

## Dean Alexander and the 4-Year Plan



# Handout:

## The ARM Newsletter

November 18, 2013 Vol. 2, Issue 3



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

IN THIS ISSUE

Meet the Dean

## The 4-Year Plan by Natalie Glybin, Pinney ARM

Appointed the dean of the School of Arts and Sciences in 2012, Dr. Mary "Missy" Alexander has shown great promise here at WCSU. Previously she was an Assistant Dean at Marist College, just one of the leadership positions she held during her years there. She earned her master's degree in communications from Hunter College and her doctorate in media ecology from the NYU School of Education.

Recently, she presented to students about how to get on a four-year plan at WCSU and stay on that plan, as increasingly a five-year plan is becoming the norm at WCSU. "The first trick to creating a four year plan is to understand the prerequisite gate. Each major has a set of prerequisites that you need to take. If you don't take this course in the right semester, you will not be able to proceed to the first class in your major."

She went on to note that for some majors, the program is very scripted. "You just need to keep doing well and progressing from semester to semester." For other programs, the students have much more leeway in the classes they can take and this can present a challenge to stu-

dents who are unaware of the complexities of their chosen program's requirements. Dr. Alexander encouraged students to take a more proactive role in their education and seek guidance from their advisors and the chairs of their current programs or prospective programs.

Dr. Alexander also pointed out the complexities of graduation requirements as a whole. "Here's something else you need to know, a very important thing. How many credits do you need to graduate? Because it is not the same for every major. If you choose to take fewer credits one semester to make time for that *really* difficult course, you need to think about when you are going to make them up or you will be behind three or four credits."

She also pointed out a flaw in the way some students pick their classes during registration. "Keep in mind that twelve credits is the requirement for fulltime status. This qualifies you financial aid each semester. You will not graduate in four years if you only take twelve credits each semester. You really need 15-16 credits each semester to graduate in 4 years." For students who are

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# HOW ABOUT A WINTER READ?

By Allison Vas, Grasso ARM

Bored over break? Looking for a winter read? Check out some of these books!

## *The Hunger Games Trilogy*

by Suzanne Collins

In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. Long ago the districts waged war on the Capitol and were defeated. As part of the surrender terms, each district agreed to send one boy and one girl to appear in an annual televised event called, "The Hunger Games." Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen regards it as a death sentence when she is forced to represent her district in the Games. The terrain, rules, and level of audience participation may change but one thing is constant: kill or be killed.

## *I Am Malala*

by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education. *I Am Malala* is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons.

## *The Last Lecture*

by Randy Pausch

When Randy Pausch, a computer science professor at Carnegie Mellon, was asked to give such a lecture, he didn't have to imagine it as his last, since he had recently been diagnosed with terminal can-

cer. But the lecture he gave--"Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams"--wasn't about dying. It was about the importance of overcoming obstacles, of enabling the dreams of others, of seizing every moment. It was about living.

## *Ender's Game*

by Orson Scott Card

In order to develop a secure defense against a hostile alien race's next attack, government agencies breed child geniuses and train them as soldiers. Ender's skills make him a leader in school and respected in the Battle Room, where children play at mock battles in zero gravity. Is Ender the general Earth needs? The war with the Buggers has been raging for a hundred years, and the quest for the perfect general has been underway for almost as long. Ender's two older siblings are every bit as unusual as he is, but in very different ways. Between the three of them lie the abilities to remake a world. If the world survives, that is.

## *World War Z*

by Max Brooks

The Zombie War came unthinkably close to eradicating humanity. Max Brooks, driven by the urgency of preserving the acid-etched first-hand experiences of the survivors traveled across throughout the world, to record the testimony of men, women, and sometimes children who came face-to-face with the living, or at least the undead, hell of that dreadful time. *World War Z* is the result. Never before have we had access to a document that so powerfully conveys the depth of fear and horror, and also the ineradicable spirit of resistance, that gripped human society through the plague years.

Book summaries from: [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

Still looking for something else? Check out these authors!

