

A group of students in blue shirts and caps are painting a wooden fence. One student in the foreground is wearing white gloves and using a brush to apply paint to a wooden post. Another student in the background is also painting. The scene is outdoors with green trees in the background.

The

Handout

YOUR ARM NEWSLETTER

**Midterm
Study Tips**

GOOD NOTE-TAKING &
GETTING READY TO
REGISTER

FALL FUN IN THE
DANBURY AREA

**WESTERN
CONNECTICUT
STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Celebrating 120 Years

**OCTOBER 2024
VOL. 13, ISSUE 2**

WWW.WCSU.EDU/HOUSING

Table of Contents

04

MIDTERM STUDY TIPS

It's not too late to study

06

STAYING SAFE DURING FLU SEASON

Keeping yourself (and others) well

07

FALL FUN IN AND AROUND DANBURY

Looking for fall fun? Check these out

09

GOOD NOTE-TAKING

Taking good notes can make all the difference

12

INTERVIEW - ADJUNCT PROFESSOR ANTHONY DEPOTO

A WCSU grad is now teaching here, and he's got words of advice

15

BEATING THE SLUMP

Are you feeling the mid-semester slump?

The Handout

THE HANDOUT - CURRENT AND PAST ISSUES

FAIRFIELD HALL ARM

VERA BOATEMAA

LITCHFIELD HALL ARM

JESSICA GLEASON

NEWBURY HALL ARM

AZAYDA LYNT

CENTENNIAL HALL ARMS

JORDAN DeANGELO

AMY MANDELBAUM

GRASSO HALL ARM

TIM HYNAN



EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

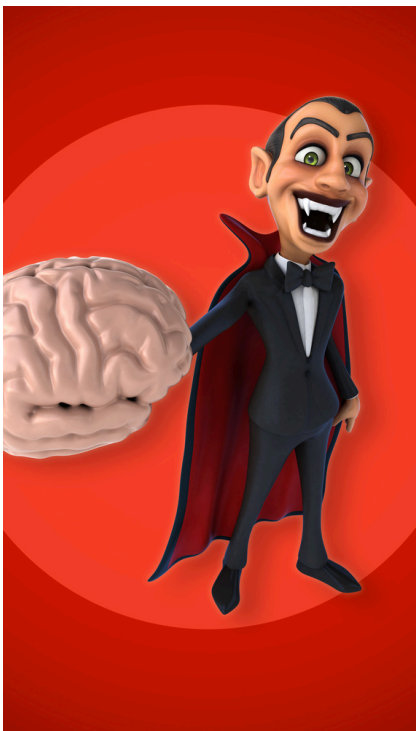
MARIBETH GRIFFIN

Director for Residential Programs & Staff



Midterm Study & Prep Tips

by Jess Gleason, Litchfield Hall ARM



October is upon us, and with it comes all kinds of scary entities—vampires, werewolves, and perhaps the most horrifying of them all: Midterms. While Midterms can be a frightening time, proper preparation can ensure that your tests will be all treats and no tricks! Below are some tips to help you navigate this midterm season.

Create A Study Schedule

One way to ensure you ace your midterms is to study and review material consistently leading up to the exam. Two or three weeks before your midterms, you should create a Study Schedule to follow as you prepare for the test. Ideally, these sessions would last between 45 minutes and an hour; however, if that much time isn't available in your current schedule, you can adjust it to fit your needs. You should schedule time to study for each subject individually to guarantee that every class gets equal attention and study time! Ensure this schedule is realistic for you and won't lead to burnout!

STUDY

Study Smarter, Not Harder

Methods such as notecards, self-quizzes, and study guides are all effective ways to study for midterms and can help with retention over simply rereading notes from class. Also, if writing physical note cards is not your thing, websites and apps such as Quizlet can be a great alternative!

Create Study Groups with Peers

A great way to review material is to study with others in your class. This can allow you to share notes, quiz each other, and fill in gaps in knowledge that you might have missed during class. Westconn has many places on campus where you and a group can meet, including the Ruth A. Haas Library's study rooms. Studying with groups can also be a great way to make new connections with peers on campus!

