

THE LION'S ROAR

The monthly newsletter for Penn State Berks

DID YOU KNOW? Alternative Grading

Things to know about Fall 2020 Alternative Grading...

- Alternative grades do **not** negatively impact your GPA.
- Between **Dec 23 and Jan 12**, in LionPATH students can elect to keep their letter grade as earned OR use alternative grades for their course(s).
- There are **three types** of alternative grades
 - SAT: original course letter grade of C or higher
 - V: original course letter grade of D
 - Z: original course letter grade of F
- If a student has an **Academic Integrity violation** in a course, they will not be able to use alternative grading in that course.
- Potential **drawbacks**
 - Could impact scholarships, Financial Aid, and entrance to other education institutions
 - Students may NOT be able to use alternative grades for entrance to major in administratively controlled majors
 - Impact to Dean's list attainment and graduating with honors

Speak with your **academic adviser** if you are considering alternative grades. Find your assigned adviser in LionPATH. Any student can also reach out to the Academic Advising Center via phone 610-396-6280 (during regular business hours) or email

bkadvisingcenter@psu.edu (after business hours)

Learn more from the keeplearning.psu.edu site by clicking [here](#)

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IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Semester Dates

Dec 11 Last day of instruction

Dec 11 Withdrawal Deadline (5pm EST)

Dec 14 -18 Final Exam Week*

Dec 19 Commencement (2pm EST)**

Dec 21 - Jan 18 Winter Break***

Dec 23 - Jan 12 Alternative Grading election period

Dec 24 - Jan 1 University Closure****

Jan 4 University re-opens

Jan 19 Spring Semester begins

*Check LionPATH & your syllabi to determine when your finals take place

Commencement is University-wide. Berks will host a graduate reception following commencement. Students who did not file their intent to graduate on time may obtain a cap/tassel by emailing **graduation@psu.edu

***Many university offices and services remain available during Winter Break

****University offices and services will NOT be open/available



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ADVISING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring 2021 Course Enrollment


- **There is still time to meet with your Academic Adviser to plan your Spring courses!**
- Remember, the sooner you schedule next semester's courses, the more likely you are to get the courses you want/need!
- **IMPORTANT**
 - Holds, To-Do List items, and/or having an unpaid balance may prevent you from scheduling classes for next semester.
 - Connect with Financial Aid, Bursar, and any other office as necessary to ensure all issues are resolved before you schedule.



FINANCIAL AID NEWS

2021-2022 FAFSA

REMINDER: FAFSA for 2021-2022 opened Oct 1, 2020!

- You can file your 2021-2022 FAFSA by [clicking here](#) 
- PA residents, submit BEFORE May 1, 2021 to be considered for the PHEAA State grant.
- Have your 2019 tax info.

If you have already completed the 2021-2022 FAFSA, you may begin seeing verification requests starting in December. The requests will be for the aid year of 2022 in LionPATH.

DO NOT LOSE YOUR AID!

If you have not completed your verification items for the 2020-2021 FAFSA (aid year 2021 in LionPATH), you could be at risk of losing your federal aid for the entire academic year.

- You **MUST** return all **To Do List** items in LionPATH to the Office of Student Aid (OSA) as soon as possible.
- Once OSA reviews your submitted materials, that MAY trigger new items for review.
- **If the verification is not completed by the last week of classes, you will lose your federal aid *for the year (Fall 2020 AND Spring 2021)!***

Contact Financial Aid

Phone: 610-396-6070 (leave a message with your name, phone number, 9-digit PSU ID number, and reason for calling if there is no answer)

Email: BerksFinAid@psu.edu

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BERKS CAMPUS: DECEMBER UPDATES

Campus Spaces

OPEN after Finals Week

- Thun Library: Mon - Fri from 9am - 5pm
EXCEPT when the university is closed
 - Visit the tinyurls below to reserve a space in the library!
 - Computers & seats
www.tinyurl.com/thunseats
 - Scanner
www.tinyurl.com/thunscanner
 - Study rooms
www.tinyurl.com/thunstudy

CLOSED after Finals Week

- Game Room
- Beaver Community Center

Campus Services

OPEN after Finals Week

- Academic Advising Center
 - EMAIL: Bkadvisingcenter@psu.edu
- Financial Aid
 - EMAIL: BerksFinAid@psu.edu
- Housing and Food Services
 - EMAIL: HousingBK@psu.edu

CLOSED after Finals Week

- Health Services (resumes on Jan 4)
 - For support, call Penn State's 24/7 Advise Nurse hotline at 814-863-4463
- Counseling Services (resumes on Jan 11)
 - When in crisis
 - Call 24/7 Penn State Crisis Line at 1-877-229-6400
 - Text the 24/7 Crisis Text Line: Text "LIONS" to 741741
 - When not in crisis
 - Thriving Campus: list of counseling services available in the community.

Academic Opportunities

Lion Side Chat

WHAT: We Are...Prepared
(Preparing for Finals)

DATE: Mon, Dec 7

TIME: 12:15pm - 1:15pm

PRESENTER: Dr. Ryan Hassler

ZOOM:

<https://psu.zoom.us/j/9700346>

2963

Click here if you are in need of motivation for finals

Forum on Black Affairs
Scholarship Opportunity
(Deadline 1/5/2021)

FREE TUTORING!

For help with Math, Science, or Study Skills make an appointment with our Learning Center Tutors [here](#)

For help with a paper, speech, resume, or other written material make an appointment with our Writing Center Tutors [here](#)

***Dec 11: Last day for Tutoring Center appointments**

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A Berks Bite: Rolo Pretzel Delights



Supplies

- One bag small square pretzels
- One bag of Rolos (you will need to unwrap them)
- Bag of M&Ms and/or Pecans

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Put a single layer of pretzels down.
- Put an unwrapped Rolo in the center of each pretzel.
- Bake for 3-5 mins--the Rolos should be soft but not melted.
- As soon as they come out of the oven, gently squish the top with a candy or a pecan.
- Allow to cool and then enjoy.
- Store in an airtight container.

Recipe courtesy of Dr. Paula Plageman

CAMPUS FEATURE: ADVICE FROM A TUTOR

Name: Rohan Bhatt

Major: Mechanical Engineering (B.S.)

Hometown: Audubon PA [originally from New Delhi, India]

Question: As a Learning Center Tutor, what advice do you have for students to succeed in an entirely remote learning environment?

"Remote learning comes with a lot of pros and cons. It helps students to manage their time more flexibly and concentrate on individual priorities. This remote setting gives a little bit of freedom to edit our schedule. Specifically, we don't have to hurry to class or rush back from an in-person class to join the online class. But remote learning also comes with many challenges with students struggling to understand the material, having a hard time finding the motivation to learn, and the lack of social aspect of college. My advice to students is...

- Find something interesting to learn about and work on in your courses to increase motivation.
- Eat well, work out, have some fun time with loved ones.
- Take multiple breaks to relax between work sessions.
- Talk to classmates over the break, trust me, discussing your shared experience can help let off steam.
- Make use of the Learning and Writing Centers

I wish you all the best of luck for finals!"

