*Billing Reminder: Spring charges are due by Jan. 6. E-bills went out Dec. 5 to your student’s MIX e-mail if they owed a balance at that point. Last day to enroll in a five-month payment plan is Dec. 31. See SPRING 2020 PAYMENT DUE below for full details.*

Today is the last day of fall classes, fa la la lala, la la la la! Tomorrow there are no classes to allow an extra prep day for Finals that start Monday. To help your student finish strong, we have included an updated list of Final Support that you can share with your student including everything from reduced parking to free coffee and midnight breakfasts to fuel their studying! Just a few more exams until students begin a long winter’s break.

Please be sure to ask your student when their last final ends (see the Fall 2019 Finals Schedule) as residence hall students are expected to head home within 24 hours of their last exam to keep halls quiet for those still studying. (NOTE: If a student is signed up to take the Parents Club Winter Break buses home, they can request advanced permission via their Residence Hall Coordinator to stay until Friday/Saturday.) Also, before they head out for Winter Break check out Housing Wrap-Up and Safety Notices for reminders. Need help getting them home for the holidays? Winter Break Buses are filling quickly but some space remains – see below.

If you heard some extra loud cheers today, that was likely from our soon-to-be December Graduates as they are celebrating their very last set of finals! Updates and deadlines are included below about December Commencement scheduled for Dec. 21. With that, happy Finals Week to all, and to all a good few nights of studying! In this edition:

BILLING AND FINANCIAL AID
- Spring 2020 Payment Due
- Submit 2020-2021 FAFSA by Dec. 31 for chance at a $250 Scholarship

END OF THE YEAR WRAP-UP
- Finals Support
- Bookstore Buy Back, Rental Returns and Spring Textbook purchases
- Housing Wrap-Up and Safety Notices
- Winter Break Bus Reservations

GRADUATION UPDATES
- December Commencement Reminders
- May 2020 Commencement On-campus Accommodations available

CAMPUS NEWS AND HAPPENINGS
- WVU Ceramics and Pottery sale – Dec. 13 and 14
- Get in the Spirit with Holiday Service
- WVU’s Winter Intersession Dec. 23-Jan. 10
- WVU Police Department ranked 14th
- New Education Abroad topics for December
- Spring Health Insurance Waiver – Available now through Jan. 6
- Tech Holiday Tips
UPCOMING DATES

BILLING AND FINANCIAL AID

Spring 2020 Payment Due
Spring charges are posted for any student who is registered for spring classes (or has housing or meal plan charges for spring), and spring balances can now be viewed and paid online. NOTE: If students wish to make changes to their Spring Dining Plan, this may impact their bill but they can do so online now. December eBills were also sent on Thursday, Dec. 5 to student MIX emails if they owed a balance at that point. Ask your student to check their MIX email and take action if they received an eBill. If you have not already, log into the Parent/Guest Portal today following the directions below (if your student has granted you access to their student account information) to pay the balance due.

1. Log into the Parent/Guest Portal. Students can pay online through STAR in their WVU Student Portal.
2. In the Parent/Guest Portal, click the tab for your student’s name.
3. Click the link for “Electronic Bill/Make Payment.”
4. Select “Spring 2020” (scroll to the bottom of the page to find this) and click “Submit.”
5. Scroll to the bottom of the page and select “Pay Now.”
6. If necessary, you can also do a “print screen” from this page if a printed copy of the bill is needed for Smart 529 plans or other reasons.

You may also choose to enroll in a monthly payment plan through CashNet. The last day to enroll in the five-month payment plan option is Dec. 31. This will allow you to spread payments over multiple months.

Please keep in mind that WVU offices will be closed for the winter holidays on December 24, 25, 26, 31 and January 1. Don’t wait until the last minute in case there are questions regarding your student’s account!

Questions? Call or stop by the Mountaineer Hub to speak with a representative, call 304-293-1988, or visit our WVU Billing page. Please be aware that phone lines will be busier as we get closer to the due date.

Submit 2020-2021 FAFSA by Dec. 31 for chance at a $250 Scholarship
The 2020-2021 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for next fall and spring has been available since Oct. 1. Winter break is a great time to knock this off your to-do list! Also, students who submit their FAFSA by Dec. 31 will automatically be entered for a chance to win up to $250 in scholarship money. This year we’re doing two drawings instead of one!

