

Wait—I only get 1/2 a room? How to Adjust to Life with a Roommate



Starting a new year can be thrilling. You get your own space away from family, independence over your own decisions, and can more or less do whatever you want, whenever you want. But, what about the roommate? Whether you are living with your best friend, a person you are vaguely familiar with, or a complete stranger, here are some tips to keep the peace in the small space you share.

Be positive. If you walk into a situation with a negative perspective, you will only notice the bad things. “He/She/They have SO much stuff.” and “He/She/They have SO many friends coming over.” Address these early and try to flip the situation around. For example, if they have a lot of decorations or furniture, look at it as creating a more homelike environment, taking away the jail

cell feeling some residence halls can have.

Be friendly. If you come into a new relationship acting standoffish, it will create awkward tension, and block the communication between you two if there is ever an issue. For example, if a professor walked into a room, made no eye contact, and simply lectured the class, assigned piles of work and left, would you feel comfortable asking questions or asking for assistance? That is essentially how you would make your roommate feel.

Be vocal. Sit down from the very beginning, and put it out there what things you are and aren’t okay with, so you not only let your roommate know what you like, but they know you are willing to listen to their concerns as well. This creates a positive environment and props the door

open for communication from the very start. Show them you want living together to work out and you are willing to work towards that goal in tough situations.

Be assertive. I cannot stress enough how important that is. College is tough, and learning to live with someone new on top of school work and a social life can be overwhelming. Don’t just push things under the rug and brush it off. If it bothers you, speak up. Being a good roommate isn’t letting someone take control of the room, its addressing issues in the

Cont. on pg. 4

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In this issue:

- Wait...I only get HALF a Room?! Page 1
- How to Adjust to Life with a Roommate Page 1
- How to Ball on a Budget Page 2
- Out of State Homesickness Page 3
- Contract Majors Page 3
- Getting Adjusted to a New Routine After Summer Page 4
- Take A Hike Page 5
- Equity vs. Equality Page 6
- Academically Adjusting to College Page 7
- Gab & GROW Page 8
- Housing Announcements Page 8



2018-2019 Academic Resource Mentors



How to Ball on a Budget

by Brianna Walker, Centennial ARM

The best way to start a semester off is to be organized and prepared. As a junior here at WCSU, I know that it can be extremely frustrating to know what exactly to buy, when to buy those things, and get the best value for your dollar. Navigating through classes, work, and having a social life, the expenses can definitely add up.

It is imperative to recognize the amount of money that you have in the beginning of the semester so you know what you're starting off with. Prioritizing will definitely help determine what you end up spending your money on. The most important things that one would need as a student would be books and supplies. If you know that you do not need a book for class, you can save that money and put it towards food, or maybe even decorations for your room. If you cannot afford all of your books, talk to your classmates! Ask if you can possibly share a textbook—that could also open to more opportunities like study groups! If no one is willing to share their books or supplies and you're still having trouble—always talk to the professor sooner rather than later. In my experience, professors have been pretty accommodating to my needs as a student. Also, if you find the book for cheaper online, the bookstore also has a price matching system in which they will duplicate the price that you've seen online. If you need your book in a hurry and you have to buy it online, Amazon has a membership for students called Amazon Prime Student which means that depending on the seller, the book could ship in two business days.

Decoration and room preparation wise, plenty of items are available at the **Dollar Store** and **Five Below**. Most of my personal ornaments are from **Five Below** which has decent supplies for five dollars and under. Also, look out on Amazon for other things where you can also save on a ton of decor. Pillows, fairy lights, batteries, lamps, and

anything else you can think of can be bought online. But, like stated before, buy just the things that you need right now, and if you know you are getting paid in the future from a job on or off campus, save for other expenses with later checks.

It should also be known that using your student ID can be very helpful with getting discounts for food, local establishments, and even getting discounts with stores online! Three Brothers offers WCSU students a discount while eating there, and if you sign up for UNiDAYS, plenty of discounts get sent to your email on a regular basis! If you're into Papa John's pizza, using the code YALE50 or UNH50 will score you half off of your orders online. For those that like music, Apple Music offers a student discount and you are also able to get Spotify and Hulu together in a bundle with a college email. Also, with a simple google search, you can find plenty of lists of stores that also participate with giving students a discount. Be sure to fully do your research though before going.

Thinking about money can definitely cause stress when you're in college. Hopefully, with these things in mind, you're able to save a bit of money and realize your priorities so you too can ball on a budget.

