

The Handout

An ARM Newsletter

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Getting Back Into the Swing of Things



by Tamia Scott, Litchfield ARM

Getting back into the swing of things, without a doubt, is pretty difficult for all of us. However, there are some things that people do to help alleviate the feeling of being overwhelmed. So here are some ways to readjust to the rigors of academic life. Many people set goals for themselves. Take a pen and paper and write a list of personal goals that you'd like to accomplish during the semester. These goals might be social, intellectual, or physical, but by having something to work toward, you can relieve some anxiety about starting up again. Some goals you might want

to consider are making friends, getting better grades or even joining a club.

Give yourself time to relax. It can be daunting to look at the syllabus and see all the work you're going to have to do for that class. Multiply that by 5 and it can be overwhelming; especially coming back from winter break where there was nothing to worry about. So, when readjusting to school, take some time to chill every so often. After a month away, it'll be great to catch up with everyone you've missed from school, and they'll likely have so many stories to share. While you

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Let's Not Take That Shot

by Gabrielle Christofor,
Centennial ARM



It is easy to fall into bad habits, especially when you are out of your comfort zone. Being in college is a hard adjustment for everyone and not being able to cope with a new environment can lead to isolation. College is known to be the “best part of life” for some, but it can be the hardest for others. These lonely feelings build up and can turn into the mental illness, causing you to stay inside your room. Especially at WestConn, the residence halls make it easy to never leave. Being alone can feel easier than confronting feelings, yet it will have detrimental effects.

We can begin to normalize mental illness and seek help if we can identify the signs. If someone is having trouble focusing, they are not getting out of bed, they are disconnected from their feelings, or they say things such as, “the world would be better off without me,” they may need someone to talk to. In college, signs could also consist of immense homesickness, academic stress, poor self-esteem, or going to social media as an outlet. If you feel any of these emotions, you are normal and there is help.

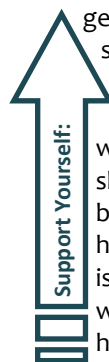
Some see a simple solution by turning to alcohol or drugs as a way to forget the problems. It could feel good in the moment, but after the fact, there will only be more pain when the effects wear off. It becomes an unhealthy cycle. Before the issue becomes worse by coping with substance abuse or skipping classes, there are ways to find your inner happiness.

Seventy-five percent (75%) of mental illnesses begin before the age of 24. A great number of cases may start in college due to stress, and can last for years. Research says that the main coping mechanisms currently for college students are: sleeping (66.5%), physical exercise (65.6%), eating (46.9%) and consuming alcohol (34.3%). We should begin

to change these methods of dealing with anxiety and depression to more healthy choices. Here are some ideas to give a try:



Think about what truly makes you happy. It could be as simple as painting with calming music on. Many people like to sing. Listen to your favorite artist. Pet a dog. Volunteer for an organization, whether it is new to you or not. Watch your favorite episode of “The Office.” Cuddle underneath a blanket that reminds you of home. It is the simple things that can turn the day around. Get your mind off of the bad and do something you love for a while. It will change the narrative in your head to think about the positive parts of the day instead of dwelling on the unpleasant ones.



If you are not sleeping, try to get at least 8 hours of sleep. That seems virtually impossible as a college student to obtain; however, you can focus on the weekends on catching up on sleep. Also, do not label yourself based on your feelings. You are human. You will feel things, and it is okay. Eat healthy foods that won't slow you down. Avoid alcohol and drugs when sad. Meditate or do yoga to clear your mind. Allow yourself to feel, and then let go of those feelings.



There is support on campus. Make it a point to talk face to face with people. Texting and calling is okay, but talking in person brings a connection that is unattainable over the phone. If you are not able to talk to friends about issues you are hav-

ing, there is the Counseling Center, and a counselor would be willing to help. Find a program with therapy dogs to help cope with stress. Find your niche, but do not judge yourself in the process.

It may seem cheesy to say, but everyone is going through **something** right now. Look out for your friends. Notice the signs, send resources to help, or share the simple joys with them. If you are struggling yourself, expect the ups and downs. Treat yourself with the same kindness as you would treat your friends. Forgive yourself. Find your happiness and roll with it. It is not going to be easy, but you can do it.

