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

Handout:

The ARM Newsletter

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The End is Near

by Eric Keller, Centennial ARM

Finals are approaching! With that said, it would be beneficial to start studying or planning out when to study for the exams. Here are some tips on how to prepare for your exams:

- Don't try to do all your studying the night before the test. Instead, space out your studying. Review class materials at least several times a week, focusing on one topic at a time.
- Space out your studying! (Can't say it too much!) You'll learn more by studying a little every day instead of waiting to cram at the last minute. By studying every day, the material will stay in your long-term memory. If you try to study at the last moment, the material will only reside in your short-term memory and you'll easily forget.
- Find a comfortable and quiet place to study with good lighting and little distraction (try avoiding your own bed; it is very tempting to just lie down and take a nap).
- Take short breaks frequently. Your memory retains the information that you study at the be-

ginning and the end better than what you study in the middle.

- Make sure that you understand the material well, don't just read through the material and try to memorize everything.
- If you choose to study in a group, only study with others who are serious about the test.
- Give fuel to the mind and body. Get plenty of sleep and eat good food that gives you a lot of energy.
- Don't study later than the time you usually go to sleep. You may fall asleep or be tempted to go to sleep. Instead, try studying in the afternoon or early evening. If you are a morning person, try studying in the morning.
- Relax, have a positive attitude and just do your best!



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SUCCESS SPOT

www.wcsu.edu/housing/arm.asp

STAYING PRODUCTIVE DURING SUMMER BREAK

by Jamie Maitland, Litchfield ARM

1. Get a start on upcoming tasks

If you are an RA/ARM, you can use the summer to start planning your programs, door dec ideas, and even what you plan to put on your bulletin board. If you are a resident, you may be involved in many different activities. The summer will give you a chance to start planning out what you would like to do so by the time school starts you will already be organized.

2. Practice skills-The summer gives you a chance to practice different skills and become better at them. For instance, since I am a Nursing major I can practice taking blood pressure and pulses on peo-

ple. That way by the time school starts again I will not forget what I have been taught. Also, for education majors you will have the chance to use your family as your students. If you have any siblings or nieces and nephews, you can practice different methods of teaching them and see how it helps them.

3. Volunteer -Summer is not only about relaxing and enjoying the weather. You can also give back in a major way. A lot of places welcome volunteers. If there is a certain place that you like, why not see if they need any help? Not only do you get to give back but you

also get to meet new people and put a smile on their face.

4. Work-the summer is the best time to make money! Working is sometimes difficult during the school year when you have a million other things to do. However, the summer is a more relaxed time when you can have fun and make money.

5. Read-During elementary school we used to have summer reading lists. Even though that is not the case anymore, that does not mean that we cannot read! The summer is a great time to crack open a new book and get lost into a different world.

Wise Words from Commencement Speakers...

"To get what you want out of life, all you can really do is find out who you are, and do that. Practice being curious, want to know things, ask questions. Consider what people think of you, but don't be afraid of what people think of you."



Anders Holm, Comedian

"...you must go out and find a way to get in trouble, good trouble, necessary trouble. You must play a role in helping to make our country, helping to make our world, a better place. Another generation of students, professors, rabbis, ministers, priests and nuns stood up and be-



Rep. John Lewis, Member of Congress

"You may learn sooner than most generations the hard lesson that you must always make the path for yourself. There is no secret society out there that will tap you on your shoulder one night and show you the way. Because the true secret is your life will not be defined by the society that we have



left you... I believe we have given you a gift, a particular form of independence."

Stephen Colbert, Comedian

"The losses I've experienced have taught me something else: We are all terminal. You have to appreciate the gifts that every day of your life will bring. Your family, your friends. A beautiful sky at sunset...Be grateful for the time you have and savor the joy that comes your way."

Katie Couric, TV Journalist





As the end of the semester approaches, the dreaded final exams and final projects creep up from beyond the horizon. As the stress piles on, it is important to work smarter, not harder. Here are a few rules of thumb to help get you ready for that end-of-the-semester rush.

Learn to study efficiently

Study in a quiet, out-of-the-way place. The fewer distractions, the better.

