

## How to Get Over Your



# TEST ANXIETY

by Angela Nicastro  
Pinney ARM

Now we all have had this issue at some point in our lives, and there often hasn't been a solid way to deal with it. This is most likely because everyone is different, and the "perfect" way to deal with test and/or performance anxiety would most likely not work for everyone.

Over the course of many years, with many tests and performances, I have asked professors, researched, and even thought of my own tips that could possibly help you with your test/performance anxiety. Here are a few:

**Talk to your professors:** Your professors are there to help you! They have office hours, and adjuncts have emails that they (hopefully) answer. If they do not answer through email, talk to them before or after class about your concerns; they don't

want you to fail their course, and want you to be learning something without adding on the stress of being worried about the test or performance.

**Study with a buddy:** Studies show that if you study for a test, and actually know the material, you tend to have less anxiety since you will most likely end up with a better score (obviously.) If you tend to not be able to focus on your own, or just can't find that studying groove, find a person in your class to be your study buddy. Help each other stay on track, express your concerns about what you're worried about, and maybe together you can find ways to lessen that anxiety that can help you get a good grade.

**Get a good night's sleep, and eat a healthy breakfast:** This was

something that has been drilled into our brains since kindergarten by our parents; get a good night's rest, and in the morning eat a good and healthy breakfast. It won't help your test anxiety if you have been up all night studying, as you're not going to be able to concentrate at all for the test. Though you think you need to stay up to study, study a little each day so this doesn't have to happen, and you'll be fully rested.

**Find ways to relax:** Find an activity or something that can help you relax the night of or right before taking the test. Obviously, I am not saying go out and party with friends, but if you have studied and know the material, maybe go to the movies to get your mind off the test for a little bit, or go to the

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## The Handout an arm newsletter



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### Some RAs getting ready for WCSU Day of Service



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As this holiday season approaches, a lot of people will be receiving gifts. Maybe it's for a holiday that they celebrate, maybe for a holiday others around them celebrate, or maybe you and your friends just really like giving each other gifts! It's so easy to ask for the phone you want, the video game you want, the eyeshadow palette you want, or anything else that you might want. It makes sense to ask for those things because you're not spending the money so you don't have to feel bad about the purchase. But a challenge I'm trying to take on myself this year is to try to take some of my gifts I'm given and instead ask for something that I can give to others that need it. Here are a few ways you can give for the holidays.

### **Volunteering at a local food bank.**

Signing up to volunteer at a food bank is an excellent way to get involved directly in your community. Helping out at a food bank is especially important in the winter season when it's getting colder and more families are trying to celebrate holidays with bigger meals. If you don't have time to volunteer at a food bank, dropping off food is just as helpful! Some food banks even provide a list of what they are critically in need of at the moment, so you can make your shopping effective!

### **Donating.**

There are so many ways to donate. You can donate to a local charity, a national organization, a hospital—there are all kinds of places that benefit so greatly from the

donations of people like us. When asking for donations as a gift, you can send friends or family a link to where to donate. There, someone can donate something in your name and you can get emails through the organization with a thank you and information on what your donation has done.

### **Organize groups!**

A few years a group of people and I signed up for **Toys for Tots**, where we were assigned a local child who comes from a family that cannot afford to provide that child Christmas presents. We get a list of information about that child such as what kind of stuff they like and what clothing size they are. Then the group splits up tasks to get toys to wrap for that child and then deliver to **Toys for Tots** to bring to the parents for Christmas. It's so fulfilling to know that you're directly helping a family, and when you do it in groups it doesn't have to be too expensive. And to anyone like me who loves children, what could be better than knowing that you're a real life Santa Claus to a child?

Sure I could ask for a new laptop or clothes, but I am not in essential need of those things. And personally, I feel so much better knowing that I could help someone in some way when they needed it than I could ever feel from getting something that I just want. Happy holidays, everyone. Remember to always be kind and share with those around you.

Winter is approaching and for me, my initial thought is to curl up in bed and hibernate until the crocuses start popping up in April. However, a few of my friends get excited for winter and I thought that I could channel some of their positive spirits by creating a list of super fun things to do in the winter!

**Ice Skating:** The Danbury area has the Danbury Ice Arena where students can go to open skate for hours at a really low fee. Ice skating makes a good date night, or a perfect outing with all of your friends!

