Parents: In observance of the Thanksgiving holiday, University Offices will be closed from Wednesday, November 25 to Friday, November 27. Offices will reopen with regular business hours Monday, November 30th. Residence Halls will reopen Sunday, November 29 at noon.

Below are a few reminders for you while your students are home over break! At Thanksgiving dinner you may likely hear chatter about housing arrangements for next fall. Reminders on this process (and important questions to ask!) are included below as well as info about the spring Off-Campus Housing Fair. Also included is information regarding Final Exam prep and December Commencement that are both just around the corner! Also – please do note that the 2016 May Commencement schedule is also now online: http://bit.ly/1Bdbyjd.

Again, enjoy the break with your students and remember that free, home-cooked food is always something to be thankful for as a college student – so clean out those leftovers and pack some turkey sandwiches for the road! As a reminder, Holiday Break Buses are full for Thanksgiving. Any questions regarding these buses should be directed to ParentsClub@mail.wvu.edu. Happy Thanksgiving and thank you for all you do to support your WVU students throughout the year!

Housing Conversations

December Commencement

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**Housing Conversations**

As students begin looking ahead for housing for the 2016-17 school year, staff members from Student Legal Services and the Off-Campus Housing Office reminds students and parents to look at all the details and consider individual circumstances:

- Leases are legally binding contracts, and after signing a lease – no matter what happens to your status as a student – students are bound by the terms of that lease for the stated period.

- While many landlords and property managers will tell students that they must sign early, in reality there is a healthy supply of housing. Consider waiting to avoid the risks of signing a lease many months prior to moving into an apartment.

- Furthermore, since so many leases in the Morgantown area are joint leases, a potential pitfall is signing a lease with a student who will not return for next year. Students are advised to take your time.

- **Graduating next year?** 2017 Graduation Weekend Dates are listed as Friday, May 12, 2017 – Sunday, May 14, 2017. Students should be sure to read the fine print and consider their personal situation in regards to the lease such as, what is the last day on the lease regarding graduation for those graduating in May or is there an option for early termination or subletting for those graduating in December?

- **Only in Morgantown half the year?** If your student is graduating mid-year, or leaving the area for study abroad, co-ops, internships, student teaching, National Student Exchange or other similar programs next year, residence hall housing options could make sense because of their flexibility. Students in these circumstances may be released from a WVU Residence Hall Room and Meal Plan contract for that period, with proper documentation. A limited number of upperclassmen spaces are held for returning students. If interested, students can apply and pay their deposit online now and choose their room in the January selection process: [http://bit.ly/1xW0Z4v](http://bit.ly/1xW0Z4v).

- **Free Lease Reviews:** It’s a great idea for students to have a lease review performed by Student Legal Services prior to signing a lease. Services are free for students, and it is important for them to understand the legal document they are about to sign. Call 304-293-4897 for an appointment ([http://bit.ly/1DUWwCr](http://bit.ly/1DUWwCr)).

- **Off Campus Housing Fair:** Please encourage your students to attend the final Off-Campus Housing Fair located on the Evansdale campus to educate themselves about the process and explore all housing options: *Saturday, January 23, noon to 3 p.m., ERC Blue and Gold Rooms.*
December Commencement

2015 August and December graduates are invited to participate in the Commencement scheduled for December 18, 2015, at 1:30 p.m. inside the WVU Coliseum. Please keep the following information in mind as you make your plans:

- Students who plan to participate and walk in December Commencement should register online as soon as possible: [http://bit.ly/1I90BIN](http://bit.ly/1I90BIN).
- On December 18, graduates must report to the Coliseum's second level Red Gate by 12:30 p.m. to check in and receive instructions for lineup. The processional begins at 1:30 p.m.
- Tickets are NOT required and there are no restrictions on the number of guests a graduate may bring. The ceremony will last approximately two hours.
- Graduates are required to wear caps and gowns. Regalia is available for purchase online from Herff Jones [http://bit.ly/1LuzSpZ](http://bit.ly/1LuzSpZ) or in person from the WVU Bookstore.
- Doctoral candidates will be hooded onstage by a faculty member of their choice or a WVU administrator. Master’s candidates will not be hooded on stage and should wear their hoods to the ceremony.
- Diplomas will be mailed after all grades are finalized and certified by the WVU Office of the University Registrar.
- Names of the 2015 August and December graduates will be listed in the December 2015 Commencement program. They will not appear in the May 2016 program.
- To arrange accommodations for graduates or guests with disabilities, contact WVU’s Office of Accessibility Services at 304-293-6700.
- WVU has contracted with GradImages to provide graduation photos of each student. Proofs will be emailed to the student within 24 hours of the ceremony.
- Following the ceremony, please take a moment to share your opinion of WVU Commencement. Your responses will be used to strengthen and shape future events: [http://bit.ly/1jitjew](http://bit.ly/1jitjew)
- Questions? Contact the Office of University Events at Graduation@mail.wvu.edu, 304-293-7132 or visit our website [http://bit.ly/1AtnbGN](http://bit.ly/1AtnbGN).

DISCLAIMER: Registration to walk in December Commencement is not a record of degrees awarded. Names listed in the December Commencement program are taken from applications for graduation made to WVU's Office of the University Registrar for August and December graduation. Registration for graduation does not ensure that graduate names appear in the program, and participation in Commencement exercises does not constitute graduation from West Virginia University.
PARENTS CLUB NEWS

Spring Family Weekend – Save the Date!

SAVE THE DATE: Spring Family Weekend is scheduled for April 15 - 17, 2016. Mark your calendars and make plans to join us for a fun-filled weekend! Stay tuned. More details will be forthcoming in early spring semester.

