

2014—2015 ARM Staff



Sean ● Alex ● Kyle ● Jamie ● Saraphina ● Kenny ● Colleen

Photo by Maribeth Griffin

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

Handout:

The ARM Newsletter

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Your ARM—more than an appendage!

by Jamie Maitland, Newbury ARM

Academic Resource Mentors (ARMs) are students who play an essential role in Housing and Residence Life. ARMs have many responsibilities, which include educational programming, mentoring, and referring. ARMs are not tutors, but an academic coach who can assist you with different strategies so that you can be successful. Each ARM has designated office hours in the residence hall and the hours are posted in multiple areas. If you can't make it to your ARM's office hours just let him/her know in advance so that you can set up an appointment. If you need help in a subject that your ARM is not familiar with, your ARM will refer you to someone who can help you.

ARMs can help you with important topics such as time management, dealing with stress, studying effectively, the resources available on campus, talking to your professor, and building your résumé. ARMs put on eight educational programs per semester, which include two Great Resources on Weekdays (**GROW**) programs that all students are welcomed to come to. GROW programs are held each week during the fall and allow you to become familiar with the resources and staff at

Western that can help you. Some topics that have been presented at **GROW** programs are Registration, Sustainability, Identity Development, and Utilizing Technology.

In the spring, ARMs host *My Road to Western*, which allows you to hear about the academic journeys of different staff members at Western and how they ended up here. Delicious food is also served. *My Road to Western* is a treat to all who attend because you get to learn about the Western staff on a different level. For instance, last spring Dr. Missy Alexander, the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, was one of the key speakers for a *My Road to Western* event and the audience loved hearing her talk about her journey to Western.

You do not have to come to your ARM only when you need help with your academics. You can come to your ARM's office hours to talk, or even have a quiet place to study. You are eligible to become a PASS member if your GPA is within the 3.0-4.0 range. PASS members are student volunteers who live in your buildings and are comfortable assisting other students in familiarized subjects. PASS members

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SUCCESS
SPOT

www.wcsu.edu/housing/arm.asp



by Colleen Mair, Litchfield ARM

YOU'VE GOT EMAIL

New changes have been made to Information Technology & Innovation (ITI)! As of March 2014 all ConnectMail passwords were synced with WestConn Windows. This means that your password for Banner, Wifi, Blackboard, etc. is the same for your school email. If you need to change your password, you can use the Self Service Windows Password Manager. This tool can be found by searching "password" on the WCSU website. To use this tool you must have your student ID number, birthday, and home zip code. If you have issues with your password, visit any of the staffed computer labs located

in the Haas Library on Midtown, the Student Center on Midtown, the Campus Center on Westside, or the Classroom Building on Westside. There is also a new system to verify your identity if you want to change your password over the phone.

Be sure to check your email daily for important information from professors and the school. Your school email is the best way to get in contact with WestConn faculty. Other email address may be automatically sent to the spam folder. That wouldn't be good! This is also where you will get notifications

about school closings, delays, or resources on campus.

You can also find out about these resources while you're checking out the computer centers. On Midtown, ITI offers free tutorials for a variety of programs like PowerPoint, Excel, and more! If you take the Photoshop tutorial, you can check out the new tablets available to training specialists. These one-on-one sessions are held in the Student Technology Training Center, located in the Student Center. You can start making appointments in early September. Definitely take advantage of all of these great resources!

Your ARM (continued from Page 1)

can also be recognized for their hard work at the Academic Recognition Ceremony held in the spring.

All residence halls except for Fairfield Hall

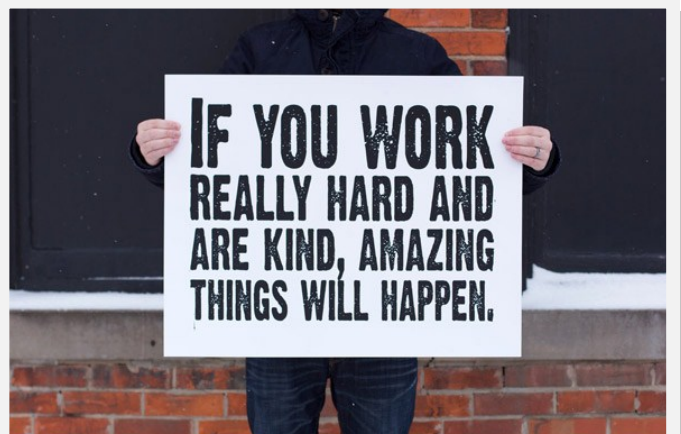
have an ARM. In Centennial Hall, Sean Keenan and