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Meal Plans

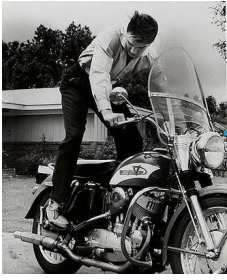


Not Anymore
& Title IX



RESOLVE to
be GREAT





TIPS TO KICKSTART YOUR SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH

by Sara Slaiby,
Newbury & Fairfield ARM



Scholarships are a beautiful thing, no matter what form they come in. There are millions of scholarships available at the touch of your fingertips through the web, however it takes some searching. There are a multitude of scholarship-finding websites available for free, which you can enter your information into and find matches. If you are looking for scholarships, check out the websites below!

1. Chegg.com

Chegg, commonly used as a textbook rental website, also has a scholarship searching feature. When you click on the scholarship tab, it will take you to the search portal where you can enter your education level, age, and GPA. These features allow Chegg to search through the 25,000-scholarship database to find matches that you are eligible for.

2. Scholarships.com

This website requires that you create a profile, which entails filling in basic information regarding yourself. The purpose for creating a profile is to allow the website to filter through the available scholarships to help find a better match for you. Also, by creating a profile, you can save different

scholarships that you would like to apply to, as well as keep a record of what scholarships you did apply for, and what to follow up on.

3. The College Board

This website, typically used by students going through the application process for schools, also has a scholarship searching feature. Just like with scholarships.com, you make an account providing minimal information regarding yourself, and then have access to nearly six billion dollars' worth of scholarships.

4. Local community foundation websites

Googling your local community foundation websites can lead you to a variety of scholarships and grants available. Due to the fact that these scholarships and grants are aimed toward those who live in the community, the application pool for most scholarships is significantly smaller than those you would find on a main stream website such as scholarships.com or chegg.com, and therefore your chances of earning the scholarship are much higher.

5. Western Connecticut State University Foundation Scholarships

Through the university's webpage, there is a [page designated](#) for foun-

dation scholarships that are available to students of the university. There is an application available online that asks for brief information regarding you, such as your name, address, student identification number, clubs you're involved with on campus, etc. The current application period ends on March 02, 2020. There are scholarships specific to certain schools such as the Ancell School of Business, Macricostas School of Arts and Sciences, etc. There also are scholarships available which are university wide, meaning any major can be eligible to earn the scholarship.

Overall, there are plenty of resources surrounding us that we can utilize when beginning our search for scholarships. Although some scholarship applications can be lengthy, many scholarships are searching for the same criteria—essays can be utilized more than once, and your resume can be tweaked each time to present the appropriate information required from the scholarship. Creating a folder designated for scholarships is a great way to keep all of your information in one location for easy access, as well as a way to keep track of all the scholarships you have applied to, and what you need to follow up on.



Continued from page 1



probably all kept in touch over break through texting, Snapchat, or Facetime, there's nothing like giving your best friends a great big hug after time apart.

Get into a routine. After the free-

dom of winter break, you may be used to just roaming around and doing whatever you think of in the moment.

When readjusting to class schedules and extra-curriculars, it can be helpful to get back into a routine. This will make all the things you have to do just a bit less overwhelming. Plus, scheduling your day or week is just another way to ensure

that you don't miss a class or forget to complete an assignment.

Last but not least, take your time getting back into the rhythm of things. There's no getting around it, you'll need some time before it feels normal going to school again. Don't be hard on yourself. This process can take a week or two, but coach yourself through your negative thoughts.

Great Apps for a Great Semester

by **Caitie Barry**, Grasso ARM



We live in an age of technology: why not embrace it?! Tech does not have to hurt you academically; it can actually help enhance your college experience — with the right management skills. Below are my favorite free apps that I have personally used that I have seen improve my experience!

GRADES

In this app, you are able to compile all the different weighted or unweighted sections of your syllabus, as well as what grade you strive to get in the class. It will then continually calculate what you need to get on future assignments as you put in your actual grades.

Wunderlist

This is a sort of to do list app that lets you set reminders, different folders, and will let you even connect to other people's lists so you can assign them tasks or have a group to do list.