**Hot Chocolate Drinking:** Curl up with some hot chocolate and a book or a movie!

**Hiking:** Bundle up, throw on some boots and set out on some trails. Winter sights can be extremely breathtaking. If you have access and the snow is plentiful, you should try something new! Cross country skiing or snow shoeing are both fun outdoor activities for the winter.

**Skiing:** New England has a pretty great skiing atmosphere. If you're interested, head out and take advantage of the mountains in your area. If you have experience, get out and push your limits. For those of you that do not have experience, most skiing locations offer lessons!

**Movies:** The winter is a great time to stay in and watch a movie. Holiday movie marathons are always on, and some really good movies are always hitting the theatres. Grab a friend, pick up some popcorn, and enjoy!

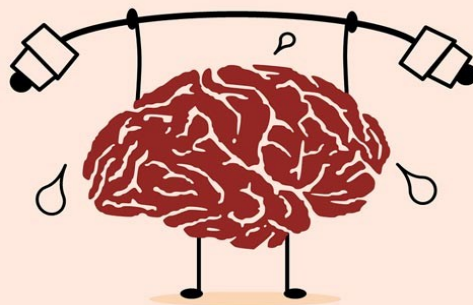
**Volunteering:** The winter, and especially the holiday season, is a great time to participate in volunteer activity. Something that you could do are wrap presents for people in the mall. For some people in the community, especially the elderly population, giftwrapping can be a huge help. A lot of elderly people begin to lose some of their motor skills, which can

(cont. on pg. 3)



# Staying Academically Sharp Over Winter Break

by Sara Slaiby, Fairfield ARM



Believe it or not, winter break is fast approaching. Once the fall semester ends, it is most definitely a necessity to take a mental break from all school related things. Hanging out with friends, enjoying the holiday season, and spending time with family are all great things that are recommended for college students when completing a semester. However, it is very important to not lose your school strategies and mindset too quickly because believe it or not, winter break is over in the blink of an eye. I am not recommending that you read entire textbooks or write essays every day of your winter break—that would be crazy. However, here are a few suggestions as to how to keep your brain working while still enjoying a break from college.

Find a novel to read that interests you. When many people think about reading, they automatically associate it with stress and time crunches due to their past experiences from reading for

school. Nonetheless, picking out a novel that specifically interests you can be very therapeutic. Find a comfy place around your home to relax and indulge in a novel. Before you know it, the novel will be over and you will be searching for your next novel of interest.

**Maintaining a schedule.** Going from a strict schedule of classes, a work schedule, a gym routine, and designated homework time is hard to disassociate from in the course of a week. Many students find themselves going stir crazy sitting at home and having no obligations that they need to attend to. This is why it is important to not completely lose your sense of routine. Continue to go to the gym and get in your daily exercise, or schedule a work routine and designate time out of your day for that, too. If you are the type of person who does not like to work out, or does not have a job, simply schedule time from your day to eat meals! Any type of structure that you can maintain will help

ease your adjustment back into college life when returning in January.

Get your textbooks for the upcoming semester. Winter break is the perfect time to start ordering and looking through your textbooks. You have time to find the best prices, and don't need to rush the shipping! Once your textbooks are in, browse through them and get an idea of some of the topics you may be learning throughout the semester. If you want, you can even start reading some of the first chapters just to get ahead of your class, which is always a great start to a new semester!

Finally, learn something new. This does not have to be something extravagant or pertaining to your major in school. This is something as simple as learning a new yoga pose or even learning a new song on the piano; something new that interests you. By learning something, you are stimulating your brain and keeping it active. By doing so, when coming back to college you won't feel as overwhelmed.

By attempting even two of these tips for staying academically sharp, you are guaranteed a smoother transition back to college. Overall, enjoy your winter break and enjoy time with friends, family, and loved ones and we will see you in January!

make it difficult for them to wrap! Another activity that you can do is collect food for a food pantry near you. During the winter, the demand for food is much greater. If you think about some of your traditions, it is likely that they might revolve around food. Imagine if you had none... Think about making donations so that less fortunate people can partake in their own holiday festivities.

Whether you are partaking in a leisure activity or a volunteer activity, the winter is the perfect time to spend with friends and family. Don't let the winter blues stop you from getting out and making the most of every day.

A new year is coming, and with it, New Year's Resolutions! If you look back on the last 365 days and can't remember all the friends you made or the accomplishments you've enjoyed, then journaling might be for you!

