



A WestConn Winter Morning

Handout:

The ARM Newsletter

January 18, 2013 Vol. 1, Issue 3



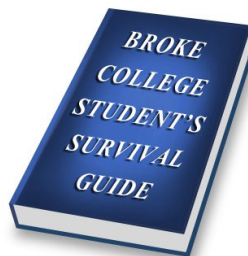
ACADEMIC PEER MENTORS— YOUR ARM HAS A *HANDOUT* FOR YOU!

IN THIS ISSUE

Don't be a "broke" college student!

by Emily Freundt, Centennial ARM

“**H**elp me I'm poor"...Even if you have not seen the movie *Bridesmaids* this is a pretty familiar phrase for most college students. Being a full time student and finding time to juggle one or more jobs is no easy feat. Sometimes it is almost impossible depending on the work load, so what happens when you are on a strict minimal income? You have to become money conscious and responsible. Here are a few tips on how to help budget your money and not get yourself into debt.



student. It is so easy to just swipe the card but at the end of the month when the bill comes it is quite a shock. Stay away and do not fall into the trap. If you do not have the cash to buy something then DO NOT buy it.

- ◆ When **cutting expenses** cut a little bit from several categories instead of trying to completely cut out one.
- ◆ **Cook instead of eating out.** Even low cost restaurants add up and you can get a lot more for your money (and it is A LOT healthier too) if you learn to cook for yourself.
- ◆ **Conserve your transportation costs** by grouping trips together. If you have a car do all your errands on one side of town at the same time to save on gas. If you can carpool or use public transportation do that. Gas is expensive and only seems to be getting pricier.
- ◆ **DITCH THE CREDIT CARD!!!!** Credit cards are a major source of debt for a college

- ◆ **Keep focused.** When we get bored we tend to end up searching for things to keep us busy and these things end up costing us money. Keep busy with activities such as homework, working out, watching movies at a friend's house, or other free activities.
- ◆ If you find that after all that you still have a lot of free time **look for a part time job.** Not only will you fill up your free time but you will also make money so you can go out once in a while to the movies or dinner with a friend or pay off those student loans.
- ◆ **SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID!!!** Make sure you apply for financial aid on time and look for any and all scholarships that you can apply for. Every little bit helps and the more money you get in scholarships the less money you have to take out in loans that you must pay back.

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SUCCESS
SPOT

www.wcsu.edu/housing/ARM/armsuccess.html

GOOD FOOD. GREAT STORIES. YOU.

By Maribeth Griffin, Director of Residential Programs & Staff

Have you ever wondered about what your professors were like when they were in college? Do you know how they got started in their fields of study? Do you think you might just want the chance to get to know them a little better?

The time is right, and the time is now! On 8 nights this semester, you have a chance to have a great meal with your favorite professor or campus administrator, and hear about their "Road to WestConn". They'll talk about what they studied, who made a difference for them, why they chose WestConn, and give hints on things you might do to get started on your own path.

Here's who's coming to dinner:

- **Tuesday, January 22nd**
 - * Dr. Daryle Brown, Nursing
- **Wednesday, February 6th**
 - * Dr. Dennis Dawson, Physics & Astronomy
- **Wednesday, February 20th**
 - * Dr. Marsha Daria, Education & Educational Psychology
- **Monday, March 4th**
 - * Dr. Casey Jordan, Justice & Law Administration

- **Tuesday, March 12th**
 - * Dr. Paul Hines, Chemistry
- **Tuesday, March 19th**
 - * Dr. Dan Goble, Dean, Visual & Performing Arts
- **Tuesday, April 2nd**
 - * Mr. Larry Marsicano, Biology
- **Tuesday, April 16th**
 - * Dr. Walter Bernstein, Vice President of Student Affairs

All the dinners are free with your meal plan. Non-residents may also attend at no cost, so invite a classmate who doesn't live on campus to join you. All we need is for you to let us know you're coming so we'll have enough food. You can email us at housing@wcsu.edu any time before noon the day of the dinner.

Dinners start at 6:30 pm, and are in the Faculty Dining Room just near the information desk in the Midtown Student Center. The last dinner with Dr. Bernstein will be held in the WSCC Ballroom.

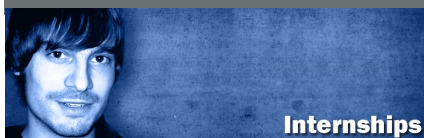
Good food. Great Stories. You!



DON'T MISS YOUR OPPORTUNITY!

