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THE LION'S ROAR

The monthly newsletter for Penn State Berks

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Observing Ramadan at Berks

Penn State Berks is thrilled to announce extended kitchen access for residential students during the upcoming Ramadan season. From Feb. 28th to Mar. 29th, students residing on campus will have round-the-clock access to kitchen facilities, ensuring they can observe their religious traditions comfortably. This initiative aims to create a supportive environment where students observing Ramadan can prepare meals and break their fast at their convenience. It's not just about providing access; it's about fostering a sense of community and understanding.

In line with our commitment to fostering a respectful and inclusive community, we would like to remind all students of the following kitchen etiquette:

- 1. Maintain Cleanliness:** Please clean up after yourself promptly to ensure a clean and hygienic environment for all users.
- 2. Respect Others' Space:** Be mindful of others' needs for kitchen space and equipment. Clean and return communal kitchenware promptly after each use.
- 3. Be Considerate of Others' Needs:** Whether it's during Ramadan or any other time, respect your peers' religious and dietary practices.
- 4. Minimize Waste:** Let's work together to reduce food waste by using resources responsibly and storing leftovers properly.
- 5. Communicate:** Should you have any concerns or encounter any issues related to kitchen access or etiquette, please don't hesitate to reach out for assistance. Contact the Housing team via email at housingbk@psu.edu or the ResLife team via email at BerksResLife@psu.edu

Important Dates

Feb. 24 – March 19 | Mid-semester Progress Reporting¹
March 1

- **Penn State Berks Scholarship** Application Opens²
- **Summer Course Enrollment** Continues³
- **Final Exam Schedule** Viewable in LionPATH⁴

March 5 | Career & Internship Fair in Gaije from 11am – 3pm

March 8 | Residence Halls CLOSE at 12pm for Spring Break (for residential students)⁵

March 10 – March 14 | Spring Break – No Classes

March 16 | Residence Halls RE-OPEN at 11am (for residential students)

March 19 | Campus-wide Academic Advising Meetings | 12:15pm – 1:15pm

March 22 | Installment Payment Plan (IPP) payment due⁶

March 26 | Fall 2025 Course Registration opens⁷

LOOKING AHEAD

April 11 | Late Drop Deadline at 11:59pm (for full semester courses)

- 1** Instructors can raise kudos (for areas of excellence) and flags (for areas of concern) on issues related to your academic progress, which will send messages to your Penn State email.
- 2** Learn more about scholarships at Penn State Berks [here](#).
- 3** Summer Session provides students with the opportunity to enroll in courses at any Penn State Campus. Options around the start date, end date, and length of courses exist. Learn more [here](#).
- 4** Students should review their Final Exam schedule in LionPATH and report conflicts to their professor as soon as possible.
- 5** All residential students (unless approved for and have accepted a Break Contract) must vacate the residence halls by this time. Belongings can remain in the dorms.
- 6** If you enrolled 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. Learn more [here](#).
- 7** Course registration dates vary by student. Dates are based on the total number of credits earned. View the [Registration Timetable](#) for more information

ACADEMIC INSIGHTS

Fall Course Planning Considerations



Can you believe that planning for next semester starts now?! Read on for key details about registration, advising events, and resources to help you stay on track.

PREPARE to Schedule Fall Classes.

- **Know when you can register.** Check your LionPATH Student "Home Base" (i.e., your dashboard) for an Enrollment Appointment date and to review the schedule of courses. Remember, enrollment dates vary by student.
 - Priority Registration begins March 19
 - Regular Registration begins March 26
- **Clear LionPATH Holds.** Registration-related Holds for the Spring 2025 semester should be resolved prior to assigned enrollment date to prevent issues when scheduling courses.
- **Make Major and Campus Changes.** Sophomores should have their change of major and change of campus (if applicable), completed prior to scheduling Fall classes! See page 5 for more information.

