Parent Chat  
September 24, 2009  
Topic: General

Admin 1: Hello! Welcome to the first parent chat of the year! We are glad to have so many parents here already!

Admin 1: Admin 1 is Meta Laabs Director of Student Affairs Administration. Also joining us will be Dr Bill Porter Dean of Students; Bruce Harber from Police Services; and Wayne Capooth our Medical Director.

Glo: I would like to know if every dorm has a policy for spraying for bugs.

Admin1: Please introduce yourselves and Dr Porter, would you answer Glo's question?

momof3: Gina Jordan- Hi Ms. Meta!

Admin6: Hello everyone. This is Bruce Harber, Director of the U of M Police Services, and I am Admin6.

Admin1: Hey Gina! Group, this is one of the great members of our summer parent panel.

Admin2: Hello, Bill Porter, Dean of Students, here. I'll have a response to Glo's question in a minute.

momof3: What is the status of swine flu on campus?

High Point: I heard there have been some challenges in Richardson Towers with some of the Resident Assistants?

Q: Good Afternoon, I would like to know the dining hall hours on the weekends and also Glo which dorm is having bugs issues?? Just curious.

Glo: Richardson Towers

Admin5: Hello, I'm Doctor Capooth, Medical Director at UofM. We have had 209 cases of H1N1 (swine) flu so far since we saw our first cases on Aug. 28; a very small percentage when you consider we have 24,000 faculty, staff and students.

Q: Are the students that have confirmed cases isolated somehow?
Pamela: I have heard that there have been some recent robberies on campus with handguns. What is happening with that situation?

High Point: So my question is, have you replaced the RA on the second floor men's side of Richardson Towers?

Admin1: High Point, we will ask Dr Porter to answer you after he answers about the bugs

Momof3: Dr. Capooth, of the 209 cases, do you know what percentage of those were living in the residence halls?

Admin2: Glo, the University has pest control technicians on staff. There is a regular process of spraying for bugs in all residence halls. Beyond that, students can report pest problems to residence hall staff at any time and work orders will be generated to inspect and have additional spraying. This should take place very quickly once we hear about a problem.

Admin1: Please be patient - we are typing answers as fast as we can - we are working on the dining hall answers

Admin6: Pamela, The robberies were just off-campus, on the City streets. While they are the Memphis Police Department's jurisdiction, we are working closely with them. Our officers are focusing their patrols in the area and without going into too much detail, there are two suspects in Memphis Police Department custody who have not been charged yet. (Bruce Harber)

Glo: I found out about the bug problem right after the move in for the Fall from my son.

Admin6: Pamela, We still want everyone to be cautious until we are certain everyone who might have been involved has been apprehended. (B Harber)

High Point: Are the suspects in custody students?

Admin2: High Point, we do have a new RA on the job on the second floor of Richardson Tower North.

Big Dog: What is last day to drop a class and receive a refund?
High Point: Great about the new RA. Glad to hear that. I know there was an issue with a new student on that floor. Has that been handled?

Admin6: High Point: I don't think the two suspects have any connection with the University. (B Harber)

High Point: Thank You.

Admin5: Q: The students who live on campus and can remove off-campus have been isolated off-campus. Those who live on-campus and cannot remove, every attempt is made in residence life to separate those students from well students. All ill students are given three fact sheets: an illness sheet that tells the ill student how to take care of themselves and what symptoms to look for that might mean they need to seek follow up care; a caretaker sheet of instructions for those who will have someone looking after them; and the final sheet is the close contact sheet of information that tells those who have been in close contact (hugging, kissing, family members closer than 6-feet) how to take care of themselves and how to protect themselves.

Admin6: You're welcome.

Glo: Thank you. My son lives on the second floor.

Admin5: momof3—I don't have an exact figure, but would estimate about 15%, with about 10% being able to remove off-campus away from residence halls.

Mom1818: When I fill out the financial aid forms in January that is for the Fall of 2010, right? I don't need it for the Spring of 2010, right? So much paperwork, I'm overwhelmed!!

momof3: Thank you, Dr. Capooth.

momof3: Mom 1818: January's FAFSA is for the next school year. I have done that thing what seems like a thousand times between my 3 girls.

HLSmith: How is the new University Center coming along? When will it open?

