Happy December!

While many of us are dreaming of winter break, students at UW-Eau Claire are preparing for the very busy end of the semester. In between writing final papers and studying for final exams, there is also a lot of fun to be had at UW-Eau Claire in December.

If there is any time left to breathe, hopefully students have much to look forward to, especially reconnecting with friends and family over winter break, and new classes starting here second semester.

Hopefully you’ll have lots of time to visit with your UW-Eau Claire student in the coming weeks. Don’t forget to ask them to tell you about life here in Eau Claire!

**Winter Commencement**

*Saturday, December 19, 2015*

*Zorn Arena / 9am & 2pm*

**Morning Ceremony:** College of Arts & Science  
College of Nursing & Health Services

**Afternoon Ceremony:** College of Business  
College of Education & Human Sciences

For more information visit the [Commencement webpage](#) or email [commencement@uwec.edu](mailto:commencement@uwec.edu)
Before You Leave….

Studying all hours, eating poorly, drinking lots of caffeine, maintaining a different schedule, and lack of sleep all contribute to forgetfulness for some students. In the hurried packing, often times students don’t think about everything they need over the next month or so. Please note that most of the residence halls are closed from December 19th at 6pm through January 20th at noon and Housing and Residence Life staff are not available to let folks in to retrieve forgotten items (except in emergency situations). Here is a list you and your students can use create a what-to-pack list:

Commonly forgotten items
• Medication
• Personal Hygiene items that student might need (dental retainers, etc.)
• Passport, birth certificate, driver’s license, etc.
• Purse/Wallet, Bills, receipts, tax forms, etc.
• Suit, dress, tuxedo, or other special occasion wear
• Musical instruments
• Sports equipment if student is on an athletic team
• Keys, shoes, glasses/contacts
• Holiday presents, etc.

Finals Week - December 14–18

Finals week is part of the regular academic semester, and all classes are required to meet as shown in the final examination schedule. Exam schedules are available, on My Blugold CampS. Each course offered for credit is concluded with a final examination unless the instructor determines that some other method of evaluation is more appropriate to the objectives of the course.

It is important to know that no student will be permitted to reschedule a final examination unless there are extraordinary circumstances over which the student has no control (e.g. hospitalization or military obligation). If your student has a serious issue arise which prevents him or her from taking an exam, your student should contact the Dean of Students Office for assistance.

However, if a student has three or more examinations scheduled for one day, he or she may request the change of an individual examination time. A request for a change in the time of an individual final examination must be approved by the instructor, the department chair, and the assistant/associate dean of the college in which the course is offered. Make-up examinations must be scheduled during finals week or later and must be arranged by the student with the instructor.

At the conclusion of each term, an electronic grade report is e-mailed to each enrolled student at his/her university e-mail account. The electronic grade report is typically emailed to the student within 48 hours of the submission deadline. The report includes, in addition to grades for courses just completed, the student’s semester GPA, resident GPA, classification, degree program, major, faculty adviser, academic status (if unsatisfactory), and academic warnings or special notices. The grade report links to information for students in academic difficulty. If your student has a designation of academic warning, probation or suspension, s/he should follow that link to get more information.
Staying On Campus During Winter Break

Below is the letter that was shared with your student earlier this week

Halls CLOSED during break: Bridgman, Horan, Oak Ridge, Priory, Putnam, Sutherland
Halls OPEN during break: Chancellors, Governors, Murray, Thomas and Towers Halls

**Winter Break:** Halls will close at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 19th and will re-open at noon, Wednesday, January 20th.

**Reasons for Staying:** If you have a valid reason to stay on-campus anytime during these break periods due to work, Winterim classes, athletic, music departmental commitments, or if you are an international student, you must complete a Break Authorization Form.

**Moving to new room for Spring Semester?** If you are moving to a new room for Spring 2016, you need to move to your Spring room 24-hours after your last final or 6:00pm, Saturday December 19th at the latest. You must be flexible with it being finals week and trying to accommodate moves with the current residents in your new room.

Please note if you are staying for winter break, you will follow the procedure based on your **SPRING ROOM ASSIGNMENT**. For example: if your spring room assignment is in an open hall, you will complete the online form. If your spring assignment is in a closed hall, you will need to find a room to stay in and thus complete the paper form in the Housing office.

