WVU will be closed for the holidays December 22-26 and January 1.

Happy holidays! Well, we hope they are happy for you and your student now that grades have officially posted. After a brief technical difficulty with the Parent/Guest Portal http://bit.ly/PGPortal, they are all there now, as long as your student has granted you access. While we hope they bring much holiday cheer, depending on the outcome there are some tips in the Academics and Final Grades section on how to either get back on track or further ahead, so read on! Last-minute Gifts Ideas can also be found below, including Discounted Basketball Tickets, Spring Textbooks, and Career Services also offers a great discount and possible gift idea via their upcoming big Suit-Up Event via JCPenney.

Some WVU offices run with a limited staff during semester breaks, so please plan ahead and be understanding. Also, Spring Bills are due January 2 http://bit.ly/2ya7EC1. Please know that if your student still had a balance due on December 15 (there were over 11,000 who did), they received an e-bill to their MIX account that day. Have them log on and check today so payments or payment plans can be made online and/or any questions answered before January 2. Also, see the Payment Tips below for additional help. As we look ahead, check out the Wrapping up Fall and Looking ahead to Spring section for items like the Spring Calendar as well as the Housing Updates section that includes some security changes to Towers when they return in 2018.

Finally, to the Class of 2017 and their parents, congratulations – both on your student’s graduation and that the spring billing notice no longer applies to you - Hooray! Be sure to check out some pictures: http://bit.ly/2Bbrfz4 and videos from the weekend: http://bit.ly/2BJce8V. Also, if you now wish to be removed from the Parents Club listserv, see the Housekeeping section at the end and let us know what the next step is for your new graduate. Until 2018…In this edition:

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ACADEMICS AND FINAL GRADES

Good Grades and Goals!
Grades were officially posted today Wednesday, December 20, after noon, for students in their MIX/STAR Accounts and parents who have been granted the access via the Parent Guest Portal. For those who did well, here are some continued goals to shoot for!

Dean’s and President’s Lists – The online Fall 2017 Dean’s and President’s lists will post in late January/early February. The Dean’s List highlights undergraduates who earned a 3.5 GPA or higher, and the President’s List recognizes undergraduates who achieved a perfect 4.0 GPA. To be recognized, students must be enrolled in 12 credit hours or more of graded courses with no grades of I (incomplete), NR (not reported) or W (withdrawal). Only the highest honor is awarded, and it will be noted on the transcript as well as on the online searchable listing: http://bit.ly/29wxWRp.

Latin Honors – As students’ progress toward graduation, Latin Honors (Summa Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, and Cum Laude) are another recognition they could receive. These graduation honors are based on cumulative GPA requirements of a 3.4 and higher: http://bit.ly/2dtB6av. These can be good goals for students to work toward to help them stay focused and on track – and a nice addition to a transcript and diploma!
**Good Fall Grades: Now What?** – There are a number of resources students can explore from home as they make plans for upcoming semesters:

- Summer classes are posted now and can help students get ahead or provide time to focus on a challenging class: [http://bit.ly/1yHNGni](http://bit.ly/1yHNGni).

- Education/Study Abroad options might be worth considering to broaden a plan of study. WVU offers opportunities that take place over spring break, in the summer or over a fall/spring term: [http://bit.ly/2hATb6C](http://bit.ly/2hATb6C).

- If graduate school is in the future, undergraduate Research opportunities are something students may consider to enhance that resume: [http://bit.ly/2hLrb2S](http://bit.ly/2hLrb2S).

- Adventure trips (both domestic and international) are available including weekend getaways throughout the spring and spring break and summer options, with some offering class credit: [http://bit.ly/2BQCG2z](http://bit.ly/2BQCG2z).

- Once students return, many spring career fairs are planned. Encourage them to check these out to explore summer internships, co-op programs or long-term hire possibilities: [http://bit.ly/2BTwFCu](http://bit.ly/2BTwFCu).