Some aid is limited and offered on a first-come, first-served basis to eligible students – so taking care of the FAFSA early is important. Students and families must use 2018 tax information for the 2020-2021 FAFSA, so you do not need to wait for your 2019 taxes. Download the myStudentAid app from the Apple Store or Google Play to submit your FAFSA right from your phone. Students can also submit their FAFSA online here. Questions? Students can come to the Mountaineer Hub at Evansdale Crossing for one-on-one FAFSA assistance. We are here to help!
END OF THE YEAR WRAP-UP

Finals Support

Finals get under way Mon., Dec. 16. Tomorrow there are no classes as this day is listed as a Prep Day for Finals. Students should check finals times, dates and locations as noted on their syllabus or as adjusted by their instructor. Click here for the overall Finals Schedule. All Fall 2019 final grades will be posted online by the end of the day Mon., Dec. 23 and can be viewed in STAR by the student or on the Parent/Guest Portal with appropriate access granted by your student. Here are a few other reminders and tips to share with your students:

- **Free Food:** Students can take a study break and [refuel with late night breakfasts](#) Mon., Dec. 16 at the Mountainlair from 10 p.m. to midnight and Tues., Dec. 17 at the ERC Café from 10 p.m. to midnight. These are free and open to all students!
- **Free Coffee/snacks:** [Dining Services Coffee Shops](#) will be offering free coffee and snacks or $1 off specialty coffees and other drinks Sun., Dec. 15 through Fri., Dec 20 at their campus locations
- **Reduced Parking:** Parking in short-term WVU lots will be reduced to $0.50 per hour starting Mon., Dec 16 through Fri., Dec. 20 through the ParkMobile app with promo code WVUFINALS.
- **Study spaces:** The WVU [Libraries](#) are offering extended study hours, with the Evansdale Library open 24 hours and the Downtown Library open until 3 a.m. Additionally, the Lair will be open 24 hours a day starting Sun., Dec. 15 through Wed., Dec. 18 and will also offer study rooms during finals. The Blue and Gold Rooms in the ERC will also be open 24 hours during finals week.
- **Wellness Support:** As a reminder, students who are feeling stressed heading into finals can text the new WVU Crisis Text line to reach a live, trained crisis counselor. Some helpful tips can also be found in the DA’s Finals Survival Podcast.
- **Residence Halls Quiet Hours:** 24-hour quiet hours will be enforced for the week prior and during finals. Students are expected to head home within 24 hours after completing their last final, and halls officially close for Winter Break on Sat., Dec. 21 at noon. (NOTE: If a student is signed up to take the Parents Club Winter Break buses home, they can request permission via their Residence Hall Coordinator to stay until Friday/Saturday.)

Bookstore Buy Back, Rental Returns and Spring Textbook purchases

With the end of the semester approaching, here are some tips and reminders from the WVU Bookstore:

- **Rental Returns Due by Dec. 20th** – Please remind your students to bring back their Fall 2019 rental titles to the bookstore they originally rented them from by Dec. 20. *(Per the rental agreement signed by all customers at the beginning of the semester, customers who do not bring back their rentals will be charged the full price of the book, and an additional late fee).*

- **Book Buyback** – also known as “Cash for Books.” After classes end, students can resell their books. The best time to do so is Dec. 16 through Dec. 20th. Students must have valid WVU ID to conduct buyback, and it must be done in person at the stores.

- **Purchase Spring Books Today!** Did you know that your student can purchase or rent their spring textbooks as soon as they register for the spring term? For students using Financial Aid in the spring, the deadline to use it is Jan. 1, 2020 at 11:59pm (the Financial Aid Office will send eligible students a separate email with more details). More on [online registration integration here](#) or a [video link here](#).

- **Caps, Gowns and Alumni gifts** – Available for in store purchase through Dec. 20 at all locations. We have plenty of stock available! *Pre-ordered caps and gowns through the Herff Jones website will be available for pickup starting Dec. 9. For gifts for the grad, see "WVU Alumni" gear at the WVU Alumni shop [website](#).*
**December Sales/Discounts** –
- Dec. 4 through Dec. 16th - 25% OFF Cold Weather/Fleece items! Available in store and online.
- Dec. 18 & 19 - 20% OFF entire stock and Free expedited shipping! Online only.

