Dear Parents:

I appreciate the opportunity to write to you through our parent newsletter. As you are aware, the institution is experiencing a transition, and leadership changes can be disconcerting. I want to assure you that the high-quality experiences your student has enjoyed at Ball State University will continue without interruption. Our Board of Trustees members and the university's leadership care deeply about our students and their education. Our great university is moving forward, and we do have a very bright future ahead.

In the short term, we are excited to launch a new College of Health, entrepreneurial learning initiatives, and cutting-edge research. These examples and many others have a direct impact on student learning, and students are at the forefront of these opportunities. The uniqueness of a Ball State education is transformational. Our students are actively engaged in researching and solving real-world problems. They also cultivate leadership skills, develop multicultural competencies, and become compassionate citizens. Our outstanding graduates are leaders in their chosen professions and in their communities across the globe.

As a parent as well, I know how much you value your student's education. We appreciate your partnership and thank you for entrusting your student's higher education to Ball State University. We are committed to continuing our tradition of excellence.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Hall
Chair
Board of Trustees

Get the App
Commencement Goes Mobile

When it's time for your student to graduate, your family can get commencement information and connect with the event on the big day through a new mobile app. Our Ball State Commencement app is free to download for Apple and Android cell phones and tablets from the respective online stores. It provides answers to frequently asked questions as well as other useful information for graduates and guests, including local restaurant options. For family and friends unable to attend in person, the app links to the web stream of the ceremony.

Spring Commencement is scheduled for Saturday, May 7, outdoors in the Old Quad. Tickets are not required. Details are available at bsu.edu/commencement.
Undecided 101
Helping Your Student Find the Way Forward

Is your student undecided about a major? Are they unsure about what to do for a career? Are they considering changing majors?

Various Ball State resources help students explore their career options and investigate different majors that fit their passions. To support your student, encourage them to consider the following:

- What are their passions, and what are they good at? Often a combination of these two things can point students in the right direction for a major or career path. Our Career Center offers two personal assessment tools—SIGI 3 and TypeFocus—that can help your student identify potential careers that align with their interests and personality type. Learn more at bsu.edu/careers/keycareers.

- What are they involved in on campus? Checking out a campus organization or club related to a major or profession can help your student get their feet wet before committing to the major. They can find these groups at bsu.edu/bennylink. Your student's academic advisor also may encourage them to take a course or two in the program to see if they would like the classes.

- Who can help them determine and declare a suitable major? Staff in the Academic Advising office (North Quad, room 339) can talk through a variety of courses and majors. This is also the place where your student can officially select or change their major. Learn more at bsu.edu/advising

- Have they taken the ID 101 seminar? This 1 credit course provides a special opportunity to explore a variety of academic majors. Your student should speak to their academic advisor about enrolling in this class.

- Who is their career coach? The Career Center offers a unique mentoring experience through a personal career coach who will help your student explore decisions related to majors and career choices, navigate connections with those who can help them succeed, provide resume and cover letter support, and more. Visit bsu.edu/careers/coaching

Help a Fellow Cardinal

Ball State is often thought of as your student's “home away from home.” As part of our campus community, they are meeting new friends, engaging with amazing faculty, and growing both culturally and socially.

Parents like you are deeply invested in the lives of your students and often express a desire to demonstrate support and appreciation for the university. We invite your partnership for this year's Parents Annual Fund as a meaningful way to help students achieve their potential as innovative leaders, active and contributing citizens, and proud Cardinals.

Here’s how your participation will make a difference:

- All gifts support student programs, academic assistance, health and wellness initiatives, campus activities, and more. One important program, Late Nite @ Ball State, creates a fun, safe, and welcoming environment for students every weekend.

- Contributions to the Parents Fund help fill the financial gap some students face in college by providing emergency aid and scholarships.

Please visit bsu.edu/give, where you can specify that your contribution supports the 2015-16 Parents Annual Fund. All donors will receive a signature parents decal.

Thank you in advance for your support to open doors and provide incredible opportunities to all Ball State students.
Is Your Student Interested in Studying Abroad?

