

THE LION'S ROAR



The monthly newsletter for Penn State Berks



Important Dates

October 31 - November 4 Common Read Week

November 1 2023-24 Housing Contract Request Period Continues*

November 11

- Late Drop Deadline at 11:59pm**
- Fall Break Housing Request Deadline (residential students only)

November 19 Residence Halls close at 2pm***

November 22 Installment Payment Plan (IPP) Payment #4 Due****

November 21 -25 Fall Break. No classes for all students.

November 27 Residence Halls reopen at 11am

*Learn more about the 2023-24 on-campus housing contract request process [here](#) 🖱️

**This date applies to full semester courses. Learn more [here](#) 🖱️

***During Fall Break, residential students may leave their belongings in their dorms. TIP: take all necessary academic materials, personal devices, and device chargers.

****If you enrolled in the Installment Payment Plan (IPP) by the first payment (8/29), your second, third, and fourth installments are due on the 22nd of the three subsequent months. Read more on the IPP, [here](#) 🖱️

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DON'T FORGET

SPRING COURSE ENROLLMENT

1. **REVIEW Current Course Progress**
 - a. Assess your current performance to determine if you might need to repeat a course next semester.
 - i. Learn about the Late Drop process on page 4.
2. **ADDRESS Holds & To-Do List Items**
 - a. Unaddressed Holds and/or To Do List Items can impact your ability to schedule courses. Make sure to clear any outstanding items before your course enrollment date.
3. **MEET With Your Assigned Academic Adviser**
 - a. This person can help you determine the best plan to remain on track towards graduation. Be honest with them about your current performance to ensure the most accurate planning. Find your assigned adviser on your LionPATH dashboard in "My Advisors."

DID YOU
KNOW?

FALL BREAK HOUSING OPTIONS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

Break housing is not included in the semester contract and signing up will charge an additional \$240 to your student account.

If approved to stay, you'll be offered a Break Contract which you must accept to receive break access.

Request break housing in eLiving at
Contracts > Summer/Break Housing Request

DEADLINE TO REQUEST BREAK HOUSING:
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2022



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MENTAL HEALTH: CARING FOR SELF

Counseling Services: 008 Perkins Student Center

Website: <https://berks.psu.edu/counseling-services> | Phone: 610-396-6082

EVERYONE NEEDS HELP SOMETIMES

- Self-care is a great way to support our own wellness on a daily basis. Doing things we enjoy, caring for our bodies, and engaging in purposeful relaxation are all great examples of self-care. However, sometimes self-care alone isn't enough to help us manage stress or lift a low mood.
- Reaching out isn't easy. There are lots of reasons we might hesitate to tap into mental health resources. Maybe we worry about what other people would think. Or maybe we think having mental health struggles means we're "weak" or that we should be able to handle things by ourselves. These problematic ideas are untrue and the result of lingering societal, cultural, and sometimes family stigma around mental health care. Unfortunately, that stigma keeps thousands of people from getting the help they need every day.



WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP

- There are lots of reasons people seek help. We don't need to wait until there's a crisis to get support. We also don't have to be 'crazy,' desperate, or on the brink of a meltdown. Just about anything that's impacting our mood, functioning, self-esteem, or decision-making can be effectively addressed in counseling.
- There's no need to question if we're feeling "bad enough" to get help. In fact, it can be better to get help as soon as we notice something feels "off" so we can begin to address it before things get worse.

HOW TO ASK FOR HELP

- There are many avenues to pursue mental health care, including through a doctor, health insurance company, or online.
- At Penn State:
 - Counseling Services (see info at the top of this page)
 - 24/7 Penn State Crisis Line
 - Call the line at 1-877-229-6400
 - Text the line by texting "LIONS" to 741741



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STUDENT RESOURCE LIST

- Questions about your **aid, holds, or to do list items?**
 - Contact Financial Aid
 - Email: BerksFinAid@psu.edu
 - Phone: 610-396-6070*
 - Location: 014 Perkins Student Center
- Questions about your **bill?**
 - Contact Bursar
 - Email: bkbursar@psu.edu
 - Phone: 610-396-6040*
 - Location: 125 Franco Building
- Questions about **veteran benefits?**
 - The Registrar's Office is the point of contact for all VA certifications.
 - Contact Registrar
 - Telephone: 610-396-6085*
 - Email: BKVeterans@psu.edu

*No answer? Leave a message with your name, phone number, 9-digit PSU ID number, and reason for calling!
Allow 24 - 48 hours for a return call.