Study groups can be effective at times, but they are not always helpful, especially if you're the one who knows the material the best.

Stop cramming at least five minutes before the test. Instead, use the time to relax and gather your thoughts so you can focus.

Learn where you can get help if you need it

There are lots of great resources on campus to get help. Here are just a few:

Your Academic Resource Mentors

The tutoring center, writing center, and math centers in Berkshire Hall

Your professor or T.A.

Classmates and fellow students who know the material well (study time and socializing time should be kept separate)

Learn your exams and the best plan of attack

Does your professor prefer lots of shorter questions, or a few very in-depth questions? Are you allowed to bring your notes or a formula sheet to the exam? Is your exam comprehensive (covers everything taught all semester) or non-comprehensive? Answering these questions before you study can help maximize your study potential.

No Reason to Say "I'm Bored!"

by Erin Selavka, Newbury ARM

Summer break is quickly sneaking up on us. Soon enough you will be relaxing and soaking up the sun. But before you let loose this summer, it is important to plan ahead to make the most out of your break.

If you want extra spending money for beach trips and drive-in movies, try to get a summer job. If you need a summer job, do not just search the internet. Drive around your town and look at the companies that are most busy during the summer. Fill out an application for your local amusement park or local ice cream shop, become a counselor for summer camps, or if you are lifeguard certified, look for openings at public swimming areas. If you already have a summer job, make sure you contact your employer at least two weeks before you plan on starting to work again so that you can discuss your summer schedule and availability.

Summertime is the perfect time to volunteer! I spend my summer volunteering as a softball coach, and there are many other ways you help others while still doing something you



enjoy. Love musicals and theater? Contact local establishments, like the YMCA, to see if they put on summer musicals that you can help with. Love to dance? Visit a dance company to see if they are in need of instructors. Love sports? See if local leagues offer volunteer opportunities at summer clinics for your favorite sport. Not only does volunteering look good on a resume, it is fun!

If you live far away from your roommates, make sure to keep in touch over the long summer break. Sit down with your roommate(s) before moving out and schedule a time to meet up over the

summer. If you live on opposite sides of the state or in completely different states, pick a cool spot half-way between your homes and take a day trip. Plan sleep overs, road trips, beach trips, anything you want, but just make sure to do it before it's too late. You don't want to show up for next year without having seen your roommate(s) for almost four months. Plus, spending one-on-one time out of the residence halls in your hometowns builds relationships and can make you and your roommate(s) better friends.

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april is stress awareness month

By **Natalie Glybin**, Pinney ARM

As college students, stress, especially heading into the last few weeks of the semester, becomes a part of our daily lives. We cram for exams, spend whole days doing nothing but writing papers, and bury ourselves in books in prep for finals. While some stressors (such as that looming thesis due date) may motivate and challenge us to work harder, excessive and prolonged stress negatively impacts nearly all areas of our lives. Here are some strategies for distressing and staying balanced in the final weeks of the semester.

Often sleep is the first thing we cut when that paper is due or there is a big exam tomorrow. However, not sleeping actually reduces our ability to think critically and logically, something that is essential to test taking. Additionally, it impacts our emotions and moods negatively as well. Stressed and sleepless individuals are more likely to be short, irritated, angry and frustrated. All of these feelings over time emotionally exhaust us and leave us feeling even worse. So when planning your day, plan for a solid 7 hours of sleep minimum. You need to make sleep a priority and then plan the rest of the day. If you absolutely have to stay up late studying, try going to sleep early and waking up early to study. This may help you remember the material better as well.

Food also plays a critical role in stress management. First off, don't forget to eat. This is the easiest way to run yourself down, especially if you aren't staying hydrated as well. If you're drinking a lot of coffee you may dehydrate yourself very easily, leaving you feeling even more exhausted. Additionally, if you are snacking throughout the day instead of actually eating real food, you aren't giving your body the nutrients it needs to power your brain effectively. This is especially important before exams. Don't forget to eat something light with carbs and good fats to power your brain. And bring a snack like a granola bar and a bottle of water to the exam so you don't crash midway through your final.