Journaling can be a great tool to get to know yourself better, and to recognize how you change from month to month or year to year. You can look back and say "Wow, I've really improved!" For example, you can see that you used to jog or paint or read once a week last year, but this year you do 3 times a week!

You can also look back and see patterns you would like to change. If you notice a trend of eating food you would rather be cutting out of your diet or spending too much time on the internet, then you will be more likely to be mindful of it and begin to amend that behavior.

I recommend you use the journal in a variety of ways. Be free with it! Make boxes, take notes, draw arrows and pictures. Write some things very BIG and some things extra tiny. You can make a page devoted only to what books you've read or shows people have recommended you watch, and go back to it whenever you need to add something. Some people track their exercise, diet, and sleep in it to track their health. Others make timelines with goals and steps to achieve those goals. The most important thing, though, is to make



journaling truly enjoyable for yourself, so forget everything I've said and just go with your gut! Your journal should be an external drive for your brain, to get things out and down on paper so you can free up that brain real-estate.

Make sure to jot down funny thoughts, good ideas, businesses you could start, inventions you could create, fantasies, imaginations, lists of your favorite words and bands and people. Phone numbers, coordinates, memories, jokes you don't want to forget. Maybe one day you'll need a laugh and flip to a page and be reminded of a great day you had with a friend. You can even paste things into it, like concert tickets or sticky notes, or write in a vast assortment of colored pens so each page has its own personality. In this way, your journal will be a true reflection of you, and be more useful because you'll be able to navigate the pages more readily.

Journaling should be for YOU! To be creative or goal oriented, to remember who you were and to keep in mind who you want to be, to have something to confide in and to celebrate with. Start now, start on January 1st, start on a gum wrapper or on a huge piece of paper tacked to your wall. Invest in yourself by investing the time to think out loud and to embrace your thoughts by grabbing a pen and just beginning with one word.

### **Test Anxiety** (continued from pg. 1)

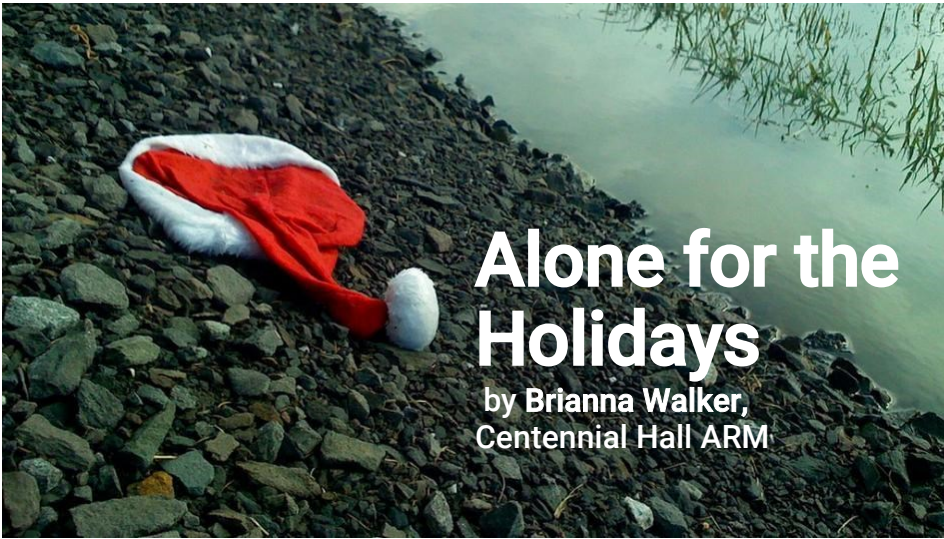
gym, read a book, or meditate. Find something that can calm you down when you start thinking about that big test or performance.

**Eat a lot of spaghetti:** I'm not a scientist, and I don't know how this works, but it is a fun little trick that works for me to get over test or even performance anxiety. As a music major, I've had to audition and play in front of my professors many times, and I still have severe performance anxiety. In high school, my private lesson instructor said to eat spaghetti the night before a test or performance, because the carbs or the starch or the whatever helps block out the adrenalin that can cause the symptoms of anxiety. Now I don't know if this is a placebo effect type of scenario . . . but it honestly kind of worked for me. I've done this religiously since I first tried it, for both performances and tests, and I've noticed that my symptoms like sweaty palms, fast heartbeat, and shallow breathing lessened. If you want to test out this trick for yourself, try it! It would be fun to hear what others say!



