

**WCU**  
**WEST CHESTER**  
**UNIVERSITY**

**PARENT AND**  
**FAMILY**  
**HANDBOOK**



**OFFICE OF PARENT AND FAMILY RELATIONS**

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## Welcome to the Ram Fam!



Dear WCU parents and families,

First and foremost, congratulations and welcome to the Ram Fam! You are joining a community of engaged and active parents and family members who partner with the University and the Office of Parent and Family Relations to foster and support student success.

WCU is a special place, where we take pride in our services, programs, resources, and offices dedicated to supporting students and parents and families through the successes and challenges that are common throughout college.

We are thrilled that you and your student have chosen West Chester University. We know that this decision may have been difficult, so we feel privileged that you and your student have chosen to call WCU home, and we commit to doing everything in our power to make this a positive and enriching experience for you and your student.

At WCU, parents and family members are truly valued partners. By "parents and families," we mean moms and dads (biological, adoptive, and foster), guardians, step-parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles...anyone who loves, cares, and supports your WCU student. We recognize that it takes a village!

We know that informed and engaged parents are critical to student success, and the Office of Parent and Family Programs is committed to providing parents and families with various resources (both print and digital) to be used as resources throughout their student's tenure at WCU. This handbook is just one of these many resources.

Within this handbook, you will find advice for the upcoming transition to help you prepare for different stages of college student development. You will also find information related to FERPA, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, housing, dining, health and wellness, safety, and finances.

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parents and  
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My office should serve as a first-point-of inquiry. We are here to help with inquiries, concerns, and needs. Whatever your question, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lexie McCarthy".

Lexie McCarthy  
Director  
610-436-2698

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## OFFICE OF PARENT & FAMILY RELATIONS

### Mission

West Chester University's Office of Parent and Family Relations supports the mission and vision of the University and the Division of Student Affairs by recognizing our WCU community of educators includes parents and families, as we share a common goal of fostering student learning, development, and success.

The Office of Parent and Family Relations is committed to building lasting collaborative partnerships with parents and families by providing intentional information and meaningful engagement opportunities to ensure that students are supported in their personal and professional success.

### Vision

West Chester University' Office of Parent and Family Relations will be a nationally recognized model for demonstrating excellence in partnership with parents and families to support student success on campus and prepare students to learn, lead, and serve in their communities after graduation.

### Values

West Chester University' Office of Parent and Family Relations believes:

1. All parents and families should have access to accurate and timely information about WCU's services, programs, and opportunities that contribute to student success.
2. Parents and family members provide invaluable expertise and wisdom that can be harnessed to support and further University, Division, and department goals.
3. Intentional partnerships with parents and families strengthen and enhance the student experience and are integral to fostering student success, retention, and lasting affinity to the institution.



## **PARENT & FAMILY PROGRAMS**

### **Family Orientation**

In conjunction with Orientation Part 1 held each term to welcome new and transfer students, New Student Programs also offers a Family Orientation. During orientation, students are placed into small groups according to their major, while families attend a separate schedule more tailored to their questions and needs. The family and guest program is a mix of group presentations and smaller sessions that one can choose to attend based on interest. This program also offers opportunities for parents, family members, and guests to have their questions answered.

### **Family Weekend**

Each fall, West Chester University's Family Weekend gives parents, siblings, grandparents, and guests the perfect opportunity to enjoy WCU's campus, get to know the Golden Ram community, and spend quality time together.

Events include planetarium shows, family picnic, art exhibits, mocks classes, athletic events, campus history tours, and other family-centered on and off campus engagement opportunities.



### **Newsletters**

**Ramping Up** - First-year parent and family specific newsletter with curated content to help you help your student survive and thrive during their first year on campus

**Ram Fam Monthly** - All parent and family newsletter with content relating to campus involvement opportunities and reminders from student services offices.

### **Facebook**

We invited you to join our West Chester Parent and Family Facebook Group. Each day, posts are shared and curated to keep parents and family members engaged and informed.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/WCURamFam/>

### **Ongoing Initiatives**

As a new department in the Division of Student Affairs, the Office of Parent and Family Relations is continuously adding new programs and creating new partnership.