Kenny Ward are the ARMs. In Grasso Hall, Kyle Venditti is the ARM. In Litchfield Hall, Colleen Mair is the ARM. In Newbury Hall, Jamie Maitland

is the ARM, and in Pinney Hall, Alex Saraceno and Sarahina Mwangi are the ARMs. The duty of the ARMs is to help you in any way possible.

You are encouraged to come for help. ARMs are trained and know

what resources are available to help you make a difference in your academics, but it's up to you to utilize the help.





Returning to College: Some Tips for Readjustment

by Kyle Venditti, Grasso ARM

Just like moving into College your freshman year was a handful, so can be returning for your second or third year. Sure, you still have all your skills and knowledge from previous years, but how will you readjust? After all, summer just ended a few days ago, so are you ready to start again? If not, hopefully these tips will make transitioning back into College easier.

The “Sophomore Slump” is a term thrown around for many returning students entering their second year of college. This term is used to describe students who have made it past their freshman year but are beginning to struggle. For many, this is when the bigger decisions are made and the pressures of the real world begin to become evident. Many students like to declare a major in this year, if they haven’t already done so, and begin to look at internships or jobs on campus. This pressure, along with the expectation that students will know how make such a decision about what they want to do with their life, can lead to burnout, or a lack of motivation due to frustration with where the student finds him/herself.

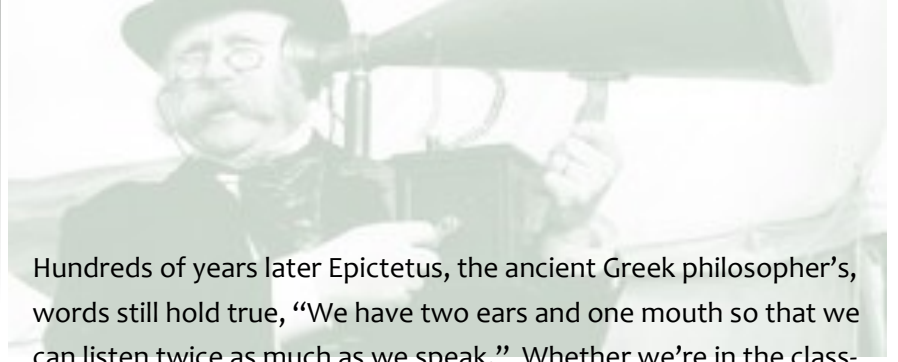
Though this stress is not necessarily irrational, it is unnecessary. It is typically during a student’s sophomore year when General Education requirements are either completed or nearly completed, which means that for the most part these students aren’t necessarily focused on their field of study yet. For most programs, the General Education requirements are universally accepted. A student who is undeclared will likely be taking the same General Education requirements as an English major or a History major. Although it is normal to feel anxious about declaring a major, it isn’t the end of the world if you as a student haven’t done so yet. And don’t forget, many classes do fill up the free electives section of your program sheet, so don’t feel afraid to take that 100 level Art class or maybe delve into Psychology some more. College really is a time when you can reinvent yourself and do so easily, so be sure to take advantage of it!

Motivation can become an issue for many returning students as well. The new feel of College is beginning to wear off and for many their social group has been found and they’ve selected what clubs or organizations they want to contribute to. Life can easily become filled with routine, but it doesn’t have to be that way. Every year, new students come onto

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Listen Up!

by Alex Saraceno, Pinney ARM



Hundreds of years later Epictetus, the ancient Greek philosopher’s, words still hold true, “We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.” Whether we’re in the classroom, the residence hall, or the cafeteria, listening plays an integral role in any interaction. When we are distracted by technology, waiting for our turn to speak, or paying attention to something else during a conversation, we are listening passively. Nothing is gained from such exchanges. To practice active listening one must approach any and all conversation with an appreciative, comprehensive, critical, and empathic manner. Balancing these four styles enables us to connect clearly and genuinely with others.

