



WCU
WEST CHESTER
UNIVERSITY

**PARENT AND FAMILY
RESOURCE GUIDE
2023-2024**

Parent & Family Resource Guide

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Dear WCU parents and families,

Congratulations to your student on becoming a WCU Golden Ram! Let me also take this opportunity to welcome to you the Ram Family!!! We have an engaging community of active parents, guardians, 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 families through the successes and challenges that are common throughout the college experience.

While I look forward to partnering with you during your Golden Ram's journey, please note that I am also in the unique position to also act as the WCU Student Ombuds. In this role, I can work directly with your student when they have questions or concerns about their campus experience.

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 staying informed and being part of your student's higher education journey is very important. The Office of Parent & Family Relations utilizes our platform called "Ram Fam Central" as our main digital communication tool. On this page, you will find a QR code to use to sign up for this communication tool. This handbook is an additional printed version of just one of our many resources available to you.



Within this handbook, you will find advice for the upcoming transition and an overview of the Office of Parent and Family Relations. You will also find, information related to FERPA, Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, housing, dining, health and wellness, billing, financial aid, and frequently asked questions.

My office should serve as a first-point-of-inquiry for both you and your student. I am here to help with inquiries, concerns, and any needs your student may have. Please feel free to contact me as needed.

Sincerely,

Lisa Montgomery

Director of Parent & Family Relations & WCU Student Ombuds
610-436-2698

A detailed map of the NCU Allumni & Foundation Center campus. The map shows various buildings, streets, and parking areas. Key buildings include the Veterans Center (3), Asplundh Concert Hall (7), Linden Street (D-CAP Program) (1), Main Hall (16), Academic Quad (4), E.O. Bull Center, Swope Hall (17), Poetry Center (823 S. High Street), Tanglewood (100 E. Rosedale Ave.), Madeline Wing Adler Theatre, Fame Firehouse, 821 S. Matlack Warehouse, 201 Carter Drive, 887 South Matlack Street, and 202 Carter Drive (NCU Allumni & Foundation Center). Streets shown include Nields Street, 701 S. High St., Linden St., 703 S. High St., South High Street, East Rosedale Avenue, 210 E. Rosedale Ave., 220 E. Rosedale Ave., East Campus Dr., 823 S. High Street, 310, 320, 202 Carter Drive, and 887 South Matlack Street. Other features include College Arms Parking, Matlack Parking Structure, Lot M, Lot W, Lot V, Lot U, Lot Z, Lot Z1, Lot M1, Lot M2, Lot B4, and a Wire Plaza. A north arrow is located in the upper left corner.

Will my student be safe and how are you going to keep them that way?

Every parent and family member asks that question at some point during their student's time at West Chester University. The Department of Public Safety (DPS) is here to ensure your student is safe AND has the resources to protect themselves as well.

Some DPS facts

West Chester University is proud to have a full-time police department on the same footing as those municipal law enforcement agencies surrounding campus. This enables our Department to be fully attentive to the safety and needs of our students and community members.

- "The lights are always on at Public Safety". We are a year-round, round the clock operation; we do not "hand-off" policing duties to another agency at a certain time of the day.
- WCU police officers are just that, police officers: Each West Chester University Police Officer has full statutory arrest authority for any violations of state law occurring on campus.
- Operates 1200 cameras across campus: The Department operates cameras both inside and outside all buildings on campus. We are constantly looking at any obstructions that would affect the operability or visibility of each camera.
- One Department, many divisions: the Department of Public Safety has within it four Divisions that affect your student's time on campus. The Police Division; providing law enforcement on campus, the Security Division; posted at the entrance to residence halls and other campus buildings, Parking Services Division; enforcing parking rules and issuing parking passes, and the Electronic Security Division; administering key card (Ram Card) access to campus buildings.

THE WCU SAFE APP

Available for download on Apple or Android devices, this is West Chester's official safety app.

Some features include:

- **Virtual WalkHome:** Allow Campus Security to monitor a user's walk. If a user feels unsafe when walking on campus, they can request a Virtual WalkHome and the dispatcher in Public Safety will monitor their journey until they reach their destination.
- **Public Safety Escort:** This walking escort service is provided to students, faculty, and staff from one on-campus location to another.
- **Panic Button / Mobile Bluelight:** Send your location to WCU security in real-time in case of a crisis.
- **Safety Notifications:** Receive instant notifications and instructions from WCU DPS when on-campus emergencies occur.



For FAQ's about the WCU Safe App, please visit www.wcupa.edu/dps/WCUSafe/faqs.aspx

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's 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, preparing 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, particularly those that contribute to student success.
2. Parents and family members provide invaluable expertise, wisdom, and referral power 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 a lasting affinity to the institution.

What is a Student Ombuds?

The Student Ombuds (Dr. Lisa Montgomery) is a resource that all students at West Chester University can utilize for assistance with questions and concerns. The Student Ombuds Offers informal dispute resolution services, provides resources and referrals, and helps students consider options available to them to resolve matters related to their student experience at WCU.

Why would a student meet or contact the Ombuds?

During the course of an academic year, there are questions or concerns that arise for our students, and they may not be certain of exactly who to contact to follow up or get answers to their questions. Instead of spending their time contact various offices/staff members who may or may not be able to help them, students may contact the Ombuds. The Ombuds is a professional staff member that serves as a student's point of contact who will provide them with the exact person/department to call/meet with to resolve their concern(s). The Student Ombuds can also be a sounding board for students who may need to talk about an issue they may be having and some ways they can advocate for themselves to resolve the concern.

What should a student expect when contacting the Student Ombuds by phone?

Students should call 610-436-3356 and can expect their feedback and/or concerns to be heard. The Student Ombuds will follow up with students directly to provide next steps for each situation as requested.

What if a student would like to meet with the Student Ombuds?