Reserve Winter Break Holiday Buses Today

The reservation system for the Winter Break buses is now live. To make reservations: http://bit.ly/1vStQFj. The last day to request a refund for the winter buses is Thursday, December 3, 2015.

MPC Question of the Month – reminder!

We have a question and we want your answers! Be sure to visit our website http://bit.ly/1Xd2P0D and answer our ‘Question of the Month.’

Parents, help us find future Mountaineers

Do you know a high school student in your area that would make a great Mountaineer? Pass along their information by completing this form: http://bit.ly/1NNMLZ3. Participants will qualify for one free t-shirt while supplies last. Questions? Contact Katie Condon, kccondon@mail.wvu.edu.

WVU HOLIDAY SHOPPING OPTIONS

WVU Wish List

Looking for a holiday gift for your favorite Mountaineer? As you begin your holiday shopping, check out these WVU gift ideas in our WVU Wish List: http://bit.ly/1TdbLNQ.

WVU Barnes and Noble Bookstore Champion Sale

As the holidays approach, the WVU Bookstore will be having a 25% off all Champion items sale Dec. 7th through Dec. 19th. The WVU Bookstore also offers a variety of other great gift ideas in the store and online including ornaments, attire and other great WVU gear and collectibles. http://bit.ly/1SQRqfD

WVU children’s book to support WVU Children’s Hospital

A new WVU children's book highlights the tale of a curious canine in search of a home and family at a place called the Gold-and-Blue Mountains. "Musket's Big Adventure," is a 38-page,

**Pottery Sale features and supports student work**

A semester’s worth of work will result in the opportunity to buy beautiful, locally-produced ceramics. The University will hold its semi-annual pottery sale Dec. 4 and 5. Undergraduate and graduate students in WVU’s School of Art & Design have been hard at work creating a line of table and kitchenware at the school’s production ceramics facility. Proceeds from the twice-yearly sale of product go to support visiting artists and study abroad, and can be used to defray materials costs. More here: http://bit.ly/1T1d5mp.

**FINALS PREP**

**Tips for Academic Success: The End of the Semester is Almost Here!**

The end of the semester is almost here! We encourage you to talk with your student about his or her academic performance this fall and plans for the spring semester. Below, we highlight information about spring registration, events to help your student relax and prepare for finals, information on final exams, and final grades including President's List, Dean's List and academic probation.

*Fun before Finals Events*

Encourage your students to take a break from studying and have “Fun before Finals”, November 30 – December 5. WVU is launching the first-ever “Fun before Finals” week and there are lots of fun activities planned for students! To see the complete schedule, go to http://bit.ly/1IeyBy6.

*Technology Help during Finals*

As a reminder, during the fall term and continuing during finals week, ITS Connect walk-up support center in the Lair. If students need tech help they can simply walk-up to ask their question or troubleshoot their issue. http://bit.ly/1HI1rCn

*Registering for Spring 2016*

If your student has not yet registered for classes, be sure she or he completes course registration as soon as possible. We want to welcome your student back for the Spring 2016 Semester! Students meet with their advisors prior to being able to register for the next semester, so if your student has yet to meet with his or her advisor, please encourage him or her to connect
with advising as soon as possible. Successfully completing 15 credits per semester will help them stay on track for graduation in four years.

ChillFEST and Academic Center for Exams (ACES)

The time leading up to final exam week can be a bit stressful. Encourage your student to participate in chillFEST and the Academic Center for Exams (ACES). ChillFEST, taking place on Friday, December 4th, includes free chair messages, meditation, and numerous opportunities for yoga. For more information visit well.wvu.edu. ACES is a one-stop shop tutoring event in the Mountainlair Shenandoah Room on December 9th from noon to 4 p.m.. Tutors and student success coaches will be available to help students prepare for final exams.

Final Exam Week

Final exams will take place December 10 to 16. Please make sure your student knows when his or her final exams are taking place because often the exam is held on a different day and time than class. For more information on the Final Exam Schedule, please visit http://bit.ly/1MZda1V. We want all students to remain enrolled and in good standing, but we understand that sometimes students need to withdraw completely from a semester. If your student is considering a withdrawal from the current term, please encourage him or her to discuss options with an academic advisor, a professor, a resident faculty leader, a financial aid counselor, or another WVU faculty or staff member. Students can also call Regan Bruni, Director of the Student Life Office of Assessment and Student Success Programs, at 304-293-5804. The last day to withdraw from this semester is Monday, December 7.

Final Grades

Final grades will be available for viewing in STAR or via the Parent/Guest Portal, if access has been granted by your student, on December 22. Final grades determine a student's academic performance for the semester. To qualify for Dean's or President's List, students need a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded courses with no incompletes, NRs (not reported) or withdrawals. Students who earned a 3.5 grade point average or higher will be named to the Dean's List. Those with the same qualifications with a perfect 4.0 will be named to the President's List. The lists will be released in late January or early February. Students are placed on academic probation if their cumulative GPA falls below 2.0. All students will be notified by mail and e-mail during the winter break if they are on academic probation. First-time freshmen on academic probation are required to attend the Mid-Year Academy on Sunday, January 10 to help get them back on track. During the Academy, students will meet with advisors, adjust schedules if needed, review academic suspension guidelines and financial aid policies as well as learn about WVU’s academic and other support services. More details about academic probation will be sent in the December Parent E-News.
WVU Turkey Day Trivia

Did you know that The Pride of West Virginia, the Mountaineer Marching Band, was selected from 175 applicants, as one of 10 bands to march in next year’s edition of the annual Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade?  http://bit.ly/1NqVjuB  Let’s Goooo Mountaineers!

/Katie Gallagher and Lisa Hanselman

Office of Parent Relations

West Virginia University