Ask for Help if you Need it!

Despite how it may feel sometimes, Professors want their students to succeed! If you are struggling with concepts in class, visit your professors during their office hours and talk to them about it. They can help you understand the material or refer you to a place where someone can help you better understand it. Additionally, many resources on campus can help you prepare for Midterms. The Tutoring, Writing, and Math Centers are all resources to get help preparing for exams and other Midterm assignments. Appointments are not required, but they can be beneficial in making sure that you are seen and get your questions answered!

Make Sure to Take Care of Your Health

This time of year can be rough on your physical and mental health. As midterms and assignments ramp up, it can be easy to forget to take care of yourself as you get lost in your work. Be sure to eat nourishing meals and stay hydrated. To the best of your ability, try to get between 7 and 10 hours of sleep nightly, which will help improve your exam performance. Make sure you have a support system of friends and family that you can talk to when times are hard. Additionally, if you feel extremely overwhelmed, do not hesitate to contact the Counseling Center on Campus, where you can speak with a professional counselor who can help you through rough times.

Hopefully now you have some useful tips that will help make this Midterm season soar higher than bats!



Staying Safe During Flu Season

by Vera Boatemaa, Fairfield ARM

Flu season presents a significant public health challenge each year, with millions affected by the influenza virus. The World Health Organization estimates that seasonal influenza epidemics result in approximately 3 to 5 million cases of severe illness and up to 650,000 respiratory deaths globally. As communities brace for the impact of flu season, it becomes imperative to implement effective strategies to minimize transmission and protect vulnerable populations.

This article explores essential preventive measures, including vaccination, hygiene practices, and community awareness, highlighting their importance in reducing the incidence of flu. By understanding and adopting these measures, individuals can contribute to a healthier environment and mitigate the spread of influenza, ultimately safeguarding both personal and public health.



FLU PREVENTION AND TREATMENT



Get Vaccinated: The flu vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and others from the virus.

Practice Good Hygiene:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol when soap isn't available.
- Avoid touching your face, especially your eyes, nose, and mouth.

Avoid Close Contact: Try to stay away from people who are sick and maintain distance in crowded places.

Cover Coughs and Sneezes: Use a tissue or your elbow to cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze and dispose of tissues properly.

Clean and Disinfect: Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces, like doorknobs and phones.

Stay Home When Sick: If you're feeling unwell, it's important to stay home to avoid spreading the flu to others.

Stay Hydrated and Eat Well: A healthy diet and staying hydrated can help strengthen your immune system.

Monitor Your Health: Be aware of flu symptoms like fever, cough, and body aches, and consult a healthcare professional if you have concerns.

Following these steps can help you and the WCSU Community stay healthier during flu season!



Fall Fun Near Campus

by Amy Mandelbaum, Centennial ARM

Happy Fall!! It is finally that time of year again to take in the beauty of the changing leaves, enjoy all the apple and pumpkin treats, throw on your favorite cozy sweater, and bask in all the wonders of autumn! If you are looking for some festive fall activities to do to make the most of this autumn, you are in luck! There are many fun and affordable local things to do to help you get into the fall spirit! Here are a few of my personal favorites:

1. Elephant's Trunk Flea Market in New Milford

Every Sunday from 8am-2pm, the Elephant's Trunk Flea Market is open for business in New Milford! It is a huge outdoor flea market with vendors selling almost anything you can imagine, from clothes to antique trinkets to jewelry to homeware to paintings to food and MORE! Heading up to the flea market on an idyllic fall day is the perfect way to spend a Sunday! It is lovely to walk around outside and see what treasures you can find! After you've seen everything at the flea market, you can head into the town of New Milford, which is one of the places that the fall oasis of the town of Stars Hollow in the TV show Gilmore Girls was based on, and go to a quaint cafe and catch a movie at the classic Bank Street Theatre for a fun-filled fall day!

