



THE LION'S ROAR

The monthly newsletter for Penn State Berks

Important Dates

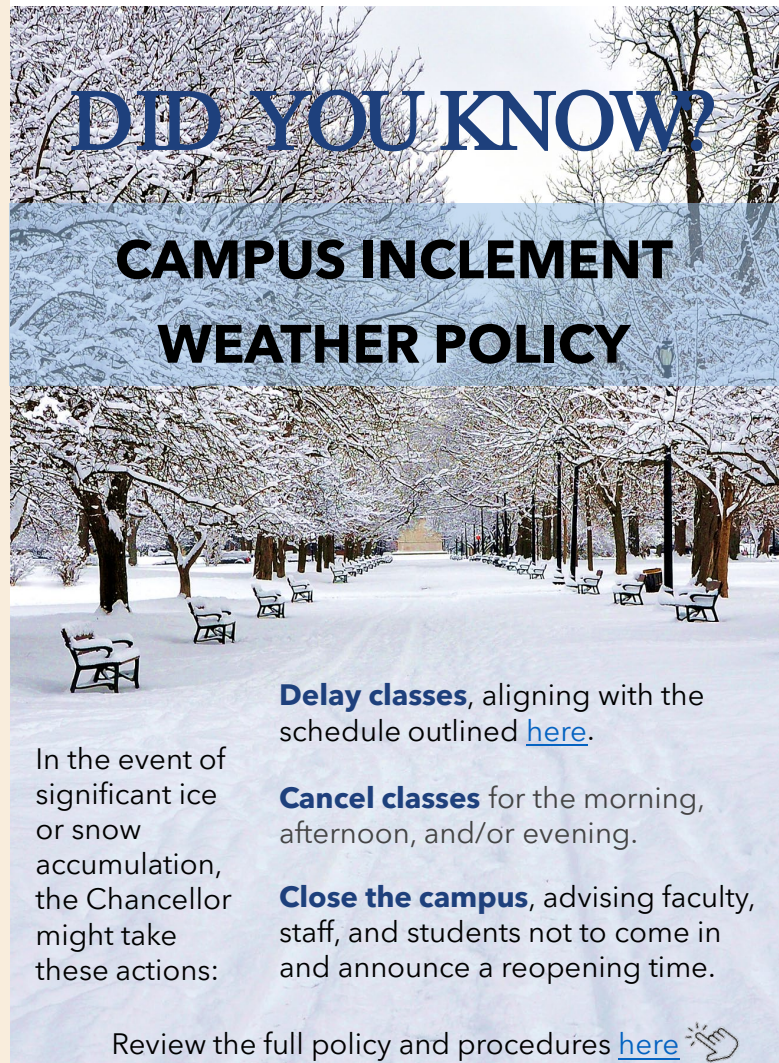


- January 2 - 22** | Intent to Graduate Activation Period¹
- January 5** | Leave of Absence Deadline²
- January 7**
 - Residence Halls reopen at 11a.m.³
 - Spring Course Registration Deadline at 11:59 p.m.
- January 8** | Spring Classes Begin
- January 10** | Club Rush at 12:15 pm in Beaver Athletics and Wellness Center
- January 13** | Regular DROP Deadline at 11:59 pm (for full semester courses)
- January 14**
 - Regular ADD Deadline at 11:59 pm (for full semester courses)
 - Late Drop Begins (for full semester courses)⁴
- January 15**
 - Late Registration Begins
 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day Holiday - (University Closed)
- January 22**
 - Spring 2024 Bill Due
 - Installment Payment Plan (IPP) enrollment deadline⁵
 - New International Student's MICI Submission Deadline⁶

¹Students intending to graduate in May 2024, should file their intent to graduate in LionPATH. More information [here](#).
²Students not enrolling in the Spring 2024 semester but plan to return to the university in the fall semester, should speak with an adviser and consider submitting the leave of absence form. Learn more [here](#)
³Learn more about residential student return [here](#)
⁴The Late Drop period ends on April 5 at 11:59 pm. This date applies to full-semester courses. Learn more [here](#)
⁵If you enroll in the Installment Payment Plan (IPP) by the first payment (1/22), your second, third, and fourth installments are due on the 22nd of the three subsequent months. IMPORTANT: To use this method of payment, enroll in Penn State's Installment Payment plan every semester. Read more on the IPP, [here](#)
⁶All NEW international students in initial or transfer F-1 status must complete Mandatory Immigration Check-in (MICI) to be registered in SEVIS. Learn more about MICI [here](#). Click [here](#) to schedule an appointment with Diane Sanders, International Student Adviser.

