



the arm newsletter

The Handout

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ACADEMIC RESOURCE MENTORS — YOUR ARM HAS A HANDOUT FOR YOU!

IN THIS ISSUE

Take Full Advantage of Thanksgiving Break

by Ruth Williams, Newbury ARM



After eating all the turkey and stuffing you can handle it is important to take advantage of your time. Thanksgiving is full of happiness, family and food, but many students don't think to get assignments done. Thanksgiving break begins Wednesday November 23, 2016 and ends Saturday November 26, 2016. This gives students 4 to 5 days to get ahead. Here are some tips on how!

1. Build Your Résumé

You may think it is too early to think about applying for jobs, but this is the perfect opportunity for students to create or critique a résumé. Besides the various resources we have on campus, there are many informational websites that can help you develop a résumé that is professional and specifically related to your major/career. The structure of the résumé should include an objective, experience, education, past jobs, and references. Find an appropriate format and make sure to ensure a suitable length. The last thing to do it **proof read, proof read and proof read!** You can never do enough proof reading.

2. Homework

It isn't called "home" work for no reason. It can be hard to get work done in the comfort of your own home, but it may be the most optimal time to. As much as many students dislike work during Thanksgiving, many teachers continually assign it. If you are given a project, a presentation, or a homework sheet that is due the Monday after Thanksgiving it is best that you to strive to complete it as soon as you can. The quicker you get it done, the more you can enjoy the remainder of your holiday week and the less stress you will have the Sunday before it is due.

3. Exercise

This is the probably the last thing on anyone's mind to do during Thanksgiving break but it may be one of the best ways to get ahead. Scientifically, exercise is

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SUCCESS SPOT

www.wcsu.edu/housing/arm.asp

Taking It Step by Step

by Lexi Fonda
Grasso ARM



One of the unique things about Housing & Residence life here at Western Connecticut State University is the rewarding progression through the residence halls. Each year, students get to experience a different style of living that encourages academic success, socialization, and self sufficiency.



It begins with the first-year residence halls. Currently, we have two: Fairfield Hall and Newbury Hall. Fairfield Hall was first built in 1917 as an all-female hall. It was renovated in 1957, when an annex was added. After its latest renovation in 2007, Fairfield finally became co-educational. Fairfield Hall is known for its charming atmosphere.

Newbury Hall was built in the 1960's and has a more modern look. Both halls have double bedrooms, communal lounges with kitchens and game rooms, and communal bathrooms. Sometimes this style of living gets a bad reputation, but the truth is that it probably builds the most character! Students are less likely to stay in their rooms because the space is pretty limited, so they often will leave their bedrooms. When students leave their bedrooms, they make friends!



Historically, Litchfield Hall is a first year residence hall, and it's currently under renovation. (As your former Litchfield Hall ARM, I must say I quite miss it. I can't wait to



see what it looks like when it's finished!)

In addition, some first-year students live in Centennial Hall. As a second-year student, you will likely be living in Centennial Hall. The first floor is comprised of first-year students, and the rest of the building is a mix of second year and third-year students. It was



opened in 2004. Centennial Hall is a suite-style building with two bedrooms per suite. One bedroom is a double and the other is a triple. Each suite also has a kitchenette, common area, and full bathroom. There are also designated study lounges on each floor and a multipurpose lounge in the basement. In this residence hall, students opt to live with friends they've made during their first year. They might meet these people around their first-year hall, in their classes, or through clubs they have participated in. Students gain a little more responsibility as they learn what it means to care for their own kitchenettes, common areas, and bathroom. They are still pretty reliant on their meal plans since the kitchenette only has a microwave, sink, and cabinet sink in it. However, the basement has a communal kitchen that students can cook in. (Fun Fact: I lived in Centennial Hall my first year!)