Many students are intrigued by the idea of spending some time exploring their academic interests in another country. International learning experiences add a firsthand global perspective to any major and immerse participants in diverse world cultures. But it can be challenging for students and their families to determine all the study abroad options available and to plan financially for overseas travel. Ball State’s Rinker Center for International Programs is ready to help.

According to Kelly Kirkwood, the center’s assistant director of study abroad, the options are numerous. Ball State offers about 250 unique programs throughout the year in more than 54 countries. A few programs include multiple countries. Study abroad experiences range from short-term (one week) to a semester to a full year. Summer and short-term programs are the most popular.

Study abroad opportunities are available in both English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries. If your student isn’t fluent in a foreign language, they can study in a non-English-speaking country by taking their coursework in English and/or taking introductory courses in the spoken language.

Cost Solutions

Costs for studying abroad vary, depending on the destination, time of year, program type, number of credits, duration of study, housing choice, cost of living in the country, and related factors. Your student would generally have the same types of expenses they pay for during a term on campus—tuition, housing, food, health insurance, transportation, etc.—plus special costs associated with studying abroad (see list).

Most students cover these costs with a combination of resources, including personal funds, scholarships they are already receiving, study abroad scholarships available through Ball State and the program providers, federal loans, and grants.

Once your student chooses a study abroad program, they can request a budget estimate sheet to take to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships for personal advice on how their financial aid awards would apply.

Abundant Benefits

About 460 Ball State students chose to study abroad last year. These experiences provide many benefits, and you should encourage your student to fully engage in the process independently.

“The skills your student will develop from researching and comparing programs, making thoughtful decisions, budgeting, signing contracts, investigating and preparing for entry into a new culture, traveling overseas, and living in a new environment are invaluable,” Kirkwood said.

“Students who exercise independence and take ownership are not only more satisfied with their educational experience but are also better prepared to leverage their study abroad experience in interviews with future employers.”

Your student can learn more about study abroad by setting up an appointment with a peer advisor (email studyabroad@bsu.edu). They can also visit studyabroad.bsu.edu or facebook.com/ballstatestudyabroad.

Special Expenses

Examples of additional study abroad costs include:

- airfare to and from the host country
- passport application fees
- visa application fees (not required for every country)
- immunizations (needed for only certain locations)
- personal spending money for extra travel
Stay Connected
We welcome your questions and comments as we partner with you to ensure your student enjoys a fulfilling and successful experience at Ball State and beyond. Email Katie Slabaugh, associate dean of students/Title IX coordinator, at kslabaugh@bsu.edu, call 765-285-1545, or write to her at the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, Bracken Administration Building, room 238. Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306-0830.

Ball State University Telephone Directory

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate Dean of Students/Title IX Coordinator</td>
<td>765-285-1545</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bursar</td>
<td>765-285-1643</td>
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<td>Campus Information</td>
<td>765-285-5000</td>
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<td>Career Center</td>
<td>765-285-1522</td>
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<td>Counseling Center</td>
<td>765-285-1736</td>
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<td>Dining</td>
<td>765-285-1967</td>
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<td>Disability Services</td>
<td>765-285-5293</td>
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<td>Financial Aid and Scholarships</td>
<td>765-285-5600</td>
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<td>Health Center</td>
<td>765-285-8431</td>
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<td>Housing and Residence Life</td>
<td>765-285-8000</td>
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<td>Learning Center</td>
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<td>Multicultural Center</td>
<td>765-285-1344</td>
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<td>Parking Services</td>
<td>765-285-1208</td>
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<td>Police</td>
<td>765-285-1111</td>
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<td>Registrar and Enrollment Services</td>
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<td>Retention and Graduation Specialists</td>
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<td>Student Legal Services</td>
<td>765-285-1888</td>
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<td>Student Life</td>
<td>765-285-2621</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Rights and Community Standards</td>
<td>765-285-5036</td>
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Many of these offices can be reached using the university’s toll-free number, 800-382-8540. Campus information is always available at bsu.edu.