



VOL.35 | AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2024 THE LION'S ROAR

The monthly newsletter for Penn State Berks

What's Inside:

IMPORTANT DATES (P.1)

CHANCELLOR WELCOME (P.1)

ACADEMIC ADVISING (P. 2)

- Information about academic advising at Berks including finding your advisor and changing your Fall schedule.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE (P.3)

- Information related to learning and studying at Berks.

FINANCIAL AID (P.4)

- Information about ensuring your aid is disbursed, maintaining aid, and FAFSA updates.

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES (P. 5)

- Information about things to do at Penn State Berks and in surrounding area.

CAMPUS RESOURCE LIST (P. 6)



Dear Penn State Berks Students,

Welcome to Fall 2024! We're very happy that you are joining us, and we hope your path of learning and self-discovery leads you to realize your dreams. Thank you for pursuing your educational journey with us.

Our faculty and staff are ready for you: excited about the learning experiences you will share and eager to get to know you. Please visit your professors during office hours or by appointment; they really want to talk with you one-on-one and will remember you afterward.

WE ARE ... Engaged! Our Office of Student Affairs has created a vibrant environment in which you can get involved this fall, through our many clubs, activities, sports, student government, and the community beyond campus. There's something for everyone at Penn State Berks, and if you can't find a club that fits your interests, you can even start your own!

And you will find your people here – the ones who know you, care about you, and are looking out for you. If you have any concerns – about your classes or being away from home or anything else – please reach out. Our staff and faculty are here to help and support you so that you are successful.

You belong here. Penn State Berks offers a warm welcome to all members of our community and proudly supports diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging.

If you see me around campus, eating at Tully's, going to sporting and cultural events, and walking around Perkins Plaza, please feel free to tap my shoulder and say, "Hello."

Dr. Radha Pyati
Chancellor, Penn State Berks



Important Dates

Aug. 12 - Sept. 10: Intent to Graduate Activation Period*

Aug. 26:

- New Student Convocation at 12:15pm (Perkins Lawn)
- Classes Begin

Aug. 31: Regular Drop Deadline at 11:59pm (for full semester courses)

Sept. 1:

- Regular Add Deadline at 11:59pm (for full semester courses)
- Late Drop Begins (for full semester courses)**

Sept. 2:

- Labor Day Holiday - No Classes

Sept. 3:

- Fall Bill Due
- Installment Payment Plan (IPP) enrollment deadline***

Sept. 22: IPP Payment #2 Due***

*Students who intend on graduating in December 2024, should file their intent to graduate in LionPATH. More information [here](#)

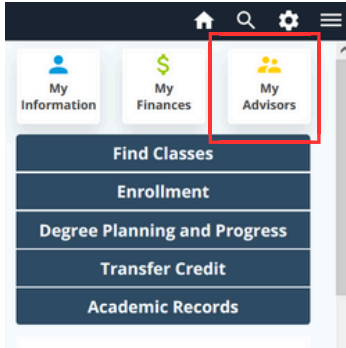
**The Late Drop period ends on Nov. 15 at 11:59pm. This date applies to full semester courses. Learn more [here](#)

***If you enroll in the Installment Payment Plan (IPP) by the first payment (9/3), your second, third, and fourth installments are due on the 22nd of the three subsequent months. Read more on the IPP, [here](#)



ACADEMIC ADVISING

DO I HAVE AN ADVISOR?



Find your assigned academic advisor in LionPATH. Click "My Advisors" in the upper right corner on your student dashboard.

Schedule an appointment with your Academic advisor. In LionPATH, click "Starfish" in the Quick Links section on the bottom right of your student dashboard.

TOP 4 REASONS TO MEET WITH AN ADVISOR

1. Create an appropriate **course schedule** to remain on track towards graduation.
2. Develop a deeper understanding of **requirements and/or changes** to your major.
3. Learn about **policies and deadlines** that could benefit you (e.g., grade forgiveness; course repeats, etc.).
4. Explore **opportunities and resources** that could augment your academic experiences.

FALL 2024 COURSE LOAD

A student's academic course load will impact their degree progression and financial aid eligibility.

