5 Things To Do If Your Student Misses The Mark
By Dr. Dan Engstrom, Associate Provost, Office of Academic Success

The end of the semester is just around the corner. Students will be taking their exams soon, and ultimately receiving their final grades. While I share your hope for the very best of outcomes, it isn’t always the case. Perhaps you will find yourself in the difficult position of having to converse with your student about his/her academic progress (or lack thereof).

As both Associate Provost in the Office of Academic Success and father of four children, I often encounter students who had semester results that do not accurately represent their abilities. What is a parent to do? I would recommend that you have a serious discussion around these five topics:

1. **Have you asked your professors for help?** We like to say that they three most important words a student can say are “I need help.” The university has a number of academic support services that can help a student success academically IF your student is willing to ask for help. For more information see: [http://www.calu.edu/current-students/academic-resources/office-of-student-success/index.htm](http://www.calu.edu/current-students/academic-resources/office-of-student-success/index.htm)

2. **Talk to your student about their study habits.** In college, it is recommended that they study at least an hour for each hour of class they have per week. So, if History 101 is a three-hour per week class, your student should be regularly studying three additional hours each week.

3. **Ask your student to describe how they prepare for class.** I have recommended to many students that preparing for class is as important as going to class. This formula has helped a lot of students. If Chapter 3 is going to be covered in Psychology 100 on Thursday, your student should have read Chapter 3 before class. During class they will find that some of the material is repeated because they read prior to the class. Immediately after class they should reread Chapter 3 and then begin any assigned homework.

(CONTD)
4. **What about their major?** If the classes in which your student did poorly in are part of their major, perhaps your student should make sure that they are in the correct major. At Cal U we offer all students an opportunity to take the FOCUS 2 Career Assessment and then meet with a career counselor to discuss the results. You can learn more about FOCUS 2 by going to: [http://www.calu.edu/current-students/career-services/career-assessment/](http://www.calu.edu/current-students/career-services/career-assessment/)

5. **Provide plenty of encouragement.** Remind your student that in the bigger picture of his/her career, this is only a bump in the road. There are many students who hit a rough spot or two, but still move on to optimum levels of academic success. Help your student to push past the bump and refocus for the next semester.