ATTEND Upcoming Advising Events

- **March 19: Campus-wide Advising Meetings** from 12:15pm - 1:15pm in various locations.
 - Advising Meetings are designed to help students learn more about majors, opportunities (scholarships, travel, etc.), and course scheduling information.
 - Locations vary by major. [See the full list of locations here.](#)
- **March 24: Hands-on Change of Major and Change of Campus Workshop** from 12:15pm to 1:15pm in 205 Gaige and via Zoom: <https://psu.zoom.us/j/96999973533>

NEW: Peer Academic Coaching

Need Help Staying on Top of Your Classes?

We've Got You!

Connect with our NEW & FREE Peer Academic Coaching Program

*Struggling to keep up with deadlines?
Procrastination hitting hard?
Feeling totally overwhelmed?*

Don't stress—we've got your back!



Let's be real—sometimes it's just easier to talk to another student who gets it. Our coaches can give you real, practical advice in a chill, judgment-free space. Whether you need help with:

- Time management (because deadlines don't remind themselves)
- Study strategies (let's make that all-nighter a thing of the past)
- Motivation (we'll help you fight the urge to binge TikTok instead of study)
- Test prep (because panic-cramming isn't a strategy)
- And so much more (whatever your academic challenge, we've got strategies to help you tackle it!)

Ready to level up your academic game? Sign up to get one-on-one support with a peer academic coach: <https://forms.office.com/r/wB57du57AS>

Have questions?

Reach out to berkslearning@psu.edu.

Free Peer Tutoring

LEARNING CENTER (161 FRANCO)

- **WHAT:** Tutoring in math, chemistry, biology, and more. Support with study skills, time management, test anxiety, and more.
- **HOW:** Available in-person by appointment -- schedule on <https://berks.mywconline.com/>

WRITING CENTER (146 FRANCO)

- **WHAT:** Support with written material such as papers, speeches, resumes, and more!
- **HOW:** Available in-person or via Zoom by appointment -- schedule on <https://berks.mywconline.com/>

MATH PEERS & PROFS (222 LUERSSEN)

- **WHAT:** Tutoring sessions available for Math 4, 21, 22, 26, 34, and Stat 100 with Math faculty and teaching assistants.
- **HOW:** In-person, no appointment is necessary!
- **WHEN:** Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:15 - 1:15p.m.

GRANTS & GETAWAYS

Get Rewarded for Academic Achievements

CALLING ALL STUDENT RESEARCHERS!

The Thun Library is awarding its 7th annual Undergraduate Research Award (up to \$500!) this spring. Anyone presenting their original research at an external conference this academic year (including fall 2024, spring 2025, and summer 2025) is eligible to apply.

Application Deadline: March 28, 2025!

Need more information? Explore the Undergraduate Research at Berks guide: guides.libraries.psu.edu/Berks/UndergradResearch

QUESTIONS? Please reach out to Alex Chisholm at aec67@psu.edu!



The poster is for the University Libraries Undergraduate Research Award at Thun Library, Penn State Berks. It features three circular images: a student using a VR headset, a student working with a power drill, and a student at a laptop. The text includes the award name, eligibility criteria, application deadline, and contact information. A QR code is in the bottom left corner.

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AWARD

Thun Library, Penn State Berks

AWARD UP TO \$500

Eligible entries include HECBC Undergraduate Research & Creativity Conference and other external conference submissions by Penn State Berks students

APPLY BY MARCH 28

tinyurl.com/URAbirks2025

QUESTIONS?

Contact Alex at aec67@psu.edu

Spring Break Safety

Written by M.N., Communication Arts & Sciences Major

Goblin here. Spring Break is coming up and I want you all to come back to campus safely. Here are some tips from me to help you stay safe while traveling/exploring during Spring Break.