- To be considered a **full-time student**, you must enroll (and maintain for the duration of the semester) at least 12 credits.
- To be considered a **part-time student**, you must enroll (and maintain for the duration of the semester) at least 6 but less than 12 credits.
- Learn more [here](#)

PRO TIP: Review your Fall 2024 course schedule in LionPATH within the first two days of the semester. If you are **not** enrolled in the minimum number of credits needed (based on your preferred part-time or full-time status) meet with an academic advisor before the first Friday of the semester to adjust your schedule!

DROP-IN ADVISING

Academic Advising Center
160 Franco Building
610-396-6280

Want to change your schedule? Students can DROP classes until Saturday, Aug. 31 (11:59pm) and ADD classes until Sunday, Sept. 1 (11:59pm). Always speak with your assigned academic advisor (and Financial Aid) before making any schedule changes. Schedule changes can potentially impact progress towards degree completion and financial aid eligibility.

Unable to reach your assigned academic advisor? The Academic Advising Center is happy to help! Students can meet with an academic advisor virtually or in-person between August 26 - 30 from 8:00am – 4:00pm.

- Virtual: <https://psu.zoom.us/j/95866379023>
- In-person: Come to the office and sign in for a walk-in appointment. You will have the option to meet with an advisor in-person or virtually.



ADVISING SYSTEMS



Academic advisors use a number of PSU systems to coordinate support of students. The systems most often used include:

LionPATH: <https://lionpathsupport.psu.edu/>

1. Used to help students manage their degree planning and progress.

Starfish: <https://sites.psu.edu/starfishinfo/>

1. Used to connect students with their advisor and maintain notes on advising meetings.

University Bulletin: <https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/>

1. Used to explore degree programs including entrance to major requirements and suggested academic plans.



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

MASTER THE MATERIAL

This is the year you master your course material! Engage with the various tutoring resources at Penn State Berks to help you excel this semester!

LEARNING CENTER (161 FRANCO)

- Professional and peer tutoring in math.
- Peer tutors in chemistry, biology, and more.
- Support with study skills, time management, test anxiety, and more.
- Schedule an appointment at <https://berks.mywconline.com/>

Open for Peer Tutoring by Appointment

Monday–Thursday 9:00am–7:00pm | Friday 9:00am–1pm

Walk-In Hours Dr. Ryan Hassler, Faculty Math Tutor

Monday Noon to 3:00pm | Tuesday & Thursday 1:30pm – 3:00pm

WRITING CENTER (141 FRANCO)

- Peer tutors to help with a paper, speech, resume, or other written material.
- Available in-person or via Zoom
- Schedule an appointment at <https://berks.mywconline.com/>

Open for Peer Tutoring: Monday–Friday 10:00am – 6:30pm

MATH PEERS & PROFS (222 LUERSSEN)

- Tutoring sessions available for Math 4, 21, 22, 26, 34, 41, and Stat 100 with Math faculty and teaching assistants.
- Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:15-1:15pm.
- No appointment is necessary!

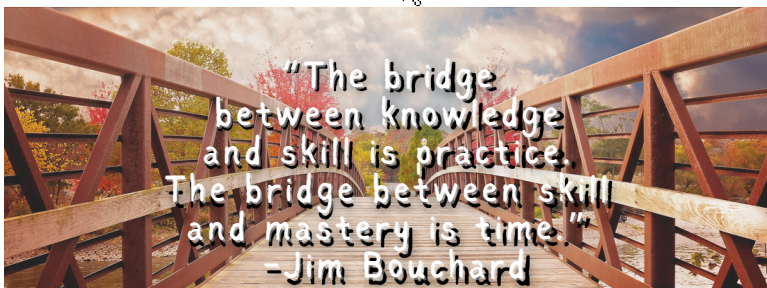
CLASSROOM LEARNING ASSISTANTS (LAs)

• Select courses may include LAs who support during class as well as offer individual office hours. If applicable, check with your individual LA for their availability.

STUDY SMARTER INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP

Learn to better monitor your learning and improve your study skills so that you don't waste time and effort on ineffective study strategies!