### John Grisham

Genre: detective, thriller

Titles: *Sycamore Row*, *Theodore Boone, A Time to Kill*

### Nicholas Sparks

Genre: romance

Titles: *The Longest Ride*, *Safe Haven*, *The Notebook*, *The Last Song*

### Mitch Albom

Genre: memoir, non-fiction

Titles: *Tuesdays with Morrie*, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*, *For One More Day*, *Have a Little Faith*

### Stephen King

Genre: mystery, thriller, suspense

Titles: *Doctor Sleep*, *Under the Dome*, *The Shining*, *The Dark Tower*

### Malcom Gladwell

Genre: non-fiction, psychology, sociology

Titles: *David and Goliath*, *Blink*, *Outliers*, *The Tipping Point*

## THE 4-YEAR PLAN (CONT.)

used to taking 12 credits to qualify for on campus housing, this can be a shock.

These simple and practical pieces of advice were very informative for the freshmen she presented to, who are largely unfamiliar with the registration process and graduation requirements at WCSU. Dr. Alexander concluded by encouraging students to be proactive in their journey here at WCSU by contacting her or the other deans and chairs of departments for help in navigating the complex process that a four year plan can be. She added, "With proper planning, you can make room for studying abroad, participating in internships, or pursuing interesting minors. Take the time to plan at the beginning of your studies to make room for all of the opportunities available at Western."

Dean Missy Alexander



# Did you know?



By *Andrés Chaves, Centennial ARM*

Here are five interesting facts about that famous end-of-November holiday: Thanksgiving!

## ■ Thomas Jefferson originally disagreed with having a national Thanksgiving celebration

In spite of George Washington and most of the founding fathers' support for the holiday, Jefferson actually claimed Thanksgiving was "the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard." After numerous letters to Congress from Sarah Hale, the creator of the "Mary Had a Little Lamb" nursery rhyme, President Abraham Lincoln finally proclaimed a national Thanksgiving celebration on the last Thursday of November in 1863.

## ■ The date for Thanksgiving as we know it did not exist until 1941

Until President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed a bill into law stating Thanksgiving would be celebrated on the fourth Thursday of every November, the date for Thanksgiving was not fixed and whoever was president at the time was free to change it.

## ■ The day before Thanksgiving is the biggest day of the year for bar and liquor sales

More so than the Super Bowl, New Years' Eve, and yes, even St. Patrick's day, the day before Thanksgiving is shown to have the most sales of alcohol in the U.S. Some credit this to the large influx of people returning home for the long weekend, preparing for the Thanksgiving festivities and sports games.

## ■ Abraham Lincoln started the tradition of pardoning turkeys on Thanksgiving

President Lincoln accidentally started the trend by informally pardoning his son's pet Turkey. However, the practice of presidential poultry pardoning did not become official until 1947, with president Harry Truman.

## ■ Many southern states were initially unsupportive of a national Thanksgiving celebration

After the long battle for states' rights over the federal government's ability to exercise unilateral control, many southern states did not like the idea of celebrating a government-issued Thanksgiving holiday, especially since it was seen as a "New England" holiday.



# PASS

The semester is winding down, but there's still time to pull off a good grade in those classes you may have struggled with. There are people waiting to

help you — our PASS members. Take a look at what help is there—and it's all free! Here are Grasso and Pinney members. Students from any building may contact a PASS member, so if you don't find your match in your building, try another! (See Centennial members on page 6.)