Admin1: Weekend dining hours – 11 am to 7 pm in Tiger Dining in Jones Hall

High Point: Overall how would you say the first month has gone?
gregg: 1st time here what is the topic or is there one?

Admin2: High Point, I'm not familiar with that particular issue so I would have to check into it. If you would like more information about that, please e-mail me at weporter@memphis.edu and I'll share what I can.

momof3: One more question- who can I direct my daughter to? There has been water standing in the showers on the 5th floor of Rawls for the past week. It has been reported daily, but as of last night, still wasn't fixed. The girls have to go elsewhere to take showers.

Admin1: Thank you Mom of 3 - I didn't have it handy

Admin5: momof3-- you're welcome For those who can't remove off-campus, we have a surveillance done by phone from someone from the school of nursing. That someone checks to see how they are doing; if not doing well then what is the problem; it has worked out pretty well up to this point.

Admin2: HLSmith, great question! The UC is really looking good. It's going to be a wonderful addition to the campus. It is scheduled to open on January 14, the first day of spring semester.

Admin1: hi gregg, anything you want to ask - welcome!!

HLSmith: Mom1818: The FASFA you filled out in Jan. 2009 will cover Fall 2009, Spring 2010 and Summer 2010

Admin1: How are things going for your students?

High Point: Very good, my son seems to be fitting into the routine of college life well. How do you feel things are going?

momof3: Great. My girls all love it. My freshman is so excited to be there.

Admin1: We have been thrilled with the first few weeks - great enthusiasm from the students, especially the freshmen!!

Glo: Very good. He seems to be getting adjusted.
Pook's Mom:  This is my daughter's first semester and she absolutely loves it! She is involved in several organizations and has met so many people who are willing to help her with whatever she needs. This eases my mind a bit since she's not just around the corner anymore.

Admin1: Pook's mom, that is great - and we are always here for you to email at parents@memphis.edu

High Point: That is great news to hear things are going well.

Pook's Mom:  Thanks for the support! It is very much appreciated.

Mom1818:  My daughter is in her element- happy and very involved. There was an issue when moving in though and she was very disappointed and confused. We were sent her roommates name early in the summer. They spoke several times and even went to Frosh camp together. They spent a great deal of time getting their list together on who was bringing what. Only to find out when moving in that she had another roommate. She was told by 2 people that there was nothing that could be done unless her present roommate said she would move- which she would not; nor would the anticipated roommate!

Admin2: momof3, I just checked and there does not seem to be a work order in for this problem on the 5th floor of Rawls. We will send someone over to check it out and take care of whatever the problem may be.

Admin1: How are classes going for your students?

Admin5: Everyone: H1N1 (swine) -- you can get valuable information on the H1N1 from our blog that is devoted entirely to H1N1: www.uofmshs.typepad.com, or receive daily tweets from www.tweeter.com/uofmshs

Pook's Mom: Am I correct that the parent chats happen once a month?

gregg: Is there a system to allow us as parent to check our kid grades? At our HS we had that ability?

Admin1: Pook's mom, yes approximately once a month
Q: Great my only complaint is the need for additional book and supplements that were not on the original list including some CD that cost $200 that contains labs unless my child is trying to get shopping money

Admin1: Are there specific topics you all would like future chats to be about?

Pook's Mom: Great! Since we are early in the semester I don't have any issues. It's good to know that as the semester goes on the parent's will have more opportunities to ask questions.

Admin1: Q: do you know what course that was for?

HLSmith: Big Dog: Check out this link for more information on the various dates for dropping classes and refunds. You get a percentage depending on when the class is dropped. http://bf.memphis.edu/finance/bursar/calendars.php

Admin1: Pook's mom - for sure - and we are working to redo our web pages to make them more useful

map: Is there any dining facility open for resident students after 4:30 on Fridays?

Q: Not sure, I know she mentioned it would be used all 4 years

Admin1: Thanks, HL Smith - I love it when one parent helps the others!

Candy: My son has work study, but is having a hard time finding a work study position

Admin6: Everyone: Just a reminder, we’ve had the safest large campus in the state 3 of the past 4 years. There is a lot of good information on our web site, including all crimes reported on campus, at http://bf.memphis.edu/police/ (B Harber)

HLSmith: Gregg: This link will give you more information on how your child can set you up as an authorized user. http://bf.memphis.edu/finance/bursar/accessinfo.php

mojo: The HOPE scholarship is $2000 for fall and spring. Is there HOPE money for summer classes?

