Student Guide

GradesFirst

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**Introduction**

Welcome students to GradesFirst, your home for staying connected with your advisors, tutors and professors. We truly hope you enjoy using GradesFirst and find it essential to helping you manage your daily student activities. Within the application you will find a powerful combination of programming functionality that focuses on helping advisors more effectively succeed on student retention and eligibility. In other words, GradesFirst will put the power of information at your fingertips as you use our diverse set of tools to help maximize the effectiveness of your daily student activities.

The scope of this document is to provide you, the student, with a source of information that will help you understand and use GradesFirst. Since GradesFirst is a very flexible application, this document will instruct you on the basics of using the system. However, keep in mind, these instructions will be general in nature as universities will have a varying degree of needs.

**Support**

How do I contact technical support? You can log a support ticket by emailing support@gradesfirst.com. This will automatically create a support ticket, viewable by our entire support staff, to ensure a speedy reply.
Home
When you log into GradesFirst, you will be immediately taken to your Home page. This is where you will spend the majority of your time. Below is a sample screenshot of what your Home page may look like. **Note that student permissions will vary between institutions.**

**Conversations:** View all of the messages sent from and to you in GradesFirst.

**Schedule an Appointment.** If this link is visible on your Home page, then permission has been granted for you to create a tutor/advisor appointments.

**Request a Tutor Appt.** Need help with a class? Use this link to request a tutor.

**Calendar.** View your class schedule, assignments and all appointments that have been scheduled for you.

**Reports.** View reports/information that has been linked to you.

**Study Hall Information.** Quickly and easy view your study hall stats for the current week.

**Conversations**
The GradesFirst Conversations tab functions much like your typical email inbox. You can view the details of your messages, mark messages as read or unread, and reply to messages from this tab.
If you click on the details link next to any message, it will open up the contents of that message and give you the option to reply.

Repying to a message is simple, and GradesFirst will allow you to send additional notifications and/or add an attachment if you wish.
Schedule an Advisor Appointment

Use this option if you wish to create an advising appointment. Using this option will actually create and schedule your appointment of choice. After the appointment has been saved, GradesFirst will send emails to attendees as well as update everyone’s calendars.

Clicking the ‘Schedule an Advisor Appointment’ link will display a screen similar to the one below.
After you have selected a date, advisor and time for the appointment, click Save. This will then create the appointment, update calendars and send emails notifying users of the appointment. Email reminders, if checked, will be sent the day of the appointment (at 6:30 CST) while text reminders are sent one hour before the appointment.

Once you have saved your appointment, you and the advisor will receive an email which will include the details of the appointment you have just created. Note that this email will always send out upon the creation of an appointment and is a separate email than the reminder email which may or may not be selected to be sent.
Request or Schedule a Tutor Appointment

Need help with a particular course? Requesting and scheduling tutor appointments couldn’t be easier! You will have 3 options: to request a tutoring appointment, schedule a tutoring appointment, or schedule a student service.
Request a Tutor
On the Request a Tutor screen (shown below), enter your preferred meeting time, click Send, and an email will be sent to the appropriate school personnel to match your request with a tutor.
Once the tutor coordinator has matched your request with a tutor, you will receive an email much like the one below.

Schedule a Tutor
To schedule a tutoring appointment for a specific course or for a student service, you will select either the “Schedule a Tutor Appt.” link or student service link. Note that each of these links will take you to the same scheduling page.

After choosing a location for your tutoring or student service appointment, a grid will appear with all of the available tutors at your specified location who are able to tutor in that particular course or student service. All of the Open boxes are times that you may schedule an appointment with the tutor. Many of the boxes may have other things listed, including “Course,” “Advising,” “Tutoring”, or “General.” This means that the tutor has something else already scheduled for that time. “N/A” indicates that a tutor has not listed that time in their availability, while “Drop-In” indicates that the tutor is only available for drop-in appointments at that time.
Note that choosing the calendar icon will allow you to pick a future day on which to schedule your appointment.

Once you have chosen an open time for your appointment, a confirmation box will appear, allowing you to enter comments, opt in for an email and/or text message reminder, and finalize your appointment.

Once you have submitted your appointment, you will receive an email just like the example shown on page 8.
Calendar

Forget your class schedule or upcoming appointments? Click the Calendar tab to see what’s on your schedule!

Clicking the Calendar tab will display the screen below.

Feel free to print a PDF of your calendar using these links.

You may also choose to view a weekly or daily calendar, if you prefer.
While GradesFirst defaults to viewing by Month, you can change this view by clicking on either Week or Day. If you use Firefox or Chrome, you can mouse-over an event on your calendar for a more detailed view.

Reports
This is where all reporting and notes created by professors, advisors, coaches and/or tutors are stored and displayed.

As previously stated, you may see all or some of these reports described above depending upon your permissions as defined in GradesFirst. If you do not have access to specific reports, and believe you should, please contact your GradesFirst Administrator for permissions.
Responding to an Appointment Campaign
Advisors have the ability to request that a specific group of students sign up for an advisor appointment(s). This process mainly works via email. This means you will receive an email (see screenshot below) where you will be able click a link to select an appointment time.

If the “Schedule an Advisor Appointment” link doesn’t work, copy and paste the URL in the email into your browser. Either way, the Schedule an Advising Appointment screen below should appear.
Click ‘Create This Appointment’ to confirm your time selection with your advisor. Upon clicking “Create This Appointment,” you will be sent to a confirmation screen (shown below), an email will be sent to you and your advisor, and GradesFirst will update your calendar, as well.
Facebook Student Interface

Don’t have access to GradesFirst application? That’s ok; just request a Facebook invitation to be sent from your advisor so that you can have access to all the same information via our new GradesFirst Facebook application.

Haven’t ‘synced’ up your Facebook account with GradesFirst, see how in the next section.
Sync GradesFirst to your Facebook Account

In order to sync our GradesFirst application to your Facebook account you will need to first receive the email invitation from your advisor in GradesFirst. This email will look like the one shown below.

Clicking the link above will prompt Facebook to ask for permission to allow the GradesFirst application to be installed on your Facebook page.

The last step will be to enter your confirmation code (see email above) and click ‘Connect to GradesFirst’.
Once done, the GradesFirst application will now be accessible via Facebook. GradesFirst will now appear along with your other Applications on your Facebook page. One way to access your applications is to click on Account > Application Settings > and it is there you will see the new GradesFirst application.

**Still have questions? No problem!**

If you still have questions, please feel free to send an email to support@gradesfirst.com or give us a call at 1-800-745-5180 (dial 9 for support).