"Human beings, who are almost unique in having the ability to learn from others, are also remarkable for their apparent disinclination to do so."

*Douglas Adams,
author of The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy*



by Sean Keenan, Fairfield ARM

Internships

can provide wonderful opportunities to students looking to

expand their horizons and find meaningful work experience in the field that they are studying. While there are many prospective internships for students looking for work, they can often be very competitive. Here are a few things students can do in order to make themselves stand out from their competition:

- **Write an up to date and compelling resume.** When writing your résumé, be sure to limit yourself to one page. Employers will be going through a lot of candidates and a résumé of several pages will not be thoroughly looked over. Try to highlight the experiences you think best show your qualities that will be valuable to the job you are applying for. Feel free to visit the WCSU career development center for help with your résumé.
- **Cultivate impressive references.** Employers know that what you write about yourself in your résumé will only be positive. In order to get a less biased opinion of their prospective employee, they will call upon the references you provide and, most often, your previous employers. It is important to always do your best in any job you will have. This not only ensures your continued employment but also helps you attain jobs in the future.

- **Develop a healthy relationship with your advisor and other professors.** The WCSU faculty is very knowledgeable and many are more than happy to assist those students who make themselves known. Visit your professors during their office hours and set up appointments with your advisor. Let them know what you want to do with your education and they will help you achieve those goals. This includes internships. Many professors will inform their students of opportunities to get some experience in the real world. By developing a relationship with your professor, they will know what you are capable of and point you in the direction of exciting internships.
- **Apply to many different Internships.** You should treat an internship like a job right from the beginning. Do not simply apply to one and assume you will be accepted. This is not the case, especially with paid internships. It is very likely that you will be rejected from at least one internship. This should not discourage you. Instead, try to understand why you were not accepted and apply what you learned to the next application.

Once you finally are accepted as an intern somewhere the work does not end. You will be expected to balance school work and your internship workload. However, despite the extra work, this will often be a fantastic experience. It will give you the opportunity to see how you be able to use your degree in the real world. Some internships may even offer you a paid position if they find you worked hard enough, so be sure to do your best and take advantage of every opportunity you have.



5 Ways to Improve Your Résumé

by Natalie Glybin, Pinney ARM

For some students spring is a season of serenity. For many other students, particularly juniors and seniors applying for internships or jobs, it is a time of great stress. Intimidating words like *cover letters* and *résumés* start to get thrown around frequently, and for many, the concept is foreign. Here are some tips to take your résumé to the next level!

1. Keep it professional! This means that cutie_loves_to_party_23_xoxo@gmail.com is not an appropriate email address to be using professionally!!! Your email should be identifiable, preferably a combination of your first and last name and/or your initials. Stay away from numbers if possible as well--they are distracting. You should also stay away from cutesy fonts, colored paper, personal opinions, clichés/jokes, and the like. Keep it factual, objective, and to the point.

2. Professional does not mean booooooring. Possible employers and recruiters sometimes view upwards of hundreds of résumés. Make yours stand out by highlighting interesting or unusual positions you have held. These make you memorable and get the conversation going at a job interview, should you be granted one. Play with the format of your résumé as well. You have a lot of leeway with how to set up your résumé, however there is a fine line between visually appealing and over the top. You can use font, font size, and space to your advantage to draw the eye to certain areas you wish to highlight. Just remember to keep the format consistent.

3. Use buzzwords sparingly. Use words that demonstrate leadership, action, and accomplishment on your part. These words can convey confidence and achievement. That being said, there are also many buzzwords that are overused and should therefore be avoided unless you want your résumé to sound like every single other applicant. Some of these include "responsible for," "team player," "effective," "problem solver," and more. While using these words doesn't necessarily mean your résumé will go to the bottom of the pile, it makes you less distinguishable from other candidates. If you're not sure about a buzzword, get rid of it and be more specific. Describe what you actually did, and be concise using strong concrete verbs. Your

résumé should be accomplishment driven,

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Fall semester didn't go as you planned? Well luckily for you, spring semester is just beginning and with a new semester comes an opportunity to wash out the bad taste of last semester. First, take a few deep breathes and realize that everyone has a "bad semester" at some point. With the difficulty of college courses, you are bound to have some semesters be better than others. What's important now is to be **proactive** and not **reactive**. You can't get down if you have one slump of a semester, because the truth is college is more difficult than high school, and as you progress through your college years, your classes will become more challenging, so if your grades fall a bit for a semester or two, you can't beat yourself up. Instead, follow these proactive steps to improve academically for this semester and the semesters ahead of you.