**My hall is closed, what do I do if I want to stay?** It is your responsibility to find someone whose room you can stay in. You will also need to get the door combination from the person whose room you will be staying in. Male students can only stay in male-designated rooms and female students can only stay in female-designated rooms.

- Find a room to stay in that is located in one of the OPEN halls
- Pick up paper Break Authorization Form in the Housing Office
- Get both individuals who are assigned to the room you want to stay in for break to sign your paper Break Authorization Form.
- Turn in completed forms to Housing Office (Towers 112) by **4:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 17th**
  Please do not wait until the last minute as you do need to get permission signatures.
- If not turned in by due date/time, you will not have access to the building for break.

**My hall is open, what do I do if I want to stay for break?** Please complete the online form, To acknowledge you will be staying in your room for break by **Friday, December 18th at NOON**.

If you do not complete the form on time, you will not have access to the hall during break.

**I live in the hotel and want to stay in my room over break?** Please complete the online form, to acknowledge you will be staying in your assigned hotel room for break by **Friday, December 18th NOON**.

You can stay in your room however students from the closed halls will not be granted permission to stay in hotel rooms over break.

**I will not be attending UWEC in Spring however, I need to stay past Saturday, December 19th.**

If your current room assignment is in an open hall (Governors, Chancellors, Murray, Thomas, Towers), you will need to come to the Housing Office (Rm. 112 Towers) to complete a paper authorization form. You will need to get the signatures of your current roommate in addition to the new spring resident moving in (if there is one). Must be completed and returned to the Housing Office by **Thursday, December 17 by 4:00pm**.

If your current room assignment is in a closed hall (Bridgman, Horan, Oak Ridge, Putnam, Priory, Sutherland), you will need to find an individual’s room to stay in that is located in an open hall (Governors, Chancellors, Murray, Thomas, Towers). You will need to get an authorization form in the Housing Office, Rm. 112 Towers, and have the signatures from the two students that will be living in the room for Spring 2016 to sign your authorization form. Must be completed and turned into the Housing Office by **Thursday, December 17 by 4:00pm**.
Winter Break Tips for Students
Living Off Campus

The Off Campus Student Life program and Student Senate have teamed up this fall to provide information to students about things to consider before leaving town for the extended winter break. If your student is living in an apartment, please encourage them to follow these steps before they come home.

**WINTER BREAK CHECKLIST**

- **Prevent theft**
  - Close and lock all windows and doors
  - Create an illusion that you're home by leaving on a couple of lights and the radio
  - Bring your valuables home with you

- **Save energy**
  - Unplug electronics & appliances
  - Turn thermostat down, not off (reference your lease for appropriate temperature)

- **Get help from friends or neighbors**
  - If it's your responsibility in your lease, arrange for someone to shovel for you while you're gone
  - Have a neighbor pick up your mail, or arrange for the post office to hold it for you
  - Make sure your landlord has your contact information so you can be reached in case of an emergency

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**Off Campus Student Living Handbook now available for students**

The UW-Eau Claire Off Campus Student Life program has completed an Off Campus Student Living Handbook which is available to students. The guide includes everything a student needs to know about being a renter and living in Eau Claire, from finding a good roommate to signing a lease to being a good neighbor. City contact numbers and on campus resources are included in the handbook. [The booklet can be found online by clicking here.](#)
Students Moving Home for Winter Break

We’ve heard from parents and families in the past that winter break is LONG! Students will have a month-long break beginning on December 20th and continuing through January 21st when the residence halls open.