Appreciative listening is done for enjoyment; it’s reacting to simple friendly conversations with the same ease of listening to music. One listens comprehensively to gain knowledge, which requires suspending judgment and delaying evaluation until all the information is shared. Critical listening is analyzing the truth or validity of what one is hearing. To understand another person from where they’re coming from is to listen empathically.

While these four different types of listening are second nature when communicating with certain people, there is much to gain through practicing them in all interactions. If we become more aware of how we’re listening to others and how others are listening to us, we begin the invaluable process of becoming better communicators.

There is a great deal of new information at the beginning of the semester, and to both receive and share all of it we need to be mindful of the effort we’re putting into our own listening.

Source:

Sanft, Marni, Eldon L. McMurray, and Mike Jenkins. "Chapter 8/Communicating Effectively." *Peer Mentor Companion*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2008. 128-35. Print.



Diversity

By Kenny Ward, Centennial ARM



It's mid-September, you've been living at school for about three weeks now, and you're really struggling to deal with the new roommate that has suddenly been forcefully placed into your living space. Everyone knows that adjusting to another person's living habits can be a rough time, and ultimately this can lead to bigger interpersonal problems than any of us ever wants to deal with. However, dealing with and having a good grasp on this situations is very important, not only in order to have a good year, but also for growing into a kind and respectable human being that people actually want to associate with. To translate, this means you need to understand and start to accept diversity.

At some point in life, just about everyone has sat through a mind-numbingly dull diversity training video. The weird thing about these videos is that they actually serve to point out and highlight all of the differences between people. While on the one hand, this can help to highlight the diverse nature of each and every one of us, it can also allow our minds to momentarily entertain some biases we may have never even considered before. Nonetheless, the goal of this type of training is amiable to say the least.

The idea of diversity is something that makes a lot of people super uncomfortable. And why wouldn't it? We're all raised with a certain set of values and social mores, and when we

encounter people who don't adhere to these, we tend to be on edge. All too often, this leads to tension, discrimination, and in the worst cases, violent hate crimes. This shouldn't be the case, though. The idea that the refusal to accept the differences among those around us can cause not only discriminatory acts and hateful speech, but also the death of innocent people is more than a little alarming. After all, we cannot forget that some of history's most infamously depraved actions—be it the mass genocide during the Holocaust or the present day charges of ISIS and al-Qaeda—have been fueled by an inability to accept diversity. The same goes for smaller and more isolated interpersonal incidents, be it using derogatory language or actively discriminating against someone based on their traits.

One thing that is important to acknowledge—and is often ignored—when tackling the topic of diversity is this: we are all minorities in one way or another. Ironically enough, there is often a stereotypical view of who is a “minority”. Women, queer individuals, and people of non-white descent are often who we consider to be “minorities”—however, this remains a rather narrow-minded understanding of what it means to be a minority. In a classroom comprised of twenty-somethings, a 57-year old professor is a minority on the basis of age. On a staff

of primarily Asian women, a white man is a minority on the basis of race and gender. In a room of gay men, a heterosexual woman is a minority based on her sexual orientation and gender. These specifications can be much more discrete than what we would normally consider though. Financial status, marital status, town or city of origin, and more can all serve as diversifying qualities for any group of people.

While we may not actively discriminate on the basis of marital status the way that we do with race or sexuality, we do often allow microaggressions to do the work for us in that regard. Basically, this means that we unknowingly use more subtle words and actions to send the message that we aren't accepting of another person's diverse nature. This is troubling to say the least. While it is okay to acknowledge difference among ourselves and others, it is never okay to openly argue that someone is any lesser of a respect-deserving human being because of these differences. Think what you may on the inside, but always show respect for the cultural and social backgrounds of those around you.



Returning to College (continued from page 3)

campus with fresh ideas, brimming with energy and eager to make friends, so why not be a friend to these students? Clubs are always looking for new members as well, and often times it's perfectly fine to walk into a club during its meeting time and decide to become a part of their next

event. If neither of those works for you, dropping by the game room during the week always proves to be a great way to meet new people. It's a hotspot on campus full of friendly people who are excited to play a game of pool or ping pong with you.

