We often remind parents that October can be a long month. As one of the busiest months on campus, many things are happening that require the timely attention of our students and also you, our WVU parents. To help you and your student get through, I have included a number of important reminders. These include key info on midterms and support options (drop-in Mid-Semester Help Center is Monday), 2018-19 FAFSA filing (if you help with this, file before October 31 to get three chances to win a scholarship), details about WVU Break Housing and football game housing options November 17-19; and a calendar change to the end of the spring term in May. Students should also now be meeting with their advisor regarding spring and summer schedules and checking their student accounts to ensure they have no balances so they can register on time –registration starts October 25. Today is also the last day to apply to graduate in December (application closes at 11:59 tonight) and soon-to-be graduates can also now sign up online to walk in December Commencement ceremonies. Pepper in some career, internship and graduate school fairs coming up, and you can see why we can feel so long! So read and share to make sure you all stay on track.

We also hope those who attended had a great Fall Family Weekend 2017! We want to hear from you, even if you weren’t able to attend, so please complete the Fall Family Weekend evaluation: http://bit.ly/2xXgi5M. Each year we do our best to plan events for the whole family; please take a few minutes to let us know your thoughts and experiences. Thanks in advance for your feedback. In this edition:

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Calendar Change for Spring 2018 Semester

Please note that we have had a schedule change for the end of the academic year in May 2018. The WVU Faculty Senate approved a change to the academic calendar for the spring 2018 term. Classes will now end Friday, April 27, 2018, and finals will be given April 30-May 4.

The previously-published calendar had the last day of classes on April 30 and finals scheduled May 2-9, right up until Commencement. This change means that WVU residence halls will also be closing Saturday, May 5 at noon rather than Thursday, May 10, as was previously noted. The full 2017-2018 academic calendar can be found at http://bit.ly/2e69da7 and residence hall opening and closing schedules can be found here with the new dates noted: http://bit.ly/2p4S2tx.

Mid-Semester Is Here

The halfway point of the semester (midterm) is upon us. This is a critical point for student success. It can also be a stressful time for your students as it tends to be when exams take place as well as deadlines for projects and papers. Please remind your student of the various support services that are available.
Resources include free tutoring, student success coaches and other help at http://bit.ly/2ywirWE. Instructors’ office hours are listed on every course syllabus. In the residence halls, student have a wealth of resources including residence hall coordinators and resident assistants (RAs). WellWVU (http://bit.ly/1prNoiE) has several resources to help students with stress, time management and better sleep habits. Career Services http://bit.ly/1oGa9zh helps students build a four-year plan to launch a successful career. The Carruth Center offers individual and group counseling http://bit.ly/2y1Pv64. And Accessibility Services enhances the educational opportunities for students with disabilities http://bit.ly/1oG8jhA.

Please note that faculty reported midterm grades on Thursday, October 5. Students, as well as parents with Parent/Guest Portal access http://bit.ly/1l9XiAm, can view midterm grades through STAR starting Friday, October 6. If your student is struggling in a class, please encourage them to speak to the instructor during office hours as well as seek the resources listed above.

There will also be a Mid-Semester Help Center available on Monday, October 9 from 1 to 5 p.m. in the Mountainlair Vandalia Lounge (1st Floor): http://bit.ly/2g0Bh0x. Advisors and representatives for tutoring resources, Accessibility Services, Career Services and the Mountaineer Hub will be available to help students. This is a great one-stop shop for those who may be struggling in a class or for students who would like to get ahead. Students who feel they cannot pass a course may consider dropping the class and adding a mid-semester course. Mid-semester courses start Monday, October 9. Before adding or dropping courses, students should speak to their advisor or go to the Mid-Semester Help Center. The last day to drop an individual class is October 24.

It is very important to remain a full-time student in good academic standing (at least a 2.0 GPA) in order to graduate in a timely manner as well as maintain scholarships and financial aid. Students receiving scholarships have higher GPA requirements. Students with below a 2.0 GPA at the end of the fall 2017 semester will be placed on academic probation. If their GPA remains below a 2.0 at the end of the spring 2018 semester they could be suspended from the University as well as lose their financial aid due to not making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) which is evaluated on the attempted versus earned credit hours and overall grade point average (GPA). More information about financial aid satisfactory academic progress can be found at http://bit.ly/2xna7Zk. Students worried about their academic progress should consult with their advisor as well as the Mountaineer Hub regarding their aid status.

**HOUSING NOTES**

**Break Housing**

WVU’s residence halls officially close three times throughout the school year (Thanksgiving, winter and spring breaks). Because we realize that some students might still need a place to stay during these breaks, we are offering a solution – staying in town and on campus. In 2017-18, **Oakland, Seneca, Summit and Bennett Tower** will offer Break Housing to their
residents. If a resident of another hall wants to stay, Bennett Tower provides space during Thanksgiving, winter and spring breaks. Not all residence halls can remain open due to staffing and security over breaks.