Students brainstormed the following list of things to think about:

- Students may become bored at home over break.
- Students may feel the need to stay connected (via email, IM, phone, Facebook, visits, etc.) with friends from school.
- Grades will arrive and may or may not be what students and parents expected. Consider the following conversation ideas: maybe a reality check about the first semester challenges, refocusing for next semester, additional encouragement, possibly appeals procedures if grades are very low, course load, the reality that classes that "sound" easy (i.e. English 101) might be very challenging, understand that a high school honors student may only be an "average" college student and even then, might still be struggling, etc. It is important to remember that the first semester, with all the transitions, is typically the toughest.
- Students may or may not want to spend time with friends from back home; they will have changed, too, and those connections might not be as desirable anymore.
- House rules/policies: communicate and compromise; the student has experienced freedom, independence, and, likely, change. The rules that were in place for the 18 year old high school student may need to be revised for the 18 year old college student. But it's important the student still recognizes parental guidelines and, especially, if there are siblings at home, the impact of behaviors and attitudes on brothers/sisters.
- Some of the students will have chosen/experienced physical changes as well. Some of these may be of the new piercing/tattoo/hair style/hair color variety. Others may involve weight gain. Students say they don't want to hear remarks about the "freshman 15" or "muffin tops" or any other potentially insensitive observations. We know these innocent comments often reinforce negative body image which can lead to eating issues. On a related note, be careful about buying clothes for holiday gifts... not only may tastes/preferences have changed, but sizes may have changed as well. Consider gift cards or shopping together.

Parents and families in the past have shared that it is helpful to discuss:

- House rules (curfews, etc.) Have your "policies" changed now that your student is back?
- Habits: Students may have picked up some new habits while away at college; unfortunately, not all of those habits are good ones. What happens if you do not approve of their new habits?
- Expectations (chores, laundry, etc.): Is your student expected to perform daily duties?
- Money: Who pays for what?
- Working: Will your student work over winter break? If not, what will he or she do to occupy his or her time?

If employment is part of the plan your student should visit Career Services for information about job searching. Students can also utilize the online job board to find jobs in Eau Claire.
Meet a UWEC Employee

Who are the Faculty/Staff/Students/Professors that your student is around everyday? We will feature a different UWEC employee each month, we hope to put you in touch with everyone from the Chancellor to our wonderful food service people.

This month we had Shanti Freitas, Intercultural Immersion Coordinator, answer the following questions:

What do you do at UWEC: I coordinate all the faculty-led international and domestic immersions on campus. These are short-term Winterim, Spring Break, and Summer programs that immerse students in another culture and context, whether that is in the United States or globally. We offer about 20-25 programs each academic year, which are both for-credit courses as well as non-credit experiences. I work with faculty leaders in the development and implementation of their programs, as well as with students in choosing a program that fits with their academic plan, preparing them for the experience, and providing support after they return.

How did your path lead you to UWEC: I was born and brought up in Chicago, Illinois, and studied abroad in Ecuador as an undergraduate student. Therefore, I knew how impactful and life-changing Immersion Experiences could be, and wanted to work at a university that truly supports and values these types of high-impact practices. UWEC was certainly that place, where faculty, staff and administration understand the importance of developing intercultural competence and global awareness in students.

Tell us what you love about UWEC: UWEC is committed to providing students with a liberal education curriculum as well other academic opportunities that prepare them for a changing world after graduation, as is demonstrated by the Chancellor’s guide post of 100% of UWEC students participating in a high-impact practice before graduation. But UWEC doesn’t just state it as a goal, the university supports students in achieving it by offering a diverse array of opportunities, increasing access through Blugold Commitment funding, and encouraging participation through advising and curriculum. I am constantly amazed by how dedicated the faculty and staff on campus are supporting student success, both inside and outside the classroom, and making high-impact practices available to as many students as possible.

What is your favorite place to visit on campus and in Eau Claire: On campus, I love walking over the bridge because I am reminded of the beauty of our campus and community. Whether it’s during the summer and students are floating down the river in tubes, or it’s during the winter and the river is frozen, every time I walk over the bridge I appreciate the natural beauty that surrounds us. In the city of Eau Claire, I really enjoy spending time at Phoenix Park, whether it’s at the farmers market or listening to music in the parks, or just taking a walk.

What advice do you have for parents: I would let parents know that by sending your child to UWEC, there are so many opportunities for him or her to take advantage of on campus. I would encourage parents and students to spend the time to really get to know about all the opportunities available, and get involved as much as possible. In addition, I would once again highlight the dedication of faculty and staff on campus to help your child succeed, and encourage your child to reach out to faculty and staff on campus, because we are here support you!
Second Year Experience

Do you have a second year student? Are they still looking for ways to get involved, find connections, or decide on a major? Or maybe you have a student who is looking for ways to build their leadership skills. If so, consider having them attend #JumpNotSlump, a free, half-day retreat for second year students! The Retreat will take place the Sunday afternoon before classes begin, and will feature free food, break-out sessions, speakers, and prizes. Second year students who attend will have the opportunity to meet other second year students in the same boat as well as meet with successful faculty, upperclassmen, and alumni.