Students are welcomed and encouraged to meet with Dr. Montgomery. Please call to request an appointment. During any meeting, students can anticipate:

1. Privacy: Conversations will be held in the privacy of the Student Ombuds office and are not shared with anyone unless there is a legal obligation that requires disclosure of the discussion.*
2. Neutrality: The Student Ombuds Office will not take ANY sides in a conflict, dispute, or issue. The office operates impartially, seeking to provide a fair and equitable process.
3. Informality: The use of the Student Ombuds Office is voluntary.

Student Testimonial

"Thank you so much for everything you did, I felt so prepared because of you and I can't thank you enough! It was a pleasure meeting you, and I hope we can cross paths again in the future."

Family Orientation

In conjunction with Orientation 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 roundtable discussions 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.

Newsletter Communication

Ram Fam Central – Be sure to sign up for Ram Fam Central which is a digital platform used to provide families with upcoming events, important dates, and other information regarding students. Families can customize the frequency with which they receive the newsletter and can also select from an array of communities of which they wish to belong. The more families customize their Ram Fam Central communities, the more information you will receive that is specific to your need-to-know information.

Ram Fam Advisory Council

There is a small group of families that meet with the Director of Parent & Family Relations periodically to discuss family concerns and feedback. Be on the lookout for information about nominating yourself to be a part of the council!

Ongoing Initiatives

The Office of Parent and Family Relations is continuously adding new programs and creating new partnerships.

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.

Family Weekend

This fall, West Chester University will be combining Family Weekend with Homecoming! Parents, siblings, grandparents, and guests will have the opportunity to enjoy WCU's campus, get to know the Golden Ram community, and spend quality time together at all of the planned festivities.

Events include planetarium shows, art exhibits, athletic events, campus history tours, food trucks, a Ram Fam brunch, and other family-centered on and off campus engagement opportunities.

SETTING EXPECTATIONS

It is important to set expectations with your student each semester. This helps to proactively prevent any confusion. Key areas that are important to discuss are grades, schedule course load, and involvement opportunities. When setting expectations, keep the following things in mind:

Be realistic. If your student was a B student in high school, it is not likely they will earn a 4.0 each semester – especially their first semester.

Be adventurous. This is important when thinking of extracurricular activities. WCU has over 280 student organizations; encourage your student to try something new!

Be consistent. Get in the routine of setting expectations each semester. This should become a consistent process for you and your student.

“How are you going to handle that?”

Rather than solving the problem for your student, it is important to ask questions that are supportive and to encourage them to find a solution. A great thing to say is, “How are you going to handle that?”

Through asking this open-ended question, your student is encouraged to have an open dialogue with you to discuss options of how to solve the situation. Your student will grow from learning how to handle problems on their own.

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.
- 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 realistic, adventurous, and consistent expectations
- Guide, don't direct. Ask your student probing questions. When they own their decisions, they will grow and develop.

Communication Timeline

At certain points in the year, there will be issues on the forefront of your student's mind. August is all about transition. Whether your student is a first year or senior, each year is a new one, and everyone gets the chance to start over with a new academic year. November is a big month on campus. Your student may be getting burned out and/or feeling somewhat overwhelmed because that is the time when the process for scheduling courses for the next semester begins and when some discussions or action items need to be had or completed regarding living arrangements for the next academic year. Be sure to check in with your student on how they are handling these tasks and about how they are preparing for final exams.

First Semester Best Practices

- Continue to articulate your love and support — ask about classes and their social lives, not just grades.
- Revisit your expectations conversation. 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.

"I love you; Go to Class"

This one is simple. End every conversation with, "I love you; go to class." One of the key factors of student success is whether or not they are regularly attending class. This simple phrase serves as a gentle reminder of the importance of attending class. It may sound silly, but each year we have parents let us know that they use this little trick, and it makes a huge difference.

FERPA SIMPLIFIED

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 is a federal law that requires colleges and universities to protect the confidentiality of student education records.

West Chester University is committed to protecting the privacy of its students and to maintaining the confidentiality of student education records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

Students at WCU are afforded the following rights regarding their educational records:

- 1. The right to inspect and review their educational records within 45 days from the date the University receives the student's request for access.**
- 2. The right to request an amendment to their educational records, if he or she believes the record contains inaccurate information.**
- 3. The right to provide consent prior the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in their education record.**
- 4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by WCU to comply with FERPA.**

*For more information, visit wcupa.edu/registrar/privacy

STUDENT RECORDS: THE PARENT PORTAL

Students can use the Parent Portal to share pieces of their WCU record with parents and others. Permission to view student information is fully controlled by the student. The student is the only person who can grant others access to view their information. Students have full discretion over what pieces of information they make available to others and have the ability to remove access at any time.

Through the Parent Portal, students currently have access to choose which of the following pieces of information are shared with others: Course history, end-of-term grades, addresses, class schedule, Financial Aid awards, and Financial Aid alerts

Students wishing to share their information with others can elect to do so through myWCU. Student should login to myWCU and click on the Parent Portal link under Resource Links.

The Ram's Eye View

The Ram's Eye View is the online Student Handbook that can be found at: wcupa.edu/ramseyeyview

The handbook provides information about the borough of West Chester related to voting and legal services as well as resources provided for students divided by academic and student life services. Finally, the handbook outlines General University Policies, Academic Policies, and Residence Life Policies. This resource is a one-stop-shop for resources, services, and policies that guide student life on and off campus.

Student Code of Conduct

The Student Code of Conduct guarantees due process and protects the individual freedom of the student as well as requiring accountability for their actions.

Disciplinary action may be imposed when a student engages in behavior, on or off University property that is not consistent with University community standards as defined by the West Chester University Student Code of Conduct. Students at West Chester University are expected to abide by the rules and regulations of the University, and local, state, federal, international laws

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.