**Address your test anxiety:** "I'm just a bad test taker," "Oh, I've never been able to concentrate on a test," are just a few things I've personally said, and also hear a lot from other students. Now could you honestly just be a bad test taker? Yes, you could, but instead of letting all your test scores be lower than they could be, wouldn't it be better to address the problem and find a way to solve it? It could be something deeper than just being a bad test taker or you having to put in more effort to concentrate. Seek out help to figure out what might be holding you back.

Like I said before, these tips might not help everyone, but with finals coming up soon it might just be helpful to get a head start on finding ways to help you take those exams and performances without the anxiety.



# Alone for the Holidays

by Brianna Walker,  
Centennial Hall ARM

The holidays are usually a fantastic time to bond with those closest to you - friends, family, those who've touched your heart in a special way. This includes possibly traveling to them or going home. What happens when you don't have a home? What should you do when you are not capable of travelling? If you find yourself alone on the holidays - there's no need to despair. It is still possible to be in the holiday cheer, enjoying yourself during those periods of time when you're told that it's sad to be alone.

When you're unable to be with your friends and family, but still want to be around people, consider going to public places often. This could be helpful for those who find comfort in seeing other families, or even just being outside. Getting outside of your solitude could help with you embracing it! Take time to look at decorations, feel the cold air, experience

all of the holiday goodness. If you're in a city, look up the holiday events near you, you might find inspiration there. Social interaction could be absolutely necessary in changing the perspective of what it actually means to be alone. Talking with those who are working could put your position into perspective. During this time, self reflection is absolutely important - recognizing your feelings and understanding them will benefit the time that is spent alone. There is still a possibility to put those outward good feelings into other people, even if you're not close to them. Smiling at a stranger or paying it forward are two ways for you to feel more connected. Sometimes, even volunteering at a soup kitchen or local theatre helps alleviate the negative thoughts of your situation. There are people who are less fortunate than the average person, so they might also need extra

cheering up!

One of the best ways to make the most of your free period is to take time to care for yourself. This could include starting a new hobby that you haven't gotten around to yet, like knitting or learning how to play the piano. Or, maybe it's paying more attention to the people or things that you may find important, like reaching out to the family members that you're unable to see and sending them post cards. It may be finally relaxing by yourself during this holiday season. It could be a combination of all three, or include anything that goes under of the umbrella of self care. Starting a new habit, like doing yoga every morning, could even extend beyond the two months during the holidays, making it more than a holiday ritual. It is beneficial to enjoy your time working on yourself, and you may spread those newfound good vibes to others.

When it comes down to it, it is very possible to still enjoy yourself on the holidays and feel in spirit even if you cannot be around friends and family! Remember that you are not alone - there are plenty of people out there who are also riding it out solo. It is all about your personal mindset - the stronger your mind, the more you can achieve!



# I Am Who I Say I Am

by Keyanna Wright, Litchfield ARM

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Most people are familiar with the idea that college is the point in a young adults' life where they do the most self-discovering. Many of us take this opportunity to explore or create different parts of our identity. This quest can be both beautiful and insightful as well as exhausting and draining. Learning to love parts of yourself while surrendering other parts can leave you with a feeling of void, but it also gives you an opportunity to decide exactly who you want to be. Using the experiences and knowledge we gain along our journey, we aim to shape ourselves into the ideal version of us. Most of us attempt to evolve sexually, mentally, physically, and spiritually as we embark on our journey through life. We use college as an opportunity to flourish in the best ways, and sometimes there are tools to help us. One of the ones I've used is called True Colors, which helps us understand ourselves and others based on our personality temperaments. Complete the following personality quiz to find out aspects of your personality you may not have recognized before. It is possible to identify with more than one of these personality types. However, some traits are much stronger than others are.

**Instructions:** Compare all four boxes in each row. Do not analyze each word; just get a sense of each box. Score each of the four boxes in each row from most to least as it describes you: **4** = most, **3** = a lot, **2** = somewhat, **1** = least.