Doodle

Doodle is a life saver! This is a group scheduling app; its perfect for finding a time for a club to meet, have a meeting or just find a group study time. You can put all the possible options to meet, and everyone is able to click their preferred time.

Quizlet

Everyone has different study tricks and techniques but one that is generally universal is flash cards and self-quizzing! This is what Quizlet is for! You can make flashcards, study and quiz yourself on school-

work. You can even search for topics and collaborate with other students.

Free College Schedule Maker

Although this is not an app, this website has basically organized my entire life. You can update it whenever you want, but you plug all weekly events into the grid. You can change the colors and design as well! You can save this and pull it up in your photos whenever you need it.

Duolingo

Did you spend your entire high school career studying a foreign language only to forget everything after you were handed your high school diploma? Me too, me too. *Duolingo* is a great app to help you brush up on your foreign language skills, or even learn a new language all together

Venmo

There are so many different apps to pay or send money, but *Venmo* tends to be the most accessible and popular app on campus!

Blackboard

If you are a WCSU student, please download this app now... *Blackboard* is how you access your up-to-date grades, look at assignments and class lectures and do everything for your online classes. Out of all these apps, this is definitely the most important!

I hope this help improve your experience! Have a great Semester!



Again I reply to the triple winds
running chromatic fifths of
derision
outside my window:

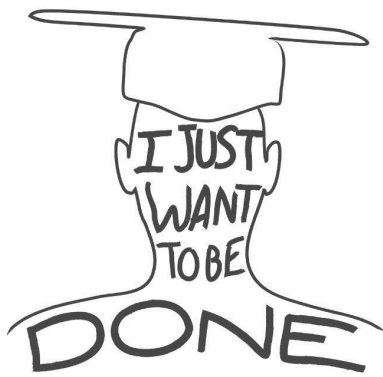
Play louder.

You will not succeed. I am
bound more to my sentences
the more you batter at me
to follow you.

And the wind,
as before, fingers perfectly
its derisive music.

January

William Carlos Williams
1883-1963



How to Overcome Senioritis



by Angela Nicastro, Pinney ARM

We have all faced the cruel

grasp of senioritis at least once in our lives, and it doesn't really get any better. You can already see the finish line, your way out, but all that stands in your way is only a few classes, homework assignments, student teaching, internship hours, work, some essays, a thesis here and there, a group project or two, one or two jobs, and hours in the library pulling your hair out trying to find out the history of the Pythagorean Theorem. As seniors, we tend to forget that even though the end is near, we have lots of things to do before we can be sent off into the real world. While some might not have as much on their plates as others, this is the time of year senioritis kicks in at full force, and that's not a good thing.

Even though it's your last semester, you should try your best at everything you do, especially when it comes to classes that are associated with your degree since, well, you have to know it. So how do we overcome senioritis? How do we, the class of 2020, who graduate in about 100 days, stay motivated for all of those days in-between?

Remember that grades still matter: In

order to graduate with your degree, you have to fulfill certain requirements. Just because it's your last semester does not mean they will let you graduate if you failed a specific class of yours. This just means that if you do want your degree, you are going to have to retake that class until you meet the specific grade requirement. This will also make you feel better about your overall academic performance, and hey, every-

one deserves to feel proud about what they accomplished.

Set goals for yourself: Now, I'm not talking about life altering goals like what you want to be in five or ten years, but small things like eat breakfast, wake up a little earlier, finish all the things on your To-Do list, work on your project and so on. Giving yourself even small things to do can help build your motivation, and you can then set your goals to something bigger. Setting goals can also help you figure out what you need to improve on before you graduate, such as certain skills or habits.

Don't fall into bad habits: I know this is easier said than done, especially since winter break is still somewhat fresh in our minds, but when you are in your last semester you can't really afford to be falling into bad (or worse) habits. It's going to be very tempting to party with friends every week for a last hoorah, but not only would that start to affect your academic performance and leave you exhausted the next day, it will affect your wallet. I know that you want to let loose this semester, party, and let it all out before you become an official adult, which is actually normal and fine . . .in moderation.