Academic dishonesty as it applies to students includes but is not limited to academic cheating; plagiarism; the sale, purchase, or exchange of term papers or research papers; using books or other materials without authorization while taking examinations; taking an examination for another person, or allowing another person to take an examination in one's place; copying from another's paper during an examination or allowing another person to copy from one's own; falsification of information which includes any form of providing false or misleading information, written, electronic, or oral; or of altering or falsifying official institutional records.

Plagiarism is defined as copying another's work or portions thereof and/or using ideas and concepts of another and presenting them as one's own without giving proper credit to the source.

NOTE: The Student Code of Conduct covers theft or attempted theft of property and/or services; destruction; vandalism; misuse or abuse of the real or personal property of the University, any organization, or any individual.

THE SEVEN WCU COLLEGES

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Programs in the College of Arts and Humanities feature small classes and highly qualified faculty who are committed to teaching excellence and a wide range of research interests. Programs provide students with internship opportunities. The College is comprised of the School of Visual and Performing Arts and the School of Humanities.

COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

The College of Health Sciences offers a diverse array of undergraduate and graduate programs. These programs are offered through the departments of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Health, Kinesiology, Nursing, Nutrition, and Sports Medicine.

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

Programs feature small classes and highly qualified faculty who are committed to teaching excellence and a wide range of research interests. Our programs provide students with internship opportunities. Majors include: accounting, criminal justice, economics, finance, geography and planning, marketing, etc.

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES AND MATHEMATICS

The College of the Sciences and Mathematics prepares the students of West Chester University to be informed citizens and successful professionals, through our academic programs and co-curricular experiences in the computational, mathematical, natural, and social sciences, as well as engineering.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK

The College of Education and Social Work is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, NCATE. This accreditation covers both initial teacher preparation programs and advanced educator preparation programs. The College also houses undergraduate and graduate social work.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

University College promotes academic excellence and contributes to the success of all students at West Chester University. University College is the college of exploration and the home to students working with the Exploratory Studies Program. If students find that the problems they want to help solve require expertise in various fields, they may major in one of the interdisciplinary programs in University College — the Liberal Studies major or the Professional Studies concentration. These programs allow students to build customized degrees that require students to build expertise in multiple areas.

WELLS SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music, the West Chester University Wells School of Music prepares students to excel as talented, creative individuals in music. Programs are available in Music Performance, Education, Theory, History, Composition, and Music with Elective Studies in an Outside Field.

OVERVIEW

The General Education curriculum includes critical components recommended by the General Education Advisory Board informed by feedback received from the University Community over the past few years, including:

- **A first year course, with a significant content shared across all programs**
- **A universal use of Electronic Portfolios to facilitate students' thinking across their Gen Ed and Major courses**
- **A universal implementation of capstone courses in the majors, with a requirement that students synthesize their entire undergraduate career (Gen Ed, major, minor, and co- curricular work)**
- **Development and implementation of pathways utilizing existing Gen Ed requirements which can lead to transcriptable certificates**

Academic Foundations	
First Year Experience	4
English Composition (WRT 120/123 and 200-level WRT course)	6-7
Mathematics	3-4
Interdisciplinary (I)	3
Diverse Communities (J)	3
Ethics (ET)	3
Distributed Disciplinary Requirements	
Science	6-8
Behavioral And Social Science	6
Humanities	6
Arts	3
Total Credits	43-47

E-PORTFOLIO PROGRAM

We will encourage the use of an electronic portfolio in all General Education courses.

The First Year Experience will introduce the e-portfolio as a way for students to collect their work; to work on developing their personal and professional identities online; to review their work for synthesis; and, in the capstone course, to generate an integrated overview of their career, including both Major and General Education courses. The capstone assignment does not have to be a graded component of the course, but may be; it must be a requirement of the course.

All Academic Foundations, Distributive, Interdisciplinary, Diverse Communities, and Writing Emphasis courses should try to incorporate the electronic portfolio in a way that encourages integration of student learning across courses.

By Year 5 of the new General Education program, we would like to have 100% participation across all General Education courses.



Student Standing

A student's standing is determined by the number of semester hours of credit earned as follows:

First-year: 0 - 29.5 hours

Sophomore: 30 - 59.5 hours

Junior: 60 - 89.5 hours

Senior: 90 or more hours

Academic Load

Academic (or course) load refers to the number of credits taken by a student each semester. It is used to determine full- or less-than- full-time status and may change throughout a student's academic career.

Students may change their academic load through the myW-CU portal; consideration should be given to the impact it may have on financial aid, housing, and other credit-dependent services. Undergraduate academic loads for fall and spring are broken down as follows:

Less than 1/2 Time: 5.50 hrs. or less

1/2 Time: 6.00 - 8.50 hrs.

3/4 Time: 9.00 - 11.50 hrs.

Full-Time: 12.00 - 18.00 hrs.

Full-Time w/ Overload: >18.00 hrs.

Relevant Academic Policies and Procedures

First-Year Student Scheduling and Placement Exercises

In an effort to assist students in choosing the correct courses for their major and for timely progression to graduation, West Chester University creates a first semester schedule for all first-time, first-year students. Schedule prototypes are created by department faculty and reflect a combination of general education and major courses.

All students are required to take the Mathematics Placement Exam and the WRITE Survey prior to New Student Orientation.

Some students (all B.A. candidates and Exploratory Studies/Undeclared students) are required to take the Second Language Placement Exam. Results from these placement exams/surveys and other specific student information, including Dual Enrollment and AP courses (if known), are taken into account when creating a student schedule. Students may adjust their schedules one week prior to the beginning of the semester but are encouraged to seek the advice of their advisor or department chair.