Good luck with this upcoming semester!





Out of State Homesickness

by **Angela Nicastro**, Pinney ARM

Going to an out of state school seems like an amazing idea at first. You get to be far from your parents, who can't really tell you what to do. You can hang out with whoever you want, whenever you want. And, you can keep your room messy as much as you want ... though you might want to clean it up before HFS checks.

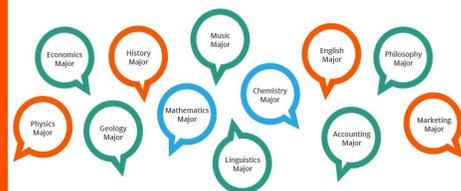
It isn't until you actually get to school and move in, where you might realize that *everything* is different. The people, the food, the scenery, the fact that there's more buildings than trees; mostly just the area in general is so different than what you're used to, you start to panic a little when your parents drop you off and take off down 84.

As an out of state student myself, I know what it feels like to be far from home, and not able to really go home. I live in New Hampshire, about four and a half hours away, and if I wanted to go home, I'd have to plan the trip weeks in advance. It was a while before the feeling of homesickness left, and it got so bad my mom drove all the way down to come see me a week after move in.

Eventually I learned ways to deal with this, and was able to finally connect with my surroundings. If you are an out of state resident, especially a freshman, here are some ways I got rid of my out state homesickness that might help you:

1. **Join clubs:** Join some clubs on campus! There are many to choose from here at WCSU, and you might make some friends along the way. If it's something you are passionate about or like to do for a hobby, it might make you feel a little more at home doing something you enjoy.
2. **Hang pictures up of family, friends, and pets:** One thing a lot of college kids don't do is hang up family photos because they think they will be judged. If it makes you feel better seeing pictures of your cute dog, put pictures of him on your wall or on your desk! This will make you feel more comfortable with your dorm and your surroundings.
3. **Don't be afraid to call home just to say hi:** Your parents love you, and want what's best for you. If what's best for you is calling them every day until you get a hang of things, do it. Even if it's FaceTiming your cat, at least seeing a familiar face can help you with homesickness.
4. **Decorate your room:** Though this doesn't make much sense, it worked like magic my freshmen year. I brought my posters and pictures from home, and once I hung them up like I did at home, it made it easier to sleep and get comfortable with my room.
5. **Plan a weekend to go home (if possible):** If you live in New England and are not scared to drive long hours, plan a weekend you can go home to see everyone. Sleep in your own bed, take up your parents' wifi, and just appreciate the fact that you're going to be eating homemade food.
6. **Remember why you came to college:** It might have gotten lost between all the panic, anxiety, and school work, but try to sit back and remember why you came so far in the first place. Was it strictly for the department you're in? Career opportunities? Or was it just to get away and actually experience freedom or a new area?
7. **Don't just sit in your room:** I made this mistake my first year of college. I spent all my free time lying in bed because I was too scared to put myself out there. Get out there and do something! Go bowling with your roommate, go to a program, go see a play; do something that will get you out of your room, even if it's just a walk around campus.

There are always going to be times where you get homesick, even if you live just twenty minutes down the road. Do what you think works for you, whether it's joining a club or trying something new, you might find out it helps with that out of state homesickness.



Contract Major

By **Emily Chauvin**, Centennial ARM

Isn't it hard to choose a major? Right out of high school, we choose a path to follow. Some of us have been bee-lining for Anthropology since childhood, or had a keen interest in Theater that was unshakeable. Others of us entered WCSU as undecided, or Exploratory Studies majors, or have chosen one major from their myriad and diverse passions. With the Contract Major, you don't have to choose just one! It's a great way to not only dip into multiple programs and departments, but to leave WestConn and enter the workforce as a dynamic, flexible, and interesting candidate for a wider variety of jobs. And who doesn't like options?

I made my own Contract Major in my Junior year, when I noticed a unique trend in the electives I was taking. I just couldn't resist classes like Gallery Interactions and Philosophy of Art. I realized what I learned in one class would be incredibly helpful in my comprehension of the ideas in the others, even though some classes were in the Art Department, and the others in Humanistic Studies. I wanted my transcript to reflect this path I was choosing, so I talked to Professor Dalton, a very inspiring professor and my Faculty Advisor

GETTING ADJUSTED TO A NEW ROUTINE AFTER SUMMER

By Heidi Ohngemach,
Grasso ARM



One of the hardest parts of the semester is starting it up again when you've gotten so used to your routines and habits of the summer. That's not even just not having the patience to read a textbook or keep up with assignments. There's a lot more to managing your semester than the academics. Even though you do come to college for academics, you still have to watch out for your social life. It's important to maintain at least some of a social life for your mental wellbeing.