Finally, take breaks from studying, from doing homework, from work. If you are cramming for an exam take 10 minutes of every hour you study to do something unrelated. Just browse online, watch some funny videos, or play some games on your phone. Anything to take your mind off of the large volume of information you are trying to memorize. This will help you not burnout and keep you sane when you actually get to the exam.

Stress can leave us feeling absolutely exhausted. The maladaptive ways we cope with stress also increase our risk for getting sick. That's why so many college students also get sick in the weeks leading to finals week and graduation. Remember to take the time to take care of yourself!

Preparing for Finals (continued from page 3)

Someone is going to have to grade several dozen of these in the span of a few days. If you make your answers concise and meaningful, you're likely to get on your professor's good side.

Carefully read all the directions and make sure you answer what's needed. If you finish early, reread your answers. Everyone likes to get out early, but a final look-through can be the difference between a good grade and a great grade.

Learn the difference between what you need to work on and what you just need to review

Needing to study equally for all exams is a common misconception. A brief refresher on concepts you are familiar with is good, but don't waste your time studying material you already know.

Focus on subjects you know you have trouble with. When you go for that math exam you've been dreading, but spent half your time studying psychology, you'll wish you looked over your notes on quadratic equations an extra time.

Don't stress out working on unnecessary material. If your professor said chapter 2 isn't on the test, then don't bother studying that chapter.

Be prepared

Start studying and compiling your notes now, so you will be ready when it's time to start studying.

Make sure to get plenty of sleep and eat good meals during finals week. Pulling an all-nighter to study the night before the test is like selling your car for gas money. You need proper rest and nourishment to work at peak performance.



Finally, don't forget to do everything you've been putting off all year! If you've been extra-stressed this year, spend a day lying by the pool or on the beach, or schedule a massage. If you haven't cleaned your room since you moved in last fall, do some summer cleaning. Spend a day going through all of your belongings, sorting out what you do and do not need. Then, you can hold a tag sale to get rid of your unwanted goods. It will give you more space, and you'll make extra cash! Or, if you've fallen behind or didn't do so well in certain classes, register for summer courses at a school close to your home. Some classes can be completed in less than a month, but it depends on the course and the school. Before you register, talk with your advisor or visit the Academic Advisement Center to discuss what classes at community colleges or other universities are able to transfer for credit here at Western.

You have 106 days from the end of the semester, May 10th, and the start of the next semester, August 28th. Even though it seems like a long time, it will go by before you know it, so make it your best summer ever!

“Summertime is always the best of what might be.”



— Charles Bowden, author

FUN THINGS TO DO THIS SUMMER IN CONNECTICUT!

by Allison Vas,
Grasso ARM



If you're in the mood for ice cream, check out any of these locations!

- Ferris Acres Creamery – Newtown
- Mystic Drawbridge Ice Cream – Mystic
- Shady Glen – Manchester
- Rich Farm Ice Cream Shop – Oxford
- UConn Dairy Bar – Storrs

Feeling daring? Go cliff diving, zip lining, water inflatables, and much more!

- Brownstone Exploration & Discovery Park – Middlefield

In the mood for a movie? \$2 movie tickets cannot be topped!



- Edmond Town Hall – Newtown

Two different aquariums, two great experiences!



- Mystic Aquarium – Mystic
- Maritime Aquarium – Norwalk

History, fine dining, and majestic ships!

- Mystic Seaport – Mystic

A great day adventure of visiting animals.

- Beardsley Zoo – Bridgeport

For all the 21+ students, here are great locations for gambling, shopping, and all sorts of shows

- Mohegan Sun – Uncasville
- Foxwoods Resort – Ledyard

Two great places to catch a summer concert

- Xfinity Theater – Hartford
- Webster Bank Arena – Bridgeport

Not looking to drive to New York or Boston for baseball? Go catch a Blue Fish game!

- Bridgeport Harbor Yard – Bridgeport

All day fun on roller coasters and other rides



- Lake Compounce – Bristol
- Quassy Amusement Park – Middlebury

Great state parks for hiking and picnics – perfect for outdoor adventurers!