1. Rumors Cafe in Danbury

Rumors is one of my absolute favorite local small businesses around campus and is everything you could wish for in a cozy cafe! I can't think of a better place than Rumors to romanticize the fall by cozying up with your favorite book and one of their delicious fall specialty drinks, like the Pumpkin Patch Latte or Bad Witch Latte served in a fall-themed mug. As if Rumors wasn't already cute enough, they also decorate for fall to make it extra festive, and they have a wide variety of board games to play! Rumors is also a great study spot, and you can easily spend a few hours there getting some work done and enjoying the vibes.

2. Tarrywile Park in Danbury

Tarrywile is a beautiful park all-year round, but its beauty really shines in the fall when all the leaves have changed colors and the air is perfectly crisp. This is an ideal place to take an autumn stroll, have a fall picnic with your favorite seasonal foods, and search for the perfect leaf to add to your collection or make into a craft! I can't think of a better place to soak in the wonders of fall than the great outdoors!

1. Mothership on Main in Danbury

Mothership is another one of my favorite local small businesses where pretty much everything is made fresh, and the vibes here are simply amazing in every season but especially in the fall. They have a great breakfast and lunch menu that is sure to have something for everyone as well as fresh baked goods every day, delicious drinks, and seasonal treats! You do not want to miss out on their fall specialty drinks, like the classic Pumpkin Spice Latte with real pumpkin and Caramel Apple Latte! The atmosphere is unique, warm, and inviting and the wonderful service makes you feel right at home. Mothership is truly a one-of-a-kind gem!

2. Ives Concert Park on the Westside campus!

We are so lucky to have a place as beautiful as Ives Concert Park right here on our Westside campus! Ives is a true oasis right here at our school, and fall is a great time to take advantage of its beauty! Ives is a wonderful place to go on a scenic fall stroll, journal, read, hang out with friends, meditate, create art, get some fresh air, and admire the foliage we are lucky enough to have here in CT!

1. The Salvation Army in Danbury

The Salvation Army is the perfect place to go thrift the fall sweater of your dreams! Thrifting is a great way to find amazing and unique clothing pieces at a great price all while being environmentally conscious by shopping secondhand and reducing clothing waste! Get excited for fall by thrifting some staple pieces for your fall wardrobe this year. Happy hunting!

I hope this gave you some inspiration for things to do to make the most of this beautiful time of year! I wish you all a happy, healthy, and festive fall!





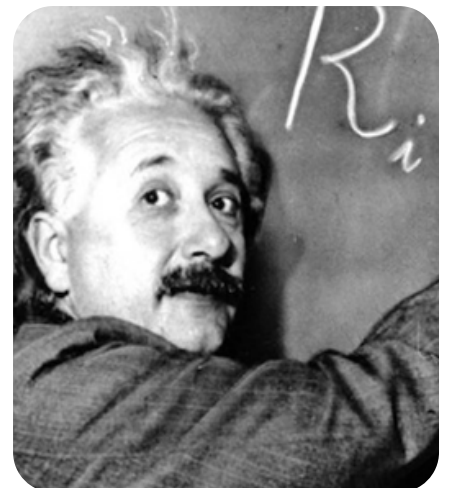
HERE ARE SOME TIPS, TRICKS, AND MAYBE LIFE-SAVING WAYS TO HELP YOU STAY ON TOP OF YOUR ACADEMIC GAME WHILE REDUCING YOUR STRESS LEVELS.

BY JORDAN DEANGELO,
CENTENNIAL ARM

Good Note Taking & Getting Ready to Register

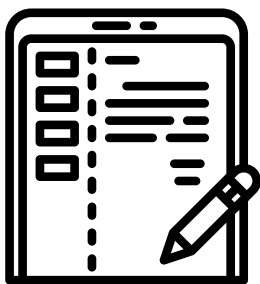
College might feel like a blur of lectures, assignments, and countless emails about looming deadlines. But don't worry; you've got this! We've got you covered, whether you're attempting to take better notes without copying down every single word or just trying to figure out how to register for classes without panicking at the last minute. Here are some tips, tricks, and maybe life-saving ways to help you stay on top of your academic game while reducing your stress levels.