1. **Wear Sunscreen.** Let's start with something easy. The sun, while beautiful, can be extremely harmful to our skin. Sunscreen is good. If you're soaking up the sun, be sure your skin soaks up the sunscreen.
2. **Use the Buddy System.** Always travel with a friend when exploring new places. There is safety in numbers!
3. **Drive Safely.** Wherever you go, get there safely. If possible, try not to drive long distances over night. If you can't avoid late night driving, it's best to have company along for the ride!
4. **Don't Overshare.** Avoid posting your exact location to social media in real time. You never know who is watching you and whether they have bad intentions for you or for your property while you are away.
5. **Drink Safely.** If you are of age, and will be drinking, make sure to always keep an eye on your cup. Better yet, have a sober friend around. Also, it's never a good idea to drink in hot tubs.
6. **Seek and Offer Help.** If you feel unsafe, ask for help. If you see someone else doing something suspicious, call for help. Be the person that will break the bystander effect – which occurs when the presence of others discourages an individual from intervening in potentially dangerous situations.

Now that you know this, go and enjoy your break!



MONEY MATTERS & CAMPUS BUZZ

Financial Aid Reminders

BE CONSIDERED FOR AID: Students who want to be considered for any type of student aid (including grants and scholarships for the 2025-2026 school year) should complete the FAFSA at studentaid.gov by April 1st.

- Please note that you will need to use 2023 tax information for the 2025-26 FAFSA.

BERKS RETURNING STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP: It is almost time to complete the Scholarship Application for returning students to the Berks Campus for the 2025-26 academic year!

- The application will become available on Saturday, March 1. [Click here for the 2025-2026 Berks Scholarship Application.](#)
- The application will close on MAY 1st. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered for all Berks scholarships. In order to be considered for ALL Berks scholarships, you must complete a 2025-26 FAFSA AND a 2025-2026 Berks Scholarship Application.

ADDITIONAL SCHOLARSHIP RESOURCES: Please find links for additional scholarship resources below:

- <https://studentaid.psu.edu/types-of-aid/scholarships>
- <https://equity.psu.edu/scholarships>
- <https://studentaid.psu.edu/types-of-aid/scholarships/outside-of-penn-state>

If you have any Financial Aid related questions, please email BerksFinAid@psu.edu for support.



Select Upcoming Events

PSU Berks Career & Internship Fair - All Majors Welcome

- **DATE:** March 5, 2025
- **TIME:** 11am - 3pm
- **LOCATION:** Gaige Building Lobby
- **WHAT:** Join us for the Penn State Berks Career & Internship Fair. 70+ Employers representing ALL MAJORS will be on campus recruiting for internships and full-time jobs. See Career Services with any questions.

Craft & Chat with a Counselor: Planters & Origami

- **DATE:** March 19, 2025
- **TIME:** 7pm
- **LOCATION:** 007 Perkins Student Center (MPR1)
- **WHAT:** Counseling Services is hoping to bring some beauty as we host another craft and chat featuring planters and origami! Some supplies will be provided, but you can also bring your own craft supplies to hang out for a relaxing night of informal art therapy! Crafting has been shown to increase mood, improve self-confidence, and reduce stress! If you have questions about the event, or questions about accessibility, contact Autumn Fritz (amr40@psu.edu).

Hands-On Change of Major Workshop

- **DATE:** March 24, 2025
- **TIME:** 12:15pm - 1:15pm
- **LOCATION:** 205 Gaige
- **WHAT:** Attend this student workshop for a hands-on review of the Change of Major process at Penn State. Learn about necessary steps and have your questions answered by an Academic Advising Center academic adviser.

Undergraduate Research & Creativity Conference

- **DATE:** April 26, 2025
- **LOCATION:** Reading Area Community College
- **WHAT:** The annual Berks County Undergraduate Research & Creativity Conference hosted by Higher Education Council of Berks County (HECBC) allows students to share their research and creativity with each other and the community. The conference is open to any undergraduate student seeking an opportunity to share their expertise with other scholars.
- **DEADLINE:** Submissions are due by Friday, April 4, 2025
- **MORE INFO:** <https://www.racc.edu/academics/berks-county-undergraduate-research-creativity-conference>

Find more upcoming events on the [Student Events Calendar](#)