Adjusting a sleep schedule is probably one of the hardest adjustments when the semester starts, especially to everyone who has 8 a.m.s (or how about those new 7:15 a.m.s??). Everyone approaches the adjustment differently. Some people like to spend the last week of their summer slowly waking up earlier so that waking up early on the first day of classes isn't that drastic of a change. Some people would never spend the end of their summer doing that. If waking up at 11 a.m. every day and then suddenly waking up at 7 on the first day of class works for you, absolutely go for it.

I'm one of those horrible people that have at least 30 alarms on their phone, most of them as little as 2 minutes apart. When you have to be up at 8 it makes sense to set an alarm at 7 and then have separate alarms go off every few minutes until 8 just to make sure you don't completely miss them. From my experience, though, it makes you immune to the sound of alarms and then you always miss all of them. When I moved in this semester, I decided to take a look at my alarms. I had an unnecessary amount that ranged from 12 am to 11:30 pm. So I

made a risky choice and deleted ALL of them except for 6:30 am. I've so far found that it really does make me get up because it's my only chance to be woken up, and then I have more energy by not letting myself fall back to sleep.

And as exciting as it is to see all of your college friends after a long summer away from everyone, you can't spend every minute catching up with everyone during the first few weeks. But don't completely shut people out of your life in an effort to get ahead on your classes or study to keep up. Try to fit in a good balance of hanging out with friends. You can also save some time by hanging out with a group of friends rather than being with everyone you know one on one.

Another way to work your friends into your daily schedule and social life is to go do things with them. WestConn is always putting on lots of cool events, and now even more on the weekends. Have your friends come with you to PAC Bingo or Coffeehouse or programs in yours or other residence halls where you and your friends could have a lot of fun together! Starting school again doesn't mean it has to be boring every minute of the day.



How to adjust to life with a roommate (continued from pg. 1)

right tone. Letting things pile up until you blow up one day is not exactly a picturesque situation. But picking out every small flaw they have can also backfire. The key is to ask them to sit with you and discuss the issue. If their things are ending up on your side of the room, politely ask them to keep it on their side. Help them see the issue from your perspective, rather than demanding change.

And finally, **be cooperative**. Solving issues is a two way street, and you may find that sometimes, you will end up on the receiving end as well. And when that happens, don't get mad. Put yourself in their shoes, as you want them to do when the roles are reversed. Try to understand where they're coming from, and negotiate a way where both parties can be happy, instead of having the "my way or the highway" attitude.

Being in college isn't easy. Whether it's your first year or your last, challenges will always arise. Working together to solve issues and be happy can take some of the weight off both of your shoulders, and create a positive living space for the both of you so you can succeed in your college experience. And remember, you don't have to love your roommate, you just need to tolerate each other, and put in effort on both ends to make the two of you happy.





by Sara Slaiby, Fairfield ARM

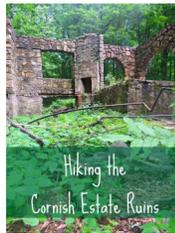
Whether you are moving back in, or making the initial entrance to college, there is always stress and worry. Many students become overwhelmed with meeting new people, looking over their syllabi, and preparing for the upcoming school year. Stress, unfortunately, is inevitable in college when you are being introduced or reintroduced after such a long and relaxing summer break. The best way to relieve stress is to extract yourself from the stressful situation, and do something to take your mind off of it. Enjoying the outdoors and going for a hike will help you to clear your head, as well as get some exercise and enjoy some beautiful views. Here are five hikes that I feel are the perfect get away when you are in need of a refreshing step out.

The Dover Stone Church. The Dover Stone Church is a short beginner hike that offers a beautiful view of a waterfall and cave.



The cave is nearly 1 mile into the woods from the parking lot, and offers trails past the cave which vary from 3-4

miles extra. The hike to the beautiful Dover Stone Church is flat and seems timeless while doing so. The Dover Stone Church received its name from the cathedral shape of the cave. If you are looking for a beautiful view about 45 minutes away, this is a great choice!