Admin1: Candy, has he looked at the work study job listing site? Also he should pursue the library, the IT Help Desk, the Campus Rec Center, and residence life desk—they all hire a lot of students
Admin1: map, that is correct, but as I am sure you know there are quite a few food establishments close to campus on Highland.

mduncan: Thanks for the link to the crimes reported. This offers peace of mind.

Admin2: Mom1818, there are a few different scenarios that could cause this to happen. As far as resolving the problem now, we are very, very full this semester without even one empty room for women. The only thing I can suggest is for your daughter and her friend to keep in touch with staff to make sure we know they are still interested in moving in together and see what might happen. Also, they can start asking about ways to work out rooming together in the spring.

mojo: Will the new University Center have a dining hall?

Q: Sorry, but are the dining hall hours 7 pm on weekends or 4:30 pm?

Candy: Thanks, Admin 1

Admin1: Q, my understanding, and Dr Porter please confirm this - until 7 on weekends and 4:30 on Friday

gregg: how do we go about getting our students into the new residence hall? Is it first come first serve or can we reserve a place now?

MemphisFan: Candy, Here is link which provides information on work study positions. http://www.memphis.edu/financialaid/sejobs.htm

Candy: Thank you, MemphisFan

Admin1: mojo - 678-3213 is the hope scholarship contact person - you get $4000 per year and can use it in the summer if you have not used it all during the fall and spring

MemphisFan: You bet, Candy!

Admin2: Mojo, The new UC will have great dining facilities, one of the best features of the building. There will be a food court with six stations, including several national brands and a wide variety of options. The seating area will have a beautiful view overlooking the Alumni Mall and include some outdoor seating.
There will also be another, smaller restaurant and a "grab and go" that will probably be a Dunkin' Donuts.

Sunshine: I'm curious, are there many confirmed cases of students with swine flu?

Pook's Mom: Thanks for the chat. Have a great day everyone!

Q: On Fridays, do the students without cars live on whatever they can walk to eat?

Admin1: Thanks for joining us Pook's Mom!!

map: The dining facilities sound fantastic. My main concern is will there be any dining facility open Friday evenings for our students?

Sunshine: The new UC sounds wonderful. When again will it be completed?

Admin2: gregg, Students will be able to apply to live in the new residence complex sometime in the spring. I don't have the date yet but it will be announced to the students. Even though the new buildings will have some spaces dedicated to certain programs like students in the Honors Program and some of our living-learning programs, there will certainly be spaces for any student to apply for.

Admin5: Sunshine: we have had 209 cases of H1N1 (swine) flu on campus so far; the first cases were seen Aug. 28. This is a very low number considering we have 24,000 students, faculty, and staff.

Admin1: I think your questions about Friday nights are appropriate and we will discuss them. Dr Porter, do you know about the dining facilities in the UC on Friday nights?

Admin1: Q, actually so many students have cars, they often go out to eat together on Friday nights

Admin2: We have not yet determined hours for dining services in the new UC. Expanded hours for Friday nights will certainly be considered.

Admin1: gregg, that is Spring 2010

Sunshine: Is the H1N1 vaccine available to students?
MemphisFan: Sunshine, here is more of what Dr. Capooth said: The students who live on campus and can remove off-campus have been isolated off-campus. Those who live on-campus and cannot remove, every attempt is made in resident life to separate those students from well students. All ill students are given three fact sheets: an illness sheet that tells the ill student how to take care of themselves and what symptoms to look for that might mean they need to seek follow up care; a caretaker sheet of instructions for those who will have someone looking after them; and the final sheet is the close contact sheet of information that tells those who have been in close contact (hugging, kissing, family members closer than 6-feet) how to take care of themselves and how to protect themselves.

Admin2: Sunshine, the new UC is scheduled to open on January 14, the first day of spring semester.

Pamela: Sunshine, the H1N1 vaccine will be available around mid-October and the general flu shot is already on campus. My child already got that one

Admin1: There will be a 24 hour computer lab in the new UC!!