The office also works with individual campus departments to develop and update parent and family-specific materials to best meet the needs of our Golden Ram Family.

## TRANSITIONS

### Stress Timeline

**August** - All is new and wonderful

**September** - Homesickness

**October** - College life isn't perfect, midterms

**November** - Increased academic pressure

**December** - Finals and returning home

**January** - Loss of security and familiarity upon return to campus

February - Renewed optimism...can be fleeting

**March** - Spring Break

**April** - Academic pressure returns

**May** - End is near, freedom maybe ending



### Summer-Before Tips for Families

- Let your student know that it is natural to have doubts and be unsure about academics or adapting to a new social environment. Express your trust in their ability to make the right choices.
- Don't overreact to mood changes. Transition anxiety may be the cause.
- You know your student best: If something seems truly off, seek the help of professionals. Counseling may help your student manage this major change.
- Focus on important matters: discuss expectations with your student about academics, financial matters, social choices, and communication.
- Guide, don't direct. Ask your student probing questions. When they own their decisions, they will grow and develop.

### First Semester Best Practices

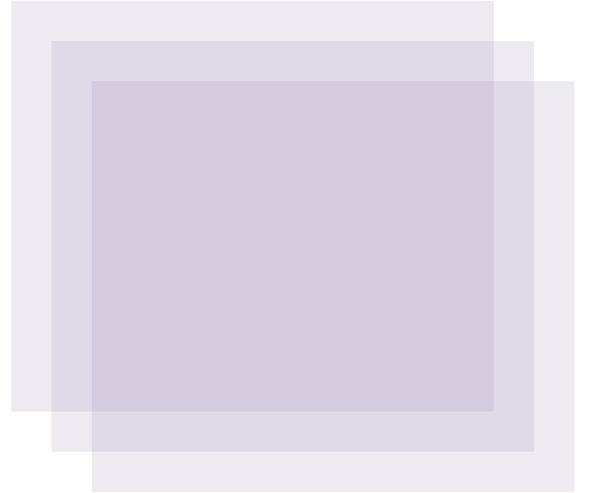
- Continue to articulate your love and support - ask about classes and their social lives, not just grades.
- Revisit your expectation conversations. Consider if some parameters need to be adjusted.
- When an issue arises and you get "that phone call," encourage your student to problem-solve and resist the urge to step in immediately.
- Avoid "helicoptering" - be a coach and encourage your student to use resources available to them on campus.
- Encourage your student to get involved, but not to overextend themselves.
- If your student is living in the residence hall, do not allow them to come home within the first weekends.
- Continue to pay attention to changes in behavior and refer to professional counseling if necessary.



## FERPA

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## ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

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## STUDENT AFFAIRS

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## LIVING ON AND OFF CAMPUS

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## DINING ON CAMPUS

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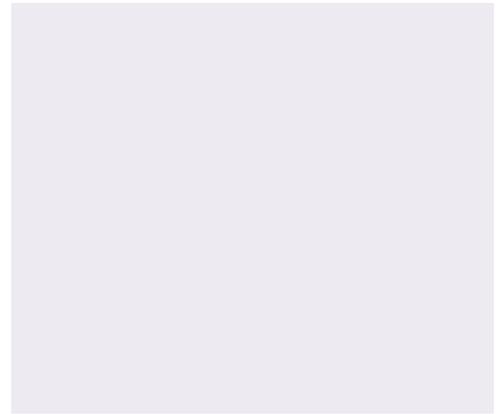




## STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

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## STUDENT SAFETY

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## FINANCIAL AID, BILLING, AND REGISTRAR