The Cornish Estate Trail. This trail is a beautiful quiet trail leveled as Moderate. It is a 4.9-mile-long loop that features an old estate from the

1930s. This trail is about 45 minutes away from Western Connecticut State University, but is a direct ride there that seems to go by much faster than expected. As you hike up the trail, you see the multiple buildings and surrounding architect left over from the estate. This hike is beautiful and not very trafficked. If you are looking for an enjoyable walk with interesting views and historical landmarks then the Cornish Estate Trail is the perfect match!



Lovers Leap Trail. This trail is located in New Milford, CT and is only 21 minutes

away from Western Connecticut State University. It is only 1.1 miles round trip, with little to no elevation gain. This hike features a bridge you can walk over, a beautiful river, and the infamous “lovers leap”. If you are a history lover, the background story of this hike is definitely worth looking into before you stop in!

Tarrywile Park Yellow Loop.



This trail is a moderate 3.6-mile loop that features a

beautiful forest scene with an amazing view of Danbury. The incline is enough to get your heart pumping, but is still quite enjoyable. The trail is well main-

tained and is only a short 10 minutes away from the Western Connecticut State University Midtown campus.

Green Diamond Trail Loop. This



trail consists of a beautiful walk around Bennett's pond in Ridgefield,

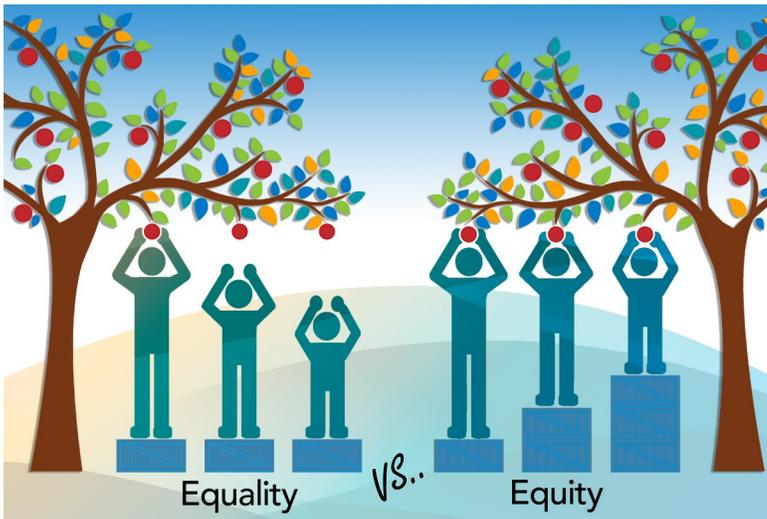
CT. It is a short 2.2 miles with a very small elevation gain, located only 9 minutes away from the Western Connecticut State University Midtown campus. This hike is perfect if you need a quick hike close to campus that will offer beautiful views of a pond with the peacefulness of being away from the commotion and stress of college.

Hiking is the perfect way to remove yourself from the agitation and burden you may feel from school. The various amounts of hiking trails in Connecticut each offer their own piece of beauty. I encourage everyone to try hiking as you may find a new interest that you never had before, as well as a safe and healthy from of stress reduction.



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Alexis is 6 feet tall. Each girl needs to be at least $\frac{1}{2}$ foot higher than the fence to see over it clearly. Equality would be giving everyone a box

that one girl was significantly taller than the other two. Height is an inherent feature that has to do with biology and genetics. In most cases, when we are talking about either equity or equality, we are discussing man made issues that are systemic. These issues, unlike height, can be controlled and improved. In situations dealing with economic status, social injustices, etc., sometimes giving everyone the same resources is not conducive to the overall success of the group. This is especially true if that group was at a significant disadvantage prior to getting help.

Equality should always be the bare minimum to begin but there are circumstances where equity is just as or more important than equality if the goal is to yield fair and impartial results. Try to be mindful of this when you are interacting with others. Everyone comes from different walks of life. If you do not know someone, you should never make assumptions about what he or she has or how he or she got where they are. Some people manage to defy all statistics and end up with a much better life than one would predict based on their circumstances. This does not mean they had a fair chance in getting where they are.

by Keyanna Wright, Litchfield ARM

Many people in the world do not know the difference between equity and equality. Most of us know that equality is the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunity. We hear so much about equality from groups of people who are of marginalized identities as well as people from underprivileged communities. However, very few times do we distinguish or acknowledge the important difference between equity and equality. Equity is the quality of being fair or impartial. In other words, equality is everyone being provided the same resources whereas equity allows everyone to have the resources they need to succeed. Here is an example:

There are three people, Taylor, Destiny, and Alexis, trying to see over a $6\frac{1}{2}$ foot tall fence. Taylor is 5 feet tall. Destiny is $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet tall.

that is one foot tall to stand on. In this situation, everyone was given the same resources to see over the fence. However, this resource does not benefit everyone the same. Taylor would still be another 6 inches away from the top of the fence, Destiny would be eye level with the top and Alexis would be $\frac{1}{2}$ a foot above the fence. Although everyone was treated equally with the height of the box, Taylor and Destiny still cannot see and Alexis is at the perfect height. Equity would be giving each girl the height they need in order to be $\frac{1}{2}$ foot taller than the fence. In this situation, Taylor would need to be elevated 2 feet, Destiny would need to be elevated $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet and Alexis only needs to be elevated 1 foot.

Now, with this example, the thing that made them unequal was height. It is not anyone's fault

This year's Western Day of Service is Friday, September 21st. Register now to assist the Greater Danbury Community with a special community service project. You can come with your group or come on your own. All you need to do is take time to pre-register (www.wcsu.edu/community-service/western-day-of-service/). You'll be assigned a spot to work from there. Then on the 21st, show up for a continental breakfast and send-off, go do



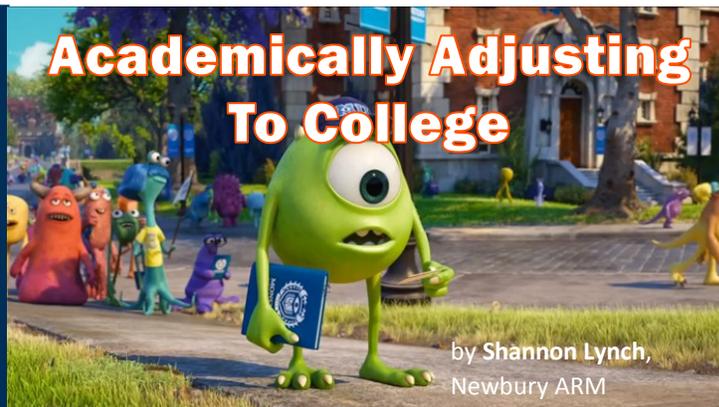
your service, and come back for a free barbeque! It's easy, free, fun, and fulfilling! Could you ask for more?

for my contract major, who helped me put it all together, every step of the way. Thus, my Aesthetics, Theory & Practice Major was born.

The Contract Major consists of 36 credits, chosen by you and approved by a board. (For more details, I recommend you take a look at www.wcsu.edu/admissions/programs/contract/) You must provide a proposal as to your reasoning of the interrelatedness of the two concentrations, why they create a cohesive theme, and how they will help you on your way to achieving your long-term career goals.

The options are endless! Some common ones might include HPX and Business, if maybe you'd like to open your own training center. Maybe you'd like to be a Photojournalist. Journalism and Photography is the way to go. Also, all Philosophy majors are contract majors. Meteorology and Media Arts would be a great way to head into the newscasting world, or JLA and Spanish would be an incredible edge in your field. It's a good idea to let your imagination run free and pursue your very special dreams!

Everyone is different. We want to be interested and engaged in our education, and for many of us, a more varied schedule of classes will keep our minds enlightened. The unique mixture of ideas that two or more majors will provide a motivating and challenging intellectual course. Talk to a professor or faculty advisor in one of the departments you are interested in, today!



When I came to WestConn as a freshman, I thought that college was just an extension of high school. I figured that if I did things the

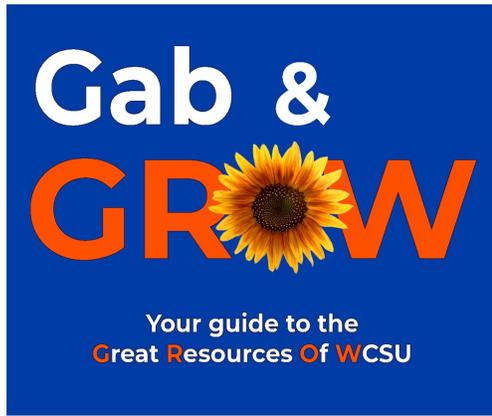
same way I had always done them, it would be a piece of cake. I quickly learned that things needed to change. Studying the night before was no longer enough, and note-taking was not something I could get by without. It took time for me to adjust! My hope is that these few things I'm about to tell you make your own adjustment a little smoother than my own.

