I’m heading out shortly to help load the Parents Club Holiday Break Buses sending roughly 650 students back your direction: http://bit.ly/1lyZHeL! For many this will be their first trip home since August and they are excited to see you. We will be closing the residence halls this evening at 7 p.m. for Thanksgiving Break and they reopen Sunday, November 29 at noon. As students have been told, they can leave their belongings in their residence hall rooms but should take any items they will need during the breaks because halls are locked during this time. As you look ahead to Winter Break, please note the sections on “Residence Hall Closings/Openings” and “Considerations for the End of the Semester” below as your students finals may finish in advance of the actual hall closing date – yay for perhaps more time with your student! Also reservations for the Parents Club Winter Break Buses are now live and other transportation options are again noted below as you plan ahead for getting home at the holidays.

For those of you with soon-to-be graduates, the much anticipated dates and times for May 2016 Commencement ceremonies have now been released! The December Commencement speaker also has been announced. We have also included some more details on the spring payment changes we told you about last week to answer some questions folks have called in with, so read on.

We hope you enjoy this upcoming break with your students and find many things for which to be thankful in this season of Thanksgiving. Happy Thanksgiving from the Mountaineer Family! In this edition:

- Spring 2016 Payment Updates
- Parents Club “Question of the Month”
- Parents Club Winter Break Bus Reservations Now Live
- December Commencement Speaker Announced
- May 2016 Commencement Schedule released
- Spring Health Insurance Waiver Now Live
- Student Athletic Ticketing Updates
- WVU Student Health Services Giving FREE HIV Tests
- Residence Hall Closings/Openings
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Spring 2016 Payment Updates

Last week we sent an e-mail about spring billing and payment changes. Bills and Financial Aid have now been posted. Based on some questions we have received, the following details might be helpful to clarify the new timeline. Our goal is to avoid any panic just prior to the start of the semester by working with our students and families as early as possible so they are ready to start the spring semester successfully. Questions? The staff at the new Mountaineer HUB are ready to help – 304-293-1WVU!

Today! – Log on!

Spring bills are now out and spring Financial Aid is posted as well. For the spring bill and financial aid be sure you are looking at the Electronic Bill By Term/Make Payment tab. There you will see the charges, then below that will be authorized financial aid. Below that will be the remaining spring balance due. Is a scholarship missing? Is a loan not posted? Let us know. Don’t wait – call us now! (304-293-1WVU)

Prior to December 18th - Help us Help You!

Make sure arrangements are in place. Let us know about third-party payment(s) that may be coming. Still waiting on a loan? Not sure about how to pay the remaining balance? Let us hear from you now so we can work with you on options and update your account prior to the December 18th due date! (304-293-1WVU)

December 18th – Payment or Payment Plan Due

The full spring balance (less financial aid!) is due today, December 18th – or you can simply enroll in the convenient, monthly payment plan and spread your payments out over the entire spring semester – interest free: http://bit.ly/1MsB3mF. If you need extra time, note that no penalties will be assessed until January 11, 2016.

After December 18th – Need More Time?

While we encourage payment by December 18th, if you still need extra time or assistance to work through your financial arrangements, no late fees will be assessed until January 11, 2016. Also, students will not be removed from classes for nonpayment until after the first week of the semester. So don’t panic! There is still time for us to work with you.
Call Today - We’re here to help!

Though the December 18th due date is a bit earlier than in the past, our goal is to help address aid and payment issues in advance, and make sure all our students have a payment plan in place so they can focus on their academic classes at the start of the semester! (304-293-1WVU)

Parents Club “Question of the Month”

We have a question and we want your answers! Be sure to visit our website at http://bit.ly/1oDaO75 and answer our Question of the Month.

Parents Club Winter Break Bus Reservations Now Live

The reservation system for the Winter Break buses is now live. Please note that the dates for the winter break holiday buses are as follows:

Buses leave Morgantown – Thursday, December 17

Buses return to Morgantown – Saturday, January 9

These dates, as always, correspond to the residence hall closing and opening schedule. To make reservations: http://bit.ly/1vStQFj. The last day to request a refund for the winter buses is Thursday, December 3, 2015.

December Commencement Speaker Announced

We are now under a month until December Commencement on December 18. Our Commencement speaker will be Darko Velichkovski. He began his music studies at the age of 7, earned degrees from Julliard and the City University of New York, and has performed around the world. In 2013, he joined the University and is now director of the Music Industry program at the Creative Arts Center. He will speak at the 2015 December Commencement on December 18 at 1:30 p.m. in the Coliseum. Tickets are not required for this ceremony. Additional information can be found here: http://bit.ly/1qEeNjg.

May 2016 Commencement Schedule Released

For those with students graduating in May, the schedule of ceremonies was recently released and might be helpful as you plan ahead: http://bit.ly/1Bdbyjd. More info will be sent in the coming months, but a link for lodging can be found on the graduation website in case you need assistance in finding hotels.
Spring Health Insurance Waiver Now Live

Please note, if your student has an approved waiver on file for fall 2015, they have opted out of the Aetna plan for the entire 2015-2016 academic year and does not need to complete the spring waiver.