Then students are headed over to Grasso Hall for their third year. As of right now, Grasso Hall also houses second-year



students. It was built in the 1980's, and is known for its hardwood-style floors. It is an apartment-style residence hall. Each apartment has two bedrooms, a full kitchen, and a full bathroom. It has a multipurpose lounge on the first floor with three study areas, game room equipment, and a communal kitchen. Students at this point are getting a serious grip on what it means to live independently. They are less reliant on

their meal plans because of their full kitchens - complete with a stove top, oven, microwave, and refrigerator. Common areas are on the smaller side, so students are often found hanging out in the recently renovated multipurpose lounge. Again, students have to care for their own kitchens, common areas, and bathrooms. A full kitchen brings more responsibilities, like oven and stovetop safety.

Lastly, fourth-year students reside in Pinney Hall. It also houses some third-year students, Honors Program students, and ISEP students. Pinney Hall opened in 1999. It is apartment-style living. The apartments have three bedrooms, two doubles and one single. Each apartment has a full kitchen, pantry, and a living room/common area. Pinney Hall is well-known for the balconies, especially on the sunset side. At this point, students have mastered the art of healthy living and sharing a space with their friends.



This makes WCSU unique in that a lot other universities don't have an intentional system like this one. In fact, apartment style living is pretty rare. After that, students are pretty much set to live on their own during their post-graduate life. They can transfer those skills to rent their first off-campus apartments with the friends they've made along the way now that they've spent their undergraduate years developing the independence needed to maintain and share that space.

“The human brain is amazing. It functions 24 hours a day from the time we were born, and only stops when we take Exams.”

- markamoment.com

The Kathwari Honors Program

By **Melanie Jones**, Centennial ARM

The Kathwari Honors Program at Western Connecticut State University is one of the most prestigious organizations here on campus. The Honors Program was founded in 1987 to nurture academic excellence. Students from any of the four schools of the University are accepted. Honors classes are created to inspire students to use critical thinking inside and outside of the classroom. Classes are primarily discussion and activity based. Each class is based on one of four different modes of inquiry.

What are the four modes of inquiry, you may ask? The four modes include textual analysis, scientific and mathematical analysis, social and cultural analysis, and artistic creation and analysis. Textual analysis explores how text conveys meaning. Texts can include obvious written works, ideas, writings in popular culture, ritual texts, and symbols. Scientific and mathematical analysis entails using the scientific processes of interpreting different events. This can include using different models and mathematical representations to understand these different phenomena. Historical analysis examines how different events or phenomena shape or are shaped by history and culture. Lastly, artistic creation examines creation, performance analysis, works of theater, art, literature, music, or sculpture. This mode of inquiry focuses on understanding creative activity.

Thinking of applying? Go for it! There are a few requirements necessary for application. First year students must have an SAT score of 1650 on the three-part SAT or have graduated in the top 25% of their class. Students who are already enrolled past their first semester must have a GPA of 3.2 in order to apply. Don't meet these requirements? Don't fret. There is still a chance to submit an application by petitioning the University Honors Council to gain admission based on previous academic records and history. Current university students may apply at any time for consideration for admission into the honors program. As an honors student, some requirements must be met in order to graduate with honors. First, you must take HON 100 during your first semester in the honors program. This is a foundation of the honors program and allows you to open your mind to understand future honors courses. For the remaining semesters,

Avoiding Ho-hum Holidays!

Tis the season to be jolly, to be sure, but it's also the season where a lot of us will feel a bit down. Maybe it's getting over election agitation. Perhaps it's the first holiday without a loved one. It could be that you just get a little blue and depressed at this time of the year, once the days get so short. If you're feeling that way, here are some hints to help you:

1. Don't overschedule yourself. Take time to relax and enjoy a little down time. If you make plans, be sure to keep things organized so you don't miss doing something you really wanted to do.
2. Declare an amnesty period with people you don't like. We all have a friend or relative who makes us nuts, but we'll probably end up spending time with them regardless. Take some deep breaths and wander to a different room if they start to get to you!
3. It's not going to be magic like it was when you were a kid! Find ways to make it magic again by volunteering to help out somewhere.
4. Don't spend money you don't have because you think you have to. While gift giving is nice, the gift of your time and interest are far more important!
5. If you need help, seek it out. There's no sense in feeling miserable if you can get help by visiting a clinic or your therapist, or talking to a good friend who understands and encourages you.