Admin5: It will be available once it becomes available to the University from the drug manufacturer. Students, faculty, and staff will be notified by mass email once we know the date of arrival of the vaccine. Keep in mind that the vaccine will be in short supply for some time until drug manufacturers can catch up with the demand, which means, at first, there will be a priority system in place to determine who gets the vaccine first; the priority system will be determined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and not the University.

Mom1818: Will the dorms be unavailable during the Fall break and Christmas break?

Q: Admin1 my child does not know that many students with cars yet so is your remedy for the dining hall closing early is my child just needs to meet more people with cars?

map: Admin1: I realize that many students have cars and go out to eat together on Friday evenings but what about the students that aren't interested in going off campus to eat. I appreciate the fact that expanded hours for Friday nights are being considered. Personally, if the concern is staffing hours and the extra cost, do the dining facilities really need to be open until 10 PM Monday through Thursday or can it be cut down to 9:30 PM and the extra hours added to Friday?
Admin1: Other questions or comments?

High Point: Thanks for your time. Have a great day.

Q: Thanks for having the chat it has been quite informative.

Mom1818: Yes, Dorm availability during breaks???

Admin1: Q and Map, this may sound odd but you all may be more concerned about this than your student. I’ll ask Dr Porter to respond, but my guess is that they will find food to eat - have they expressed concern?

Randy: How do you plan on administering the H1N1 vaccines to the students?

Candy: The parking lot of Richardson Tower, if a U of M student has packages to take to his dorm, why can he enter the lot in car instead of have to walk from the street

Sunshine: Admin 5: I am concerned for my daughter who is a Junior Nursing student. Since they are working in hospitals around sick people, I think they should be given priority.

mduncan: My child is one of those with a car; however, she had a freshman friend who has voiced her concern over the weekend hours several times over the last few weeks.

Q: admin 1: yes my child has expressed concern she also does not want to always go off campus

big dog: Should all students fill out the FAFSA form?

Admin1: Q, could she buy food before 4:30pm and take it to her room to eat later? I do think this is a legitimate concern and we will discuss it with dining services.

Admin2: Mom1818, all residence halls are open during Fall Break. Only Carpenter and Richardson Towers are available for students during the semester break in December-January.

Q: I have suggested that she does that

Q: Could it be a timing thing can you buy 2 meals at once one for now and one for after 4:30?
Admin5: Sunshine: one of the priority groups are "Healthcare workers and emergency medical services providers”. I'm not sure if the School of Nursing will include them in this group.

Q: admin 1: the $200 CD is for sociology class

Admin1: Q, I’ll express that concern to the sociology department

Admin6: Candy, The Richardson Towers lot is a priority lot for student residents. Unfortunately if they let non-permitted vehicles in, they don’t always leave, and the lot is near capacity. Resident parking is only $25 per semester. (B Harber)

Admin6: Plus, we have fewer problems in the gated/priority lots.

Q: Thank you admin 1

Admin1: We are about to wind this up - you all have been great as have our administrators - any final questions?

Glo: Thank you for listening to our concerns.

Randy: Where does my student need to sign up to get the H1N1 shot?

Admin5: I am checking out and thanks to all. We love you!!!!

HLSmith: Thanks for the chat! I always love these! Go tigers!!!

Admin6: Thanks everyone. I'm going back to work.

Admin2: Demand is a big factor in determining hours of dining facilities, though not the only consideration. But the reality has been very little student interest in using the dining facilities on Friday evenings. But we always open to reviewing facility hours and students should feel free to communicate their interests to the department of Dining Services. And as I said, we will be looking to the new UC to expand options for students. The current Saturday and Sunday hours are actually expanded from previous years.

Candy: My son is a student resident
Sunshine: Thank you. Please keep us updated about the H1N1 vaccine and on priority for nursing students.

Admin5: Randy: When the vaccine becomes available to the University, there will be an email that goes out that will give specific instructions on date, time, place, cost, priority group, etc.

Admin1: Candy, are you talking about him getting to the post office or taking things in from his car?

Randy: Great, Thanks Admin5! I'll ask my student to keep an eye out for that.

Q: admin 2: That may change as it gets a little colder my child walks to get something to eat on the weekends

Candy: From my car

Admin1: Q: let me know if problems arise or continue mlaabs@memphis.edu

Admin1: Goodbye - Thanks parents!!