Grading System

Grade	Quality Points	Interpretation
A	4.00	Superior graduate attainment
A-	3.67	
B+	3.33	Satisfactory graduate attainment
B	3.00	
B-	2.67	
C+	2.33	Attainment below graduate expectations
C	2.00	
C-	1.67	
F	0	Failure
Z	0	Failure
IP		In Progress
NG		No Grade
W		Withdrawal
Y		Administrative Withdrawal
AU		Audit
M		Military Withdrawal

Dean's List: The names of degree-seeking students who complete 12 or more graded hours in an academic semester and achieve a semester GPA of 3.670 or better are placed on the dean's list.

On-Campus Housing

FAST Facts

Did you know that over 5,300 students call our residence halls HOME through two housing providers! Here at WCU, the two housing providers are:

- **WCU Managed**, which is our community style living owned and operated by the university in the Office of Residence Life and Housing. Our residence halls include Goshen and Tyson Halls, our twin buildings, Killinger Hall, Schmidt Hall, and our apartments which are College Arms and the South Campus Apartment
- **Affiliated**, which is our suite style of living through a private partner that works in tandem with the university. University Student Housing (USH) oversees the operations of Allegheny Hall, Brandywine Hall, Commonwealth Hall, University Hall, and the Village and East Village Apartments on South Campus.



Did you also know
that over 90% of
first year students
live on-campus!

Community Member Bill of Rights

- The right to reach your academic goals and to support your academic success.
- The right to sleep without undue disturbance.
- The right to have the ability to retire in your room, suite, or apartment without constant interference.
- The right to respect of your personal property/belongings.
- The right to a clean-living environment.
- The right to entry of your room, suite, or apartment.
- The right to have guests who respect the rights of all roommates and abide by institutional policies and procedures.
- The right to mediate questions or concerns.*
- The right to live in an environment that does not permit or tolerate actions of intimidation, physical or emotional harm.*

** The Office of Residence Life and Housing strives to create a caring, vibrant, student-centered environment in our on-campus residential spaces. RLH Staff are available for assistance to address student actions/concerns.*

New Student Housing Process

When you apply for admission at WCU, you should indicate your interest in living on campus on your admissions application. Once you have been notified of your acceptance, and paid the required deposit, you will receive information that will detail the steps necessary to apply for on-campus living.

Once the deposit and the online application have been submitted, then you will be assigned a space on North Campus. South Campus Apartment Complex is not available for incoming First-Year students.

Room assignments are processed in June. Room assignments will be emailed to students' WCU email account. Later applicants will be notified of their assignment on a rolling basis as space becomes available.

On-Campus Housing is prioritized for incoming First-Year students, but not guaranteed.

OFF-CAMPUS AND COMMUTER SERVICES

West Chester University's Department of Off-Campus and Commuter Services (OCCS) advocates for equitable access to curricular and co-curricular experiences and institutional resources, regardless of a student's place of residence.

OCCS PROGRAMMING

For Off-Campus Students:

- **Off-Campus Housing Website** – your one-stop shop to search for student- zoned rentals, look for and request roommates, and find or list sublets. Visit offcampushousing.wcupa.edu today!
- **Ram Plan Programs** – OCCS offers “Moving Off Campus 101” and “Preparing for Life Off Campus” programs to support your search for off-campus housing and transition to off-campus life.

For Commuter Students:

- **Commuter Success Day** – An event held at the start of each semester to welcome new and commuting Golden Rams to the WCU community by introducing them to academic and involvement opportunities.
- **Commuter Assistants** – Seasoned undergraduate students who act as peer mentors to first-year and transfer commuter students, guiding them through their first year as a Golden Ram.
- **EXPLORE: Commuter Edition** – a commuter-exclusive introductory leadership program intended to support students with their engagement and involvement at WCU!

OFF-CAMPUS BEHAVIOR

Students who choose to live in off campus housing in the Borough of West Chester are encouraged to be good neighbors who practice responsible citizenship and are respectful of the rules and laws that govern our community.

Student Legal Aid

Students can make a free 15-minute consultation with a lawyer via RamConnect. The lawyer can consult on criminal and civil issues, including landlord/tenant concerns, and review off-campus leases.

Dining Overview

Dining plans are available to students living off campus, resident students and our faculty and staff.

All students residing in a north campus residence hall (Tyson, Goshen, Killinger, Schmidt, Allegheny, Commonwealth, University, and Brandywine) are required to have a meal plan as a condition of occupancy. For 2023-2024 students residing in University apartments will not require a meal plan but do have the option of obtaining one. Students with special dietary needs must meet with our on-site, dedicated Campus Dietitian for Collegiate Hospitality to discuss/develop a personalized menu and or to determine if needs can be accommodated.

Rollover Programs

Flex Rollover: Any unused flex does roll over from semester to semester AND year to year. However, any flex remaining on a student's account will be forfeited upon graduation or if the meal plan holder leaves the University

Meal Rollover: Any unused meals will rollover from week to week, but meals DO NOT carry over unused meals remaining on the student's account at the end of the semester will be forfeited.

All meal plans are weekly plans that guarantee a set number of meals per week throughout the entire semester based on the chosen plan. The meal week runs from Saturday brunch through Friday late night. With these plans, the meal-plan holders can choose to use as many or as few of the meals they have every week.

All Meal Plans come with five guest meals per semester, which the student can use to treat someone to a meal at The Commons Dining Hall.

Additional meal plan information can be found on the Dining Services website.