Register at Penn State Learning_



THUN LIBRARY SERVICES



- **LIBRARIANS** are here to help with your research! [Schedule a consultation](#) and [learn more!](#)
- **MEDIA COMMONS** offers digital and multimedia technology resources to the Berks campus community. Learn more about [how to reserve Berks Media Commons equipment and spaces!](#)
- **COURSE RESERVES** are course materials (e.g., textbooks) available to students for FREE. [Search for materials by course name, number, or instructor here.](#)
- **STUDY ROOMS** can be reserved online on a first come, first served basis and for up to 3 hours. [Learn more about Study Rooms and about our SENSORY ROOM here](#)
- More about Thun Library: <https://libraries.psu.edu/berks>

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday through Thursday 8:30am – 9pm

Friday 8:30am – 5pm

Saturday CLOSED

Sunday 2pm – 8pm

THUN WILL BE CLOSED ON:

Sunday, Aug. 25 | Sunday, Sept. 1 | Monday, Sept. 2

STUDENT DISABILITY RESOURCES (SDR)

Students who had academic accommodations in high school may be eligible to receive academic accommodations at Penn State. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact or visit the Student Disability Resources office **as soon as possible** to discuss accommodations as they may differ from those offered in high school.

Learn more [here](#)



FINANCIAL AID

WHAT IS VERIFICATION?

Verification is a federal regulation that requires colleges and universities to verify the information provided by students and parents on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

- If you completed the 2024-2025 FAFSA, you may see verification requests in LionPATH in your HOLDS or TO-DO List. Complete all requests as soon as possible!
- The requests will be for the "2025" aid year in LionPATH. For questions about verification, learn more [here](#)

AM I MAKING PROGRESS?

What is Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)?

All universities that award federal student aid are required by law to have academic progress standards in place for all federal student aid recipients. Students who do not meet the student aid academic progress standard are not eligible for most forms of student aid.

Review of Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory Academic Progress is reviewed every semester and determines a student's Federal financial aid eligibility. SAP is measured during all periods of a student's enrollment at Penn State, including periods in which the student is not receiving financial aid or periods where a student is in a non-degree enrollment status.



Determining Satisfactory Academic Progress

SAP: Three Key Factors

- Cumulative GPA of a 2.00 or higher
- Completion rate of 67% or higher. This means passing 67% of the TOTAL credits (not courses) you have ever attempted at Penn State.
- Maximum Timeframe of 150%. This means you cannot exceed 150% of your program's published length, as measured in credit hours.

Learn more [here](#)

Contact Financial Aid

Email: BerksFinAid@psu.edu
Phone: 610-396-6070*

*No answer? Leave a message with your name, phone number, 9-digit PSU ID number, and reason for calling!

AID NEWS & UPDATES



FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FAFSA)

For the most current news on FAFSA timelines, processes, and changes, visit <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/topics/fafsa-simplification-information>

Students are also encouraged to keep up with their Penn State email, paying special attention to communications from Penn State's Office of Student Aid (at University Park) and the Financial Aid Office (via [Johnée Border](#) at Berks)

PENNSYLVANIA HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AGENCY (PHEAA)

PA STATE GRANT COMPLETION WORKSHOP

- **WHO:** PA State Grant for Eligible PA Residents only
- **WHEN:** August 29, 2024 from 6pm – 7pm
- **WHAT:** PHEAA will present an overview of the 2024–25 PA State Grant process to guide first-time PA State Grant applicants and families through a step-by-step process of filing the PA State Grant application and High School Form.
 - **IMPORTANT:** Most renewal students are not required to complete the PA State Grant Application or High School Form. August 29th from 6:00 – 7:00 PM
- **ATTEND:** Find this session and other sessions <https://www.pheaa.org/virtual/> and register today!

PA STATE GRANT GRANTUS UPDATE

For all eligible PA residents who have submitted their 2024-25 FAFSA, if you have NOT received a GrantUs account activation notice, please first:

- Verify your email. The GrantUs activation notice will be sent to the email address used for the FAFSA.
- Check your spam/junk. The activation notice will come from NoReply@grantus.pheaa.org.
- Try "Forgot Password" at GrantUs login. If PHEAA has processed your FAFSA, you will be sent an email to reset your password and proceed with account activation.



STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

WELCOME WEEK

Join us for a week-long schedule of activities and programs to help students connect with the campus community.

Monday, August 26

- [Coffee & Donuts Cart](#) | 8am - 11am | various locations
- [First-Year Convocation](#) | 12:15pm | Perkins Lawn
 - **WHAT IS IT?** Official introduction to academic and student life at Penn State Berks for **all** students new to Berks.

