

# Family Association



## Student Involvement at the University of North Dakota

Student Involvement is a great way to meet people, learn outside the classroom, and explore interests. Research shows that “involved” students statistically graduate at higher rates, have more confidence interacting with faculty members, and rate their university experience as more positive. UND currently has over 275 recognized Student Organizations that cover a wide range of interests.

Based on recent research of UND students, we know:

- 78% are involved in at least one Student Organization
- 48% have held at least one leadership position in a Student Organization
- 50% have participated in volunteer/service projects while at UND
- 19% are involved in some type of student governance (Student Government, Hall Government, etc.)

The Center for Student Involvement and Leadership (often referred to as “CSIL”) is a great resource for students! There are four main branches of the Center for Student Involvement and Leadership: Greek Life, Leadership Development, Student Organizations, and Volunteer Bridge.

Contact the Center for Student Involvement and Leadership at 701.777.4200 with any questions or log on to their website (<http://www.union.und.edu/involvement/default.htm>) to learn about all of the Student Organizations at UND, as well as Volunteer and Leadership opportunities!

Encourage your student to get INVOLVED!!! He/she will meet new people, boost his/her resume, and have a ton of fun!



## Academic Calendars

FALL 2008: *Dates are subject to change*

Beginning of instruction, 4PM..... August 25

Labor Day—No Classes ..... September 1

Veteran’s Day—No Classes ..... November 11

Thanksgiving—No Classes ..... November 27—28

Final Exams ..... December 15—19

Winter Commencement..... December 19

SPRING 2009: *Dates are subject to change*

Beg. of instruction, 4PM..... January 12

MLK Jr. Day—No Classes ..... January 19

President’s Day—No Classes . February 16

Spring Recess..... March 16 — 20

Easter Holiday ..... April 10-13

Final Exams ..... May 11-15

Spring Commencement ..... May 16

## Thanksgiving Break Suggestions

Families and students each have their own expectations about how the four-day weekend will go—but those expectations rarely are the same. Families should talk to their student before Thanksgiving break to find out what plans he or she may have made with friends and let him or her know what family obligations will require his or her presence. It is important to keep in mind that your student will need some time with high school friends.

Those who are driving to campus to pick up their student for Thanksgiving weekend will want to include some extra time in their schedule and some extra patience into their outlook. Students may not be completely packed when parents arrive. They may want to dash down the hall to say goodbye to friends. They may still be debating which books and notebooks to bring with them, while the family is anxious to get on the road. They might have far more luggage and laundry than seems possible for a four-day weekend. Families may have expectations of a pleasant conversation all the way home, while the student probably will be ready for a long nap. Families who have packed a pillow and blanket into the car will make points with their student.

Students who have been on campus for three months with no car may seem more excited to see the family car than the family itself. The car symbolized freedom and maturity when students turned 16, and it still means those qualities to a 19 year old. When a student jumps into the car and takes off, he or she is not rejecting the family; he or she is just anxious to get back some of that freedom.

Families often argue about curfews during college break periods. Students will protest that they have not had a curfew at school and have been staying out well past the curfew they used to have. Some parents find it easiest to require that the car be home by a certain time without specifying the student must be home by then. Or they will ask their student to indicate when he or she expects to be home, with a request that he or she call if they will not be home by that time.

Students think they will catch up on their studying over Thanksgiving, but often the temptations of social gatherings, sleeping in, or watching TV and videos take precedence. By Sunday morning, students realize they haven't done as much homework as they thought they would. They may be sullen or preoccupied. They may suddenly demand to get back to campus early. This is not a rejection of family!

In some cases, students will not want to return to college after the break. They may not have fully adjusted to college life yet, or they may have had a bad experience right before the break. Encourage your student to remain in school for at least one semester or at least one full year, depending on how serious you think the dissatisfaction is. Dropping out at this point means the student will lose an entire semester of credits and tuition. In many cases, the weeks between Thanksgiving and the end of the semester improve a student's outlook on school, and for the majority of students, campus begins to truly feel like home in late January or February.

(Adapted from: <http://www.parent.umn.edu/holiday.html>)

### Family Association Corner

The goal of the Family Association is to provide you, the family, with information that you want and need to help make your student's time in college positive and successful. If you're interested in serving on the Family Association Advisory Board or just want to share your ideas, please contact:

Kristi Nelson  
Special Projects Coordinator  
(701) 777.6468 or  
1.800.CALL.UND ext. 7.6468  
kristinelson@mail.und.edu



### Care Packages

Go to <http://www.und.edu/dept/divsos/familyassociation/carepackage.html> for a complete description of each Care Package and to download the order form. Choose from any of the following options: Good Morning, Thinking of You, Movie Night, Get Well Soon, Winter Warm-Up, All Nighter, or the Valentine's Day Cookie (available only around Valentine's Day).