RESIDENT STUDENT MEAL PLANS

The Ram Ultimate Meal Plan

Includes unlimited access to the Commons Dining Hall and up to three Meal Cash Credit (MCC) swipes per day and \$250.00 in flex

The Gold Plan

Includes 14 meals per week and \$250 in flex

Purple Plan

Includes 12 meals per week and \$250 in flex

COMMUTER, OFF CAMPUS, AND APARTMENTS (SOUTH CAMPUS APARTMENTS, THE VILLAGE, EAST VILLAGE OR COLLEGE ARMS)

Block 120 Plan

Includes 120 meals per semester and \$350.00 in flex

Block 75 Plan

Includes 75 meals per semester and \$350.00 in flex

Block 30 Plan

Includes 30 meals per semester, \$180 in flex and \$120 meal kit vouchers

Flex-Only Plan

A \$150 minimum is required to open account and additional flex dollars can be added in \$25.00 increments. Flex dollars will carry over from year-to-year but are forfeited upon graduation or if the meal plan holder leaves the University.



Student Health Services provides care for well and sick case visits, as well as sexual and reproductive care.

Confidentiality

Student Health Services has a responsibility to protect and preserve the confidentiality of all medical information resulting from the professional relationships with patients within Student Health Services. Confidential information contained in medical records and associated papers are restricted to authorized personnel and can only be released if requested by the student.

Exceptions to confidentiality can occur only under certain circumstances. These exceptions include a serious, immediate threat to a student's life or welfare or to the life or welfare of another person.

Confidential information contained

in medical records and associated papers are restricted to authorized personnel and can only be released if a serious, immediate threat to a student's life or welfare or to the life or welfare of another person.

Fees and Payment

- All students who have paid the Student Health Services fee are eligible to use services. Fees are added to the tuition and fees bill for all full-time undergraduate and graduate students.
- There is a \$12 visit fee for all appointments at Student Health Services.
- Charges for visits will automatically be posted to your student's account. Charges will not reveal any confidential health information. These charges can be paid at the Bursar's Office or via online QuikPay.
- The full fee schedule can be found at the Student Health Services website.

What Your Student Can Expect at the Student Health Center

1. Students should call 610-436-2509 to schedule an appointment
2. Students please bring your photo ID and health insurance card to their appointment. There is a \$12 visit fee and possible additional fees for medications and supplies.
3. The length of appointment depends on the severity of the illness and/or services provided.
4. During the appointment, students should inform the nurse of any concerns. If they are not comfortable speaking with the nurse, your student can ask to speak with the Director, Nursing Supervisor, or email Student Health Services at healthctr@wcupa.edu.

Office of the Bursar

The Office of the Bursar is responsible for student billing and collection. When contacting our office, you must provide the student ID number before we are able assist you with an account.

Billing

Students will receive an email notification when new charges for the semester are posted to their account. Upon receipt of the email, students may view/print an on-demand Statement of Account via myWCU.

Students must confirm their enrollment each semester by paying in full or enrolling in a payment plan by the due date. If they have enough anticipated aid to cover their charges, they can confirm their enrollment by using the link on their myWCU.

Access To Your Student's Bill

Students must grant access to parents/guardians to view charges and print an on-demand bill.

- Log into myWCU
- Look for Student Resources section
- Select the Parent Portal
- Click on the "Share my Information" tab
- Click on the "Delegate Access to New Contact" button
- Select Account Summary access

Encourage your student to enroll you as an Authorized Payer so you will have access to our QuikPAY system. Authorized Payers can make payments and enroll in a payment plan via QuikPAY.

Payment Methods

1. Online via QuikPAY using an e-check or credit card.
2. Mail a check to: Bursar's Office, 25 University Ave. Room #50 West Chester, PA 19383.
3. In person with cash, check or money order.

The Payment Plans

Fall and Spring Semester Payment Plans available via QuikPAY. WCU offers 4 plan options:

- 5 Installments (20% down and 4 additional payments required)
- 4 Installments (25% down and 3 additional payments required)
- 3 Installments (33% down and 2 additional payments required)
- 2 Installments (50% down and 1 additional payment required)

Payment Plan Fee is \$35 per semester. Installments are automatically withdrawn from bank account or credit card. Installment notices are sent electronically to the student's WCU email reminding that an automatic withdrawal is pending.

Financial Aid Website — wcupa.edu/finaid

- **Ask Rammy Chatbot** – Answers to your questions 24/7 via chatbot Scholarship search and apply tool
- Work Study application process and job descriptions
- **Ocelot FA TV** – Short videos to assist with your FAFSA application process with a special section for parents and families
- **Important Forms** – Related to FERPA, loans, etc.
- **Financial Literacy** – Online tool kit with worksheets used for in-person trainings with student ambassadors

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How will my student know the status of their financial aid?

The student's financial offer and their bill can be monitored online through their myWCU. Encourage them to login into myWCU, frequently. Most communication will be sent to the student via their student's WCU E-mail account, the student should be checking this frequently.

How can I help to ensure that there are no account holds or issues with the student's financial aid?

Encourage the student to promptly provide any documentation/missing information requested by the Financial Aid Office to secure their aid package.

How can I help to ensure that there are no account holds or issues with the student's financial aid?

Permission to view student information in myWCU is fully controlled by the student. The student is the only person who can grant other users, such as Parents or Guardians, access to view their information, and have the authority to remove access at any time.

If my student chooses to share this information with me, how do they grant me access?

Students may authorize or restrict the release of information pertaining to their individual record by submitting an Authorization To Release Information Form to our office via email, fax or in-person. Through the Parent Portal the student also has full discretion over what pieces of information they make available to other users. The Parent Portal is solely an informational site; parents (and others) won't have access to complete any transactions.

Financial Aid Not in Place by Bill's Due Date?

1. Apply for financing including the PLUS and/or Private loans in June.
2. Complete all initiated tasks on myWCU including the MPN and Entrance Counseling for Direct Loans.