Don't skip class: The more you skip class, the worse the senioritis will get. Not only will you get behind in your classes, but it'll just make it that much harder to get things done in the long run.

Remember the finish line: IT'S RIGHT THERE! It is so close, and we can see it! When you are feeling lost or unmotivated, remember that you have already gotten yourself this far in school, so what's one more semester? Use this as your motivator, and constantly remind yourself that once you walk across that stage in May and get handed that diploma, you are done. You'll be moving on to do greater things such as grad school, an "adult" job, or do some long awaited traveling.

Have FUN in your last semester, and make some memories with all the friends you have made since coming to WestConn. Just remember that you are still a student, and still need to pass in order to graduate, so keep these in mind when you are having a hard time staying motivated. Don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it, whether it's from faculty or friends, as I can assure you everyone has been through this and might even have other ways of getting over senioritis. Hopefully these tips work for you, and I wish everyone the best of luck this semester!





Staying Up To Date

by Maggie Walsh, Centennial ARM

“Our country is doomed.” “The planet is dying.” “No one respects (insert marginalized group of people).”

Damning generalizations about our society are tossed around like candy every day. But how much do we actually know? In a world of Facebook-debates and finger-pointing, it is crucial to be well-read about current events. This is a daunting task, I know. And I myself have thrown out many excuses to avoid reading the headlines. But, when I consider the myriad overwhelming reasons why I should know what’s happening outside my front door, I find there are solutions to every concern I can come up with.

“The News is just so depressing.”

This was my excuse for a very long time. A lot of bleak things do happen in our world, but it is possible to be up to date without becoming depressed every time you read something. Firstly, look past the headlines. When someone is forced to condense a story into one sentence, they often use the most dramatic points. Headlines are also often designed to make the reader angry or sad, so they feel compelled to read the article. On the subject of clickbait, it’s important to know your bias. If your source is biased towards a certain cause (and many, if not most, *are*) the

articles they publish will be tailored to the issues their demographic is concerned with. So make sure you are using sources that either have very little bias, or whose bias you share. Finally, instead of just getting your information from news sources, research and follow specific organizations whose message you support. This way, you hear about their successes and breakthroughs, not just the looming list of “we need to focus more on ___!!!” When you take time to focus on the type of information you’re getting and where you’re getting it from, it makes the difficult information a little easier to hear.

“I’d rather focus on my own life instead of worrying about things I can’t control”

Another convincing argument. But there are ways to know what’s going on in the world without letting it take over our lives. Designate a time in each day when you will read up a little bit, and then leave it alone. I personally receive email notifications from the New York Times that I scroll through every morning. They send ‘briefings’ so I know what’s most important that day. It’s usually only three topics with a brief synopsis so they’re quick to get through, and that way I can know the issues while still going on with my day as planned.

“I don’t know where to start”

There is an overwhelming number of news resources to choose from. Look for one without too much bias, that covers a range of topics you’re interested in, is reliable and updated often, and offers a format you enjoy. I have already mentioned the New York Times. I use them because I trust the information they give, They have lots of categories like theatre and real estate I can look through, and I get updates sent to my email. You might like a source that’s mainly social media-based, or maybe you’ll look for something that is independently owned and operated. Whatever it is, finding a source you like is half the battle.

Reading up on current events is rarely a fun or easy task, but it is so critical to our future that young people know what’s going on. We are the key to changing the world, and it starts with knowing what needs to change.





Learning Through Forgetting

by Audrey Redpath, Pinney ARM

You have one month to prepare for a massive test, worth at least 30% of your final grade. How do you study for it? If your approach is to study a small section of the material every day until the day of the test, you might be wasting a lot of your time.

Interval studying leverages a brain phenomenon called “the spacing effect,” first coined by the 19th century psychologist Herman Ebbinghaus. Ebbinghaus’ study of the spacing effect and his concept of the natural “learning curve” have been influential to teaching, but also to machine learning and the development of video game “difficulty curves,” designed to teach the player the mechanics of a game in a way that feels organic but that ‘sticks’ in the mind without forced memorization of tactics, gameplay patterns, and controls. Leveraging the spacing effect, you can learn and retain your material as easily and lastingly as the gameplay loop in *Red Dead Redemption*.