Row 1	<b>A:</b> Active Variety Sports Opportunities Spontaneous Flexible	<b>B:</b> Organized Planned Neat Parental Traditional Responsible	<b>C:</b> Warm Helpful Friends Authentic Harmonious Compassionate	<b>D:</b> Learning Science Quiet Versatile Inventive Competent
Row 2	<b>E:</b> Curious Ideas Questions Conceptual Knowledge Problem Solver	<b>F:</b> Caring People-Oriented Feelings Unique Empathetic Communicative	<b>G:</b> Orderly On-time Honest Stable Sensible Dependable	<b>H:</b> Action Challenges Competitive Impetuous Impactful
Row 3	<b>I:</b> Helpful Trustworthy Dependable Loyal Conservative Organized	<b>J:</b> Kind Understanding Giving Devoted Warm Poetic	<b>K:</b> Playful Quick Adventurous Confrontational Open-Minded Independent	<b>L:</b> Independent Exploring Competent Theoretical Why Questions Ingenious
Row 4	<b>M:</b> Follow Rules Useful Save Money Concerned Procedural Cooperative	<b>N:</b> Active Free Winning Daring Impulsive Risk Taker	<b>O:</b> Sharing Getting Along Feelings Tender Inspirational Dramatic	<b>P:</b> Thinking Solving Problems Perfectionistic Determined Complex Composed
Row 5	<b>Q:</b> Puzzles Seeking Info Making Sense Philosophical Principled Rational	<b>R:</b> Social Causes Easy Going Happy Endings Approachable Affectionate Sympathetic	<b>S:</b> Exciting Lively Hands On Courageous Skillful On Stage	<b>T:</b> Pride Tradition Do Things Right Orderly Conventional Careful

Continued on page 8

You may read the title of this article and think, “adjust to back home? I’ve lived there my whole life!” Although this may not seem like a true issue, being prepared can make or break your vacation from schoolwork. You’ve been on your own for sixteen weeks, fending for yourself, organizing your life and your activities on **your** terms. That lifestyle can come to an end in the blink of an eye the second you walk through your front door.

Whether you notice it or not, your family now looks at you very differently. You survived on your own, cleaned your room, did your own laundry, washed your own dishes. The bar has been raised from the lazy high-schooler we all have been in the past. If you walk into your house with laundry piles to the ceiling, expect to do exactly what you’ve been doing for an entire semester. **Do. It. Yourself** . The last thing your family wants is to feel as though they just discovered a new child, and this will cause tension throughout the next four weeks.

My next piece of advice may sound silly, but it can help. Since you’re basically moving back into your house, **put your belongings away** . Maybe not day one, as that can be a tiring and stressful day. But if you have a household like mine, your family will notice it. And when they do, they will not

## How to Adjust to Moving Back Home

by Kathryn Healy,  
Pinney ARM



be happy. Not only is this courteous as well as helpful to yourself once it’s done, but it will show your family responsibility. Showing you are accountable for your own belongings might even impress them!

However, there is more to moving back home than continuing to take care of your own dishes, clothes, etc. Turn it around and be grateful that now there are others who can help you finish those things. If someone else washes all the dishes, simply thank them. Many times, it is not necessarily about how big of an action you make. Appreciation for someone else cleaning can go a long way, it shows them you notice the small things as well as makes it more of a two-way street. You do my dishes now, I’ll do yours for you next time. These small things now can prevent much larger arguments later in the break.

Some of these things listed may seem obvious, however there is a reward for taking part in even the smallest actions. It’s give and take, trying to get along with people in the same living space. Re-

member, you cannot treat your sister like the roommate you don’t get along with. Coming off as demanding and aggressive builds a rocky foundation no one wants to fix. We all come home from break tired, cranky, and probably sick from prioritizing finals over our own mental and physical health. But guess what, mom didn’t give you that five page paper a week before school closed, so try not to take it out on her. And worst case scenario, if you see these negative moods coming out, give your family a heads up. Apologizing in advance does not mean you can then say whatever you want, but giving people some explanation to rude actions or quietness can put out a few fires before they start. Overall, appreciate the people you live with. It’s the holiday season, and as annoying as things may get, remind yourself that once those four weeks are over (and they will fly by), you’ll miss the moments where you could just sit on the couch watching tv with a loved one. Take a breather from the hectic college life and enjoy it to the fullest.

After you have completed the quiz, add up the numbers you put in each box as they correspond in the box below. For example, the number in the “Total Orange Score” box should be determined by adding whatever score you put for box letters A,H,K,N, and S on page 6. If any of the scores in the boxes below are less than 5 or greater than 20, you have made an error.

