

# The Handout

an **arm** newsletter

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## Fun, Run or Dye

Homecoming 2017 (photo by Peggy Stewart)

ACADEMIC RESOURCE MENTORS—YOUR ARM HAS A HANDOUT FOR YOU!

IN THIS ISSUE

## Surviving Midterms Stress

by Megan Cancelliere, Centennial ARM



It is that time of year again. That's right, midterms. The time of year when everything hits you at once and you realize that the semester is already half way over. For some, this can be anxiety inducing and extremely stressful. For others, it seems to just be a breeze. How do they do it? The answer is simple: relaxation.

It might seem like it is impossible to relax during midterms. I mean, who can relax when you have three papers, two tests, and a ton of quizzes? Here is an inside secret though. It is actually very easy to relax, and some ways take less than five minutes!

From meditation to controlled breathing, and even just staying on top of your work, relaxation can be a breeze...even during midterms.

Meditation is such a wonderful way to lessen stress and get some relaxation into your everyday routine.

There are many different ways to meditate, and all of them help in different ways.

There is mantra meditation, which focuses your thoughts away from the hectic jumble in your head and instead puts it on one word or phrase. This helps with anxiety and helps reduce stressful thoughts. Another type of meditation is mindfulness. This helps the user focus on the present moment and reduces stress of future events and instead has the person focus on the here and now. Meditation has so many benefits, and it can be used anywhere and everywhere.

Controlled breathing is a great stress reliever. There are many different ways to control your breathing and many different benefits from each type. Equal breathing is a

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SUCCESS  
SPOT

[www.wcsu.edu/housing/arm.asp](http://www.wcsu.edu/housing/arm.asp)

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## Calling All Seniors

By Melanie Jones, Pinney ARM

**Attention, attention! Calling all seniors!** Have you applied for graduation yet??? If you are in senior standing, you should have received an email in July inviting you to apply for graduation. The application is totally simple (surprising right?) and can be filled out very quickly! The easiest way to see if you are eligible for graduation is by checking your program sheet, talking to your advisor, and checking Degree Works on Banner. To be eligible for graduation, you need to have a GPA of at least 2.0 from all the credits received at WCSU. Some majors require a higher GPA to graduate. If you are within eight credits of your degree requirement, you are eligible to walk during commencement (without receiving your physical diploma until you complete your requirements.) In order to graduate, you must complete all coursework. Any incompletes must be graded and submitted to the registrar's office within three weeks after the end of the semester. If you exceed that time, you will be granted your degree the following graduating semester. PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE check with your advisor before applying for graduation to see if you are eligible for graduation. You are responsible for staying up to date on your academic progress as a student at WCSU. You may find out that you are eligible to graduate early, but only your advisor would know that information for sure. You may find out that you have to stay an extra semester or two, but your advisor can help you plan out your program sheet to get you graduated as early as possible.

As a graduating senior, there are a few things you must take care of be-

fore receiving your diploma. One is taking an exit counseling module if you receive financial aid. With financial aid, you most likely took an entrance counseling module before being allowed to accept your financial aid during your first semester at WCSU or any school you attended previously. Before you receive your diploma, you must take the exit counseling module.

As a graduating senior, thinking about the road ahead can be scary. We won't be protected under the wing of Western Connecticut State University college life. Discussing options with responsible adults in your life (you know, the ones who are successful at adulting), such as your parents, older siblings, advisor, professors, mentors, etc., can be a very useful step in finding your path after graduating. You aren't alone after graduation, although it may feel that way. There are plenty of resources to help search for graduate schools and career vacancies in your field. There are many options out there, one of them can be for you!

Don't forget, senior portraits will be happening later in the semester. Keep on the lookout for information that will be sent to your WCSU student email.

Look forward to being decked out in chords and pins from all of your involvement on campus. Get ready to decorate your graduation cap and spend hours taking photos with your friends and family. Graduation is such a fun and special time to cherish with all of those around you. Take advantage of this wonderful moment and take it all in. You've worked hard!