Students can register for the event now. They will be sent the registration via email, but they can also find a link on the UWEC Career Services website. Registration will continue through the middle of January, but if your son or daughter is interested, encourage them to register as soon as possible! For more information see the event schedule below:

#JumpNotSlump events will include: exploring majors, getting to know your campus resources, study abroad & immersion trips and much more. Students can view the events schedule on the Career Services website.

Money Matters

It’s already the end of the fall semester; where did the time go? We’ve been wrapping up our semester and students have been busy registering for their spring classes. Your students will be on break before you know it!

We have been fielding a lot of questions from parents and students about the timing of online payments. While paying online is a convenient method of payment, it isn’t instant. Payments made online via credit card or bank account transfer can take up to two business days to appear on the student accounts. The posting of those payments is tied to our receiving a bank file at the end of each afternoon, so, unfortunately, we don’t have a way to speed up the process. If your student is in a hurry to get a payment made, the fastest route is to pay cash or check in our office. We can post that to the account immediately, and have your students on their way.

Wishing you a lovely winter break!
Holiday Gift Ideas for your College Student

Are you still looking for the perfect holiday gift for your son or daughter? We asked our student employees what was on the top of their gift list for this holiday season and here are a few of their suggestions.

- $$$ money, money, money $$$
- Socks (wool and plain old white socks)
- Barnes & Nobel Gift Card (it can be used in the Campus bookstore)
- Winter boots
- Sweaters
- Camelback Water Bottle
- Gift Cards for restaurants around Eau Claire
- Tablet or new Smartphone
- Blugold Swag (the University Bookstore has a great selection)
- New wallet or purse stuffed with surprises (money, movies tickets, gift cards)
- Kitchen appliances for the off campus student (George Foreman Grill, blender, etc.)
- Noise cancelling headphones
- Netflix membership
- New blanket
- Slippers and a bathrobe

Health and Safety Messages for students

As the fall semester comes to a close, students will receive prevention messages related to drinking and driving prevention. Posters will remind students that the holiday season can be especially dangerous on the road and to make a plan for another way home – a sober friend, a taxi, or public transportation - if they have been drinking.

Students may have noticed another campaign around campus this fall called “What’s your Happy Hour?” that featured several UW-Eau Claire students and the healthy activities they use to unwind. The Center for Alcohol Studies and Education developed the campaign, and has the mission of encouraging students to avoid excessive drinking and its associated negative outcomes. For more information, visit www.uwec.edu/case.
**Student Health 101**

*Student Health 101* is a newsletter brought to your student each month by the Student Health Service Office. The Parent Perspective is a parent’s companion to Student Health 101 newsletter. Student Health 101 is written to help your son or daughter live a healthier life.

Each issue of the Parent Perspective is a quick-to-read summary of that month’s student newsletter.

**What’s Happening on Campus?**

Blugold Athletics | [Click here for Winter Sports Calendars.](#)

*Remind your student that they can attend most games for free with their Blugold card!*

**Holiday Concert | Zorn | December 6 | 2pm & 6pm**

Tickets available at the University Service Center

You are cordially invited to enjoy a festive holiday tradition as the UW-Eau Claire Foundation welcomes the community to the university’s annual Holiday Concert. For nearly four decades, we’ve taken this time to showcase our students’ extraordinary musical talents and to spread holiday joy. Featuring: The Concert Choir and The Singing Statesmen, The Women’s Concert Chorale, The Women’s Chorus and The Symphonic Choir, The Wind Symphony, and The Symphony Orchestra.

**Banff Mountain Film Fest | Dec. 7 & 8 | 7pm**

Woodland Theater, Davies Center

The Banff Mountain Film Festival features a collection of exhilarating and provocative films that explore life in the mountains. They highlight remote cultures, intense expeditions into exotic landscapes and bring adrenaline-packed action sports into sharp focus.