Taking good notes doesn't mean jotting down every word your professor says. Pay attention to key phrases such as "There are four main..." or "To sum up..." to identify key elements. These signal words are your signal to write down what's important. Pay attention to repeated concepts, as teachers often emphasize key details several



times. Nonverbal indicators such as pointing, hand gestures, and vocal emphasis can also help you determine what's worth writing down. And don't forget closing statements! They usually give an overview of everything you need to know, so pay attention until the very end.

If you're watching online lectures, try watching them in real time rather than pausing and rewinding. This strategy can help you stay focused and encourages your brain to recognize the most significant information as it occurs. When it comes to creating notes, keep them short and sweet. Use acronyms, symbols, and bullet points instead of complete sentences. This will save you time, keep your hand from cramping, and make it easier for you to analyze later. Furthermore, focusing on shorter, important sentences allows you to home in on the main ideas without getting caught up with too many details. Now that you've covered the basics, let's look at a few note-taking techniques that are designed to help you stay organized.



1. Cornell Method

This method is simple but effective: draw a straight line down the left side of your paper, leaving roughly a third of the page margin. Write regular notes on the right side, taking down important points and information. On the left side, jot down any questions, key terms, or connections that arise during the presentation. This area can also be used to reference textbook pages or assignments that are relevant to the content. The Cornell

Method is especially useful when reading your notes later since it pushes you to actively engage in what you've written by organizing your ideas and making meaningful connections.

2. Outline Method

This strategy involves creating an organized outline while you listen, dividing down big topics into bullet points or numbered sections and adding necessary sections beneath them. This strategy works best when the material has been presented in a clear and orderly manner, allowing you to reflect the lecture's flow in your notes. However, it may be less effective in topics where the ideas tend to be more abstract or less ordered.

When it concerns registering for classes, time is crucial. First, make a note of your registration date in every available place - your phone, your calendar, and, if necessary, your forehead - to avoid forgetting it. You could also plan ahead of time by researching course offerings early on. Don't wait until the night before to check; classes fill up quickly, especially the ones you really want. Prepare a few alternatives in case your first choices are all taken. Also, don't forget to speak with your advisor before registration begins! They can assist you in making sure you are on track for graduation and have not missed any required courses.



Set numerous alarms and log in early on registration day! Registration systems may freeze or lag when everyone tries to sign up at the same time, so be prepared. If you find yourself in a schedule bind, don't panic. Some spaces may open up after the first registration frenzy, so check later or contact the professor. Remember, waitlists are your friend - sign up for one if your desired class is full, and cross your fingers that someone drops!

You're now prepared to face college like the note-taking, class-registering pro you are. With these techniques in your back pocket, you'll stay well ahead of the chaos, skip those 8 a.m. lectures (if that's your thing), and keep your schedule and mind working smoothly. So go on, grab your classes, and take some beautifully structured notes - you've got this!

Citations:

"Effective Note-Taking in Class." *Learning Center*, learningcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/effective-note-taking-in-class/.

"Note-Taking." *Academic Resource Center*, academicresourcecenter.harvard.edu/2023/10/02/note-taking/.



Housing things to keep in mind for the rest of the semester...

- If you need to stay on campus for the **Thanksgiving Break** (Nov. 26 - Dec. 1), you may do so at no additional charge. However, you WILL need to register to stay. Look for an application on the Housing Portal in early November (and remember, there are no guests and no food service or shuttle buses over the break!)
- Housing is available over **intersession (semester break)** on a limited basis, but there is a cost charged for the intersession. Applications will be available later in November. Please note - not all buildings will remain open for the break. If you do not live in one of the buildings which will be open, you **MUST** receive written permission from each current resident of an apartment to be able to stay in their room for the break. Don't wait until it's too late to make arrangements with folks to stay. We don't have the luxury of open suites or apartments for you this year.
- It's not too soon to plan for **moving out** at the end of the semester. Your final exams schedule for the fall is already posted. (<https://www.wcsu.edu/registrar/final-exams/>) When leaving at the end of the semester, you must move out no later than 24 hours after your last exam, or by Friday, December 13th @ 6 pm if your exams fall at the end of the week.
- There may be **openings for RAs or ARMs** for the spring semester. Please watch in the next few weeks for information on when and where applications will be available. If you have questions, please reach out to Maranda Cox, who is coordinating RA selection, at Coxm@wcsu.edu.
- **Good luck on your midterms and the rest of the fall semester!**

Interview: Adjunct Professor Anthony DePoto

Loads to learn from the WCSU grad turned adjunct prof!