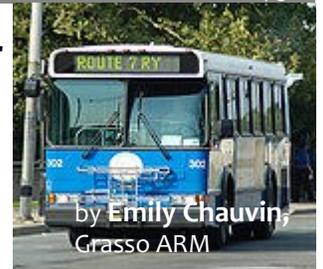
## Have a HART— Ride Public Transport!

Taking the bus isn't as scary as it might seem! HART

Transit only costs \$1.50, and you can take it from either campus to every corner of the state. Taking public transit isn't only for city dwellers; it is also easy on your wallet and saves the environment. It's also safer, and since you don't have to drive, you can read, meditate, eat an ice cream cone, take a nap, knit, write thank-you letters, play flappy bird, or whatever you want! It can even be fun!

The Route 7 bus will pick you up at the HART sign to the left of the Midtown parking garage. The website has a schedule that will tell you what time to expect it to drive by. When the bus stops, you step on and deposit your money into a machine next to the driver. If you do not have exact change, then you will receive a card with your change on it that can be used on any other bus in the HART Transit system. Keep in mind that it will not take bills over \$5. Then, take a seat wherever you please. Choose one in the back if you're feeling a little adventurous. (Just kidding, though I do recommend a window seat.) After many years of taking the bus, I've never had a bad experience or felt unsafe. You can just sit back and enjoy the ride.

A friend of mine even has a car, but chooses to take the bus sometimes because he saves on gas, and likes not having to drive. He can do homework or just look out the window the whole time. Believe it or not, I've decided mid-ride to get off and go shopping at Savers and Goodwill in Brookfield. Then I just checked the schedule on my phone and caught it again an hour later, when it looped around the parking lot of the shopping center with TJ Maxx, Kohl's, and Michaels across the road. Further along the route is Planet Fitness in Brookfield, WalMart in New Milford, and the New Milford town green which has great shopping such as the incredibly unique novelty shop, Play Toys, a small movie theater with \$5



## No matter where you are in

your college career, you will come across obstacles that seem impossible to overcome. Often, we get told that eventually, it gets easier. Truthfully, life continues to happen whether we are prepared or not. We just develop skills over time to make us better equipped to handle the hardships we face. As a college student, one of the most valuable skills to develop is being able to efficiently manage your time. Without time management, it is easy to become overwhelmed or fall behind. Effectively managing your time is a skill that you must perfect on your own and decide what works for you. Before doing so, you may want to consider these tips.

### Create a Schedule

Find a system that will help you keep track of your weekly schedule. There are several different apps available to assist you. Google Docs and Outlook both allow you to make customized schedules so you can keep track of your daily life. If you prefer to write it down, you can buy a weekly planner. Some people color code their schedules to help them organize or for aesthetic purposes. You can have one schedule with all of your commitments or you can choose to have one for academics, one for work, and another for your various extracurricular activities. Whatever you choose to do, just know that schedules are always unique, so be sure to find what works best for you.

### Be Proactive

Keep track of the assignments you must do and when they need to be completed and submitted. Constantly check your syllabus and be aware of your academic standing. Although it may be hard enough to



keep up with normal assignments, you should try to stay ahead of the class if possible. That could mean doing assignments early or reading ahead. You could also make the commitment that you will have most assignments done at least a day before the due date. Regarding extracurricular activities, it is smart to keep a to-do list. Some people write it in their planner or in their notes. I prefer to use an app called “Do!” It allows you to create a checklist with dates and time to keep you organized.

### Stay Organized

I am a firm believer of the idea that you are a product of your environment. In other words, your environment heavily influences the structure of your daily life. If you allow your space to be cluttered or messy, it will be harder to get things done on time or in the most efficient way possible. Disorganization will cause you to misplace things that you may need or miss critical deadlines.

### Take Time for Yourself

Because of how many things you juggle in school, it is very easy to forget to take care of yourself. I forget to eat all the time. I will go about my day as normal and suddenly realize it is 11 pm and I still haven’t had food. Always make sure you take the time to do things you love. Make the commitment that at least two hours a day will go towards fulfilling your needs as an individual rather than a student, an athlete, or a professional. Not allowing yourself the time to breathe and regroup can affect your memory, work ethic, and your overall quality of life. If you are not of sound mind, body, and spirit, it is very easy to lose touch with what is important.