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DID YOU KNOW?

CAMPUS INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Delay classes, aligning with the schedule outlined [here](#).

In the event of significant ice or snow accumulation, the Chancellor might take these actions:

Cancel classes for the morning, afternoon, and/or evening.

Close the campus, advising faculty, staff, and students not to come in and announce a reopening time.

Review the full policy and procedures [here](#)

SPRING 2024 DROP & ADD WEEK

Want to change your Spring 2024 schedule?

****Drop-in Advising is available the week of drop/add****

– Students can DROP classes until Saturday, Jan. 13 at 11:59 pm

Students can ADD classes until Sunday, Jan. 14 at 11:59 pm. **+**

Always consult with an academic adviser before altering your schedule as changes may affect degree progress and financial aid. Academic advisers will be available virtually or in person from Jan. 8 to Jan. 12, between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm, to discuss schedule changes.

- **Virtually:** Join via Zoom <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 adviser in person or virtually.

If you need to create a **full schedule** for the Spring semester, please call the advising center to schedule an appointment at 610-396-6280.

ACADEMIC ADVISING SPOTLIGHT: EMPOWERING YOUR COLLEGE SUCCESS

Your academic journey is unique, and we are dedicated to helping you navigate it successfully. Together, we'll ensure you make the most of your time at PSU Berks.

As the new academic semester kicks off, we're thrilled to introduce you to a crucial campus resource - the Berks Academic Advising Center. Committed to your academic success, our team is here to guide you through your educational journey.

HOW WE CAN HELP:

1. **Academic Planning:** Unsure about which classes to take next semester? Let us help you choose classes that align with your goals. Our advisers will work with you to ensure you understand all the [program requirements](#).
2. **Change of Major or adding a minor:** Are you considering a change of major or perhaps adding a minor? We are happy to speak with you about these topics!
3. **Additional Assistance:** We understand that academic challenges can arise, and you may need extra support. Whether its discussing majors, courses, grades, study strategies, tutoring options, or reviewing [PSU policies/procedures](#), we are here to assist you.

SCHEDULING AN APPOINTMENT:

You can call, stop by, or email the office. You can also schedule an appointment online using [Starfish](#). 🖱️

BERKS ACADEMIC ADVISING CENTER

Location: 160 Franco

Hours: Monday through Friday from 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Phone: 610-396-6280

Email: bkadvisingcenter@psu.edu

Appointments: In-person and Virtual

**We also provide daily Drop-In hours for immediate, time-sensitive concerns and questions.*

YOUR BERKS ACADEMIC ADVISING CENTER

Paula Plageman, Coordinator

Cindy Donahue, Administrative Support Assistant

Sue Costa, Academic Recovery Specialist

Karen Del Vecchio, Academic Adviser

Aubrey Edwards, Academic Adviser

Michael Stella, Academic Adviser

FINANCIAL AID FOCUS: CRITICAL UPDATES AND INSIGHTS



FAFSA APPLICATION 2024-2025

- The 2024-2025 FAFSA application has undergone significant changes.
 - For the latest news on FAFSA availability visit <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/december-fafsa>.
 - To learn about changes to the FAFSA visit <https://studentaid.gov/help-center/answers/article/fafsa-simplification-act>
- **IMPORTANT:** Students completing the 2024-2025 FAFSA form should be using the following:
 - Pennsylvania State University (The)
 - SCHOOL TYPE: PUBLIC, PRIMARILY 4-YEAR
 - Federal School Code: 003329

HOLDS AND TO DO LIST ITEMS

- Check for any To Do List items or Holds related to Financial Aid in your LionPATH account. Click on the link to understand if it requires action or offers information only.
- **Note:** Financial Aid To Do list items and Holds won't stop students from scheduling courses. If you cannot schedule classes, another Hold, like an [academic registration hold](#), might be the cause. Review the Hold or To Do List details to determine your next steps. For assistance with Financial Aid-related To Do List items or Holds, contact the Financial Aid office.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

If you received an email from the Office of Student Aid stating you're on a warning semester for SAP, it indicates eligibility requirements were not met during the Fall semester. Consequently, you'll be on warning for the Spring semester.