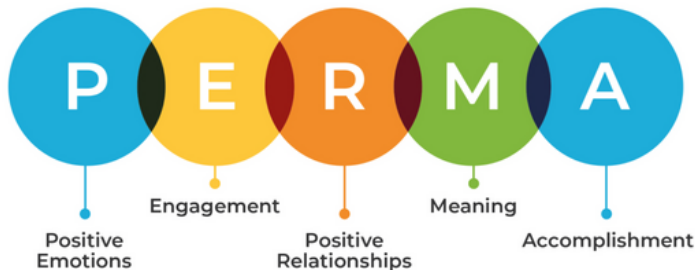
STUDENT INSIGHTS

PERMA: Beyond Everlasting

Written by M.N., Communication Arts & Sciences Major

Hello, wonderful humans. Tis' I, the goblin. Today, I'm sharing tips inspired by Martin Seligman's concepts of well-being and *positive psychology* to help shake off the lingering cold, even after the snow has melted.

Please permit me to tell you about PERMA!



P- Positive Emotion: Seek ways to increase your positive emotion such as gratitude, forgiveness, enjoying the present, hope, and optimism. I can acknowledge that being hopeful about the future can be hard, but I find that helping my community and speaking out always brings me hope.

E- Engagement: Use your skills, strengths and attention for a challenging task. We are all good at something. Find a way to use your skills to solve problems.

R- Relationships: We are social creatures by nature, so find your group. Whether it's a friend or a love interest, many of us crave connection. You need people in your corner and thanks to overpopulation you have tons of options!!!

M- Meaning: Work towards a bigger goal. That could come from joining an organization aligned with your values. Berks County offers plenty of community organizations that raise awareness for different issues and a bunch of volunteer organizations. Find volunteer opportunities here: [Volunteermatch.org](https://www.volunteermatch.org).

A- Accomplishment: Working towards goal attainment. Accomplishments make us feel good when they are recognized and can improve our overall motivation. I, as a goblin, need to stay fit so I track my steps using an app called Treecard which plants a tree every 10,000 steps I take. It works and it helps!

In summary, it takes work to be happy. Sometimes even after you put in the work, happiness can remain absent, but you won't know unless you give yourself the opportunity to try something new.

Ramadan: What I've Learned

Written by Lauren Ziegler, Writing and Digital Media Major

Ramadan is a time for reflection, spiritual growth, and strengthening bonds within the community. Ramadan is observed the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, and its exact start and end dates are



determined by the phases of the moon, specifically the sighting of the new moon. It is observed by Muslims worldwide as a time for fasting, prayer, and spiritual growth.

FASTING DURING RAMADAN

Fasting involves abstaining from food, drink, and intimacy from dawn (Fajr) to sunset (Maghrib). Fasting also involves avoiding sinful behaviors, such as lying or arguing, and is seen as a way to become closer to Allah (God). This religious practice is not just physical but aims to develop self-discipline, increase God-consciousness (taqwā), and grow spiritually. The core purpose of fasting is to purify the soul, control desires, and cultivate empathy for those who are less fortunate.

KEY PRACTICES DURING RAMADAN

- **Praying:** Extra prayers, called Tarāwīḥ, are offered at night in mosques.
- **Reading the Qur'an:** Many Muslims aim to read and reflect on the Qur'an more during Ramadan, as it was revealed in this month.
- **Charity (Zakat and Sadaqah):** Giving to those in need is highly encouraged, fostering a sense of compassion and community.

THE END OF RAMADAN

The last ten nights of Ramadan are particularly special, with Laylat al-Qadr (the Night of Decree) being one of the holiest. Worship on this night is believed to be more rewarding than a thousand months.

At the end of Ramadan, Muslims celebrate Eid al-Fitr, a holiday of feasting, prayers, and charity, marking the completion of the month of fasting.

IN CASE YOU
MISSED IT...