Financial checklist 2023-2024

APRIL–MAY 2023

- ___ Review financial aid awards: via myWCU under “Financial Aid” for 2024 aid year
- ___ Accept loans: via myWCU in order to have them post as anticipated aid on your bill
- ___ Complete Master Promissory Note & Entrance Counseling at <https://studentaid.gov>
- ___ Send outside scholarship notices to Financial Aid Office
- ___ Check status of State Grant record and make sure WCU is listed (PA Residents only): PHEAA
- ___ Review “out-of-pocket” Cost Calculator for estimate of costs
- ___ Apply for Additional financing early using the cost calculator to estimate balance in order to avoid delays in processing. Once loans are accepted it can take 7-15 business days for processing due to volume.
 - Parent PLUS loan
 - Private loan

JUNE 2023

- ___ After filing the 2023-24 FAFSA request a special circumstance appeal by emailing finaid@wcupa.edu if there has been a change in household income for 2023-24 (2021 taxes)
- ___ Apply for Work Study for 2023-24
- ___ Designate individual(s) in Parent Portal
- ___ Add Authorized Payer(s) in QuikPAY
- ___ Enroll in Direct Deposit
- ___ July 2023 (tuition rates are set mid to late July)
- ___ Check WCU email for new charges notification (On-demand Bill)
- ___ Review payment plan options
- ___ 529 authorization – E-mail a copy of your 529 authorization plan to your Bursar Account Representative or WCUBursar@wcupa.edu

AUGUST 2023

- ___ Fall 2023 charges due August 14, 2023
- ___ Confirm Enrollment (activate student account)
- ___ If financial aid covers all charges use the link on myWCU OR
- ___ Pay balance due in full or enroll in a payment plan by August 14, 2023
- ___ Authorize funds for USH Housing (if eligible: via myWCU)
- ___ Change Meal Plan: via myWCU (Changes can be made during the first 2 weeks of class)
- ___ Financial Aid begins Fall disbursements the week of August 21, 2023 Fall refunds are processed beginning the week of August 21, 2023

Financial checklist 2023-2024

OCT 2023

- ___ Check for outstanding 2023-24 Financial Aid Tasks: via myWCU

NOV 2023

- ___ Winter 2023 charges posted

DEC 2023

- ___ Winter 2023 charges due December 4, 2023
- ___ Apply for 2024-25 FAFSA. It is later this year (December 2023) due to changes in the application process
- ___ Spring 2024 charges posted

JAN 2024

- ___ Spring Bills due January 8, 2024
- ___ Make a separate authorization to USH to pay for spring once spring bill is posted and enrollment is confirmed on MyWCU

FEBRUARY- MARCH 2024

- ___ Review 2024-25 Financial Aid Tasks via new RamPortal starting in March.
- ___ Apply for Work Study for 2024-25
- ___ PA Residents confirm all tasks to secure PA State Grant are completed for 2023-24 prior to April
- ___ 1st deadline: including income validation
- ___ Apply for 2024-25 WCU Scholarships including the General Scholarship Application, College and Department Applications, and PASSHE Scholarship Application (Available in March)

APRIL- MAY 2024

- ___ PA Resident 2024-25 FAFSA Filing Deadline is May 1st to be considered for a state grant
- ___ After filing the 2024-25 FAFSA request a special circumstance appeal by emailing finaid@wcupa.edu if there has been a change in household income for 2024-25 (2022 taxes),
- ___ Apply for Summer 2024 Direct Loans after registering using Direct Summer Loan Application
- ___ Summer Charges posted
- ___ Summer Session 1 bills due mid-May
- ___ Financial Aid begins Spring disbursements the week of January 16, 2024
Spring refunds are processed beginning the week of January 16, 2024

Division of Student Affairs

The Division of Student Affairs is comprised of departments, with professional and paraprofessional staff who provide programs and services that are outside of the classroom setting, but designed to complete the educational mission of WCU and contribute to the overall growth and development of our students.



STUDENT AFFAIRS EVENTS AND TRADITIONS

Rams After Hours — Free, late night programming for West Chester University students occurring on Friday nights during the academic year from 8:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. in and around Sykes Student Union. Sykes Student Union will host various interactive live events (carnivals, live music, etc.). All Rams After Hours events are completely free to WCU Students.

Homecoming/Family Weekend — Each fall, the West Chester University community celebrates Homecoming and Family Weekend with a kick-off party, the annual parade, the football game, tailgate party, OCCS Housing Fair, a Ram Fam Brunch, plus many other activities and programs.

Banana Day — For over 20 years, WCU students have Banana Day each spring. Games are played throughout campus, bananas are eaten, and everyone competes for a coveted Banana Day T-Shirt.

Miss WCU Pageant — The University hosts an annual pageant for students to showcase their talents, intelligence, and campus leadership. This pageant functions as a scholarship opportunity as well as a fundraiser.

1871 Award — The 1871 Award was established in 2018 to recognize West Chester University juniors and seniors who are high-achieving in both the academic and co-curricular realms. Up to 71 students are awarded.

Student Leadership Awards — WCU recognizes excellence in programming, organizational development, individual leadership, and effective partnerships through our annual Student Leadership Awards ceremony.

Athletics

WCU Athletics is committed to the student-athlete experience by promoting an environment of academic and athletic excellence, sportsmanship, leadership and support. Through teaching, preparing, and empowering student-athletes, Athletics aims for success in competition and in life with the goal of enriching the Golden Ram community.

wcupagoldenrams.com

Campus Recreation

With a diverse line-up of competitive, fitness, leisure and recreational programs and services, Campus Recreation aspires to be the best part of your Ram day and your first choice for FUN! Mix in our nationally award winning sport club teams, our creative and cutting-edge intramural program, and our outstanding outdoor adventure program and you have a recipe for a healthier, happier you!

wcupa.edu/_services/campusrec

Fraternity and Sorority Life

The Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life works with over 30 fraternities and sororities at West Chester University. These values-based organizations promote friendship, leadership, scholarship, and service. With over 30 fraternities and sororities, Fraternity and Sorority Life provides a unique opportunity for students to exchange knowledge, talents, and perspectives that build character and help them contribute to a better world.

wcupa.edu/_services/fraternitySorority/default.aspx



Student Leadership and Involvement

The Office of Student Leadership and involvement oversees over 280 WCU clubs and organizations and runs countless student leadership experiences on campus. West Chester University provides a range of opportunity to grow as an individual, develop teamwork and leadership skills, and network with other students and faculty.