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## CAMPUS RESOURCES

### Emergency and Crisis Resources

**WCU Public Safety (On-Campus Emergencies)**  
610-436-3311

**Off-Campus Emergencies**  
911

**Student Health Services**  
610-436-2509

**Counseling Center**  
610-436-2301

**Resident Director on Duty (North Campus)**  
484-885-9301

**Resident Assistant on Duty (South Campus)**  
484-885-9306

**On-Campus Parking Concerns**  
610-436-3345

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**  
1-800-273-8255

### Colleges

**College of Arts and Humanities**  
- School of Humanities: 610-436-2420  
- Art and Design: 610-436-2755  
- Theater and Dance: 610-436-3463  
- Poetry Center: 610-436-2598

**College of Health Sciences**  
610-436-2825

**College of Business and Public Management**  
610-436-2930

**College of Sciences and Mathematics**  
610-436-3521

**College of Education and Social Work**  
610-436-2321

**University College**  
610-436-3416

**Wells School of Music**  
610-436-2739

**The Graduate School**  
610-436-2943

## University Offices and Departments

**Achieve! Program**  
610-436-3238

**Admissions, Undergraduate Admissions**  
610-436-2943

**Alumni Relations**  
610-436-2813

**Academic Development Program**  
610-436-3274

**Athletics**  
610-436-3555

**Bookstore, WCU Campus Store**  
610-436-2242

**Bursar (Billing and Payments)**  
610-436-2552

**Campus Recreation, Student Recreation**  
610-436-1732

**Career Development Center, Twardowski**  
610-436-2501

**Conference Services**  
610-436-6931

**Counseling Center**  
610-436-2301

**Dean of Students**  
610-436-1074

**Dining Services**  
610-436-2730

**Dub-C Autism Program (D-CAP)**  
610-436-3168

**Early Alert**  
610-436-2943

**Fraternity and Sorority Life**  
610-436-2117

**Health Services, Student**  
610-436-2509

**Learning Assistance and Resource Center**  
610-436-2535

**Parent and Family Relations, Office of**  
610-436-2698

**Parent Fund, WCU Foundation**  
610-436-2868

**Public Safety**  
610-436-3311

**Registrar**  
610-436-3541

**Residence Life and Housing**  
610-436-3307

**ResNet Central**  
610-436-2660

**Resource Pantry**  
610-436-2378

**ROTC**  
610-430-4403

**Service Learning and Volunteer Programs**  
610-436-3379

**Services for Students with Disabilities, Office of**  
610-436-2564

**Student Services Incorporated (SSI)**  
610-436-2955

**Student Activities**  
610-436-3037

**Student Conduct**  
610-436-3511

**Student Leadership and Involvement**  
610-436-2117

**Study Abroad and International Programs**  
610-436-3515

**Sustainability, Office of**  
610-436-2053

**Sykes Student Union**  
610-436-2984

**Trans and Queer Advocacy, Center for**  
610-436-3147

**Transportation and Parking Services**  
610-436-1053

**University College**  
610-436-3416

**University Student Housing (USH)**  
- Leasing: 610-430-4988  
- Resident Accounts: 610-430-4980

**Veterans Center, Greg and Sandra Weisenstein**  
610-436-2862

**Vice President for Student Affairs**  
610-436-3301

**Wellness Promotion, Office of**  
610-436-2509

**Women and Gender Equity, Center for**  
610-436-2122

**Writing Center, The**  
610-430-5664





**SUPPORT  
WCU STUDENTS**

# WCU Foundation Parents Fund

The WCU Foundation Parents Fund supports projects that **directly impact** your student's environment and educational experience. These projects are designed to promote, satisfy, comfort, and create a home away from home for WCU students.

Over the past 20 years, parents have contributed nearly \$500,000 to fund many important projects on campus including:

- Emergency funds for students' unexpected financial crises, including funds for housing, food, textbooks and tuition
- Emergency telephones strategically located around campus
- Computers in the residence halls
- Automatic external defibrillators in locations frequented by students
- Improved campus safety, including increase police presence on streets frequented by students

Now and in the Future parent support is needed to help maintain student emergency scholarships, university enhancements, extracurricular activities, and provide additional campus security.

**Donate Today!**



WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY  
**FOUNDATION**

[www.wcufoundation.org](http://www.wcufoundation.org)