GH	Mildred	Addo	Korean, COM 162, WRT106W, CHE100, 120, ANT 100
GH	Caitlin	Bairrington	BIO 105, 106
GH	Zach	Baxter	MIS, WRT100, ACC100, PHI100, COM162
GH	Rachel	Bradeen	COM162, 163, WRT101, PHI100, SOC100W
GH	Emilie	Chho	BIO106, MAT100, CHE100
GH	Jason	Deleo	JLA (100, 150) Western Lit, ENG 213
GH	Shannon	Drucker	COM 162, PSY100, WRT102W
GH	Casey	Halliwell	All English & Education classes
GH	Tyler	Hodge	All Accounting classes
GH	Kris	Jenney	All Social Work classes
GH	Andrew	Lipinski	JLA100, PSY100, COM 260, MIS260
GH	Saraphina	Murangi	ANT100, PSY100, SOC100, WRT106W, BIO100
GH	Erik	Nardone	MAT105, 106, WRT101, PSY100, History, Geography
GH	Kristen	Porter	Music Theory1, 2, Keyboard 1, 2, Sightsinging 1, 2, MUS 114, 115, Intro to Music Ed, general music
GH	Krystle	Ramos	Industrial Psych, Substance Abuse Counseling, Moral Development, Experimental Psych, Italian 1
GH	Lyndsey	Rizk	PSY100, Soc100, American Perspectives
GH	Jessie	Rocha	MAT 100, BIO 105, 106, CHE 120, 121
GH	Danielle	Scarmella	All Social Work classes, SOC 100, ANT 100
GH	Christina	Schlupp	WRT101, COM161, HIS149, MAT105, SOC100
GH	Barbara	Smith	MUS108, 109, MUS 114, 115, MUS 125, 126
PH	Natalie	Glybin	NUR201, 205, BIO105, 106,
PH	Rachel	Pelchat	Music Classes
PH	Keith	Pirraglia	Psych 204, 324
PH	Kyle	Morin	Finance, Management
PH	Kerry	Grady	Psych 200, 324
PH	Thelma	Osei	NUR 105, 205, 255
PH	Alicia	Spakowski	Psychology
PH	Tenika	Campbell	PSY100, WRT 101
PH	Jay	Sheth	Business, Finance
PH	Stephanie	Hardisty	ENG209, 210, 211, 212, MAT 110
PH	Lauren	Muller	All
PH	Megan	Kellogg	PSY100, Child Psych, Sports Psych, Music History, Diction
PH	Ashlee	Robinson	PSY100, Adolescent Psych, EPY 203
PH	Ericka	Hafford	PSY100, Art, Art History, Management
PH	Sarah	Peterson	Music, Music Ed
PH	Ryan	Keeney	JLA, SPA, ENG
PH	Tyler	Shaw	SPA, French
PH	Raven	Jones	SPA162. 164, CHE 120
PH	Ruth	Williams	SPA162. 164, CHE 120
PH	Grant	Beale	Music Classes

# Prepping Your Parents for Bad News

by Erin Selavka, Newbury ARM

Last year, I thought my life was over. I was dealing with issues at home, issues with my roommates, issues with anxiety and depression, and trying to manage a long distance relationship, all while taking five higher level courses each semester. And you can only imagine what happened while trying to juggle too many responsibilities: something has got to give.

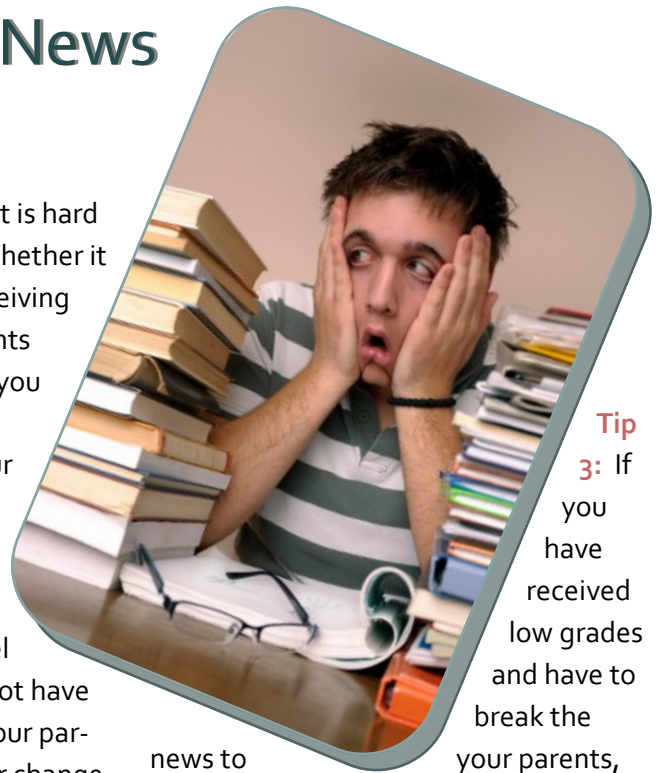
In my case, my grades slipped, and they slipped hard! Before last year, I had a high GPA and never received a grade below a B in any class; but last year I got two C+'s, one C, and one C-. My GPA slipped significantly, and while I feared losing my scholarships due to poor academic performance, what I feared most were my parents. I was terrified to tell them about my grades. They were always so used to me being a perfectionist and achieving all of my academic goals, and I was afraid they would be disappointed. But then I realized, when I switched my major twice, they accepted me and my decision; so why can't I approach this the same way?