BY AZAYDA LYNT,
NEWBURY ARM

in this October article, I had the honor of interviewing an adjunct professor here at Western Connecticut State University. Professor Anthony DePoto teaches Playmaking with Children, Children's Theatre Practicum, and the introductory Theatre Production Lecture. I was very fortunate in my first year here at WCSU that I could take his Theatre Production Lecture course. I learned a great many valuable life lessons and helpful tips that have propelled me in my academic career here at Western. Additionally, I have had the



most amazing time working under his supervision as Peer Mentor for the same course that I took my first year. Below are his responses to questions I asked regarding professional, academic, and personal success during our interview.



AL: When applying for this position, what were some of the preparations you made to ensure that you would have a successful interview?

AD: I graduated from Western Connecticut State University in 2009 with a B.A. in Performance. During my time at WCSU, I developed a good rapport with one of my professors, Coordinator of the BFA Acting Program here at WCSU, Professor Pam McDaniel. To become an adjunct professor of Theatre Arts, Professor McDaniel called me in the summer of 2013 to offer me the position. She spoke to me about the position and my connection to the material that would be taught.

AL: Can you describe your morning routine and how it impacts your performance?

AD: My morning routine is I wake up at 4:15 am and workout at the gym from 5:30 am - 6:30 am. I return home while my daughters - 7 and 11 years old - are still sleeping and I make their lunches for school. From there, I prepare for my work day and head to bring my daughters to the 8:10 am bus pick up. Once my daughters are on the bus I head to WCSU. My early morning work schedule is what keeps me energized for the rest of the day. I also enjoy my mornings with my daughters as in this industry (theatre), you will find that you might not be able to allot family time during crunchtime.



AL: What are some qualities you look for in student leaders?

AD: Qualities I look for in student leaders are individuals who can be strong listeners, communicators, and collaborators. In order to maintain a great rapport with professors, or really any authority figure, you must have strength in communication. When hiring for my own theatre company, I find that experience is rarely needed as much as is positive professional attitudes.

AL: What are some ways you remain organized with your busy schedule? What are some tactics and/or resources you utilize?

AD: Within my schedule of teaching at WCSU, I am also the Head of Acting at the Norwalk Conservatory of the Arts, CEO of innerAct Theatre LLC, and co-founder of ERA Productions. I make sure at the beginning of each month - or even sooner - that I write down all meetings, deadlines, and otherwise important information that is time sensitive in my phone calendar and other reminders. I find that this is the most convenient resource because in this time and age, we are all checking our phones consistently. I also don't have to worry about leaving a paper planner behind.



AL: What are some personal examples of a balanced work and professional life?

AD: The best way to balance my work life and personal life is to basically separate them. Once I am home I turn off all work email, texts, and phone calls and hold them to the next business day. My priority when I come home is my family.

AL: When tasked with challenging work, what is the mindset you bring, and how do you manage your personal feelings toward the job?

AD: When approached with challenging work tasks, I prioritize what is most important and has the closest due date. I tackle work that I can control

and communicate to others in a professional and efficient manner. Personally, I manage my feelings by making sure whomever I am working with understands the tasks that need to be completed and when. Communication, like as I expanded on more about student leaders, is one of the most key components when working with others.