1. Evaluate the previous semester.

- Before you beat yourself up about having a "bad semester", consider the difficulty or strength of your schedule and give yourself some credit.
- Evaluate your study habits. How did you study? Where did you study? And how often did you study?
- Credit/work overload. How many credits did you take? How involved were you on campus activities? If you were doing too much this semester it may have reflected on your grades. Balance your schedule so your course load still allows you to participate in extracurricular activities, enjoy a social life and still perform well academically.
- What resources did you use or not use? There are plenty of free resources that the university provides but it is up to you to make use of them. Seek out your ARM as a start!

Figure out what worked and didn't work for you and then determine the changes you could make to be more successful this time around.

2. Make a plan.

Tell yourself that you will study at least an hour a day and DO IT, even if you don't have any assignments due the next day. The key is to follow your

not responsibility driven, so use words that demonstration action.

4. Pay attention to the details. Take care to ensure that all of your information is factual. There should be no spelling or grammar errors and your format should be consistent in terms of font and spacing. Make your résumé easy to read. Use bullets rather than paragraph form. Put your employment history in reverse chronological order. This means your most recent jobs are listed first. Don't use acronyms that are not common knowledge (i.e., school name, organizations, etc).

5. Don't wait to get help! The dedicated staff at the **Career Development Center (CDC)** in the Midtown Student Center, located in room 227, are there to help!



after a tough Fall

by Adaobi Ogbenta, Pinney ARM

plan and not steer away from it. Like everything you do, proper studying will come as a habit. Ask for help when you need it or even when you don't. Your ARMs are here to support you academically.

Recovering from bad grades does not happen overnight. It may take a week, a month, or even one or two semesters. But it can be done, so stick to the plan you have set for yourself.

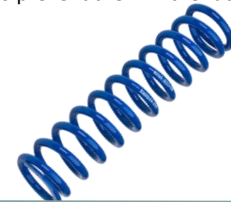
3. Look at all options.

Repeat Policy. You are permitted to repeat a course only if you have received a "C-" or lower grade. Students are limited to repeating 17 credits, and no course shall be repeated more than once. The most recent grade of a repeated course will automatically be calculated into the student's GPA and degree requirements. The original grade received in the repeated course will not be calculated into the GPA, but will remain seen on the student's official transcript for the University.

Summer Courses. Consider using the summer to figure out how to improve your situation and take summer classes. And you do not have to take the course only at WestConn, there are other universities or community colleges that may be closer to you that offer the same courses. Just make sure you complete the form required obtaining approval from the dean of your school prior to registering for the course. And note that a minimum grade of a "C" is required for transfer credit.

4. Spring forward.

Fall semester is behind us now, so you have to move forward but more importantly, do not give up! Remember, the most successful students are the ones who learn from their mistakes and do their best to prevent them in the future.





Talking to your professors

by Nicole Swenson, Newbury ARM

One of the most important things you can do as a student is get to know your professors. Going to class and participating in class discussions is just the first step toward getting to know them, however. What you really want is for them to get to know YOU.

When your professors know you, there are some significant advantages: they know if you are struggling and can offer assistance with your classwork. Perhaps more importantly, they get to know your experience and your work, and can serve as references for you when you apply to graduate school or look for a job after graduation.

Some of you may be a little afraid to speak to your professors, though, so here are some hints about talking to your professors (and to your advisors) that should help!

- Know your professor's office hours for each class.
- Don't wait to ask for help.
- Be concrete, but flexible. Know the information you want to ask your professor, but also be open to your professor's suggestions.
- If there is a personal, health, or disability-related concern, then make sure to meet in the beginning of the semester.
- Show up on time for planned meetings.
- Thank your professor after the meeting.

And here are some hints about speaking to your advisor:

- Know your advisor's office hours and work with your schedule to find a time to meet with them.
- If you can't find any way to fit a meeting into your schedule, then email your advisor explaining your situation and your availability.
- Go to the meeting prepared with the classes you want to take already written down.
- Thank your advisor after the meeting.

Hint!

Don't stop talking to your professors just because you finish their class. Send them an email every so often to share thoughts about your course load...meet them for coffee... better yet, don't let them forget about you... use their expertise. Maintaining these relationships can lead to some awesome opportunities you might otherwise have missed out on.