**Considerations for those Struggling Academically**

If final grades did not bring tidings of glad joy, we encourage you to talk with your student about their academic performance and plans for the upcoming semesters. Below, we highlight information about academic probation and the Mid-Year Academy to help students get back on track.

**Academic Probation** – Students are placed on academic probation if their cumulative GPA falls below a 2.0. All students will be notified by e-mail if they are on academic probation. First-time freshmen on academic probation will receive both an email and mailed letter indicating they are required to attend the Mid-Year Academy on **Sunday, January 7**.

**Mid-Year Academy** – During the Mid-Year Academy on Sunday, January 7, first-time freshmen placed on academic probation will meet with advisers to make changes to their course schedule, if needed, as well as learn more about the terms of academic probation and strategies for transitioning to good academic standing at WVU. As noted above, this is required for first-time freshmen on academic probation.

**Academic Suspension** – The standards used to determine a student’s eligibility for suspension are based on an overall GPA below a 2.0. If placed on suspension, students are required to sit out for a semester or more, depending on the suspension terms. Students whose GPAs fall below a 2.0 GPA are eligible for suspension from the University in May.
What Can They Do Now? – Encourage your student to have an honest look at why they didn’t have a good semester. Mistakes and bumps in the road happen, but it is important to know how you got somewhere to avoid stumbles the next time. There are resources students can explore from home to help them plan for their particular circumstance:

- Check out the WVU Catalog – It offers guidance on grades, GPA calculation and D/F repeat policies: http://bit.ly/1GBp3jz.

- Major Change – If they are considering a change of major, they can review DegreeWorks to use the “What If” feature. It allows students to explore how changing a major might affect their path to graduation and what coursework it might require in relation to what they have already completed.

- GPA Calculation Planning – DegreeWorks offers help projecting what students need to meet a certain GPA with various GPA calculation tools: http://bit.ly/1tnqyeO. If a student needs to have a cumulative 3.0 GPA at the end of spring to maintain a scholarship or avoid suspension, these tools can help determine how many hours and what GPA they need in an upcoming semester to reach that goal.

- Summer classes are posted now and can often help students get back on track or provide time to focus on a challenging class: http://bit.ly/1yHNGni.

- Before making changes to spring schedules, students should be sure to consult an academic adviser to make sure they remain on track. (Note: University offices will be closed December 22-26 and January 1 and some staff take days off around the holidays to spend time with their families, so please be understanding that response times may be slightly slower than normal.) Keep in mind that students have the chance to finalize and adjust spring schedules from now until the end of the first week of the semester (Friday, January 12), which is referred to as Add/Drop Week. First-time freshmen on probation can make schedule adjustments and meet with an adviser at the Mid-Year Academy.

- Seek out tutoring resources as well as other support to start the semester strong and on the right foot http://bit.ly/2BEJjCP.

- Is there a chance your student is struggling with an undiagnosed learning disability? Check out the resources offered by the Office of Accessibility Services: http://bit.ly/2p4vNWz.

- Finally, if your student has not yet registered for spring classes, be sure they complete course registration before the start of the new semester so they can go in prepared and ready to be as successful as possible.
HOUSING UPDATES

NEW: Card Access at Evansdale Residential Complex (Towers) Starts in January

It is important to be aware how access to the complex is changing. The card readers located at exit doors, interior doors and elevator doors at the ERC will be active when residents return in January. This means:

- Only residents will be able to access the stairways and elevators that travel to the residential floors in each tower. There will be 24-hour controlled access.

- Non-primary exterior doors and interior doors between the main and ground floors will be secured at 9 p.m. each evening. They will not be open to the public or residents until 7 a.m. each morning.

- Residents will continue to swipe in at the front desks and register guests at Bennett and Brooke Tower throughout the evening, as currently practiced.

- During break periods, exterior and interior access will be modified to authorized students and staff.

