

Greetings Scholars,

As we look to close summer session there are a few things, I'd like for you to reflect on moving forward into Fall 2016 and Spring 2017:

1. **It can be said that we are a sum of our life decisions: This statement is not to say life goes not throw us curve balls**, but it does share an impactful expression of "choice" playing a huge role in how we react to moments of opportunity and respond to challenges. Just yesterday, I was talking to a wise colleague who gave an adage (story) about a father who purchased tickets for his family to attend Disney World. For a month, he celebrated with his children, allowed the children to tell younger relatives, and the children shared their plans with their teacher as their summer plans. Well, a week before the departure date, the father places the tickets in his inner coat pocket before a dinner party. Father goes out has a really good time when he returns home, he goes to sleep. The day before leaving, the father checks the weather and finds that it's chilly outside, so he goes to his closet to reach for *the coat*. When he *grabs for the coat*, he soon tears up realizing he left his coat at the party. Father calls the club, owner shares "No one turned in a coat." With much disappointment, he rounds up his anxious 5 year old son and mild mannered 8 year old daughter to share *how* he lost the tickets. After telling his story, crying, and apologizing, the 8 year old goes to console the father, and whispers quietly, **"It's okay Daddy. I still love you. It was a mistake. So, when do you go to pick up the tickets? We leave tomorrow."**

Moral of the story: People will empathize with your tragedy, but will still require the work to be done.

2. **Rules and Boundaries:** This summer session has been a test of your will. As we enter into Fall semester, I want to talk about the inspiration of a few rules, I saw greatly abused and justified in conversation:
 - a. **Attendance:** Yes, the policy provides "5 days to be gone;" however, I am quick to remind you, if you missed 3 days, 4 days, even 5 days because thought you had "redeemable points/passes" you missed the point of these absences being given to protect you from being dropped from your class. I want to remind you very firmly and bluntly that policies are guidelines to support your academic process as well as enforcing professional and academic tolerance.
 - i. **Professional curtesy would recommend that if you were going to be late and/or not show up that work is completed and handed in before a due date and/or at the due date provided.** You would also reach out to follow up with your professor to ensure you are "hitting the mark" with mastering content. As learners, you are entering into a new realm of learning where here is a **requirement to perform more than recall** what someone told you: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQAHrMqbmUo> Higher Order Thinking Stretch).
 - b. **Behavior that influences course performance:** A while ago, a trusted colleague shared 10 things that do not require talent. I want to share with you what they are and why: (YOU OWE YOU AN EXPLANATION FOR YOUR SUCCESS AS MUCH AS YOUR FAILURE).
 - i. **Being on time**-lateness reduces credibility
 - ii. **Work ethic**- no one pays you to be great, they pay you to do a job. **Greatness elevates and advances you:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Oxz060iedY>

- iii. **Effort**- Chinua Achebe was a Nigerian novelist who shared a very true African proverb within his book *Things Fall Apart*, “we either do something or we don’t do it.”
 - iv. **Body language**- Do you look like you want to be here (Class, Life, Work)?
 - v. **Energy**- Be excited about what you do. Someone could have your spot (Class, Life, Work)?
 - vi. **Attitude**- Attitude + Ambition = Achievement
 - vii. **Passion**- Focus on what you love, not what you’re good at... It lasts longer
 - viii. **Being coachable**-You don’t have to know everything. There’s a reason to grow.
 - ix. **Doing extra**-If you do the extra mile now, you don’t have to worry about coming up short later #DoTheTaskRightYouWontHaveToWorryAboutExtraCredit
 - x. **Being prepared**- If you stay ready you don’t have to get ready. Preparation meets opportunity.
3. **Good Decision-Making**: I can recall my undergraduate days where everything around me seemed important, and so the effort needed to prioritize decisions and circumstances became clouded. What saved me was not only a group of my peers doing the same journey (college), but older counselor to help me take personal responsibility for my role in success or challenges. It’s my hope that you would begin reflecting on the following (nothing to something)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CocjtcTJai0>:
- i. What are my goals?
 - ii. What is the reality of my life now?
 - iii. What do I need to do to reach my goals?
 - iv. What hinders my success?
 - v. What about my conversation needs to change?
 - vi. What do I need to give up to reach my goals?
 - vii. How am I utilizing my time to advance my goals?
 - viii. Who are my mentors and sponsors to my success?
 - ix. Am I proud of the accountability given to them by me?
 - x. Am I proud of the accountability I give to myself?
 - xi. What are three things I do well ?

Perhaps, if we are able to self-examine our lives from where we want to be, we can see how decision making can influence the classroom as much as these choices influence other parts of our world. Please refer to the PDF (First Job 2.0).

In service,

Alea Cross
 Design Your Future Coordinator
[Educate.Enlighten.Entertain](#)
 C: 414.339.5180
Alea.Cross@cuw.edu

I will love the light for it shows me the way, yet I will endure the darkness because it shows me the stars.

Og Mandino

Design Your Future is a subset of Concordia University that allows students more support with academic rigor and student development to finish an Associate's degree that allows them to bridge over to the main campus to complete their Bachelor's degree.

Design Your Future

The Concordia University "Design Your Future" (DYF) program is a two-year bachelor's bridge program for Milwaukee area high school graduates between the ages of 17 – 24 who seek a better life through a faith-based higher education.

The Design Your Future program is administered at the Concordia University – Midtown Campus, located in the Midtown shopping campus on 56th Street, just north of Capitol Drive as well as Concordia University- Miller Parkway campus 1670 Miller Park Way,

This unique two-year program started in the fall of 2007, and is a perfect fit for Milwaukee area high school graduates who seek an affordable Christian education at an accredited institution that is community-oriented and conveniently located close to home.

Design Your Future (DYF) students can earn an associate's degree in *Business Management, Criminal Justice, Liberal Arts*. The role of the DYF program and staff is to advise, support, and empower students to do one of the following:

1. Matriculate toward a four-year bachelor's degree at the CUW Mequon campus.
2. Obtain a job within their degree's profession.
3. Commit to a year of service through AmeriCorps and continue their education with federally funded dollars.

Program Highlights:

1. Many students obtain a 40-58% tuition discount (grants/scholarships) to attend college
2. DYF Students have the opportunity to participate in study abroad with grants and scholarships for Czech Republic and South Africa
3. DYF Students have the opportunity to participate in 1st Generation Alumni Mentorship program where they are partnered with an alum of CUW and receive professional skills by our Director of Career Services.