Tuesday, August 27

- [Trivia with Campus Activities Board \(CAB\)](#) | Follow @psubk_cab on Instagram for real-time updates

Wednesday, August 28

- [Club Rush](#) | 12:15pm | Perkins Lawn
 - **WHAT IS IT?** Involvement fair where **all** students can learn more about and begin connecting with the various clubs and organizations at Penn State Berks.
- [Speed Friending](#) | 7pm | Perkins Lawn
 - **WHAT IS IT?** An event designed to help people find friendship in an inviting, low pressure environment

Thursday, August 29

- [Ice Cream Social hosted by DiscipleMakers and Christian Student Fellowship](#) | 5:30pm | Perkins Lobby

Friday, August 30

- [Welcome Back BBQ](#) | 12:15pm | Perkins Lawn
- [Loteria \(Bingo\) with Latinos United for Change](#) | 7:30PM | 007 Perkins (MPR)

Saturday, August 31

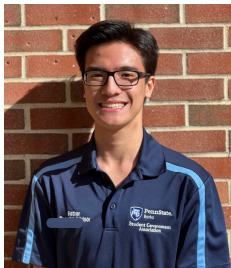
- [Notebook & Tote Bag Decorating with Rainbow Alliance](#) | 11am - 2pm | 101 Perkins (Lion's Den)

Monday, September 2

- [Hershey Park Trip](#) | Follow @psubk_cab on Instagram for real-time updates

AND MORE! Check out the [Student Events Calendar](#) [here](#) to view a full list of campus events and activities. Or follow [@berkscampuslife](#) and [@psubk_cab](#) on Instagram.

SGA: PRESIDENT'S WELCOME



Hello! My name is Nathan Tam, and I am a third-year Biochemistry and Molecular Biology major with minors in Mathematics and Chemistry. I am thrilled to serve as the president of the Student Government Association (SGA) for this year, and I am hoping to be a resource to you as our University navigates a year of change and growth.

If you ever have any questions about how to get involved with SGA or concerns about our campus, please reach out to me at nzt5226@psu.edu. You can also find me tutoring a number of subjects at the Learning Center.

Looking to get the most out of this semester? Reach out early and often to professors, staff, and peers for anything and everything! We work better when we're connected to others, so branch out, even if it's out of your comfort zone!

THINGS TO DO AT BERKS

1. **Athletics:** attend a sporting event on campus to cheer on your peers and display your PSU pride!
 - a. View the calendar of events at <https://psuberkssathletics.com/calendar>
2. **Campus Activities:** participate in the wide range of campus events and activities to learn something new, try something fun, see something cool, eat free food, and/or win amazing prizes.
 - a. See the calendar of events at <https://berks.psu.edu/public-events-calendar/student-events>
3. **Clubs/Orgs:** get involved in a student club/organization. View the list of active clubs/orgs at <https://berks.psu.edu/student-life/clubs-organizations>
4. **Exercise:** Keep your brain sharp and your body going by incorporating exercise into your weekly schedule.
 - a. The Beaver Athletics and Wellness Center is open to current Penn State Berks students:
 - i. Monday - Thursday 7:30am - 11:00pm
 - ii. Friday 7:30am - 5:00pm
 - iii. Saturday 12:00pm - 5:00pm
 - iv. Sunday 3:00pm - 8:00pm

THINGS TO DO: BERKS COUNTY



Outdoors Attractions Perfect for Fall

- **Brecknok Orchard:** pick your own produce and flowers or attend the Fall festival! | <https://www.brecknockorchard.com/>
- **First Energy Stadium:** home of the Fightin' Phils | <https://www.milb.com/reading>
- **Gring's Mill:** visit just across Tulpehocken Road for a recreation area featuring scenic views and walkable trails.
- **Nolde Forest:** 725 acres of deciduous woodlands and coniferous plantations great for hiking, fishing and more! [PA Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources](#)
- **Reading Pagoda:** an actual pagoda and the only one of its kind in the U.S. | <https://www.readingpagoda.com/>
- **Weaver's Orchard:** pick your own produce and flowers or attend the Fall festival! | <https://www.weaversorchard.com/>
- **West Reading:** visit the many restaurants and shops or attend Fall Fest! | <http://www.visitwestreading.com/>