Residents will need to carry their Mountaineer Card with them at all times as required by WVU Policy. The card access system is NOT a security system, but a tool for controlled access. Residents and staff who use the system are responsible for controlling that access. If a resident loses their Mountaineer Card, they can go to the Mountaineer Card Office on the ground floor (Brooke Tower) or in the Lair to get a replacement card (fee associated) during normal business hours. Temporary cards are available during non-business hours from the Brooke and Bennett front desks.

Resident Assistant Recruitment and Selection

Resident Assistants (RAs) are mentors, connectors, campus experts and advocates. They are among the most important student leaders on campus and they are students – just like yours. Housing and Residence Life is recruiting students to serve as RAs for the 2018-2019 academic year. If your student wants to learn more about this employment opportunity that allows them to earn a housing and meal plan waiver as well as develop leadership skills, they must attend an information session on January 10 or 11. More info about becoming an RA, including a position description and the application process, is available at http://bit.ly/2CPePVw. Please contact raselection@mail.wvu.edu with any questions.

Student Not Returning to WVU in Spring 2018? Important Housing Contract Information

If your student is making a decision about not returning to WVU for the spring 2018 semester, they must remove their belongings and return their keys before the start of the spring term. Hall staff should be available Tuesday, January 2 through Friday, January 5, from 8:00 a.m.-4:00
p.m., for students to do this. Details about the procedure for leaving the residence halls can be found at [http://bit.ly/2z6dv6E](http://bit.ly/2z6dv6E).

**GIFT IDEAS**

**Reminder: Discounted Basketball Ticket Offers for Parents Club Members**

Are you bringing your student back to campus in the spring and want to check out a men’s basketball game? Coach Bob Huggins and the Mountaineers are currently ranked 10th in both the AP and in the USA Today Coaches’ Top 25 polls! A Family Day package remains available for the matchup with Oklahoma on Saturday, January 6 (the day residence halls reopen). This package includes four tickets and a voucher good for $25 at the Coliseum concession stands (for $70 per package). Visit [http://bit.ly/1BMvB9i](http://bit.ly/1BMvB9i) and click the men’s basketball graphic in the middle of the page. Tipoff with the Sooners is scheduled for 7:15 p.m.

Looking for a chance to get back to see your student just before Valentine’s Day? Tickets also remain via a special ticket offer for Mountaineer Parents Club members for the men’s basketball game against Oklahoma State on Saturday, February 10 at noon. Upper-level tickets are $17 each ($10 savings per upper-level sideline ticket and $7 off each upper-level baseline ticket.) Parents Club members can take advantage of this offer by visiting [http://bit.ly/2Bbo0HY](http://bit.ly/2Bbo0HY) and entering the promo code WVUPARENTS.

**Career Services’ Big Suit-Up Event, Hosted by JCPenney**

Do you wonder if you’re buying clothes your student will actually wear? Send them back to campus with money to spend on career apparel. Many stores have sales after the holidays, but we have an opportunity for students to dress for success with affordable clothes made available by JCPenney. [http://bit.ly/2BbDtHY](http://bit.ly/2BbDtHY)

On Sunday, January 21 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., the Morgantown Mall JCPenney store will open its doors exclusively for WVU students and provide them deep discounts on career and professional attire. Students can check in to the event with their valid student ID and receive a special coupon for the evening for 40% savings. The coupon can be used on regular-priced and sale items, which can result in an overall savings of up to 70% off professional attire.

**Order Spring Textbooks Online Today**

Here’s how:

1. Have your student log in to STAR ([https://star.wvu.edu](https://star.wvu.edu))
2. Select "Student Service and Housing" tab
3. Select "Registration" menu
4. Select "WVU, PSC, and WVU Tech Bookstores"
5. Select "Spring 2018" term from the drop-down menu.
NOTE: Health Sciences, Law, Potomac State (PSC), and Tech (WVUIT) students, please use the appropriate link after you have completed the above steps. Need Additional Help? [http://bit.ly/2Df3OGB](http://bit.ly/2Df3OGB)

Use financial aid for spring textbooks until December 26

Follow the steps above by December 26 (at 11:59 p.m.) to place your order using financial aid (choose "Financial Aid" option during the checkout process). Questions about financial aid for book purchases, e-mail bookreserve@mail.wvu.edu. Questions about your book order: sm583@bncollege.com.