To continue receiving federal aid, you need to meet ALL these SAP requirements:

1. Maintain a GPA of 2.00 or higher.
2. Pass at least 67% of the credits you attempt. Failing or dropping courses affects your completion rate.
3. Learn more about SAP here <https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/appendix-e-financial-aid-satisfactory-academic-progress-standard-policy/#summer>

I'm on SAP Warning! Now What? In your warning semester, aim to raise your cumulative GPA above 2.00 and your completion rate above 67%. Failing to meet BOTH requirements will result in the loss of federal aid in your next enrolled semester at PSU.



CULTIVATE YOUR POTENTIAL: CAMPUS LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Orientation Leaders (OLs) represent a significant leadership opportunity at Penn State Berks. OLs are often a new student's first introduction to the campus. They assist new students with their transition during Welcome Weekend events!

Requirements: Students do NOT need to enroll in a class to be qualified to serve as an OL.

Spring 2024: Students must complete the OL application. Students selected as OLs will be expected to participate in an evening training during the Spring semester.

Fall 2024: Students must be available the week before Fall classes for training and to assist during Welcome Weekend events. OLs are expected to attend one Welcome Week **and** one Community Weekend event.



If you have any questions about the process or how you can get involved, contact Lily Sánchez at LOS5108@psu.edu or Dereka Bauscher at DZB5915@psu.edu. Scan the QR code or [click here](#) for the 2024 Orientation Leader application beginning Jan 15.

COUNSELING CORNER:

“It’s dark and cold and I don’t feel like going to class.”



Navigating the post-holiday bustle? If you’re experiencing the *winter blues*, feeling tired, unmotivated, or a bit down, you’re not alone! The cold weather and shorter days can make it challenging to find the energy for classes, studying, and/or exercising. The key to beating the *winter blues* is taking steps to stay active and healthy!

Below are some tips to help you get back to feeling your best:

- Nourish your brain with lean proteins, and vitamin D-rich foods like fatty fish, fish oil, milk, fortified cereal, and yogurt. Incorporate fruits and veggies while limiting added sugars.
- Maintain a consistent sleep schedule and minimize electronics at bedtime to ensure adequate rest.
- Get daily sunlight exposure and engage in regular physical activity.
- Surround yourself with supportive individuals such as family, friends, and campus community members.
- Limit screen time, particularly exposure to distressing or upsetting content.
- Improve your mood by listening to uplifting music.
- Plan an outing or vacation to have something to anticipate.
- Volunteer or engage in activities that help others.

While *winter blues* are normal, if you find that your sadness persists longer than a few weeks or feels intense, please contact Counseling Services for additional tips and help.

For more information and to connect with Counseling Services, visit <https://berks.psu.edu/student-life/current-students/health-and-wellness-center/counseling-services>

ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK: EXPLORE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

Alternative Spring Break (ASB) is meant to inspire servant leadership, cultural immersion, and global citizenship in all our student participants. The program utilizes the servant leadership model, along with active engagement and discussion to allow students to better understand global issues, cultures, and how they present themselves as agents of change.

In March 2024, ASB student participants will visit the Cheyenne River Tribe of South Dakota Lakota Sioux Nation reservation near historical sites Eagle Butte, Standing Rock, and Mount Rushmore. Students will have the opportunity to engage in various service initiatives

Requirements: There is an application and interview process. Interested students MUST attend an informational session.



ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK

During the 2024 Penn State Berks ASB trip, students will visit the Cheyenne River Tribe of South Dakota Lakota Sioux Nation reservation. Students will engage in community service during the day including:

- providing tutoring and educational workshops to Lakota youth
- engaging in social and recreational activities with Lakota older adults,
- providing health education to community members on the reservation
- assisting in tending to indigenous land and farms

Interested students MUST attend a session or contact Lily Sánchez lqs5108@psu.edu.