So how can you use this concept to remember material more easily and do better on your tests? The first step is to build a schedule of intervals: rather than study the same material back to back and over and over, you should look at the time you have before you need to recall the material (a comprehension quiz or major test) and set intervals to review and test yourself. Here’s a harder pill to swallow: the more difficult that studying is - the more you challenge yourself with your flashcards or a pretest - the more likely that information is to solidify itself in your memory. Just the act of retrieving a memory *for a purpose* changes that memory within the brain, particularly when you forget or misremember and have the opportunity to correct and reinforce a concept. And the best way to challenge your brain and force that retrieval is to test yourself.

Self-Testing > Memorization

In a study at Washington University in St. Louis, “Test-Enhanced Learning,” Dr. Henry Roediger and Dr. Jeffrey Karpicke found that students learned material more permanently and comprehensively by studying the material once and then being tested on it in intervals before a later, delayed test, than they did reviewing the material in sessions leading up to the later test.

In fact, when students studied the material repeatedly without self-testing, they did well on a test *immediately* following the study session, but forgot and struggled to recall the material from then on. Repeated study often feels like a smart use of time because it can produce one-off, short term benefits - but studying built around engaging your memory and building the skills to recall embedded information on the topic of study has more substantial, long term benefits for students at every level.

Mind the Gap

The space between your study sessions and self tests - those intervals or gaps - are just as important as your active study time. It’s not just time for your brain to start to forget the material so you can reinforce it, but when you take gap time between sessions, you give your mind time to work on complex associations and problem solving in the background. You can call this subconscious work your brain’s incubation mode - and it’s responsible for the surge of confidence or comprehension you might feel after returning to a subject after a substantial break.

Integrating this practice into your study routine undermines some common knowledge about college organization: since the brain draws up better and more varied external connections between material when the study context is changed up, it’s better to work in multiple, different spaces while studying and self-testing than to pick one consistent study spot; memorizing hardly helps you develop a strong understanding of a topic - and it’s easy for your brain to toss that memorization away without maintenance, so putting in the time to form your own thoughts about a subject actually makes it easier to remember than just mass-memorizing the bullet-pointed vocabulary or formulas in the test material.

This approach to learning emphasizes building and referencing connections within the brain - not just rote memorization or even familiarity with the original text. By changing up the context of your learning; mixing your study sets between chapters, types of problems, or study methods; and spacing your studying effectively in the time before your tests by learning and forgetting, you can build up your brain’s ‘storage system,’ improve your memory, and make your life easier as a student.

SMARTER NOT HARDER

STUDY CHECKLIST

- Spread out study intervals with a gap between the first and second session.
- Make a difficult self-test right after your first time studying the material and refer back to it
- Let yourself fail, make mistakes, restate in your own words - anything but rote memorization - to build a complex memory of the material.



Housing Announcements:

Fall 2020 Room Selection

Can it be that time already? Yes. Emails about the process were sent to your WCSU emails earlier this week. Here are some dates and info that you need to know:

- ⇒ Housing Deposits (\$250) are due—MARCH 20, 2020
- ⇒ Honors Housing and Gender Neutral Housing applications due—March 27, 2020
- ⇒ Group Pre-Registration Packets due—March 30, 2020

Only students who have paid a deposit by the March 20 due date will be eligible (allowed) to participate in the fall room selection process and to be a part of a group. They will receive an application/contract once the due date has passed. Once you’ve received your application/contract, you and your group members will complete a Group Pre-Registration form, along with any other forms you might need (credit exception, registration waiver, etc.). These group registration forms are due, again, on or before March 30th in the Newbury Hall Housing & Residence Life offices. If your forms are late or your packet is incomplete, your group will not be able to participate.

Group leaders and seconds will then receive an email with a 5-minute appointment time. Full groups will have appointments on April 3 or 6. Partial groups will be at some time on April 6, 7, or 8.

There’s much more information available. Look for the email which gives you the whole scoop on the process. There will also be signs posted in your building, and your RDs or the Housing Office can also answer any questions you might have.