[*Wcupa.edu/_services/STU/studentLeadershipinvolvement/*](http://Wcupa.edu/_services/STU/studentLeadershipinvolvement/)

Sykes Union and Student Activities

Sykes Union and Student Activities is the center of community life on the campus of West Chester University. We encourage and provide an environment where everyone on campus can gather to participate and learn through diversity and co-curricular experiences. The department further strives to maintain a balance of recreational, social, educational, and cultural programs and activities. We advise the Student Activities Council (SAC), a student led group, who plan and host programs such as Homecoming, Banana Day, trips, Rams After Hours late-night program, and more! The building is home to meeting rooms and event spaces, the WCU Campus Store, Commuter Center, Rams Head Food Court, Dowdy Multicultural Center, Center for Trans and Queer Advocacy and other student organization supported areas. Finally, we offer various student employment opportunities to support the building and its events.

[*wcupa.edu/sykesunion*](http://wcupa.edu/sykesunion)

Wellness Promotion

The Office of Wellness Promotion engages students in opportunities to cultivate sustainable skills in health and well- being through providing a variety of educational programs and early intervention services that include individualized sessions with staff, educational workshops, as well as campus events. Programming is offered, often through peer-to-





peer delivery, on a variety of interconnected themes to help students understand what health and wellness mean to them and how to find community with other Golden Rams. Studies have indicated that individuals develop their foundation of well-being in college, and we are here to help students along their journey.

Sometimes making decisions about health and wellness can be challenging for students. Through wellness coaching, students can engage in private conversations with a trained coach on our staff who will empower students to explore topics including sleep, stress, social connections, and substance use. Coaching is short-term and action-oriented to help students identify their strengths and personal motivations, set attainable and action-oriented goals, and work towards their health and well-being vision using sustainable strategies in a supportive environment.

A variety of informal opportunities also exist for students to learn about their health and wellness including our Stall Seat restroom newsletter, our Ram Box subscription service connecting students to free resources and personal health supplies, our What's Happening in Wellness newsletter, and more! Our programming information is available on RamConnect, updated information is on our website: www.wcupa.edu/wellness, and a lot of good educational materials are distributed through our social media pages (www.facebook.com/WCUWellness; @WCUWellnessPromotion).

wcupa.edu/_services/wellness

Center for Trans and Queer Advocacy

The Center for Trans and Queer Advocacy strives to be a catalyst in enhancing the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, queer, questioning, agender, asexual, aromantic, and intersex students, staff, and faculty at West Chester University and beyond. Through visibility, outreach, programming, education, and community building, the center works collectively to create an environment where trans and queer people feel supported and validated.

[*wcupa.edu/_services/transAndqueer*](http://wcupa.edu/_services/transAndqueer)

Center for Women and Gender Equity

The Center for Women and Gender Equity actively promotes and advocates for a campus community that values the safety, equality, and intellectual advancement of women and other historically marginalized groups.

[*wcupa.edu/_services/women-gender-equity*](http://wcupa.edu/_services/women-gender-equity)

Lawrence A. Dowdy Multicultural Center

The Lawrence A. Dowdy Multicultural Center promotes holistic success and development of Students of Color through collaborative co-curricular experiences that promote multicultural awareness, create a sense of belonging, affirm racial and cultural identity, and empower all students to challenge systems of oppression.

[*wcupa.edu/_services/multicultural/*](http://wcupa.edu/_services/multicultural/)

New Student Programs

The Office of New Student Programs coordinates orientation and outreach programs for undergraduate first year, transfer, and adult-learner students. Orientation programs include sessions in June, July, August, and January. The Office of New Student Programs welcomes, supports, and assists new students and members of the Ram Fam by facilitating programs and providing resources aimed at student success. Orientation sessions, virtual and in-person, as well as welcome week programs, are designed to help students with the transition to college academic rigor, facilitate social connections, and explore opportunities for co-curricular engagement. Understanding the importance of family support, New Student Programs also equips members of the Ram Fam with resources to help their students in their academic pursuits and student involvement efforts during their time at West Chester University.

[*wcupa.edu/orientation*](http://wcupa.edu/orientation)

Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact (CCESI)

The Center for Civic Engagement & Social Impact promotes community-based learning experiences that address issues of public concern by building mutually beneficial partnerships and empowering students to be active citizens in their local, national, and global communities.

CCESI engages students interested in community service, volunteering, service-learning, social advocacy, voting, and other meaningful ways to make a positive impact in their local, national, and global communities. From hunger and homelessness to educational inequities, our programs and services – including the WCU Resource Pantry – provide students with a wide range of impactful opportunities to learn about and address issues of public concern. Through our mutually beneficial partnerships with community-based organizations, we strive to equip all students with the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in democratic life as agents of positive social change.

Please explore our website for opportunities, programs, and services specific to students, faculty, community partners, and the WCU Resource Pantry. The West Chester University Resource Pantry supports by eliminating barriers related to basic need insecurity. It is open to ALL undergraduate and graduate students at West Chester University, regardless of need level. There are pantry locations on the West Chester Campus and the Philadelphia Campus. The Resource Pantry now features a Benefits Hub that supports students by connecting them to government benefits and community resources (e.g., SNAP) to maximize student success. Federal work study eligible students interested in civic leadership programming are welcome to apply to our many student staff positions including work in our Resource Pantry.