Interest Sessions

Wednesday, 1/17
6:00pm, Perkins 003

Friday, 1/19
12:15pm, Perkins 003

RSVP here:



Funded by the Student Allocated Fee.

Campus Life welcomes persons with disabilities to campus events. If you need assistance or have questions about access, please contact Lily Sánchez at lqs5108@psu.edu



MAXIMIZE YOUR SUCCESS THIS SEMESTER

Studies show that students who utilize academic services have higher success and retention rates when compared to students in the same courses who do **not** utilize those same services. Peer tutoring begins in Week 2 of the semester. Engage early to establish habits for semester-long success!

Tutoring services are available to all students free of charge.

Learning Center

- Professional and peer tutoring in math.
- Peer tutors in chemistry, biology, and more.
- Study skills support tutoring to help you with time management, organization, test anxiety, and more.

Open for Peer Tutoring by Appointment

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

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

Monday Noon to 3:00 pm | Friday 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Writing Center

- Peer tutors to help with a paper, speech, resume, or other written material.
- Available in-person or via Zoom

Open for Peer Tutoring

Monday–Friday 10:00 am – 6:30 pm

To set up tutoring appointments, log on and register your Penn State email at berks.mywconline.com



Math Peers & Profs

- Tutoring sessions available for Math 4, 21, 22, 26, 34, 35, 41, 110, and Stat 100 with Math faculty and teaching assistants.
- Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:15-1:15 pm in Luerssen 222. No appointment is necessary!

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. Day



Please join us:

Thursday, January 18, 2024

6 pm in the Perkins Auditorium for an engaging multimedia performance titled "King's Dream."

This powerful presentation pays tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Nobel Peace Prize laureate renowned for leading America's peaceful fight for equal rights. Through captivating large-screen visuals, the performance chronicles the gripping narrative of courage, drama, and resilience.

Following the "King's Dream" performance, there will be a brief awards reception honoring members of our community who exemplify Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy. These individuals will be acknowledged for their dedication to community service, leadership, and commitment to social justice and positive change.

This event is made possible by the Arts & Lecture Series, the Diversity Equity Inclusion and Belonging Committee, and with the generosity of the Student Initiated Fee.

JAN 15 | Berks Campus Community Service Opportunity

Please join us for an Invasive Species Removal service activity on Monday, January 15, hosted at the Penn State Berks campus.

Starting at 9 am, we'll gather at the Janssen Conference Center for a brief orientation. Following this, we'll head outdoors to work with hand tools, focusing on removing invasive species until 11:30 am. Then, we'll reconvene at the Janssen Conference Center for a rewarding break including pizza and hot drinks.

IMPORTANT: Please wear appropriate clothing for outdoor work and bring your enthusiasm to make a positive impact on our local environment! For questions, contact Jayné Park-Martinez at jip10@psu.edu

This event is made possible by the PSU Berks Sustainability Council, in partnership with Gring's Mill, and PSU Berks faculty, staff, and student volunteers.

This newsletter is made possible by the joint efforts of the Student Success & Retention Committee, DUS Academic Advising Center, and the Office of Admissions & Enrollment Management.

CAMPUS RESOURCE LIST

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

GENERAL

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 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.

- **Campus Contact:** Dairicelis Rodriguez-Guzman
- **Email:** Dairicelisr@safeberks.org
- **Office:** 311 Gaige
- **Phone:** 484-769-7606 (call or text)

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/>

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 [125 Franco] - 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 [014 Perkins] - 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

International Student Services [311A Gaige]

- Questions about international student-related programs and events **email** nar165@psu.edu
- Questions about maintaining immigration status, internships, employment, enrollment requirements, and visa-related regulations **email** dcs5845@psu.edu
- **Phone:** 610-396-6105

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) can be used in the library for 2-hour 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 4, 21, 22, 26, 41, & 110, attend "**Peers and Profs**" help sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:15-1:15 pm in Luerssen 222. No appointment is necessary!

Veteran Benefits [125 Franco] - Questions about **VA certifications**, contact the Registrar's Office

Email: BKVeterans@psu.edu | **Phone:** 610-396-6085