Visit the UND Family Association Website: [www.go.und.edu/familyassociation](http://www.go.und.edu/familyassociation)

# Spotlight on Faculty...

## Dr. Paul Sum, Political Science



Paul Sum not only teaches political science, he lives it.

Sum came to the University of North Dakota in 2000, and teaches courses in comparative and international politics. He finds teaching very rewarding. “The students teach me how best to explain things and what is important and what is not. Feedback is really important,” says Sum. He believes that being very engaged in both research and the classroom makes him more passionate about what he is teaching.

Sum earned bachelor’s degrees in economics and political science from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and planned to continue his graduate studies in economics. His graduate education blended his two interests as he studied political science with an emphasis in economic questions and applications. He graduated from Northwestern University with a doctorate in political science in 1996.

After graduating, Sum taught at Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, where he was able to observe Romanian’s transition to democracy. “The transition was moving, but it was not entirely clear what was going to happen,” says Sum. His academic appointment in Romania was funded through the United States Information Agency with the purpose of establishing a new faculty of political science. Besides teaching and conducting research, he engaged in curriculum development and worked with the university to integrate the new program into the existing university structure. “Today it is a very strong department and I have built relationships that will last a lifetime. At least a dozen of my students have earned doctorates at institutions worldwide,” says Sum. He continues to hold the position of lecturer at that department, teaching summer courses and supervising graduate student projects.

In fall 2007, he spent three weeks in Romania after he was invited to join a team that evaluated the USAID civil society development program, which has been in place since the revolution. Sum studied the successes of the development program, and the team discussed how to duplicate them, minimize the shortcomings, and the extent to which this approach to democratization could be used in other countries. The team conducted over 200 interviews with social organizations, parliamentarians, local government officials, government officials, and business and media people.

Among his other accomplishments, he has served as country co-director in Romania for two large-scale comparative survey data collection projects. They were the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems and the Citizenship and Involvement Democracy project, where he conducted national post-election surveys, national opinion polls, and city-wide polls in Romania and Moldova.

He has received several awards from UND for teaching excellence, research, and service, and the UND political science department has received the University Award for Outstanding Departmental Teaching. Sum has been published in scholarly journals such as *Eastern European Politics and Society*, *Law and Social Inquiry*, *Europe-Asia Studies*, and *Romanian Journal of Society and Politics*.



## Commencement Information:

### Winter Commencement:

December 19—Chester Fritz Auditorium

10:00 a.m.—Graduate Degree Ceremony

2:00 p.m.—Undergraduate Degree Ceremony

Please visit <http://sos.und.edu/commencement/>  
for more information!

Congratulations to all of our  
2008 Graduates!

## Top 10 Questions You Should Be Asking Your Students:

1. Are you going to class? (Skipping class is the #1 reason students fail)
2. Are you studying at least 25 hours per week? (College is a full time job—You should be in class, studying, and doing homework 40 hours per week)
3. Are you reviewing material in each class weekly? (If you review all material each week, then preparing for an exam is easy)
4. Are you scheduling your "goof-off" time? (Everyone needs down time but students need to learn to manage their "goof-off" time)
5. Do you know when the last day to Withdraw is? (After this date you cannot withdraw from a class) *\*\*November 7, 2008 was the last day to drop a full-term course\*\**
6. Are you starting your assignments early? (The unexpected happens...you get sick, your computer crashes...start assignments early with plenty of time for the UNEXPECTED)
7. Have you seen your advisor? (Students need to meet with their advisor to plan for next semester)
8. Have you gone to your professors' office hours? (Professors like to help students—do not hesitate to visit the professor during office hours)
9. Are you going to tutoring sessions, study sessions, or review sessions? (Some professors host review sessions prior to exams, and the Student Success Center has drop-in tutoring)
10. Have you formed a study group? (Studying complex material is more efficient with a study group)



## Career Services

Does your student need help finding a job?

UND's Office of Career Services offers free services for students. Encourage your student to stop by Room 280, McCannel Hall and check out all they have to offer!

Contact Career Services at  
701.777.3904. Visit their website at:

<http://www.career.und.edu/>