students must take four other honors courses that cover the four modes of inquiry. Lastly, an honors capstone is required. Honors students must also participate in four honors activities which can range from being on an e-board of a club, being a member of the Honors Students of Compassion, studying abroad, and much more! The Honors Students of Compassion is a club run by Honors students. Formerly known as HSO or Honors Student Organization, the HSOC strives to provide opportunities for academic growth outside of the classroom. Members don't even have to be honors students to participate in meetings. There are a lot of benefits of being an honors student. There are many scholarships available. Honors students may also take up to 21 credits a semester without having to pay additional class fees and they receive priority registration. Honors housing in Pinney is also available to all students, including freshmen. Lastly, honors courses can cover other general education requirements. Think about joining the honors program! There are too many benefits to even count and why not surround yourself with a higher level of out of classroom education?

How Not To Go Broke This Christmas

It is no surprise that college students are not equipped with cash to spend on their loved ones this holiday. Out of the 20 million Americans that attend college today, about 60% of them borrow money to help pay for costs and currently, there are about 37 million people with outstanding student debt. Although on average the gift giving season is a budget breaker, this does not mean it is impossible for even college students to spread the love of giving.

While students may want to give thoughtful gifts to friends and family, having little cash and an unclear job future means they may want to act with greater restraint during retail's biggest season. Students are under a ton of pressure with end of the year projects, finals and assignments that are catching up with them so thinking about spending their money on the perfect gift becomes a burden. In order to check off everyone on your shopping list this year here are a few tips that won't destroy your bank account.

No. 1: Shop online. Shopping online is a great way to avoid the crowds on Black Friday, and the hassle of malls. Many sites offer online only deals and promo codes that you can apply to your order for even more savings. Keep watch for special online deal occasions such as Cyber Monday or Amazon Prime Day to accomplish all your giving goals. Also, when shopping online you are less likely to look around and impulse buy at the checkout line rather than go in and out for what you were looking for.

No. 2: Track prices. Pricing on items will

continue to fluctuate throughout the season. When you are searching for specific items, try downloading helpful apps such as **Hukkster** and **RetailMeNot** to find the lowest prices. Online deal comparisons really make the difference when all of your gift purchases add up. Stores are constantly dropping item prices, so it is essential to stay in the loop.

No. 3: Use social media. Twitter and Facebook especially are great resources to find extra savings this holiday season. There are promotional advertisements every day that are sponsored as well as shared by your friends and followers. Daily deals can be posted and you can sometimes participate in them by sharing something on your page for savings.

No. 4: Consider consignment stores. Sites like **Thredup.com** have categories for every kind of gift recipient and are a good starting place to find quality used gifts. However, there are many treasures to be found in your local thrift stores like **Savers** and **Goodwill**. Don't underestimate what you may find, and what great gift someone's donation could be.

No. 5: Finally give the homemade gift! While it may sound lame, the time college students have over winter break and can be the start of creating your heartfelt gifts. Today there is no excuse to not have any inspiration to create something since there are sites like **Pinterest.com** and so many people who share their recipes and how to's in making almost anything. It can be as easy as decorating something to make it personal, cook or bake something that is their favorite or even experiment and build something like a picture frame, knit a scarf or melt your own candles. The possibilities of homemade gifts go beyond any savings that you can find this season. Those who are special enough to be given gifts to will love a personalized letter, or anything you put together in thought of them.

Overall, this holiday season does not need to cause more debt in a college student's life. Explore the possibilities that are out there and share the joy of giving.

by
Samantha Feliciano,
Fairfield ARM

Take Advantage (cont. from pg. 1)

not only the best way to work off that Thanksgiving food but it also a way to reduce stress and reenergize. Exercise can keep your mind sharp and provide a boost of energy to get things done. While everyone is sleeping after a big meal, going to exercise can give you the drive to complete all tasks and make you feel a lot better about it.

4. Job Search

This is the most important time to look for jobs. This is true for a couple of reasons. The first is that many companies, especially retail, want to hire staff before Christmas. The second reason is that many careers (business, nursing, education) are starting to look for new grads to hire for upcoming year. The third reason is that students have the time to complete applications! This is hard to do while classes are in session. Take advantage of this time to get ahead of your peers and get hired in a position within your field.