For many, with all these commitments, doing homework can become an issue. Some days you may not want to go to class because you're exhausted from that party last night or maybe you just stayed up too late doing homework. Planning your day out is critical to effective time

management. What is time management? Time management is affording a certain amount of time to different activities each day so that one can effectively be a good student, great friend and remain involved around campus. What each person decides to fill their schedule with is their choice, but regardless of what you do, planning your day is critical to staying in control of your life.

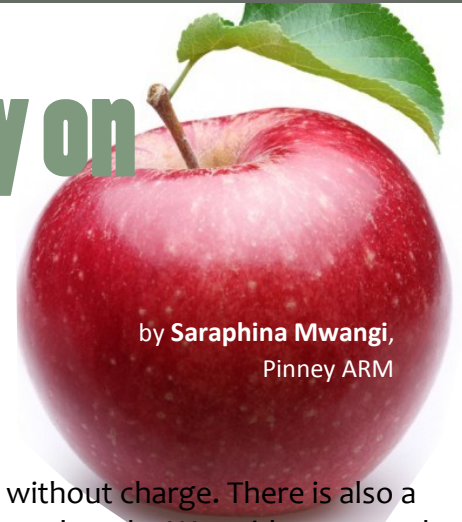


An effective skill to managing your day is giving yourself small deadlines

to complete tasks. For instance, you have to write a three page paper that's due in four days and have an exam to study for in three days while you'd also like to go out to the movies with your friends tonight. Give yourself forty minutes to plan out your paper and then go for a walk. The idea here is not to finish the paper in forty minutes but rather to give yourself a small block of time to focus on getting some work done. After the forty minutes, no matter where you are, stand up and take a break. Whether you go for a walk, watch some TV or listen to music, taking your mind off your work for a brief time will give you time to recharge and review what you've done so you can plan how to attack the assignment later on. Try out this method and see how efficiently you can complete many tasks. From doing homework to something as small as cleaning your apartment, time management is a life changing skill that can make you a productive worker.

Returning to college can be a stressful experience and can prove harder when you're not interested in the General Education classes you're taking or your routine has become tedious and boring. By using time management and exploring new areas and organizations on campus, hopefully you'll find that the Sophomore Slump is nonexistent and that college will grow more fun and exciting as you continue along your academic career. You can get your degree, so have fun getting it!

Living Healthy on Campus



by Saraphina Mwangi,
Pinney ARM

Living a healthy lifestyle while taking a full course load and living on campus can be quite difficult. It can be tempting to eat pizza, fries, and burgers everyday; and motivating yourself to make time to work out can feel nearly impossible. But we all know that in order to live life to our fullest potential we need to be healthy. Thankfully here at Western we have the opportunity to both eat healthy, and to stay active.

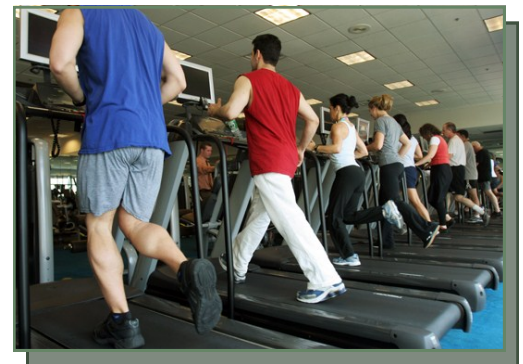
On the Midtown campus, there are two main student-dining areas. The upstairs cafeteria offers made to order deli, salad toss, and fruit smoothie stations. There is also a Greek yogurt bar where you can add fruit, honey, and many other toppings to your yogurt. In the downstairs food court there is the Verde salad bar, which serves made to order salads, and Stack's Deli, which serves made to order sandwiches and wraps. On the Westside campus there is the Westside Marketplace. The Marketplace has a Mindful station which offers "Mindful foods that balance nutrition with enticing flavors to create an indulgent way to enjoy health." There is also Sandella's, which serves healthy wraps, salads, and other options.