At the end of the day, your college experience is one that you must create yourself. Learning the appropriate time to do everything that needs to be done will help you in the long run.

### Grammar Quiz:

Choose the correct pronoun to fill in the blank:

- 1) Neither Bill nor (him/he) showed up for the concert.
- 2) The boys brought (us/we) girls flowers that they’d picked.
- 3) Just between you and (me/I) let’s not repeat the rumor that’s going around.
- 4) Why don’t you give the dollar that you found to (her/she)?
- 5) The Thompsons and (they/them) both appeared in photos found on the society page.

1. **He**—is the subject. A good way to check is to say only the pronoun along with the rest of the sentence. (“Him showed up for the concert..” - doesn’t sound right!)
2. **Us**—*Girls* is an indirect object of the verb brought, so the pronoun takes the object form.
3. **Me**—it’s the object of the preposition between, and *me* is the object form.
4. **Her**— it’s the object of the preposition to, and *her* is the object form.
5. **They**—it’s a part of the subject, and takes the subject form *they*.

# MINOR Opportunities

by Victor Namer, Pinney ARM

Here at WCSU, students have the opportunity to declare an addition to their major in the form of a minor. A minor is a condensed study of a major field, and only requires 18 credits to complete. This shorter version of a major helps students receive a concentrated understanding of another respective field. There are many benefits to having a minor, both professionally and personally.

A minor shows employers and graduate schools that a student wanted to invest more in his or her education, and demonstrates knowledge in a specific sub field. Graduate schools like to see minors when reviewing applicants, as it is something that differentiates applicants from those who would otherwise have the same qualifications. Additionally, it shows employers that one is more well rounded, and that one has challenged oneself to study something outside of a direct field of study.

More so, a minor can be related to one's major, but this is not required. For example, if a student is a psychology major and likes social work, he or she can complete 18 credits (usually 6 classes) of social work and have a minor completed! At the same time, if a student is a psychology major and wants to minor in accounting or music, he or she has that ability as well!

Looking at minors from a personal standpoint, a

minor gives students the opportunity to pursue an interest they have always had, and apply it towards something officially recognized on their diploma. As mentioned above, minors do not need to be related to one's specific major and can entail any courses of study offered at WCSU. Almost every major has a minor associated with it, and this enables students to take courses which apply to a sub-field of a major. If you have always wanted to study anthropology, sign up for some anthropology classes and get started on working towards your minor! When selecting classes, minors usually have recommended courses to help students create a well balanced group of classes in this sub field.

For a list of minors available, visit the WCSU home page and type in "minor program sheets" in the search bar at the top right. A list of all available minors offered will be displayed here, along with any specific courses within a minor that need to be completed. Usually minors can be completed by using any courses adding up to 18 credits, but certain minors have specific requirements that need to be met, or recommendations for which courses to take when pursuing a minor. If you are interested in completing a minor, make an appointment with your advisor to get started. You can use free elective spaces to complete a minor, and courses you have already taken for your major can be transferred to help count for your minor without taking away from your major requirements. Overall, your advisor can point you in the right direction to get started on this opportunity, and all you have to do is reach out and grab it. Make the most of it everyone!



common controlled breathing technique. In this, you breathe in for four seconds, hold for four seconds, and then release for four seconds. You can do this as many times as you need to relax, just increase the count with every few breaths. (In for six, hold for six, out for six). This technique has been shown to calm the nervous system as well as reduce anxiety. Another amazing breathing technique is called alternate nostril breathing. This is said to bring calm and balance. In this exercise, you sit relaxed, place a finger

(Surviving Midterms—Continued from Page 1)



over one nostril (closing it) and breathe in. Once you have taken a full breath in, cover the opposite nostril (releasing the one that is already covered).

Repeat these three to four times, and then switch.

Lastly, just try and stay on top of your work. The less you give yourself to stress about (by getting stuff done ahead of time), the less you will have to worry about as the due-dates draw near. Do not put assignments off until the last minute, and try to work on big things a little bit at a time so you do not overload yourself.