**Housing Wrap-Up and Safety Notices**

**On-Campus Residence Halls**
Students are expected to vacate their residence hall rooms within 24 hours of their last final to ensure a quiet environment for those still studying. Finals Exams are held at different times than their actual fall class schedule so students will wrap up the fall semester at various times throughout finals week – please check with your student. WVU’s residence halls will officially close at noon on Sat., Dec. 21, and reopen at noon on Sat., Jan. 11. The only exceptions are for students who have signed up for Holiday Break Housing (deadline to register was Dec. 6, however late registration is available with an additional fee) or scheduled to ride the Parents Club Winter Break Buses.

While students must leave the hall for break, they can leave belongings in their residence hall room. They should take home any valuables or items they may need over break. During Winter Break, students will not be permitted back into their residence hall rooms nor will they have access to their mailboxes. This does not apply to students living in University Apartments (College Park, University Park, University Place and Vandalia); they may stay throughout the break.

There are a few things students should be sure to do before leaving for break; Housing and Residence Life has a [webpage](#) with a checklist they can reference. In general, students should lock valuables in their closet or take the valuables home, close and lock their windows, close the curtains, empty their trash and unplug appliances such as hair dryers and curling irons. If they have rented a MicroFridge or have one of their own, please leave it plugged in to prevent food from spoiling. Finally, students should make sure their room door is closed and locked when leaving.

**Off-Campus**
If your student lives off-campus, remind them to make sure their apartment has been prepared for their absence. Empty apartments can be a target for vandalism and theft. Tips to pass along include:
- Put lights on a timer.
- Have mail temporarily held by the USPS to give their place a “someone's home” look.
- Take out their trash and clean up before leaving.
- Take valuable items with them when they leave town.
- Keep their heat on during break to avoid frozen or burst pipes due to a cold snap. Set the thermostat to a lower-than-normal setting while out of town, but do not turn off the heating system. Landlords generally require a minimum thermostat setting in winter months.
- Have a friend who lives in Morgantown or staying in town for the break check on their place. They may also contact the Morgantown Police Department (if inside city limits) and sign up for the Vacation Home Check Program (304-284-7522, option 0) or file online.
- Close and lock all windows and doors, since many crimes are simply crimes of opportunity.
- Upon returning to Morgantown, students should immediately report any theft or suspicious incidents to authorities.

Here's to a safe and restful break!
Winter Break Bus Reservations
The reservation system for the Winter Break buses is now live. The Winter Break buses travel to Allentown, PA; Carlisle, PA; Hagerstown, MD; Secaucus, NJ; King of Prussia, PA; and Highland, NY, which also services those in the Connecticut, New York and New England areas. The Southern New Jersey, Central Maryland, Northern Virginia and Long Island, NY, Mountaineer Parents Clubs also offer buses to their areas. (Note: The Northern VA bus is full.)

Please note that the dates for the winter break holiday buses are as follows:
- NOVA, Central Maryland and Southern NJ buses leave Morgantown – Fri., Dec. 20
- All other buses leave Morgantown – Sat., Dec. 21
- All buses return to Morgantown – Sat. Jan. 11

See our MPC Holiday Bus website for full details and to make Winter Break reservations online.

PLEASE NOTE: The last day to request a refund for the winter buses has passed. It was Mon., Dec. 9.

GRADUATION UPDATES
December Commencement Reminders
There will be two ceremonies at the WVU Coliseum on Sat., Dec. 21 – one at 10 a.m. and one at 2 p.m. See the December Graduation site for full details. Here are a few helpful tips:
- NEW this year, graduates’ special moments on stage will be captured on video and they will get a personalized video clip called a StageClip. This will feature screen titles showing their name, commencement date, and capture the moment they cross the stage and receive their diploma cover. Graduates will be emailed after their ceremony has taken place to notify them when their clip is available on the StageClip website. Remind your student to watch for this! Students are also photographed as they cross the stage and will be e-mailed within 48 hours by GradImages!
- NEW this fall, purses and bags are not permitted in the venue unless they meet the Clear Bag policy. Please remind your guests in advance!
- If family members are unable to attend, the event will be webcast live, and a link will show and go live about 10 minutes before the start of the event. Ceremonies will also be recorded, and a video of each will be uploaded to the December Commencement website the week after the event.
- Before Commencement, students should ensure their account balances are at zero, that they have no holds that would prevent a diploma or transcript release and also that they have the appropriate mailing address on file by updating it in STAR, since this is where diplomas will be mailed after the ceremonies.
- Cap and gowns are now available for purchase at the WVU Bookstores through Dec. 20. Caps and gowns that have already been purchased online are also now available for pick up through the morning of Commencement Dec. 20 at the WVU Bookstore location the student chose.