- **WellTrack Boost:** Free tool designed to help students understand the activities associated with changes in mood and motivation, as well as to identify patterns in their daily activities and how they are associated with changes in emotional states.
 - Get PSU access at <https://psu.welltrack.com/>
- **Online Mental Health Screenings:** Free, anonymous screenings on several areas of mental health, including depression, anxiety, academic distress, eating concerns, frustration level, family stress, and alcohol use.
 - Begin a screening [here](#)
- **Life Hack Kits:** Free step-by-step wellness packages designed to help you navigate and demystify the perplexing parts of being human.
 - a. Learn more here <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/wellness-services/life-hacks>



FINANCIAL AID REMINDERS

FAFSA FAST FACTS 2023-2021

- The 2023-24 FAFSA application **opened on Oct. 1, 2022.**
- The FAFSA must be **completed annually.**
- In order to access the FAFSA application, you'll need your **FSA ID and password.**
- To complete the FAFSA, you'll need **2021 tax documents.**
- Completing the FAFSA early can lead to **improved odds** of securing more FREE aid (i.e., grants and scholarships).
 - Plan to complete the FAFSA soon and before Dec. 31!
- After you've completed the FAFSA, monitor LionPATH for Holds or To Do List Items which may prevent aid from disbursing.
- Click the FAFSA icon to access the 2023-24 application.



IMPACT OF HOLDS & TO DO LIST ITEMS

- Unresolved Financial Aid To Do List Items may prevent aid from disbursing on time (or at all) to a student's bill. This can lead to a *Bursar Account Delinquent Hold*.
- An unresolved *Bursar Account Delinquent Hold* will prevent the student from obtaining their official transcript and from registering for courses in future semesters.
- Late Dropping a course could cause some aid to be returned to its aid source. This will depend on the timing of the late drop. This action could also cause issues with Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and renewal of certain types of aid. Learn more about late drop on page 4.

IMPORTANT: it is best to use a computer or tablet to view Holds and To Do List Items.

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ALTERING FALL 2022 COURSE ENROLLMENT

Academic Advising Center: 160 Franco

Email: bkadvisingcenter@psu.edu | Phone: 610-396-6280

LATE DROP

VS.

WITHDRAWAL

• WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LATE DROP?

- Student action where they individually eliminate one or more course(s) from their current course roster.

• WHEN IS THE LATE DROP DEADLINE?

- Friday, November 11, 2022, at 11:59pm for full semester courses.
- **Pro Tip:** do NOT wait until Nov. 11 just in case you run into any issues and/or need support.

• WHY MIGHT A STUDENT DECIDE TO LATE DROP?

- There are various reasons why a student may decide to late drop a course. The most common reason is because they are at risk of failing the course. A student may elect to late drop a course to protect their grade point average (GPA).

• WHAT SHOULD A STUDENT CONSIDER AND/OR DO BEFORE LATE DROPPING?

- Check the syllabus to see how the final grade is calculated.
 - **ASSESS:** Is the final grade based mostly on exams or homework or projects? Are there enough of those assignments remaining to improve the overall grade?
- Speak with the professor.
 - **DISCUSS:** The professor can determine if earning a passing grade is possible with the remaining assignments.
- Speak with an academic adviser.
 - **QUESTIONS:** Is the course a major requirement? Is the course a prerequisite for another course? Will dropping the course delay graduation?
- Speak with Financial Aid.
 - **QUESTIONS:** Will you lose and/or have to pay back aid? Will there be financial implications in the current and/or future semester(s)?

• WHAT SHOULD A STUDENT CONSIDER AND/OR DO AFTER LATE DROPPING?

- Pay the fee associated with dropping the course (this can be seen in LionPATH).
- Adjust next semester's course schedule as needed.
- Use the scheduled class time of the dropped course as focused study time for all remaining courses.

• WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WITHDRAW?

- Student action where they eliminate ALL courses from their current course roster.

• WHEN IS THE WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE?

- Friday, December 9, 2022, at 5:00 pm
- **Pro Tip:** do NOT wait until Dec. 9 just in case you run into any issues and/or need support.

• WHY MIGHT A STUDENT DECIDE TO WITHDRAW?

- There are various reasons why a student may decide to withdraw from the university. The most common reason is because they are at risk of failing ALL of their courses. A student may elect to withdraw to protect their grade point average (GPA).

• WHAT SHOULD A STUDENT CONSIDER AND/OR DO BEFORE WITHDRAWING?