The spring 2016 student health insurance waiver is now open. Did your student miss the insurance waiver deadline for the fall semester, or will your student be a new student beginning in the spring of 2016? If your student does not have a waiver on file for the 2015-2016 academic year and already has adequate health insurance, you may opt-out of the Aetna student health insurance plan by completing the online student health insurance waiver application.

The deadline to complete the waiver is January 6, 2016. Eligible students who do not have an approved waiver on file for the 2015-2016 academic year by the January 6 deadline will be automatically enrolled in the Aetna student health insurance plan at a cost of $724 per semester, assessed to their student account. Visit the Student Insurance Office website at http://bit.ly/1l9XdfW to complete the waiver application or for additional information about the student health insurance requirement and the Aetna student health insurance plan.

Student Athletic Ticketing Updates

Because of Thanksgiving break, student ticketing is currently open for next week’s WVU vs. Iowa State football game. Students can log in and reserve a ticket now through kickoff on Saturday, November 28. Game time is set for noon.

The WVU Men’s Basketball season is also now under way. Students must also use the online ticketing system to request tickets for these games. That registration schedule can be found here: http://bit.ly/1PEwBXL.

WVU Student Health Services Giving FREE HIV Tests

In honor of World AIDS Day, on Tuesday, December 1, 2015, from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., WVU students can visit Student Health (located in the Health and Education Building adjacent to the WVU Rec Center) for free HIV tests. Rapid HIV testing and results are available in 20 minutes, and clinic providers will contact students to review the confidential test results. Students can walk in with no appointments needed and are encouraged to use the WVU Urgent Care wait-time app. http://bit.ly/1I3YUHe
Residence Hall Closings/Openings

Students can leave their belongings in their residence hall rooms but should take any items they will need during the break because halls are closed and locked during this time. For the upcoming breaks, residence halls are scheduled to close/open at the following dates/times:

Thanksgiving Break

Close: Friday, November 20 at 7 p.m.

Open: Sunday, November 29 at noon

Winter Break:

Close: Thursday, December 17 at noon (see below)

Open: Saturday, January 9 at noon

A full listing of opening and closing dates and times can be found here: http://bit.ly/1L74eOY.

Considerations for the End of the Semester

The last day of classes for the fall 2015 term is Tuesday, December 8. Finals Week is Thursday, December 10 to Wednesday, December 16. Keep in mind that your student very well might complete his or her finals prior to the 16th since these are given based on the finals schedule found here: http://bit.ly/1MZdalV.

Students living in the residence halls are expected to head out 24 hours after their last final to ensure the halls remain quiet and focused for those still studying. If a student needs to stay longer, they should alert their Residence Hall Coordinator. Residence halls officially close for the fall term on Thursday, December 17 at noon.

Getting Home at the Holidays

As you plan ahead to finalize transportation options home, here again are some for consideration.

MPC Holiday Buses – The WVU Mountaineer Parents Club offers holiday buses during breaks when WVU residence halls close. Buses are full for Thanksgiving breaks but Winter Break reservations are now available as noted above. Buses are confirmed to go to Allentown, PA; Carlisle, PA; Hagerstown, MD; Secaucus, NJ; and King of Prussia, PA. The Northern Virginia, Southern New Jersey, Long Island and Central Maryland local Mountaineer Parents Club
chapters are also offering buses to their areas. To make reservations for Winter Break buses or get additional info, visit [http://bit.ly/1LqJ1e7](http://bit.ly/1LqJ1e7).

Mountain Line Grey Line WVU Send-Off Service – At holiday breaks extra trips are added to the Mountain Line Grey Line for trips to and from the Pittsburgh Airport and Greyhound Station. [http://bit.ly/1O7NQ2l](http://bit.ly/1O7NQ2l)

I-Ride79 Daily Bus – This bus offers daily trips to Charleston, WV, and may also be helpful to cut off your drive time all the way to campus if your student is from parts south. [http://bit.ly/1AQrrvG](http://bit.ly/1AQrrvG)

Megabus is a national bus operator that offers daily trips from Morgantown to various destinations through Washington, D.C., and Pittsburgh, PA. [http://bit.ly/1uOAyLN](http://bit.ly/1uOAyLN)

Greyhound is a national company that offers daily trips from Morgantown connecting to destinations through Washington, D.C., and Pittsburgh, PA. [http://bit.ly/1JNgC5W](http://bit.ly/1JNgC5W)

Carpool with ZimRide: If you are coming to pick up your student or they are heading home, log on and post the trip so others can help split the costs. Looking for a ride, search or post your request to the WVU ZimRide board to match up with options. [http://bit.ly/1HcSpal](http://bit.ly/1HcSpal)

Other Airport shuttles: Information on other alternative modes of transportation such as limo and other air service options can be found here: [http://bit.ly/1zyVSdE](http://bit.ly/1zyVSdE).

New Community Aquatic and Track Complex to Serve WVU Students and Teams

According to the collaboration agreement, this estimated $25-30 million facility will be located on approximately 20 acres at Mylan Park. It will be a community facility that will also be home to the WVU men’s and women’s swim teams and women’s cross country and track teams and the county’s high school track and swim competitions. See more at: [http://bit.ly/1PR8gfR](http://bit.ly/1PR8gfR).

/Katie Gallagher and Lisa Hanselman

Office of Parent Relations