As simple as these tips may seem, they are very important ways to significantly get ahead and fully take advantage of the Thanksgiving break. Apply these tips to your holiday break and see how far ahead you can get!



There's
always
SOMETHING
TO BE
thankful
FOR



What are you going to do during Winter break? Going on vacation? Visiting your long lost family members? Going to sleep all break and binge watch Netflix shows? Well, if you don't have any of these fantastic plans in mind, I'm going to give you some tips on how to stay productive during break.

1) The first tip is to relax. You just had a challenging semester, full of exams, stress, and trying your best to balance how many meal swipes you use throughout the day. Now it's your time to shine. And by shine, I mean relax. Do something fun-go out to eat every day (if you have the funds), have a sleepover with a bunch of your friends, invite your buddies over for a night of gaming, etc. Just have fun!

2) What classes are you taking? Do they require books? Since winter break will be over in the blink of an eye, get the ball rolling on what books you are going to need and order them. Therefore, by the time you come back to school that is one less thing you have to worry about. All you'll have to worry about is settling back in and getting ready for the new academic year.

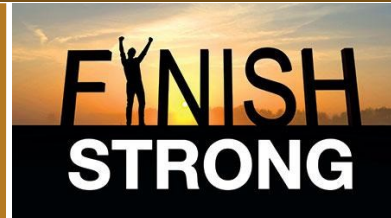
3) Since most college students work and go to school, winter break is a great time to figure out what hours you can work. If you worked multiple hours last semester and didn't do so well in your classes, maybe you should consider decreasing the amount of hours you work during the

week. On the other hand, if you worked a limited amount of hours last semester and feel like you can handle more, consider adding on hours. You know what works best for you.

4) Is there an upcoming topic that you are nervous about learning? If so, reach out to your professor and ask him/her to give you some tips on how you can tackle learning that specific topic. The professor might send you worksheets or tell you specific pages in the book (that you already ordered) that can help you. Therefore, by the time the semester starts you don't have to worry about learning that topic that you were so intimidated by because you are already familiar with it.

5) Are you involved in any extracurricular activities? Do you play a sport? Those take up a considerable amount of time and you need to be prepared for the upcoming semester. Reach out to the president of your club to find out what time the meetings will be. Also, reach out to your coach and see what time you will have practice and how often.

Being prepared for the upcoming semester can decrease your stress level which will help you in more ways than one. While in the midst of preparing yourself for the upcoming semester don't forget to have fun because before you know it you'll be right back at school!



by Nadia Orjiugo,
Centennial ARM

Hello everyone!
Right now is the
make or break

time. Although the holidays are approaching, the little time you have now between Thanksgiving break and finals are **crucial** to finishing your semester. It is very easy to think ahead and think about the vacations that are upcoming but its important to remain focused! This is why I am going to tell you how to finish the semester strong and save you some stress with a few tips!

The first tip in to finishing the semester is to make sure you have all prior work done and handed in as long as the professor allows you to do so. **Every** point counts! Remember to keep a good relationship with the instructor so that you are aware of what is coming in the future as well as your standing in the class.

The second tip is to review all due dates. Seeing that this is one of the most stressful parts of the semester, it is not unusual to have multiple tasks due around the same time.

The third tip is to start studying **NOW!!!!** Cramming may have worked through the semester, however this will not be the case with your finals. There is now more material than ever combined into one test! If you start studying now, you have time to get organized and go over material you feel least comfortable with and there's time to ask your instructor to review it. Finding the perfect study place is the most important part of this step! If you don't have a perfect study place you will not retain anything, so find out what works for you!

The last tip is one that most college students struggle with. Can you guess what it is? Well it's **PRO-CRASTINATION!!!! Do not procrastinate!** Devote your free time to school and studying and you will have better results. Along with not procrastinating, you will get more sleep. Sleep is also essential to finishing off the semester and I cannot stress this factor any more! It is said that an average adult needs 8 hours of sleep, however, how many of us actually get that much? When you do not get the precise amount of sleep, it weakens your mental proficiency and I'm pretty sure this is not what we want during finals time so get some rest!