May 2020 Commencement On-campus Accommodations available
For those looking ahead to May Commencement, convenient, affordable lodging for May 2020 graduates and their families is available from Thur., May 14, through Mon., May 18 at LINCOLN HALL. Located in the Evansdale area of campus, Lincoln Hall provides suite-style rooms with semi-private baths. Each room houses two individuals and shares a bathroom with another room. Beds are extra-long twin (36"x 80" mattress). Graduation housing options include rooms at $85.00 per night,
including tax. Each room sleeps two people. For reservations, please call 304-293-2790 or email Conferences@mail.wvu.edu.

CAMPUS NEWS AND HAPPENINGS

WVU Ceramics and Pottery sale – Dec. 13 and 14
This weekend is the WVU Winter Pottery Sale. This is a great place to find gifts handmade by WVU students! Dec. 13, 9am - 6pm & Dec 14 9am - 4pm WVU Creative Arts Center

Get in the Spirit with Holiday Service
The holidays are a time of giving and what better way to give than through holiday service activities! Volunteer opportunities exist here.

WVU’s Winter Intersession – Dec. 23-Jan. 10
WVU’s online Winter Intersession is great for undergraduates looking to fit an extra course into their schedule, boost their GPA, or make the most of their Winter Break. Winter Intersession is also a great way for seniors to fit in a course they need to graduate on time in the spring. Winter Intersession 2019 runs from Dec. 23 - Jan. 10, and registration remains open. The last day to add/drop a Winter Course is Dec. 24. All undergraduate courses are charged the standard WVU tuition rate of $369 per hour, regardless of residency. For more information, visit the Winter Intersession website.

WVU Police Department ranked 14th
According to the recent Security 500 Report, the West Virginia University Police Department is ranked 14th among security organizations at higher education institutions.

New Education Abroad topics for December
Are you and your student exploring opportunities for them to study abroad, but aren’t sure which path to take? Education Abroad offers a multitude of study abroad trips that range in length of stay. Does your student want to be abroad for a week, a month, or even a whole semester? Check out our Education Abroad Parent Page for different types of programs and help find the perfect trip for your student. To help students prepare, starting in 2020, Global Affairs will be offering FREE monthly passport photos for students on the second Monday of each month, starting Jan. 13, from 8:30 AM – 4 PM in room B5 of Purinton House on the Downtown Campus. After you discuss options over winter break, have your student mark their calendars for Wed., Jan. 22 when we will be having our Spring Study Abroad Fair in the Mountainlair Vandalia Lounge at 10 AM.

Spring Health Insurance Waiver – Available Now through Jan. 6
NOTE: Students with an approved waiver on file from fall of 2019 have opted out of the WVU Aetna student health insurance plan for the entire 2019-2020 academic year and do not need to complete this spring waiver. Others, the spring 2020 student health insurance waiver is available online now, with a deadline for completion of Mon., Jan. 6. Eligible students without an approved student health insurance waiver on file will be automatically enrolled in the WVU Aetna student health insurance plan at a cost of $1,086 per term, assessed to the student’s account. For more information about the WVU Aetna student health insurance plan, view the 2019-2020 WVU Aetna Plan Summary. Contact the WVU Student Insurance Office at sio@mail.wvu.edu with questions or concerns, or for assistance completing the student health insurance waiver.
Tech Holiday Tips

If your student will be getting a new phone over break, here are some helpful tech tips to avoid disruption of service with WVU systems such as their WVU Portal and MIX e-mail.

UPCOMING DATES

- Spring E-Bills sent to WVU Mix addresses for students who still owed a balance: Dec. 5
- **Finals Week**: Monday, Dec. 16-Friday, Dec. 20
- **University Housing Closes for Winter Break**: Saturday, Dec. 21, noon
- **December Commencement**: Saturday, Dec. 21, 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
- Last day to enroll five-month spring payment plan: Tuesday, Dec. 31
- Last day to purchase books with Financial Aid: Wednesday, Jan. 1
- **Spring Bills Due**: Monday, Jan. 6
- Last day to make Spring Dining Plan changes online: Wed., Jan. 8
- **University Housing Reopens**: Saturday, Jan. 11, noon
- First Day of Spring Classes: Monday, Jan. 13

Residence Hall Opening/Closing Dates
Academic Calendar

/Katie Gallagher and Lisa Hanselman
Office of Parent Relations
West Virginia University