Spring refunds

Shop secure knowing that the WVU Bookstores offer a full refund for spring books through January 15 (original receipt required). Other stores and online services may NOT offer you a refund period. For emails that include everything you need to know about textbooks, supplies and more, sign up at [http://bit.ly/2dTda4](http://bit.ly/2dTda4).

WRAPPING UP FALL – LOOKING AHEAD TO SPRING

FINAL REMINDER: Fall Rental Books Returns Past Due

Did your student forget to bring their rental books back to the WVU Bookstore? Books rented for the fall semester were due back on December 13; however, we will still accept them back without penalty* so please return them at the next opportunity. Please include a slip of paper with the books with NAME, PHONE #, EMAIL ADDRESS, and order number (if available). Please ship to the original store where the rental was made. If your student ordered online, please send to the Downtown/Mountainlair store:

**WVU Bookstore**

Mountainlair Bldg.  
1550 University Ave.  
Morgantown, WV 26506

**WVU Bookstore - Evansdale**

Evansdale Crossing Bldg.  
62 Morrill Way  
Morgantown, WV 26506

*NOTE: Starting December 18, all customers who did NOT return their fall rental books will receive a charge to the credit card they put on file at the time of the transaction (at the beginning of the semester). We cannot stop this charge from happening at the store level. However, we will gladly refund the FULL AMOUNT when we receive the books back into the store.*
**Healthy Holiday Conversations**

Students who make responsible choices about alcohol and other drug use (including the choice not to drink or use drugs) often do so because their parents talked about the issue with them. The next few weeks may be a good time to have that conversation with your student about their experience with alcohol and other drugs in their first semester. To help, we offer the following tips:

1. Remember, this is possibly your student’s first experience with absolute independence. They may be inexperienced in making difficult choices or crafting a game plan to help them through difficult situations related to alcohol/drug use.

2. Create a climate of trust, offering a space that is nonjudgmental and safe.

3. Questions like, “How much do your friends drink?” or “Have you experienced social situations where you felt compelled to drink alcohol and use drugs?” or “How have you handled social situations where you were concerned for a peer?” are good ways to open lines of communication.

4. Choose a good time, where you can have a calm and relaxed (rather than rushed) discussion.

5. Try to communicate directly and avoid talking while absorbed in another activity (like watching TV or while either of you are looking at your phone).

6. Don’t be afraid to clearly state your expectations with regard to alcohol, and expand the conversation to include personal safety, sexual activity and drugs other than alcohol.

Talking with your student about these topics can be difficult. For more ideas, [http://bit.ly/2Dj8ift](http://bit.ly/2Dj8ift). Some parents might consider alcohol and other drug use as a “rite of passage” during college. However, it’s often connected to other high-risk or dangerous situations. Here are some important stats: [http://bit.ly/2CNmHzo](http://bit.ly/2CNmHzo). Misuse of alcohol and other drugs is often a sign of deeper issues; don’t be afraid to ask your student what might be going on. If you are concerned for your student, please reach out to the Student Assistance Program [http://bit.ly/2ks3PPK](http://bit.ly/2ks3PPK) (Carruth Center for Psychological and Psychiatric Services) at 304-293-4431 or the WVU Collegiate Recovery Program [http://bit.ly/2mfbm7w](http://bit.ly/2mfbm7w) at 304-293-2547. A professional staff member will answer your questions and offer information related to campus resources.

**Payment Tips – Spring Bills Due January 2**

If your student hasn’t paid their spring bill, the rush is on! Bills must be paid or students enrolled in a monthly payment plan by Tuesday, January 2. Waiting until close to the deadline may mean longer wait times. When you call or log on we will provide you with the best experience we can. Here are a few hints to help you through the process:

- Make sure that your students are checking their MIX e-mail! If they still had a spring balance due (and were not enrolled in a monthly payment plan) they would have received an e-bill to their MIX account December 15 with their charges, aid, balance and due date.
If your student hasn’t registered for spring, now is the time to do it. Spring bills will not be correct and final until they have finalized their registration and/or dining/housing options. Check with your student and have them talk to their adviser as soon as possible to ensure they are fully registered.