The more conscious you are of what you have to get done, and staying on top of it can make midterms so much easier. Sometimes though, you still have a lot of work due in one day, and a lot of things to get done in a short amount of time. In those cases, use relaxation techniques such as meditation and controlled breathing to relax. Good luck on midterms, and do not stress!





# WHAT MAKES AN ESSAY A

by Brianna Walker, Centennial ARM



Most people don't like to write essays—understandable. Unfortunately, most college classes require you to know how to write multiple essays; whether it's heavily researched or fully opinionated. Luckily, a lot of us already know the foundations of essay writing, thanks to standardized testing like the CMTs or CAPT or even the SATs. With that in mind, I'm going to revisit the standard five paragraph model that can be used as the basis of lengthier, well-thought out, college level essays.

## 1. The Opening

The first paragraph is usually the hardest. How do you invite someone to read your essay? First, have your audience in mind - know who you're writing for. Once that is known, you can think about the general idea of your essay. What's the theme? This is where the thesis comes into play. After figuring out the theme and what points you want to go into more depth about, you can write a sentence or two about how that all works together. A basic way of writing a thesis would be: X affects Y because of A, B, and C. Ex. Consuming meat on a daily basis affects the state of our environment because of the outrageous amounts fossil fuels needed, the abundance of waste it creates, and the disruption it makes to our food chain.

Some people find it easier to write their middle paragraphs first, then go back to write the introduction and conclusion. You can do whatever is best for you. I highly suggest coming up with a thesis first (the sentence or two to talk about what your entire essay will be about) then diving into any part of the essay.

## 2. The Middle Paragraphs

The five-paragraph model allows for three points to be made in between the introduction and conclusion. If you're writing a longer essay, this can be extended for more points. The points are essentially the "meat" of your essay—where you'll be hitting hard with details and evidence to support the main claim you're making in your thesis. If you're doing a research paper, this is where you'll insert bits and pieces of what you've researched. A huge mistake that a lot of students make is not citing their sources correctly when they're taking information from either an internet article, a book, or a magazine / newspaper. [Easybib.com](http://Easybib.com) allows you to plug in a website straight from your computer by copy and pasting the link and after, you can fill in any information that's missing. You are also able to change the format from MLA to APA, to Chicago, etc. Within the paper, if you're using a direct quote, don't forget

to put the author's name or the source in parenthesis following that quote. You can also begin with the source in front of the quote so the reader knows that these are not your exact words.

Ex. According to an article by *The Onion*, "...eating locally is the best thing you can do!" or

"8 out of 13 people will develop heart disease after eating meat." (The Onion)

By citing your sources correctly, your reader will be able to easily read your essay and find the information that you've used with ease if they want to read the full piece themselves.

## 3. The Conclusion

Finally! The wrap-up! At the end of your paper, you want to remind your reader of why they're reading your essay. You have the option of encouraging your audience with a call to action - have them feel the urge to do something! At this point in your essay, the reader should feel enlightened and they can continue on with the gained knowledge that you've provided. End it strong!

Good luck and happy writing!



## Have a Hart (Cont. from pg. 2)

movies all day Tuesdays, an organics store, and some great high end fashion and design boutiques. The Route 7 Bus can also take you to the Elephant's Trunk Flea Market in New Milford, which is every Sunday from 5am to 2pm. There's food trucks, antiques, farmer's markets, furniture, clothes, toys, and more! Check the LOOP Schedule for routes on weekends, holidays, and buses after 6pm on weekdays.

The 6 Route Bus is the one that passes by Westside Campus. The shuttle will even

take you down to the bus stop so you don't have to walk down the hill! You can take a trip to the mall any day of the week on the Route 6 bus, or go to cheap, organic Whole Foods for groceries instead of the same old Stop&Shop products.

Eventually, all buses lead back to Pulse Point, which is actually only a ten-minute walk from Midtown Campus. You can take any Inbound bus there, (as every bus is either going to or from Pulse Point when it turns around at the last stop, there will be different schedules so make sure to account for this,) and you will receive a transfer ticket to take any of the other 7

buses. For example, the Route 2 will take you to the Berkshire Shopping Center in Danbury, where Plato's closet, Marshall's, WalMart, Gamestop, and the Halloween pop-up store is! The Route 3 will take you to Brewster Train station, which can be taken to New York City. You can also take buses to Bethel, Redding, and Norwalk, and stop anywhere along the way for shopping or leisure. Overall, if you don't drive or feel like trying something new, the Housatonic Area Regional Transit system is your best bet for a safe, easy-going, environmentally friendly and fun ride!