- The cost for break housing is $25 per day.
- To ensure everyone’s safety, no guests will be permitted.
- No meals will be served in University Dining facilities, and no meal plans will be active; instead, students may use their Mountie Bounty at many participating locations: http://bit.ly/2xZzvRR
- Only those who register online and agree to terms and conditions will be allowed to stay. The link for registration will be made active Monday, October 16: http://bit.ly/2yuETPY
- Questions on Break Housing? Visit http://bit.ly/2yuETPY e-mail wvuhousing@mail.wvu.edu or call 304-293-2811.

**Football Housing Option**

WVU will be hosting a home football game on Saturday, November 18. Due to interest from residence hall students wishing to remain past the official hall closing on November 17 to attend the game, we will keep the halls open for those who register online for two additional nights. NOTE: THIS IS SEPARATE FROM BREAK HOUSING (see above).

- For the football housing option, students will be able to remain in their current residence hall assignment for an additional charge for one/two nights – leaving by Sunday, November 19 at noon.
- There is an additional cost for those staying on campus for the football game. The cost is $25 a day.
- No guests will be permitted.
- Only those who register online and agree to terms and conditions will be allowed to stay. The link for registration will be made active Monday, October 16: http://bit.ly/2yuETPY.
- No meal plan will be available during this period. Participants can use their Mountie Bounty at many local restaurants. http://bit.ly/2xZzvRR
- Registered football break housing students must vacate by noon, November 19 (Sunday).
- Questions on Football Housing? Visit http://bit.ly/2yuETPY e-mail wvuhousing@mail.wvu.edu or call 304-293-2811.
Please note that the Mountaineer Parents Club Thanksgiving bus schedule departure date will not change due to this optional football housing. The buses will still leave on Friday, November 17 and return on Sunday, November 26 at the same times listed on the Parents Club website. To review the departure times or to make a reservation please visit http://bit.ly/2IeTaBq. NOTE: Last day to cancel and receive a refund is November 2.

Registration instructions and information will be sent to campus residents and posted around the residence halls the second week of October to register for Thanksgiving Break and Football Housing. There will be separate processes for winter break and spring break.

WHAT’S HAPPENING ON CAMPUS

WVUp All Night, October 6-7 – Encourage your students to head out to the “Happy Fall, Y’All” weekend at Up All Night Friday and Saturday nights. From campfires and giant pumpkins to hot chocolate bars as well as log jammers and hungry hippo attractions, there will be fun for everyone. http://bit.ly/2vLG7DV

Diversity Week, October 7-14 – This annual, weeklong festival includes lectures, demonstrations, panels and interactive events to provide ways for students to come together in unity to celebrate the rich diversity of our University community. http://bit.ly/2xozuK6

Mid-Semester Help Center, October 9 – For students with midterms, the Mid-Semester Help Center will be Monday, October 9 from 1 to 5 p.m. in the Mountainlair Vandalia Lounge (1st Floor). Students can drop by to speak with an advisor, financial aid or career counselor, seek tutoring options, review possible mid-semester courses and get advice for moving forward. http://bit.ly/2g0Bh0x

Davis College Career and Internship Fair, October 11 – The Davis College Career and Internship Fair will be on Wednesday, October 11 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Agricultural Sciences Building. http://bit.ly/2xnMJWw. Over 40 employers from diverse industries, government agencies and nonprofits will be recruiting for internships and full-time opportunities. Students are encouraged to research the companies in advance on MountaineerTRAK and attend a PREP Day for resume reviews and more: http://bit.ly/2y4Rg4o. While the events are geared toward Davis College majors, all students and alumni are welcome. Contact Career Services at careerservices@mail.wvu.edu or 304-293-2221 with questions.

Attention Juniors and Seniors: Class Ring Info, October 16-19

If your student is interested in obtaining a WVU class ring http://bit.ly/2yw3BQd, encourage them to stop by the ring table in the Mountainlair on October 16-19 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. They can look at options, speak with a representative or even purchase their WVU official ring in time for the April 22, 2018, Ring Day Ceremony. Orders can also be placed online at http://bit.ly/1LuzSpZ.
Graduate School Fairs, October 18 and November 11 – For students considering graduate or professional school, encourage them to attend one of the upcoming fairs: http://bit.ly/2ktzWkg.

RESOURCES AND REMINDERS

Deadline to Apply for December Graduation Is Today, October 6

The deadline to apply to graduate is Friday, October 6 at 11:59 p.m.: http://bit.ly/2sFl8xQ. Students who have applied to graduate can also now register to walk in December Commencement Ceremonies. This is a separate process and must be completed before December 9 at http://bit.ly/2yvoHOy.

December Graduation Regalia, Diploma Frames, Etc.

