

6 steps to a great first year!

1 Find out where your classes are being taught and make sure to learn the name of your professors during the first week. Here are the building codes you'll need to know:

AH (Alumni Hall) — Midtown campus, former church across from Student Center. The Midtown Coffeehouse is held here Thursday evenings.

BR (Berkshire Hall) — Midtown campus, off the Quad. The Learning Centers are housed here.

CC (Westside Campus Center) — Westside campus

ICH (Ives Concert Hall) — Midtown campus, first floor in White Hall

ICP (Ives Concert Park) — Westside campus

HI (Higgins Hall) — Midtown campus, attached to Higgins Annex. The Academic Advisement Center is located here.

HA (Higgins Annex) — Midtown campus, attached to Higgins Hall

ONC (O'Neill Center) — Westside campus

GH (Grasso), PH, (Pinney) and CH (Centennial Halls) are on the Westside campus;

LH (Litchfield), FH (Fairfield) and NH (Newbury Halls) are on the Midtown campus.

SB (Science Building) — Midtown campus

SC (Student Center) — Midtown campus

SCT (Student Center Theater) — Midtown campus. Come for PAC movies Friday nights!

WA (Warner Hall) — Midtown campus, off the quad, next to the Haas Library

WF (Founder's Hall) — Naugatuck Valley Community College in Waterbury

WH (White Hall) — Midtown campus, next to Warner Hall. Ives Concert Hall is located here.

WS (Westside Classroom Building) — Westside campus

2 Familiarize yourself with your program sheet.

The program sheet is your road map to graduation. Most majors require you to pass 122 credits in order to graduate. The program sheet lists the required classes. Each major requires different classes but many of them are electives within certain areas. In order to graduate on time within four years or eight semesters, you have to register for an average of 15.5 credits/semester hours each semester or take summer or intersession classes to catch up on these credits.

To find your program sheet, go to the web page at wcsu.edu and type "program sheets" in the SEARCH field. Find the program sheet for your academic major, i.e. English, biology, etc.

S.H. — Semester Hour (also: credit hour) Most classes count as three credits per semester; most science labs count as four credits per semester.

GPA — Grade Point Average (An "A" is a 4.0, a "B" is 3.0, a "C" is 2.0, a "D" is 1.0, and an

"F" is 0.0.) In most majors you need at least a 2.0 ("C" average) cumulative grade point average to graduate. Some degree programs require a higher GPA. You should always shoot for higher.

Prerequisites Some advanced courses require that you complete other classes before registering for them. Ask your advisor about these.

3 Speaking of advisors ... get to know yours!

Find out who your advisor is and when s/he offers office hours. Make a point to introduce yourself early in the semester. Then, pay attention to registration dates for the upcoming semester and make an appointment with your advisor several days before your personal registration date.

Be sure to bring your program sheet with you (see Step 2) and figure out a possible schedule before your meeting. For a list of classes, go to Open/Close.

What's Open/Close? Go to wcsu.edu and click Course Registration at the top right corner, then click Schedule of Classes at the top left and follow the links to Open/Close. Pick the term you want, then click on a department, hit search, and *voilà!*, a list of classes appears with times and availability. Put a temporary schedule together *before* you see your advisor.

4 You'll find college a very different experience than high school.

When assigned homework, you'll be expected to study on your own and come to class prepared. Learn how to study well at the Learning Centers in Berkshire Hall. Familiarize yourself with our Math Clinic, the Writing Lab, and Tutoring Resource Center where you can receive tutoring in almost any subject, free of charge!

Never be afraid to ask for help. The best students are often those that recognize their weaknesses and take proactive steps to overcome them. Everyone at WestConn wants you to succeed and we are here to help — but you need to ask. Attend class regularly, take notes, master the material and hand assignments in on time. And don't be afraid to use the Learning Centers. Also, the library staff can show you how to use the library, where to find material and how to do research.

If you want to know more about classroom etiquette from a professor's perspective and what you can do to make a good impression (one of the secrets to good grades), check out this web site: wcsu.edu/sas/howto.asp

5 Join up! Once you get to campus, join a varsity team, become a member of a student organization, or join a Greek fraternity or sorority. Every semester starts with Clubs Carnival when current student organizations or clubs recruit new members. There's also Greek Week when the Greek organizations on campus do the same thing. Go online to wcsu.edu/studentlife and check out the list of student organizations.

Many groups meet weekly or bi-weekly and it's a great way to get connected and add something special to your resume. You'll also find information on how to start your own organization. Being a part of the life on campus is just as important as being a good student. Check WestConduit for announcements, or go to the Events Calendar on the web page. Check the boards for flyers. The "What's On?" flyer tells you what events are scheduled Thursday through Sunday. The Commuter and MO-FRI flyers tell you what's on Monday through Friday.

There are also web pages, such as the one for the Coffeehouse, which are updated weekly. There's almost always something going on—you just have to know where to look for it!

6 You are not alone. If you find yourself feeling overwhelmed with school or personal problems — or something unexpected crops up, here or at home — we want you to know you are not alone. The Counseling Center offers free, confidential services to all matriculated students. The CHOICES Office can help you with questions regarding any kind of substance abuse problem you may be having. Or maybe you're worried about a friend or a family member. Go online to wcsu.edu and find the resource you need.

Also, there are several Campus Ministry groups on campus, as well as student organizations for students of particular religious or cultural backgrounds. The Women's Center of Greater Danbury is also represented on campus, and for questions regarding careers make an appointment with the Career Development Center in the Student Center. If you live on campus and have problems with your roommate, talk to your RA (Resident Assistant) or the RD (Resident Director) or talk to someone from the Conflict Resolution Project. And if you are ill, make an appointment to see the doctor on campus. The Health Service Office is open to all full-time matriculated students.

Remember: "Help is always given to those at Hogwarts [oops ... WestConn] who ask for it."

— (J.K. Rowling)