Paying online is the quickest and easiest method for either you or your student: http://bit.ly/2BbqdDg.

Although credit card transactions do have a processing fee, you can pay online with an e-check with no processing fee: http://bit.ly/2ya7EC1.

You can enroll in a payment plan to spread the payment over several months: http://bit.ly/2kQPrQh.

At peak times the online systems may run slower than normal. Try logging on to STAR or the Parent/Guest Portal early or late in the day.

Phone lines will be busy close to the due date, so if you need to call in, please be patient. We are doing our best to serve everyone as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Parent/Guest Passphrase – If you are calling in on behalf of your student, remember that we cannot speak with parents or guests regarding a student account without this passphrase used to confirm your identity. As we are often discussing personal and financial information please know that this is for your and your student’s protection to make sure we are discussing matters with the appropriate person, as designated by your student.

If they have not yet, have them set up Parent/Guest Portal access and, at the same time, a Parent/Guest passphrase for you for your own easy online and call-in access: http://bit.ly/PGPortal. (This takes just a few steps: 1. They designate who gets access to their records. 2. What access each person gets. 3. Set a unique passphrase for you to use when calling in on their behalf.)

If not returning for spring term, students should be sure to withdraw from any classes as early as possible to avoid tuition and fee charges. Students should note Housing policies if they are not returning to avoid charges: http://bit.ly/2z6dv6E.

The Mountaineer Hub will be open during the winter Recess from 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. on December 19-21 and on December 27-29. All University offices will be closed December 22, 25, 26 and January 1, 2018.

**Spring Calendar: University Breaks and Dates**

Afternoon of December 20 – Grades posted to students’ MIX/STAR accounts and Parent/Guest Portal (if granted that access by your student) http://bit.ly/PGPortal

*Friday, December 22-Tuesday, December 26 – University Holidays/offices closed*
Monday, January 1 – University Holidays/offices closed

Tuesday, January 2 – Spring student health insurance waiver deadline (no need to complete if you previously opted out this fall). http://bit.ly/2BneXY1

Tuesday, January 2 – Spring charges/bills due http://bit.ly/2ya7EC1

Saturday, January 6 at noon – Residence halls reopen

Sunday, January 7 – Mid-Year Academy for any first-year student on probation (students will be notified over break via email and letter)

Monday, January 8 – First day of classes

Friday, January 12 – Last day to add/drop classes

Tuesday, January 16 – Last day to adjust spring dining plans

Monday, January 15 – University Holiday – no classes/offices closed/residence halls remain open

Friday, March 9 at 7 p.m. – Residence halls close for Spring Break (Spring break housing available – must register in advance – $25/night)

Sunday, March 18 at noon – Residence halls reopen from Spring Break

Friday, March 30 – University Holiday – no classes/offices closed/residence halls remain open

*Monday, April 30 – Friday, May 4 – Finals Week

*Saturday, May 5 at noon – Residence halls officially close for the spring term (students must vacate rooms 24 hours after their last final)


*Note please be sure you have these dates noted as they are adjustments from the original academic and residence hall opening/closing calendars.
Housekeeping: Removal from the Parent E-News Listserv and the Mountaineer Parents Club

With the end of the semester and commencements, many of you will be saying farewell and leaving the Mountaineer Parents Club. Thank you for all you have done supporting your students during their time at WVU. While you are welcome to stay on with us, we understand that many of you want to end your membership. To be removed, simply reply to this e-mail with the following information:

- Parent Name(s):
- Student Name:
- Other comments/farewell messages/What their next chapter entails (employment, grad school, etc.):

/Katie Gallagher and Lisa Hanselman

Office of Parent Relations

West Virginia University