Total <b>Orange</b> Score: <b>A, H, K, N, S</b>	Total <b>Green</b> Score: <b>D, E, L, P, Q</b>	Total <b>Blue</b> Score: <b>C, F, J, O, R</b>	Total <b>Gold</b> Score: <b>B, G, I, M, T</b>
-------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------

Use the score you got for each color to identify which personality types you identify with more:

<b>Oranges:</b>	<b>Greens:</b>	<b>Blues:</b>	<b>Gold:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are free and spontaneous</li> <li>• Are impulsive risk-takers</li> <li>• Are active</li> <li>• Are optimistic</li> <li>• Resist commitment</li> <li>• Can become virtuosos</li> <li>• Thrive on crises</li> <li>• Are drawn to tools</li> <li>• Like to be the center of attention</li> <li>• Have great endurance</li> <li>• Are drawn to action jobs</li> <li>• Need variety</li> <li>• Are dynamic, animated communicators</li> <li>• Are competitive</li> <li>• Deal with the here and now</li> <li>• Are bold in relationships</li> <li>• Have difficulty finding acceptance</li> <li>• Like to live in a casual atmosphere</li> <li>• Bring excitement to society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are innovative and logical</li> <li>• Seek to understand the world</li> <li>• Need to be competent</li> <li>• Require intellectual freedom</li> <li>• Are curious</li> <li>• Question authority</li> <li>• Push themselves to improve</li> <li>• Seek perfection in play</li> <li>• May become intellectually isolated</li> <li>• Are slow to make decisions</li> <li>• Look for intellectual stimulation</li> <li>• Enjoy intriguing discussions</li> <li>• Are sometimes oblivious to emotions</li> <li>• Are detached</li> <li>• Believe work is play</li> <li>• Are drawn to technical occupations</li> <li>• Analyze and rearrange systems</li> <li>• Focus on the future</li> <li>• Bring innovation to society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are in search of themselves</li> <li>• Need to feel unique</li> <li>• Must be true to themselves</li> <li>• Look for symbolism</li> <li>• Value close relationships</li> <li>• Encourage expression</li> <li>• Desire quality time with loved ones</li> <li>• Need opportunities to be creative</li> <li>• Compromise and cooperate</li> <li>• Nurture people, plants, and animals</li> <li>• Look beyond the surface</li> <li>• Share emotions</li> <li>• Make decisions based on feelings</li> <li>• Need harmony</li> <li>• Are adaptable</li> <li>• Are drawn to literature</li> <li>• Are drawn to nurturing careers</li> <li>• Get involved in causes</li> <li>• Are committed to ideals</li> <li>• Bring unity to society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are dutiful and stable</li> <li>• Need to be useful</li> <li>• Want to be self-sufficient</li> <li>• Value organization</li> <li>• Desire punctuality</li> <li>• Schedule their lives</li> <li>• Make and keep commitments</li> <li>• Measure worth by completion</li> <li>• Are goal-oriented</li> <li>• Value rules</li> <li>• Prepare for the future</li> <li>• Are inclined to join groups</li> <li>• Believe work comes before play</li> <li>• Safeguard traditions</li> <li>• Prefer order and cleanliness</li> <li>• Are responsible and dedicated</li> <li>• Are drawn to respected occupations</li> <li>• Enjoy positions of authority</li> <li>• Desire structure</li> <li>• Bring stability to society</li> </ul>



## Announcements

If you are planning to stay for Thanksgiving Break, be sure to pick up and complete a registration form at your building’s Info Desk and return it before Monday, Nov. 19 at noon. If you aren’t registered, you can’t stay beyond Tuesday, Nov. 20 @ 6 pm. (Please fill this out if you have a Tuesday night class so you’ll have access to the building when your class is over!)

Information will be available soon for **Intersession**—both instructions for checking out and applications if you’re planning to stay for the break (because you’re taking classes or working on campus).

Only **Centennial** and **Grasso** will be open during break. If you don’t live in one of these 2 buildings, you will need to find a space there and have ALL returning residents grant permission for you to stay in their room for the break. There is NO meal plan in effect over break, so you’ll need to fend for yourselves for food, too.

If you’re moving to a new room, you’ll need to take all of your belongings home for the break and move them to your new room when you come back in January.

The buildings close on Friday, December 14 at 6 pm, and will reopen for Spring on Monday, January 21 at 10 am.

Watch your WCSU email for more info!



\*\* Don’t forget to look for campus events in the WOW email each Thursday \*\*

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