Dear Parents and Families of Students in the Class of 2025:

As the days get shorter and the weather gets colder, it is hard to believe that the Class of 2025 has almost completed its first semester. After Thanksgiving, students will start working on final papers and projects, and preparing study notes for final exams. Classes end on Friday, December 10, and reading period and final exams take place December 11-14. Housing will close at 12:00 noon on Sunday, December 19 and reopen on Monday, January 17. The spring semester will begin on January 20.

By the end of the first week of January, students will be able to log in to their portal to view their fall semester final grades, as long as they have submitted their faculty evaluations. Parents and families are naturally curious about these grades and most students are proud to share this information, especially when the grades are good; however, sometimes, especially when students feel dissatisfied with their performance, they may be reluctant to share this information with others. In a situation like this, instead of pressing the question, it can be helpful to shift the topic of conversation from “What were your grades?” to more open-ended questions such as “What did you learn?,” “What was your favorite class?,” “Can I read one of your papers?” I often remark to students that it’s not about what you earn, it’s what you learn. If this line of inquiry leads you to sense that your student is struggling, it’s always good to ask: “Have you seen your class dean?”

The first semester of college is a whirlwind of activity. While academic life is at the heart of the Wesleyan experience, life beyond the classroom is just as important. Students are expected to develop friendships, participate in clubs or athletic opportunities, or even work on campus in a part-time job – all while managing a rigorous academic course load. All new students face the challenge of refashioning high school work habits and social skills to meet the academic and co-curricular demands of the college environment. While most students eventually figure out how to make this move, even the most well-adjusted students will feel stressed out at times. Winter break is a good time to inquire into how the transition to college is going. “Are you making friends?,” “Are you managing your time?,” “Are you enjoying Wesleyan?,” “How do you deal with the stresses of college life?”

Also, as you may or may not be aware, Wesleyan offers students the opportunity to participate in a two-week Winter Session intensive learning experience. Students who take part in the program can return to campus in early January if they are taking an in-person class or to participate in career-related workshops sponsored by the Gordon Career Center.
Other Winter Session courses will be available online and students can attend virtually. Students interested in the program should contact the Winter Session office by filling out the form here: https://www.wesleyan.edu/wintersession/index.html.

I will be writing to you again at the start of the Spring semester. In the meantime, please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.

Best wishes,

Kelly Dunn, Ed.D. (she/her)
Dean for the Class of 2025
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