In the end, I survived (how else could I be writing this?!), and I know **you will too**. Everyone goes through struggles. In the end you will still graduate with

your degree, but sometimes it is hard for parents to understand. Whether it is changing your major or receiving a poor grade for a class, parents just don't understand! But if you keep these tips in mind when breaking the bad news to your parents, this hard time will pass.

**Tip 1:** Be honest. Parents love honesty, and you will feel better knowing that you do not have to perpetuate lies. Just tell your parents about your poor grade or change of major before they find out on their own. This will also help spark the conversation and show them that you are able to take the initiative and be an adult.

**Tip 2:** If you are switching majors and may have to stay in school a little longer than expected, explain to your parents why this change is important and unavoidable. Tell your parents why your old major was not right for you and how this new major will change your life for the better. If you really want to get the message to stick, make a PowerPoint or chart mapping out the pros and cons of switching your major, and make sure to make the pros obvious!



**Tip 3:** If you have received low grades and have to break the

news to your parents, just tell them. When I had to tell my mom about my low grades, I told her how hard I worked just to earn these passing grades. I reminded her about the many jobs and extracurricular activities I was juggling while going to school, which made succeeding that much harder. And above all else, remind your parents that it is your grade, your education, and if you can live with it, so can they.

And do not forget to remind yourself about this important fact – **IT WILL GET BETTER**. Everything is a learning experience, and if you approach it with positivity and optimism, every negative experience will turn into a positive one and make you a better person.



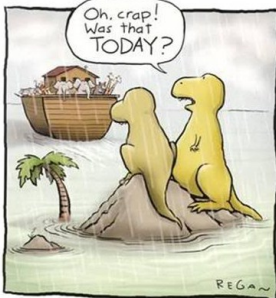
**“S**ometimes when people are under stress, they hate to think, and it’s the time when they most need to think.”

–William J. Clinton, President of the United States

by Eric Keller, Centennial ARM

Do you procrastinate? If so, then here are some tips on getting your work done on time. The semester is almost over, there is light at the end of the tunnel, so don't give up!

- 1) **Plaster your goals everywhere:** Write out your short and long term goals and post them on the fridge, bathroom mirror, in your car, inside notebooks, etc. as a constant reminder.
- 2) **Break it up:** Take small bites when tackling large and/or overwhelming projects. Better to do an assignment for one hour over five days than for five hours on one day.
- 3) **Shake it up:** Set a timer and rotate a variety of activities every hour or so in order to keep your overall enthusiasm level high. Remember to take short breaks in between activities.
- 4) **Share your plans with family/friends:** Encourage others to nudge you when you need it. Plus, it's much easier to say "no" to their requests when they are well aware of your mission.
- 5) **Make a daily "to do" list :** Develop a list every night before you go to bed for the next day's duties. Don't forget to prioritize with high, medium and low levels of urgency/priority.
- 6) **Seek inspiration:** Inspire yourself from someone else's success story and insights. Listening to music or reading an article that has meaning to you can be very invigorating.
- 7) **Track your progress:** Utilize a visual tracking method and cross off items as you finish –it gives you a sense of accomplishment. Try logging what works and doesn't work for you in order to make adjustments to your general game plan - whether school, work, or life in general.
- 8) **Reward yourself:** Treat yourself when you complete a mini-goal. It can be whatever is satisfying to you. Ensure the reward doesn't sabotage your goals, ex. partying on a Monday!



## 5 Ways to Have a Productive Winter Break

by Alex Saraceno,  
Pinney ARM

Some students realize (often far too late) that they've wasted their entire winter break. Upon returning home it becomes easy to fall into a lazy routine and before you know it the holidays are over and classes are starting up. While it is important to spend some of this break recuperating from a hectic semester and spending quality time with friends and family, we must not squander such valuable time. I have devised a simple, broad list of five tips on how to keep your body, mind, and spirit healthy and active.

**Read** – Embrace not having to finish a book by a certain deadline. Read something that interests you and go through it at your own pace. It's easy to forget how pleasing recreational reading can be.



**Set goals** – After you unpack, sit down and make a list of five things you'd like to accomplish over break and then make a game plan. Strive to complete them all before returning.

**Eat healthy** – Use this break from Sodexo as an opportunity to get reacquainted with your own kitchen. Try to share and make nutritious meals with those around you. Both your body and theirs will appreciate it.