- Speak with their assigned academic adviser.
 - **IMMEDIATE IMPACT:** Once the withdrawal is processed, **both** current semester and next semester courses will be canceled. If the student plans to return in the next semester, they will need to re-enroll. Learn more [here](#)
 - **QUESTIONS:** How will a withdrawal impact degree progress and/or graduation timeline? What is the re-enrollment timeline and process?
- Speak with Financial Aid.
 - **QUESTIONS:** Will there be financial implications this semester and/or in the future? How will financial aid (i.e., scholarships, grants, and loans) be impacted if you don't re-enroll for the next semester?

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ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

FREE PEER TUTORING

Need help with Math, Science, or Study Skills?

Make an appointment with our [Learning Center](#) Tutors [here](#) ✨

Need help with a paper, speech, resume, or other written material?

Make an appointment with our [Writing Center](#) Tutors [here](#) ✨

Peer Tutoring is always FREE!



FREE Peers & Profs TUTORING

WHAT: FREE math help sessions hosted by math faculty and math teaching assistants

WHEN: Mondays and Wednesdays during common hour (12:15pm - 1:15pm)

WHERE: 222 Luerssen

COURSES SUPPORTED: Math 4, 21, 22, 26, 34, 35, 41, 110 and Stat 100

No appointment necessary!



FREE STUDY SMARTER WEBINARS

WHAT: Learn how can you better monitor your learning and improve your study skills so that you don't waste time and effort on ineffective study strategies

WHEN: Nov. 8, 14, and 29

WHERE: Zoom. Register [here](#) ✨



ENDING ON A HIGH NOTE

MAKING THE MOST OF FALL BREAK

- Review Starfish for flags, which are concerns raised by your professor(s). If a concern was raised by your professor(s), connect with them to discuss how you can improve.
- Allocate some of your Fall Break to your academics. Dedicate some amount of time to getting caught up and/or getting ahead. For example, you may decide to study for one hour per day, one hour every other day, or a few hours on just two days.
 - **Catching Up:** if you've missed assignments, check with your professors about making them up or doing an alternate assignment BEFORE the Fall Break. **Pro Tip:** Only ask if you can commit to following through!
 - **Getting Ahead:** review Canvas and your course syllabi to see what assignments and tests/exams remain. Begin working on those assignments and preparing for exams during break! **Pro Tip:** establish a study schedule that you can start during Fall Break and continue through the end of the semester!
 - **Planning for the future:** Fall Break is a great time to search for Spring and Summer opportunities such as internships, jobs, and scholarships!

MAKING THE MOST OF TUTORING

1. **Make a plan:** demand for tutoring increases around exam times. **Pro Tip:** Make an appointment one week ahead!
2. **Try it out:** it is beneficial to attempt your work alone to get a clear idea of where you are struggling. **Pro Tip:** Bring 2-5 attempted questions/problems to maximize your session.
1. **Bring course materials:** while tutors are trained to support specific subjects, it could be helpful for them to see the course materials. **Pro Tip:** The more information they have, the better they can support you!

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A BERKS BITE: AVOCADO TOAST



Ingredients

- 1/2 an avocado
- 1 piece of bread
 - Substitutes: pita, English muffin, bagel, or tortilla
- Dash of salt
- Optional add-ons: cilantro or parsley, garlic, onion, jalapeno, light drizzle balsamic vinegar, and/or an egg for added protein

Instructions

- Toast your slice of bread until golden and firm.
- Prepare the avocado
 - Remove the pit from your avocado.
 - Use a big spoon to scoop out the flesh.
 - Put it in a bowl and mash it up with a fork until it's as smooth as you'd like.
 - Mix in a pinch of salt (about 1/8 teaspoon) and add more to taste, if desired.
- Spread avocado on top of your toast.
- Enjoy or top with any optional add-ons.

Recipe adapted from [Cookie+Kate](#)



MATIKA WILBUR

Monday, Nov. 7 at 7pm in the Penn State Berks Perkins Student Center Auditorium

Matika Wilbur (Swinomish and Tulalip) is one of the nation's leading photographers, based in the Pacific Northwest. Her most recent endeavor, Project 562, has brought Matika to over 300 tribal nations dispersed throughout 40 U.S. states where she has taken thousands of portraits, and collected hundreds of contemporary narratives from the breadth of Indian Country all in the pursuit of one goal: To Change The Way We See Native America.

Sponsored by the Penn State Berks Arts & Lecture series.

This Week at Berks

Keep up with weekly events by checking *This Week at Berks*, your weekly events and announcements newsletter! It is sent to current Berks students by email (to PSU email addresses only) every Sunday evening at 8:00pm!

Stay informed of campus activities, follow us on social media!

INSTAGRAM:



@berkscampuslife

@berkswelcomeleaders

@psubk_cab

FACEBOOK:



Penn State Berks Student Life