As we all know, this time of year is very hectic but **we can** all do this if we follow these tips! Just remain focused for these last few weeks and hang in there. Happy holidays everyone!

CLEP Your Way to Success!

by Qin Lin, Pinney ARM

Are you frustrated because your program sheet requires you to take a course you already completed in high school? Are you upset because a course you want to take requires a prerequisite? Or are you stressed because you are one class short of graduating? The College Level Examination Program can help you solve all these problems. The College Board, who administers the CLEP exam, designed the program as a way to help students receive college credit for material they already know, for a fraction of the cost of a college course. There are several reasons for why you should consider taking the CLEP exams.

Save MONEY

Many students attempt to support themselves financially after graduating college. With the skyrocketing prices of college education, many people are stressed out due to the financial burden. This is why the CLEP exam is a great option. Most students start supporting themselves after they graduate from high school. You only need to pay a fraction of the cost of a actual college course, but still receive the same amount of credits and fulfill class requirements.

Save TIME

Nowadays, almost every college student has either a part-time or full-time job on top of being a full-time student. Especially for non-matriculated students who have families and other responsibilities, it is difficult for them to find the time to take the courses they need.

Study at your own pace

Every student has his or her own study methods and pace; CLEP exams can help them meet both of the needs. Students do not need to take other classmates' needs into consideration, like they need to in the regular classroom. Students can purchase the studying materials to study on their own to prepare for the exam.

Interested? Here are the six steps to take CLEP exam at WCSU:

◆ STEP 1 - Find Out Your College's CLEP Policy

WCSU currently administers most CLEP examinations. However, WCSU only accepts select CLEP exams. Here's the list of CLEP exams accepted/credited by WCSU—
<https://www.wcsu.edu/testing/forms/WCSU%20CLEP%20Equivalency.pdf>.

◆ STEP 2 - Decide Which Exam(s) to Take

Read the **exam descriptions** of all 33 exams to find the right one for you.

◆ STEP 3 - Register with WCSU Testing Center

Register as soon as possible by submitting the registration form **along with the administration fee**. CLEP exams are offered every 4 to 6 weeks throughout the year except for summer months. You may register up to 3 exams on the **same test date** depending on space or session availability.

◆ STEP 4 - Prepare for your exam(s)

Study materials are available at **College Board CLEP Test preparation** and other study resources. CLEP subject based books are also available at the WCSU Bookstore.

◆ STEP 5 - Day of Examination

Exams are administered at Western Connecticut State University Westside Campus in the Campus Center Computer Center on the third floor.

◆ STEP 6 - Score Reports

The score report will be received instantly after completing the exam with the exception of the College Composition, which takes three to four weeks to deliver. The official transcript will be mailed directly to the college, employer or certifying agency that was indicated before initiating the exam.

(Details can be found at <https://www.wcsu.edu/testing/index.htm>)

Housing Announcements:



Thanksgiving break is upon us. If you need to stay on campus, you need to register to do so. Forms are at the Information Desk, and you must register before noon on Monday, Nov. 21st. There's no charge for Thanksgiving break.



Check out for the Fall semester is following your last final exam. Make your arrangements with your families over Thanksgiving! The buildings close for the Intercession break on Friday, December 16th @ 6 pm. Only students who have registered and paid to stay for Intercession will be permitted to remain.



Look for information in your building for what you need to do to officially check out. (You'll minimally have to sign out on a roster that you're leaving!) If you are moving (totally leaving housing or changing your room to a new room, whether in your hall or in another hall), you **MUST** remove **ALL** of your belongings from your room when you leave for the semester, and officially check out with your building staff, including signing your Room Inventory Form.



If you're returning to the same room, please make sure your room is clean, all open food and trash is thrown out, all your electrical appliances are unplugged, and your windows and blinds are closed. Don't leave anything of value in your room. Although the building is closed, there is occasional need to enter rooms for maintenance or operational issues.



** Don't forget to look for campus events in the WOW email each Thursday! **

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