**Get outside** – When it's occasionally below freezing and relentlessly snowing, the outdoors doesn't seem all that enticing. Bundle up properly and get outside on a sunny day. With the days getting shorter we should take advantage of all the sun we can get.

**Be positive** – Many of us can fall into Seasonal Affective Disorder, which is a depression that often surfaces during the wintertime even in the happiest of folks. Remind yourself that the winter, the snow, and the bare trees will not last forever.



# PREPARING FOR FINALS

By Jamie Maitland, Litchfield ARM

**Plan appropriately:** Finals week can feel like an overwhelming time. You may not know what class to focus on first, or how to even start preparing for it. Therefore, there are a lot of things that you need to take into consideration, like the level of difficulty the class is for you, your finals schedule, and your personal schedule. If you have a final on Wednesday, December 11, and your next final is not until Monday, December 16, make sure that you focus on the final that is first (which is the final on Wednesday), and **then** start preparing for your final on Monday.

**Remember to eat:** While in the midst of studying you may not realize that you have been at your desk for hours. All you may be focused on is receiving a passing grade on your final. However, not eating can harmfully affect you in more ways than one. Making sure to have a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and dinner throughout the day will benefit you physically and mentally.

**Set time aside for you:** Those of you who are new to college and are new to the idea of finals week may think that it is this dreadful week that you do nothing but study. However, that is not true. During finals week you need to study but you also need to make sure that you relax. Overloading your brain with a lot of infor-

mation all of the time is not going to benefit you in any way. Go

out for a walk, exercise, and even nap just make sure that you partake in other things besides studying.

**Utilize your resources:** WCSU has a plethora of people that you can go to for help in your academics. If there is a certain topic in math that you do not understand and you know that you will see the material again on the final you can visit the math lab. If you need help in writing, the writing lab is also available to you. All you have to do is go in and make an appointment. In the residence halls writing tutors are available and they have specific hours throughout the week to help you. Your Professor is also a good resource because he/she knows exactly what will be on the final.

**Get enough sleep:** A lot of students think that they are going to pass their finals if they stay up all night and cram. Getting at least 7 to 8 hours of sleep will allow you to remember more information, feel awake, and keep focused on your final.



## IMPORTANT HOUSING REMINDERS



## Room Selection

Your deposit was paid last spring (hurray!), and you turned in your intent form in October (yippee!!) Now what?

If you asked to stay in the same room—that's it! There's nothing left to do, and you're all set to return in the spring semester.

If you want to **change rooms but stay in your building**, you must see your RD in your building on **Monday, November 18** from 10—Noon or 1—3 pm.

If you hope to **change to a room in a different building**, come to the Housing Office in Newbury on **Wednesday, November 20** from 10—Noon or 1—3 pm.

Need to stay on campus for the **Thanksgiving break**? No worries! Just stop by your information desk and fill out the Request to Stay form letting us know when you'll be here. We'll make sure you have access to your building and room.



## 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](mailto:housing@wcsu.edu)

CH	Andrés Chaves	Music Theory, Sight-singing / Eartraining, Keyboard Comp., Intro to Programming
CH	Marissa Carrasco	PSY 100
CH	Ryan Cooke	Social Work, ANT100, 233, COM162, WRT101, ENG 130W, 106W, HUM 110, HPX160
CH	Kristen Evans	Sociology
CH	Connor Falaguerra	WRT101, COM190, 205, Math
CH	Tatum Hamernik	Writing, Art, Communication
CH	Amanda Johnson	Psychology, BIO103, Communications, History
CH	Zakiya Jones	Writing, English
CH	Eric Keller	MAT181, 182, PSY100, 215, GEO100, MTR150, 240, CHE119, 111
CH	Kristy Matasavage	PSY201, 251, 352, 100
CH	Nicole Mair	Economics 100, 101
CH	Carine Mikem	Elementary Math, Psychology, French, Biology (for non-majors)
CH	Brianna O'Grady	MAT 098, 100, Media Production
CH	Michele Reggiano	Writing, English Literature, Spanish
CH	Rebecca Rivera	Psychology, Writing
CH	Caitlin Ronan-Cunningham	Math, JLA, History, Writing
CH	Mark Surowiecki	Management, Finance 230, 310, Public Speaking, Poetry