# 6 Study Tips to Ace Your Exams

by Shannon Lynch, Fairfield ARM



As exam time approaches you might be looking for some useful tips. How can I avoid cramming? Am I using the right study techniques? What can I do to minimize my anxiety? There is no need to fear! Here are some useful study tips that will make your exams a breeze. (Or at least a little easier.)

**Maintain Consistent Study Habits:** One reason you could be experiencing exam anxiety could be related to your study habits. Setting aside time to study can decrease stress about studying and feeling unprepared. I would recommend setting aside an hour every day just to go over your notes. By doing this, you will feel less stressed about covering all the information, and when it comes time to study for the exam you will already have a good background.

**Manage Your Stress:** A lot of stress can be managed physically by taking care of your body. To perform optimally during finals, make sure that you are hydrated and are eating enough nutritional foods. In addition, you can decrease your stress by making sure you include exercise in your lifestyle. Exercising helps you release endorphins that cause stress. On exam day, practice deep breathing to force your body to relax. Do all of these things together and you will likely feel decreases stress levels and see increased success!

**Use an Agenda:** Exam time can bring on a lot of extra time consuming activities. For midterms, you could have a number of papers to do, hundreds of pages to read, and of course exams to study for. Avoid missing deadlines and cramming by recording all of your assignment and exam due dates

in an agenda. Laying out your schedule can reduce stress and help you manage enough time to do everything to its full potential.

**Make Study Guides:** One of the best ways to memorize things is to write them down. For many classes, your professors will assign study guides. To get the most out of your study guide, make it your own! Combine information from your class notes, lecture PowerPoints and text book readings to get the best information. Color code your notes to help yourself connect information. Color coding also gives your brain another connection to the information. A lot of times, as you are taking the test, your brain will remember the color you wrote it in and then attach the information to it. This increases your memory a lot!

**Put your phone away:** Eliminate your phone as a distraction to increase productivity. Just put it away. End of story.

**Sleep:** If you are tired, go to sleep. Pulling an all-nighter might seem like a good idea, but the lack of sleep causes damage to your body. The damage that sleep deprivation causes, results in decreased thought processing. Choose sleep over an all-nighter.

I promise you have everything you need to succeed. Be confident in your abilities and be smart about your studying. Obviously some things do not work for everybody, however it is important to remember that you need to take care of yourself during exam times to succeed! Strive for excellence and you will achieve!

## Housing Announcements:

### Room Changes

It's not too early to think about the spring semester. If you are thinking about changing rooms for the spring, watch for forms at your Info Desks. When they are available, make sure to complete them and turn them in at the Housing Office in Newbury Hall.

Staying in the same room for spring? Great! You don't have to do ANYTHING. What a bargain!

### Thanksgiving Break

It's hard to believe, but Thanksgiving is right around the corner. If you are planning to stay on campus during the Thanksgiving Break, don't forget that you'll have to fill out a registration form in order to have building access over the break. There is NO CHARGE to stay for Thanksgiving Break, and there is NO FOOD SERVICE provided.

Check your Info Desks in early November for the registration forms. You'll need to indicate when you plan to be here, and have them turned in by the due date so that your access will be set.

### Winter Break

You may also want to start thinking about winter break. Information will come out in mid-November. There IS A CHARGE to stay for Winter, and there is limited food service (cash only). If you don't live in Pinney or Centennial, you may want to find someone now whose room you might ask to stay in, as those will be the only buildings open (subject to change).



\*\* Don't forget to look for campus events in the WOW email each Thursday! \*\*

WHAT DO YOU THINK?



What do you think? Have something you'd like to share about this newsletter or other housing issues? Want to give a suggestion for a topic you're interested in knowing more about? Let us know.

Drop us a line at [housing@wcsu.edu](mailto:housing@wcsu.edu)