ICYMI: In Case You Missed It

Career Planning: Upcoming Events

Penn State Berks Career and Internship Fair

Wednesday, March 5, 2025; 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Gaige Technology Building

Employers representing all majors
Open to all Students and Alumni

Workshops

All workshops are held from
12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. in Perkins Room 3

Interviewing & Networking
Wednesday, March 26

Business Etiquette Dinner
Monday, April 7; 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Perkins 7 MPR

Graduate School Workshop
Wednesday, April 23

Starfish Progress Reporting

WHAT IS STARFISH?

Starfish connects you to the people and services that can help YOU navigate YOUR education.

WHEN ARE PROGRESS REPORTING PERIODS?

In weeks 3 and 7 of each semester, instructors are prompted to comment on student progress in their class(es) utilizing Starfish. Instructors can raise kudos and flags on issues related to student academic progress. Pay special attention to this time period for important feedback, which will come from notices@starfishsolutions.com. View Starfish template progress report messages at [Messages](#) | [Starfish Info \(psu.edu\)](#)

I RECEIVED A FLAG, NOW WHAT?

- Discuss the feedback with your instructor.
- [Schedule tutoring sessions](#) as necessary
- Meet with your academic adviser to determine a plan of action should you fail or need to drop the course.
- Explore new ways of learning such as
 - Reading/reviewing the material more often
 - Completing practice problems
 - Joining/creating a study group
 - Trying new note-taking habits

It's Time: FAFSA is Open

December 1 was the public release date for the FAFSA form. Students returning to any Penn State campus who are completing the 2025-2026 FAFSA form should be using the following **school information**.

- Pennsylvania State University (The)
- SCHOOL TYPE: PUBLIC, PRIMARILY 4-YEAR
- Federal School Code: 003329

Summer Course Enrollment

Current Spring 2025 students can schedule classes at any Penn State campus! Stay on track towards degree completion by speaking with your academic adviser before enrolling!

SUMMER SESSIONS:

Maymester (4 weeks): May 12 – June 11

Regular Academic Session (13 weeks): May 19 – August 15

Summer I (6 weeks): May 19 - June 30

Summer II (6 weeks): July 2 - August 15

Learn more: [Summer Courses](#) | [Summer Session \(psu.edu\)](#)

IMPORTANT!

- Most summer courses are **accelerated**, covering about 15 weeks of content in about 6 weeks.
- You can expect the **pace** of the course to be quick, with some classes meeting more frequently or for longer periods of time.
- On-campus **housing** is not available for those taking summer courses at the Berks campus.
- Contact **Financial Aid** to determine if you might be eligible for aid. Or consider applying for the [Summer Success Scholarship](#).
- If you decide to take classes at a non-Penn State location over the summer, make sure the credits will transfer back to PSU! Use the [Transfer Credit Tool](#) to confirm.

Campus and Major Changes

Are you a fourth semester student who is eligible to change your major? Use the "Update Academics" function in LionPATH to change your major if you completed your entrance to major requirements. *Do you need to complete your degree at a campus other than Berks?* Use the "Update Campus" function in LionPATH to change your campus **after** making a change to your major (if applicable) via "Update Academics".

Be sure to take action prior to scheduling your Fall 2025 courses. Contact your assigned academic adviser or stop by the [Academic Advising Center](#) in 160 Franco if you have questions!

CAMPUS RESOURCE LIST

Mental Health and 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:
 - Call 1-877-229-6400 or Text "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 Student Resources

- **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 at University Park
 - **Contact:** <https://www.bursar.psu.edu/contact-us>
- **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
- **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES**
 - Provides support and information to international students.
 - **Office:** 311A Gaige Building
 - **Website:** <https://berks.psu.edu/international-student-services>
- **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 (in 161 Franco) [here](#).
 - Need help with a **paper, speech, resume, or other written material**, schedule an appointment with a Writing Center Tutor (in 146 Franco) [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!
- **VETERAN BENEFITS**
 - Questions about VA certifications, contact the Registrar's Office
 - Email: BKVeterans@psu.edu
 - Phone: 610-396-6085



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 on the second floor Perkins.