It's many things—cabin fever, SAD, just plain cranky... it's the winter blues... that feeling that the winter will never end and the sun may not come out again! So how do you beat it? Here are a few ideas.

Open the shades in your room. Sounds simple, no? Not only does opening the blinds bring in some much needed light, but it also warms your space up just a bit, too! Of course, close them up again at night to keep that heat inside!

Take a walk. Get your heart pumping and your head clear. Walking is a great exercise that you can do nearly every day, and it can not only give you a mental boost, but it



can boost your energy level as well and keep you in shape. It also gets you out of your room, and lets you take in some of the beauty of the world around you. You can commune with nature just steps from your front door!

Eat better. We tend to want warm and heavy comfort foods in the winter, but we generally aren't moving around as much, so they like to stick around. Make sure you're eating a well-balanced diet, and don't forget that you might need some supplements, like vitamin D, to help you keep your energy up and your mind working well.

Help others. There's always a need to help those who are worse off than we are. Find something that touches your heart, and volunteer some time to that cause.

Plan for the spring. It comes faster than you realize! Are you going to graduate? When was the last time you talked to someone in Career Development Center about job opportunities and what you need to do? Are you going to want an internship or a summer job? Don't wait until others have already snatched them up — make your move now and beat the rush.



Spend time with friends. We tend to hibernate a bit more when it's dark and cold outside. Meet a friend at the café for dinner, and then take in a program or get together. Play cards or movie to-board games. Go to the Daily Grind and get a Vente Caramel Macchiato!

Picking a Major

by Samantha Augustine, Litchfield

The most likely reason that you are attending classes at our fine institution is probably for one of the following reasons: Going to college is what everyone else did after high school or your parents said that if you didn't go to school you would need to start paying rent at home, but more likely than not it is because a degree at an institution of higher learning has now become required to make a decent living. After your first, second, third, and each consecutive semester, you have friends and family members that are constantly asking you, "What is your major? What do you want to do?" This can turn out to be a very frustrating question, not only because of how often you are asked, but also because you may not know how exactly to answer the question. Not all of us come to college knowing exactly what we want to study or do after we graduate, and those of us who do may find ourselves changing our minds after a few classes in a certain area because it just wasn't what we had expected.

In a sweet utopian world where we don't need to worry about bills or rent or our struggling economy, you would be told to choose a field of study or a job that you were most interested in, regardless of the amount of money you would (or rather wouldn't) make. We do have to be real about this issue, however, and even though most of us don't have the assets or opportunities available to throw caution to the wind and study whatever we would like, you can incorporate many of your interests or skill sets into how you choose your future.

An excellent resource for first-years or sophomores who are still undeclared is O*NET (<http://www.onetonline.org/>), which was created for the U.S. Department of Labor. O*NET includes search databases for finding out how to start a career you've been dreaming about or finding one you've never imagined. It allows you to search for similar jobs within an industry or area, has an advanced search that looks up careers depending on the use of a specific skill set, tool, or software, and offers advice for how veterans can take their military skills and experience and apply it to life in the civilian workforce. As part of its efforts to keep up with the ever-changing world, O*NET also takes into account the effects that our movements toward a greener economy have on occupational development and requirements.



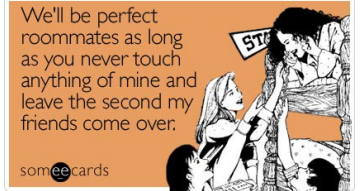
This resource may not necessarily be a search engine that can tell you what kind of major you should take, but it does allow for you to explore career options based on your skills, experiences, and interests. If while using this website you find that you are very interested in a pathway, consult your academic resource mentor (ARM), your academic advisor, or make an appointment at the **Career Development Center** to further understand your options as to what majors translate into what types of

jobs. It will take some hard work and dedication, and for some people time to choose a major is ticking away. Choose a major and explore a career path so that you can take control of your life and responsibility for your future!

The Handout is a publication of the Department of Housing & Residence Life at Western Connecticut State University. It will be published several times each semester, and distributed via email, on the HRL website (www.wcsu.edu), and via the departmental Facebook page. (WCSU Housing & Residence Life).



IMPORTANT HOUSING REMINDERS



Room changes:

Room changes will be made between **January 28th and February 28th**. Please speak to your RD immediately if you would like to attempt to change rooms.

If you live on Midtown and want to select the Platinum meal plan, you have **until January 28th** to do so.



If you live in one of the Westside halls and want to decrease your meal plan to a lower plan, you must complete this **before January 28th** as well.