- Kent Falls State Park – Kent
- Sleeping Giant State Park – Hamden
- Mount Tom State Park – Litchfield
- Gillette Castle State Park – East Haddam



Looking for the ocean? Can't drive too far? Check out the beaches Connecticut has to offer!

- Hammonasset Beach State Park – Madison
- Jennings Beach – Fairfield

Rainy day? This has an arcade, ice rinks, batting cages, and bowling lanes!

- Sports Center of Connecticut – Shelton



Don't let the Fear of Finals hold you Prisoner!

TIPS FOR PREPARING FOR FINALS

From the Office of Skills Enrichment at SCSU

Understanding Examinations—What are exams about, and what are they looking for from you?

- **True-False Format**—testing for your knowledge of the facts.
- **Multiple Choice Format**—testing for your knowledge of the materials and enough comprehension to choose the correct answer for each question.
- **Essay format**—testing for knowledge and understanding of the materials or being able to apply knowledge and understanding to answering a question.

Managing Your Priorities, Life, Time and Place to prepare for your examinations:

When you begin to prepare for your examinations NOW, your top life priority for this period of time must be preparing for your exams in order to earn your degree.

- **Scheduling**—try to schedule large periods of time (at the same time each day) to prepare for your exams.
- **Place**—You need to find/make a place that is consistently quiet with few distractions.
- **Planning**—Plan steps for preparing for your exams so that you are not trying to take on too much at one time, and so that you can see yourself steadily building strength toward taking your examination.
- **Get Help**—Your family, friends, and employers may be able and willing to help you with what you need to do to prepare for your examinations:
 - Give a copy of your schedule to your family and friends; they may be quite willing to help you stay on schedule and on task.
 - Tell your family/roommates what you need in the way of a quiet study space; they may be very helpful in designating a particular spot for you to study and making very sure that it is quiet and not distracting.
 - Many employers value good employees and their employees getting a college education. Can you discuss your examination schedule and study needs with your employer? Maybe they would be willing to help you with schedule changes.

Finding out about your exams—what do you need to know?

You need to gather all of the information that you can about your examinations so that you know what to prepare for:

- What type of exam will it be?
- How long with the exam or different parts of the exam be?
- How will the exam be organized; are there parts to it and what will they involve?
- What will be the rules for the examination and the procedures for doing it?
- What are the likely topics that the exam will cover; can you figure this out from your syllabus, the kinds of notes you have been taking, the categories of material that you have been covering?
- What is the professor looking for the exam to do; have you asked him/her?

Gathering and Organizing Your Information for Studying:

Group your information (notes or note and reading summaries) into piles by topic of what will be on the examination.

Make study guides for each pile of information to test yourself on that information. What should be on each Study Guide?

- The key points of that subject
- Key terms and vocabulary for you to make sure that you know
- Two or three self-test questions for you to answer. Think of what you would ask if you were the professor.

Drilling, rehearsing, and practicing for your exams:

- Learn your important terms and concepts with drill/flash cards.
- Answer your self-test questions in outline form. Write down the points you would make if you encountered a question like this on an exam, and in what order you would answer. This helps to fix information and organize key subjects in your mind.
- If you can't easily answer your own question, it is time to look up the subject in your text and notes and answer it.
- For performance exams, practice simple problems or exercises repeatedly until you have the procedures down.

IMPORTANT HOUSING REMINDERS



Here are some important dates and reminders about Fall 2014 room selection:

- Room selection appointments: Appointments will be on April 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25th.
- For more complete information, check out this site: <http://www.wcsu.edu/housing/documents/Room%20Selection%20Process%20and%20Timeline.pdf>

You'll soon be receiving information about your building's checkout procedures. Every student is **required** to officially check out of the building following their last exam (or after Sunday's ceremony if graduating). Failure to properly check out and sign your room inventory form will result in an improper checkout charge.



In preparing for checkout, please clean your rooms and apartments. Kitchens and bathrooms should be thoroughly cleaned (showers and toilets cleaned, ovens and stoves cleaned, refrigerators emptied and turned off/defrosted, drawers emptied, and floors swept). Please throw away garbage in appropriate facilities, and remove any non-university furnishings or carpets. Turn in any mailbox or room keys issued during the 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