The freedom that accompanies college can make it easy to slack off. One of the best ways to adjust quickly in college is to attend all of your classes, and to attend them on time. Choosing not to attend class is not only a waste of money, but it can result in removal from a course. In addition, you're missing out on valuable information that you need in order to study. Missing a lecture can put you behind in your classes, increase stress levels and decrease the effectiveness of studying.

Going to class is one thing, but what you do while you're in class is an entirely different thing. Stay off your phone. This was probably the hardest adjustment I made when going to college. Since my teachers were not adamant about phone usage in class, I took full advantage of texting and scrolling through social media during lectures. It is almost as bad as not attending class. Using your phone in class distracts you and your classmates. Put your phone in your backpack to avoid the temptation! Once you eliminate that distraction, focus on notetaking. Notetaking is very important when it comes to answering essay questions, studying for exams, and other general class assignments.

Some other ways that you can adjust to college are by allotting time to study, daily. In high school, it is very easy to cram for exams the night before, but the content is much more dense in college courses. Reviewing the material every night can make it easier when the exam approaches. Something else that can make understanding course content easier is if you do the assigned readings for the class before the class starts. This gives you a head start on the information and allows you to ask questions during class.

These adjustments may seem minor but they can make the difference during your transition. College can become overwhelming, but if you make these changes, stay organized and take care of yourself you will be able to manage. Use campus resources and don't be afraid to ask questions of your professors, peers, and other staff members. Everybody at WCSU wants you to succeed. Happy fall semester and welcome to WCSU!



A WCSUMEDIA Podcast



New on campus this fall is a podcast called **Gab & GROW**. Each week, we have several brief (15– 20 minute) episodes that will introduce you to some of the many people, places, and resources available to assist you on your academic journey here at WCSU.

So far, we've heard about moving in, becoming a college student, getting involved on campus, technology for students, who are the ARMs, and the Western Day of Service.

Over the rest of the semester, you'll be able to hear about these fine resources and services:

Week of Sept. 17:

- ⇒ The Math Emporium & Math Clinic
- ⇒ The Writing Center
- ⇒ Fall Athletics

Week of Sept. 24:

- ⇒ Blackboard
- ⇒ Study Skills & Test Taking
- ⇒ Time Management

Week of Oct. 1:

- ⇒ Tutoring Resource Center
- ⇒ Campus Change & Construction
- ⇒ Registration Readiness
- ⇒ Student Flu Clinic

Week of Oct. 8:

- ⇒ Title IX for Students
- ⇒ Bystander Intervention
- ⇒ Homecoming

Week of Oct. 15:

- ⇒ Making a 4-Year Plan
- ⇒ What You Need to Know About Advising
- ⇒ Operation Jungle Red

Week of Oct. 22:

- ⇒ The Women's Center & Healthy Relationships
- ⇒ Graduation Prep
- ⇒ Housing Room Selection—Fall to Spring

Week of October 29:

- ⇒ Campus Safety
- ⇒ College Students & Alcohol (& other drugs)

Week of November 5:

- ⇒ Campus Recreation, Intramurals, & Club Sports
- ⇒ Stress Management
- ⇒ Can I Kiss You?

Week of Nov. 12:

- ⇒ Career Success Center
- ⇒ Haas & Young: Libraries to Love

Week of Nov. 19:

- ⇒ Using the PASS Tutors
- ⇒ Getting to Know Your Professors

Week of Nov. 26:

- ⇒ Preparing for Finals
- ⇒ Housing Closing Information

Week of Dec. 3

- ⇒ Home for the Holidays
- ⇒ Financial Literacy

As you can see, there's a LOT of information available. Tune in where you usually go for your podcasts: iTunes, Stitcher, SoundCloud...

In the spring, we'll have more for you! And if you miss it that week—it's still there. Listen any time!



Announcements

Hall Councils are up and running in each hall. Your social fees and ideas are what drives the activities in your halls. Stop by a meeting, get involved, run for office, and plan some great things to do this year! See your RD or RA for details.

Room changes are taking place right now! If you wish to relocate, either within your building or into another building, and if space is available, you are able to make a switch at this time. Email your RD first, and stop by their offices (10 am—4 pm) to speak with them. They'll work with you to identify a space and help facilitate the move when possible. Room changes will only be made through October 10th.

Check out the **Academic Success Spot**—a page about the ARMs which also has information available on study tips, test tips, writing better, taking better notes... it's there just to help you! You can find it at

www.wcsu.edu/housing/arm



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

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