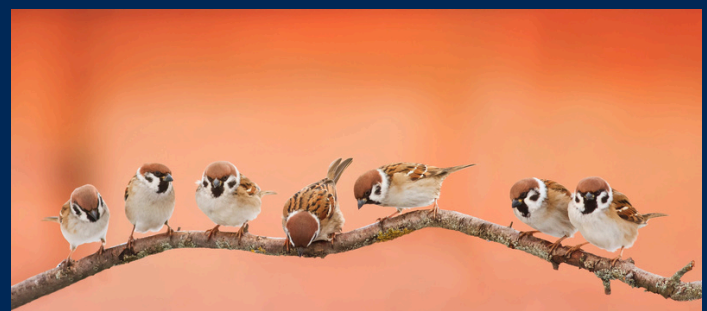
Professor Anthony DePoto's WCSU profile link: <https://www.wcsu.edu/theatrearts/anthony-depoto-adjunct-professor/>



Song for Autumn

by Mary Oliver

In the deep fall
 don't you imagine the leaves think how
 comfortable it will be to touch
 the earth instead of the
 nothingness of air and the endless
 freshets of wind? And don't you think
 the trees themselves, especially those with mossy,
 warm caves, begin to think
 of the birds that will come - six, a dozen - to sleep
 inside their bodies? And don't you hear
 the goldenrod whispering goodbye,
 the everlasting being crowned with the first
 tuffets of snow? The pond
 vanishes, and the white field over which
 the fox runs so quickly brings out
 its blue shadows. And the wind pumps its
 bellows. And at evening especially,
 the piled firewood shifts a little,
 longing to be on its way.



Beating the Fall Slump

by Tim Hynan, Grasso Hall ARM



This can be a hard time for school and you. Days are getting shorter, classes are piling up, and if you eat one more dining hall chicken tender it might put you over the edge.

Don't worry though, this is totally normal for the mid-semester slump and there are strategies in place to get your head and health in check to push through.

Getting Active

Summer's over, pools are closed, and you might be starting to pack up those summer clothes for the months ahead, but that just means that there is the opportunity to try some new activities out and get the blood pumping!

Hitting the Gym: getting into a steady routine even if it is just walking inside when it gets wintery can help be a valuable distraction from school and a great way to clear your mind and body. Improving your physical health and exercising has a thoroughly researched positive effect on mental health and reduces stress levels.

Going for walks: Fall is the perfect time for going on walks, whether a short stroll around campus or a hike through the great nature preserves around Connecticut and the area. With the leaves changing and the weather milder it is a great time to enjoy the beauty of the outdoors and find your new favorite hiking spots. Some great spots close to home here in Danbury are Tarrywile Park or Hemlock Hills-Pine Mountain trails. Also, Westside is a great area to walk around and get some fresh air in between study sessions.

Fueling Up

One of the most important things to stay on top of with the semester picking up is your nutrition. Between long classes, studying, work and your social life, fueling up your body might have taken a backseat. It is important to keep on top of this and make sure you are getting the necessary nutrients needed. Choose nutrient dense foods that will give you sustained energy, and brain boosts like trail mix, berries, or avocados and make sure to hydrate (Best brain foods, 2018).

Also, making conscious choices in the dining hall can be a game changer. Mixing it up and making sure you have a variety of colors on your plate might sound like an elementary school lesson but it's a great and simple way to get different nutrients into your diet. Try the Simply-3 station and check out the action stations to mix it up from the grill station. Making good choices can be overwhelming especially when you are distracted with assignments and responsibilities, but taking a small moment to build your plate is a great habit to form for now and the rest of your life.

Rest and Relaxation

Ultimately, one of the best ways to get through the busy period is to step away. Distraction and new habits are great, but sometimes the best way to kick back is to go back to what you know and love. Finding your happy place and stepping away from the computer screen is a great option for improving your mental wellbeing.

Finding your relaxing activity can be a great help too! Painting, puzzles, video games, and even a new TV show to binge can be a welcome escape from schoolwork and shouldn't be underestimated.

Despite how rough this period of school may be, you will get through it and your ARM is there to support you! If you have any questions or need help finding more strategies to get through this stretch, make sure to pop into office hours and talk about an action plan for the rest of the semester.

Resources

Mahindru, A., Patil, P., & Agrawal, V. (2023). Role of Physical Activity on Mental Health and Well-Being: A Review. *Cureus*, 15(1), e33475. <https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.33475>

National University. (2018, April 9). Best Brain Foods for studying. National University. <https://www.nu.edu/blog/best-brain-foods-for-studying/>