To learn more about The Resource Pantry and ways to support WCU students, visit:

https://www.wcupa.edu/_services/civicEngagementSocialImpact/pantry/donate.aspx

Learn more about CCESI:

https://www.wcupa.edu/_services/civicEngagementSocialImpact/

ACADEMICS AND LEARNING SUPPORT

Who can my student talk to about choosing a major?

Exploratory Studies
610-436-3505
advising@wcupa.edu

Who can my student and I talk to about accommodations?

Services for Students with Disabilities
610-436-2564
ossd@wcupa.edu

Where can my student get tutoring support?

Learning Assistance & Resource Center
610-436-2535
larc@wcupa.edu

Who can my student talk to about extended absences?

Student Assistance
610-436-0165
StudentAssistance@wcupa.edu

My student struggles with writing. Where can they get support?

Writing Center
610-436-5664
MErvin@wcupa.edu

My student-athlete needs support. Where should they go?

Student Athlete Support Services
610-436-3573
KMilliner@wcupa.edu

Where can we buy and rent textbooks?

Campus Bookstore
610-436-2242

STUDENT LIFE

Who can my student talk to about getting involved?

Student Leadership and Involvement
610-436-2117
Involvement@wcupa.edu

Who do I call with questions about Greek Life?

Fraternity and Sorority Life
610-436-2117
FSL@wcupa.edu

Who can my student talk to if they want to volunteer?

Service-Learning & Volunteer Programs
610-436-3379
KClay@wcupa.edu

Where can my student get involved with intramural sports/ club sports/outdoor adventure pursuits?

Campus Recreation
610-436-1732
campusrecreation@wcupa.edu

What if my student wants to study abroad?

Global Engagement Office (GEO)
610-436-3515
International@wcupa.edu

What can my student expect as a new student?

New Student Programs
610-436-3305
Orientation@wcupa.edu

Where can I call about career and internship opportunities?

Career Development Center
610-436-2501
CDC@wcupa.edu

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Who should my student contact about their meal plan?

WCU Dining Services
610-436-2730
wcudiningservices@wcupa.edu

Where can my student ask questions about living on campus?

Residence Life and Housing
610-436-3306
housing@wcupa.edu

Who can my student talk to about off-campus living?

Off-Campus and Commuter Services
610-436-2209
commuters@wcupa.edu

Where can I talk about scholarships and financial aid?

Financial Aid
610-436-2627
finaid@wcupa.edu

Where can my student get support for technology issues?

Information Services and Technology
610-436-2739
wcupa.edu/infoServices/serviceNow/

Who do I call when I have billing or payment plan issues?

Bursar
610-436-2552
bursar@wcupa.edu

Where can I call to better understand judicial procedures?

Student Conduct
610-436-3511
StudentConduct@wcupa.edu

STUDENT IDENTITY, HEALTH, AND WELLNESS

Where can my student talk about their queer identity with professionals?

Center for Trans and Queer Advocacy
610-436-3147
TransandQueer@wcupa.edu

Where can my student go to talk about healthy goals?

Wellness Promotion
610-436-2509
wellness@wcupa.edu

My student is sick. Where can they go?

Student Health Services
610-436-2509
healthctr@wcupa.edu

Where can my student get mental health support?

Counseling Center
610-436-2301
wcucc@wcupa.edu

Where can my student receive identity mentorship?

Lawrence Dowdy Multicultural Center
610-436-3273
multicultural@wcupa.edu

Where can my student-veteran receive support?

Veterans Center
610-436-2862
veteranscenter@wcupa.edu

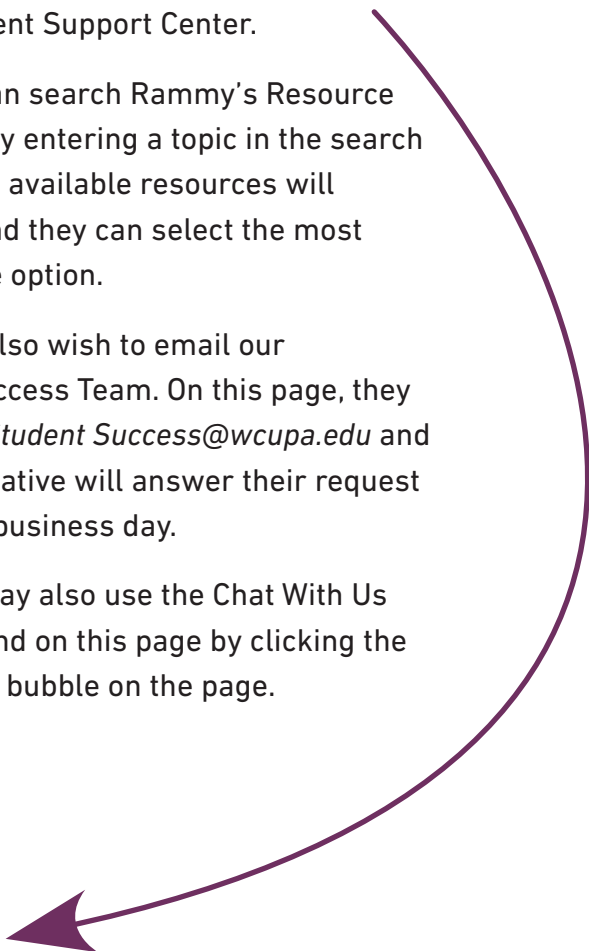
Student Support Center

WCU is committed to student success. There are many resources available to students to assist them with problems they might face. You or your student may use the QR code below which will take you to the Student Support Center.

Students can search Rammy's Resource Navigator by entering a topic in the search box and the available resources will populate and they can select the most appropriate option.

They may also wish to email our Student Success Team. On this page, they can email *Student Success@wcupa.edu* and a representative will answer their request within one business day.

Students may also use the Chat With Us feature found on this page by clicking the purple chat bubble on the page.



WCU NORTH CAMPUS