Any student who walks in the Commencement Ceremonies must wear official regalia. All caps and gowns, personalized announcements, diploma frames and college rings can be ordered online through the WVU Bookstore at http://bit.ly/1LuzSpZ. All cap, gown and frame orders need to be ordered by November 10 and can be picked up in the bookstore starting Monday, December 4. The cap and gown can be shipped to the student's home for a $15.95 fee. The home-ship orders must be placed by November 17. Diploma frames are not part of the home-ship program. There is no shipping fee on caps and gowns and diploma frames that are shipped to the WVU Bookstore for pick-up.

Commencement will be held Friday, December 15 at the WVU Coliseum. The morning ceremony will take place at 9 a.m. for graduates of the College of Business and Economic and the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences. All other schools and colleges will graduate at 2 p.m. All 2017 August and December graduates are invited to participate http://bit.ly/2gdMtFm.

Next Year’s FAFSA Available! Students Could Win a $1,000 scholarship for Completing the 2018-19 FAFSA by October 31

Why should you submit your 2018-2019 FAFSA now for next fall?

1. Students will automatically be entered for a chance to win up to $1,000 of scholarship money! Students who submit a FASFA in October have three chances to win. Submit between October 1 - October 31 = $1,000 scholarship drawing. Submit between October 1 - November 30 = $500 scholarship drawing. Submit between October 1 - December 31 = $250 scholarship drawing.

2. Some aid is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis to eligible students. Make sure your student receives the best financial aid package available.

3. Students and families can use 2016 tax information to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at http://1.usa.gov/146X9ep for the 2018-2019 academic year now.
4. You may be eligible to automatically pull your and your student’s tax information into the FAFSA from the IRS, making it easier than ever.
5. Students can get their financial aid award offer as early as February.
6. If you need assistance, contact the Mountaineer Hub at 304-293-1988! We are here to help.

**Outstanding Balances, Advising and Spring/Summer Registration**

This fall, WVU began emailing monthly account statements to students who owe a balance. The statement identifies any new charges on their account (also available in the Parent/Guest Portal: [http://bit.ly/1l9XiAm](http://bit.ly/1l9XiAm)) and informs them of any past-due balance. Statements are sent the middle of each month, with a due date of the first of the following month. Students who have a past-due amount greater than $200 have a hold placed on their record, which will prevent them from registering for classes or obtaining an academic transcript. You should encourage your student to check the WVU Portal to see if they have a hold so they can take care of this before spring and summer pre-registration, which begins October 25.

With registration priority dates approaching, students should also be scheduled/scheduling soon to meet with their academic advisors to review progress and get advice for spring and summer classes so they are ready before priority registration dates: [http://bit.ly/2wDBmKC](http://bit.ly/2wDBmKC). A student’s advisor is noted in DegreeWorks. Students should be sure to review DegreeWorks before their advising appointment and prepare any questions in advance. Looking ahead to summer school? This is a good topic to mention the adviser since students can register at the same time.

**Student Insurance Mid-Year Enrollment**

Has your student recently lost their health insurance coverage? Qualifying life events, such as aging out of coverage due to turning 26 or other loss of health insurance coverage, allow eligible students to enroll in the WVU Aetna plan mid-semester. If your student waived the WVU Aetna student health insurance and is now losing their coverage due to a qualifying life event, they can enroll in the Aetna plan mid-semester by completing the mid-year enrollment form and submitting the required documentation to the Student Insurance Office. For more information about qualifying life events, mid-year enrollment, and the WVU Aetna plan, visit the Student Insurance Office website: [http://bit.ly/1l9XdfW](http://bit.ly/1l9XdfW)

**WVU Alert Test Held September 27 – Did You Receive It?**

The University conducted a test of the WVU Alert system on Wednesday (September 27) at 2:20 p.m. This test was held in conjunction with a mandatory nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System. If you did not receive the WVU Alert, please remind your student to sign you up or update their account to include your contact information at [http://bit.ly/2gh141y](http://bit.ly/2gh141y). To improve communication in the event of a campus emergency, students are urged to opt in to the WVU emergency alert system. Emergency alerts are sent only when there is an imminent threat to the
Public Feedback for Higher Learning Commission Reaccreditation

West Virginia University is seeking comments from the public about the University for its periodic evaluation by its regional accrediting agency. The University will host a visit March 5-6, 2018, with a team representing the Higher Learning Commission. West Virginia University has been accredited by the HLC since 1926. The team will review the institution’s ongoing ability to meet the HLC’s Criteria for Accreditation. The public is invited to submit comments to the following address:

Public Comment on West Virginia University

Higher Learning Commission

230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500

Chicago, IL 60604-1411

The public may also submit comments on HLC’s website: http://bit.ly/2wCAZjo

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. Comments must be in writing. All comments must be received by February 4, 2018.

/Katie Gallagher and Lisa Hanselman

Office of Parent Relations

West Virginia University