and your student will be buoyed by all the joy this time of the year brings.

Once finals are over I suspect that many of you, especially those folks with freshman students, will be wondering about grades. Shelly Bacon, associate director of the Arts and Sciences Academic Advising Center, provides the following information with respect to grades to help you and your student:

- One of the big differences between high school and college is how final grades are handled. At CU Boulder, grades are not mailed out in the form of a report card. Faculty enter students' final grades into an online grade book and students must log into their MyCUInfo portal (where they go to retrieve their degree audit, register for classes, etc.) to see their grades. This semester students can expect to view their grades by approximately January 4th. A couple of issues that often arise around grades:
  - Grade Disputes: if students feel their grade in a particular course is not what they expected, they should reach out via e-mail to
their instructor immediately. Students only have 60 days in which to raise a concern about a grade.

☐ Honors: Students are eligible to take honors courses if their cumulative GPA is a 3.3 or above. They should contact the Honors Office if they are interested in learning more.

☐ Academic Probation: Students are placed on academic probation if their cumulative GPA is below 2.0. Official notifications from the dean’s office are e-mailed to students’ colorado.edu e-mail address but often the official notification doesn’t arrive until just before Spring 2013 classes are scheduled to begin and if students wait until they receive the notification, they won’t have much time to decide on a best course of action. If students see that their GPA is below a 2.0, they should be proactive and go ahead and review their options on the Academic Advising Center website at http://advising.colorado.edu. (Please note: Academic policies do vary between the schools and colleges. If your student is not in Arts and Sciences they should review the policies of their particular school or college by visiting the appropriate website. Your student’s academic advisor is also a very important resource.)

- If you would like to view your student’s grades, the best place to start is with your student! Sit down with your student and review both their grades and their degree audit with them (if they don’t know how to access or view the audit, that information is also on http://advising.colorado.edu). Another option is to ask your student to submit a FERPA release to the Office of the Registrar – when they do so, they will define a password and they will need to share that password with you; you can then contact the Office of the Registrar and state the password in order to gain access to their grades. Students must submit the FERPA release in person so they would need to take care of this option before leaving campus for the winter break.

Now is also the time for your student to sell back and order new textbooks at the CU Bookstore. This can be done from now until December 21st at the store in the UMC and at various times and locations around campus. For more information on

I've been receiving a good number of questions recently, especially from freshman parents, regarding housing for next year. While the majority of upperclassmen—sophomores through seniors—live off campus, the University is putting emphasis in making on-campus housing available to upperclassmen. There are basically three options for our students: they can live in one of the residence halls, they can move into Bear Creek Apartments (a facility run by the university located next to Williams Village), or they can find an apartment or house off-campus. For more information on the residence halls I recommend visiting [http://housing.colorado.edu/residences/residence-halls](http://housing.colorado.edu/residences/residence-halls). For information on Bear Creek visit [http://housing.colorado.edu/residences/apartments/bear-creek](http://housing.colorado.edu/residences/apartments/bear-creek). And finally, for information regarding off-campus, non-university housing I recommend visiting Off-Campus Housing and Neighborhood Relations at [http://ocss.colorado.edu](http://ocss.colorado.edu).

Here are a few quick reminders:

- **Winter Commencement 2012** is on Friday, 21 December, at 9:30 a.m. in the Coors Events Center. There are approximately 2,130 graduates. The Commencement speaker is Patrick Mason from the College of Music, last year's Hazel Barnes Faculty Award Winner. For commencement parking information visit [http://commencement.colorado.edu/ceremonies/winter/parking](http://commencement.colorado.edu/ceremonies/winter/parking). Remember, if your student is graduating you will probably also want to attend their “recognition ceremony.” These occur on the Thursday and Friday of commencement week ([http://commencement.colorado.edu/ceremonies/winter/other-events](http://commencement.colorado.edu/ceremonies/winter/other-events)).

  - Finally, it's not too early to start planning for Spring Commencement 2013 which will occur at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, 10 May, in Folsom Stadium. For more information visit [http://commencement.colorado.edu/ceremonies/spring](http://commencement.colorado.edu/ceremonies/spring). (Please note: it's never too early to make lodging reservations!)

  - Many of you may have questions about how your student can get to the airport and back to CU. Assuming they are not going to drive themselves or have friends take them to DIA, there are a couple of great options:
The least expensive option is the RTD SkyRide (http://www.rtd-denver.com/skyRide_SubHome.shtml). This bus (use route AB) departs from CU each hour...no reservations are necessary. Currently, the bus departure points closest to CU are at Broadway and 16th. Returning to CU after break the closest stops are at Broadway and Regent or Broadway and College. It takes about an hour to get to DIA. With your student’s ECO Pass the fare is $5 when travelling to DIA (I have received some reports that the ride is free with the ECO Pass). There is no charge for the return.

Your student can also reserve a Super Shuttle. This is a bit more expensive and reservations/booking is done on-line (http://www.supershuttle.com/en/Boulder.html). The student discount code is “Buffs”—using this code can save you a few bucks!

- Winter Break runs from the completion of fall finals (exams occur from 15 to 20 December...there are no finals on Sunday, 12/16) to the first day of the spring semester classes, 14 January. The residence halls and associated dining centers are closed during Winter Break. Students must vacate their residence hall within 24 hours of the completion of their last final and no later than 10:00 a.m. on Friday, December 21st. Students should consult with their hall director if they need to request an exception. The residence halls open up at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 9th. Of course, students are welcome to leave all of their possessions in their room during the break...rooms and residence halls will be locked and secured during the entire break.

- Welcome 2013 in style! Looking for the perfect holiday gift? Purchase the CU-Boulder Alumni Association’s 2013 campus wall calendar, which displays stunning 12'' by 12'' photographs captured throughout the brilliantly changing Boulder seasons. This spectacular calendar costs just $15, which is 17% off the regular price of $17.99 and includes tax, shipping and handling. Preview the calendar photos and buy it today. http://www.cualum.org/calendar.

- Family Weekend 2013: unfortunately, we still don’t know the date of Family Weekend 2013. We hope to host the event in mid-October. We will be sure to let you know as soon as the date is established. The most
up-to-date Family Weekend information can be found at http://parents.colorado.edu/events/family-weekend-2.

- Summer Classes? Summer Session can accelerate your student’s time to degree; help them complete a minor; or help them focus on a challenging class. Don’t forget about online classes. They can help your student meet major and core requirements while being away from Boulder for the summer. The Summer Session class schedule is available through MyCUInfo. Summer Session information is also available at www.colorado.edu/summer. For more information or to ask questions contact Continuing Education at ssdean@colorado.edu or call 303-492-5148.

- Finally, during winter break, when you talk with your student about their recent experience at CU, you might ask them if there has been a faculty or staff member who has made a positive difference in their lives. If so, please consider nominating that person for the CU Parent Association’s (CUPA) Marinus Smith Award. CUPA created this award to recognize CU personnel making a big difference in the lives of our students. Nominations are due 2/15/2013, but it’s never too early to complete a nomination. Visit http://parents.colorado.edu/cupaprograms/marinus-smith for more info.

Well, that’s all I have for now. This is the last update I plan to provide until the new year (mid-January). I will, however, be in the office during the winter break after December 27th...so please don’t hesitate to contact me (or Joyce) if you have questions or concerns.

The best of luck to your student(s) during the remainder of the fall semester and my very best wishes to you and yours during the holidays. I hope you enjoy all the blessings of this special time of year.

All the best...Barney and Joyce

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