If you wish to increase your meal plan to a higher plan, you may do this **at any time** during the semester.



RA/ARM selection for the Fall 2013 semester begins soon.

Please watch your buildings, our Facebook page, and our website, for information about applications and the process.

We'd love to have you work with us next year!

WHAT DO YOU THINK?



What do you think? Have something you'd like to share about this newsletter or other housing issues? Want to give a suggestion for a topic you're interested in knowing more about? Let us

know. Drop us a line at housing@wcsu.edu

Your Deans

By Nick Graham, Grasso ARM, & Anna Bank, Centennial ARM

We'd like to introduce you to the Deans of the four colleges. They have spanned the gamut of higher education and accomplished much in their careers so far. Here they are!

In the position of the Dean of the **Ancell School of Business** is **Dr. Allen Morton, D.P.S.** In his welcome letter on the Ancell website, Dr. Morton outlines that he wishes to work with students in order to learn how to flourish in a struggling economy. Dr. Morton holds a B.A. from Harvard College. He received his M.B.A. from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, and his D.P.S. from Pace University. You can reach Dr. Morton at mortona@wcsu.edu or 203-837-9600.



Dr. Allen Morton
Dean
Ansell School of Business

Under the **School of Arts and Sciences**, which hosts 14 different departments, the university welcomes **Dr. Missy Alexander** to the Dean's position. Dr. Alexander outlines her focus on the wonderful resources for the profusion of majors and the wealth of internships, scholarships, awards and job opportunities that this school has at its fingertips. Dr. Alexander received her undergraduate degree in Anthropology from Hunter College in New York City as well as earning her Masters Degree in Communication Studies. She received her Ph.D. in Media Ecology from New York University. Dr. Alexander can be reached at alexanderm@wcsu.edu or 203-837-9400.



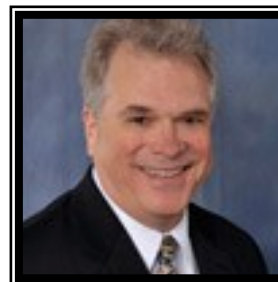
Dr. Missy Alexander
Dean
School of Arts & Sciences

Dr. Jess House is the new Dean of the **School of Professional Studies**. This school focuses on fields in nursing, community health, health education, community counseling, wellness management, elementary education, secondary education, social work, and instructional leadership. Dean House earned his Ph.D. in educational administration from the University of Iowa, and his Ed.S. in educational administration from Truman State University. Dean House also holds a masters degree and a bachelor's degree in art education. You can contact Dr. House at housej@wcsu.edu or 203-837-9500.



Dr. Jess House
Dean
School of Professional Studies

Dr. Dan Goble is the current Dean of the **School of Visual and Performing Arts**. He is a performer, educator, and arts administrator. Dean Goble has achieved much in his thirty years in the music industry. He has performed with some of the best musicians, ensembles, and conductors. Dean Goble received his Doctor of Musical Arts and Master of Music degrees from the University of Texas in Austin, as well as his Bachelors degrees in Saxophone and Music Education from the University of Northern Colorado. Students can reach Dean Goble at gobled@wcsu.edu or 203-837-8851.



Dr. Dan Goble
Dean
School of Visual & Performing Arts

We are excited by the caring energy these Deans bring to their respective schools, and encourage a strong relationship between you, them, and your ARM staff in order to create a conduit for the multitude of resources that WCSU has to offer.

The recent tragedy in Sandy Hook has impacted each of us, particularly those who were family or acquaintances of the victims. As life returns to what passes for normal, many of us still find ourselves feeling enormous pain and confusion. Here are some tips to help you get through those dark times:

Talk about it. Encourage others to share their perspectives, and don't be afraid to share your feelings. You'll soon see there are others who share your feelings.

Take care of yourself. Get plenty of rest and exercise. Do things you find soothing and relaxing. Eat nutritious food. Avoid excessive drinking and risk-taking. Maintain your usual routines.

Stay connected. Maintain contact with your friends and family, who offer reassurance. If you can't see them, visit by email, phone calls, or OoVoo.

Do something positive. Do something that helps you gain a sense of control. Donate blood, collect donations, write letters. Get involved in activities on campus, and find a way to make a difference.

Ask for help. If you feel overwhelmed by events, remember it's not a sign of your weakness, but of your humanity. Talk with a trusted friend, family member or advisor. Use campus resources such as the Counseling Center or Campus Ministries if you need it.

From the National Mental Health Association