Both campuses have fitness rooms where students can work out

without charge. There is also a pool on the Westside campus that is open to students as well. The recreation department organizes fitness classes, which meet during the week, like Zumba and Insanity. All classes are taught by certified instructors and are free to students. There are also intramural teams, active club sports, and active recreation clubs that are open for students to join. These are great ways to meet other students with similar interests and to stay active.

All in all, balancing all that life throws our way and a healthy lifestyle can be challenging; but Western offers many opportunities for students to stay active and healthy during their time on campus.

Citation: [Http://mindful.sodexo.com/](http://mindful.sodexo.com/)



THE CENTENNIAL OF WORLD WAR I

by Sean Keenan, Centennial ARM

This year marks the one hundredth anniversary of the advent of the First World War. This is a historic event that should not be overlooked. World War I irreversibly changed the political landscape of Europe as well as the face of modern warfare. The death toll of the war was on a staggering scale previously unheard of in modern times. At the end of the war, the treaty of Versailles devastated the German economy and gave Hitler the opportunity he needed to take control of the desperate people. The centennial of this event is not something that should be forgotten or glossed over.

Those involved in the Great War were forever changed by their involvement. Before the war, the British Empire was one of the largest and most powerful in the world. Because of its involvement, it was greatly weakened and lost territory around the world. Although it remained a colonial power for many years after, it was clear that it would no longer be the superpower it once was. Russia was also fundamentally changed because of the war. At the beginning of the conflict the Tsar ruled Russia and his commitment to the war angered the people. In 1916 Lenin led the people of Russia in a revolt and Communist Russia was formed. The Ottoman Empire was completely wiped from existence because of the war. It was replaced by Turkey and the numerous Baltic States. The war fundamentally changed Europe and the consequences of these changes would be felt for generations to come.

The United States of America could not escape the war either, despite its best efforts. For years, the Monroe doctrine had controlled the USA's foreign policy; America was determined not to get involved in

any European politics. However, President Wilson saw that whatever happened in Europe would no doubt affect the United States and so convinced congress to approve America joining the war on behalf of the allies. This move cemented the United States' position in European politics; in addition, the military savvy that America showed during the conflict illustrated that America was a force to be reckoned with.

At the time, the scale and devastation of the war led it to be called "the war to end all wars;" there was truly no other conflict that compared with it at the time. Up until that point, warfare was traditionally fought with rules and codes of honor. However, during World War I this was not the case; horrible new weapons evolved to decimate the enemy. Mustard gas and flame throwers were used to clear out trenches, mines and barbed wire covered no man's land between the trenches and the war truly became a battle of attrition. Ultimately the war led to the deaths of 16 million people, 9 million soldiers and 7 million civilians. This scale of this was and is still today virtually unheard of.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember about the First World War is how it ended. After years of conflict, the central powers were finally defeated and Germany was forced into a debilitating treaty in Versailles. This destroyed any chance Germany had of recovery and gave Adolf Hitler the opportunity to take control and once again devastate Europe. Had the allied powers allowed Germany to recover, it is very possible that this would never have happened. While it may be impossible and unadvisable to forget the horrors of the past, it is important to realize that the world has to find a way to live with one another despite the mistakes that have been made.

IMPORTANT HOUSING REMINDERS

The semester is already underway, and your hall councils are starting, too. Have you thought about running for a position? You should! You might also want to attend meetings so you can know what's happening in your building, and help plan the year's events.

See signs posted in your hall about meeting times, or speak to your RA or RD.

And, don't forget that your RAs and ARMs also host all kinds of programs for you throughout the semester. Fun, food, and often great information can be had at each of these events. Look for signs in your buildings to tell you what's happening, or visit the HRL webpage (www.wcsu.edu/housing/events.asp) to see what's coming.



WCSU Day of Service

On Saturday, September 20th, WCSU will be holding a "Day of Service" in the Greater Danbury Area.

Join students, staff, faculty and others from all over campus to work throughout the area doing a few hours of service. There will be transportation from WCSU to each site and back to campus. Afterwards, there will be a barbeque on campus, and then everyone is encouraged to go to the Colonial Football game against Plymouth State at the WAC at 3 pm!

Watch for more announcements on this in the coming days.

**** 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