CAMPUS RESOURCE LIST

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

- **24/7 Penn State Crisis Line** can be used in consultation for those at PSU to support someone who is experiencing a crisis or for yourself. You can reach the Crisis Line by:
 - Calling 1-877-229-6400
 - Texting "LIONS" to 741741
- **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention** offers resources and tips on how to support a friend -- or get help yourself.
 - Check it out at <https://seizetheawkward.org/>
- **Berks County Crisis Line** can be used by residents of Berk County to assist children, adolescents and adults experiencing varying levels of crisis.
 - Call the line at 610-379-2007
- **Counseling Services** are available to all Penn State Berks students for FREE.
 - Learn more at <https://berks.psu.edu/counseling-services>
- **Life Hack Kits** are free step-by-step wellness packages designed to help navigate and demystify the perplexing parts of being human.
 - Learn more at <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/wellness-services/life-hacks>
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** is free and confidential support for any person in distress, providing prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones.
 - Call the line by dialing 988 or calling 800-273-8255
- **Online Mental Health Screenings** are free and anonymous for several areas of mental health, including depression, anxiety, academic distress, eating concerns, frustration level, family stress, and alcohol use.
 - Begin a screening at <https://tinyurl.com/CAPSScreening>
- **Red Folder** at Penn State is a guide to help faculty, staff, student leaders, and others who interact with students to recognize, respond effectively to, and refer Penn State students in distress.
 - Review resources specific to Penn State Berks at <https://redfolder.psu.edu/campus-resources/>
- **Safe Berks Campus Advocate** provides support for survivors of domestic and sexual violence as well as offers Prevention and Awareness Programming.
 - **24/7 Hotline:** 844-789-SAFE
 - **Text:** SAFE BERKS to 20121
- **WellTrack Boost** is a tool designed to help understand the activities associated with changes in mood and motivation, as well as to identify patterns in daily activities and how they are associated with changes in emotional states.
 - Get FREE PSU access at <https://psu.welltrack.com/>

GENERAL

- **ACADEMIC ADVISING** [160 FRANCO]
 - Questions about **course scheduling, degree progress, changing your major, or advising policies** contact your assigned academic adviser (listed in LionPATH). You can also reach out to Academic Advising for support.
 - **Email:** bkadvisingcenter@psu.edu
 - **Phone:** 610-396-6280
- **BIAS INCIDENT REPORT FORM**
 - To report concerns regarding bias, intolerance, discrimination, harassment, and/or incivility, use the form found [here](#)
- **BURSAR**
 - Questions about your **bill or payment options**, contact the Bursar's Office
 - **Email:** bkbursar@psu.edu
 - **Phone:** 610-396-6040
- **CARE REPORT FORM**
 - To express concern for a student experiencing distress of an academic, health, safety, or financial nature, use the form found [here](#)
- **FINANCIAL AID**
 - Questions about your **aid, holds, or to do list items**, contact the Financial Aid Office
 - **Email:** BerksFinAid@psu.edu
 - **Phone:** 610-396-6070
- **HOUSING & FOOD SERVICES** [106 PERKINS]
 - Questions about ID Cards or Residence Hall and Housing Contracts email HousingBK@psu.edu
 - Questions about meal plans and food services, including reporting food allergies, email absfoodservicebk@psu.edu
- **THUN LIBRARY**
 - Looking for a **place to study, access course materials, a lounge with vending machines, or support with technology**, visit Thun Library.
 - Webpage: <https://libraries.psu.edu/berks>
 - Access their full calendar [here](#).
 - Course Reserves (free access to textbooks for your classes) can be used in the library in 2 hours intervals. [Check here](#)
- **TUTORING**
 - Need help with **Math or Science**, schedule a tutoring session with a Learning Center Tutor [here](#).
 - Need help with a **paper, speech, resume, or other written material**, schedule an appointment with a Writing Center Tutor [here](#).
 - Need help with math, attend the "**Peers and Profs**" help sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:15-1:15p.m. in Luerssen 222. No appointment necessary!
 - **Courses Supported:** Math 4, 21, 22, 26, 41, & 110
- **VETERAN BENEFITS**
 - Questions about **VA certifications**, contact the Registrar's Office
 - **Email:** BKVeterans@psu.edu
 - **Phone:** 610-396-6085

FOOD PANTRY

The Nittany Corner food pantry was funded and established by the Penn State Berks class of 2017. Pantry items are FREE to Penn State Berks students! Visit the pantry in the Thun Library's Cohen Lounge

