**Introduction**

**Welcome**
Congratulations on becoming a Peer Leader for Fall 2013! We are very excited to have you as a part of the First Year Experience Peer Leader team.

This handbook offers valuable resources and information regarding your future peer leading experience. Please read over the materials closely and be sure to check out the appendices for ideas for ice-breakers, information about campus resources, and more.

**Peer Leader Mission**
To enhance student success through our leadership skills and familiarity with campus resources.

**Peer Leader Purpose**
The purpose of the Peer Leader program is to introduce an immediate support network for students entering into higher education for the first time. Peer leaders will build relationships with first-year students in order to help them learn the ropes of college life, academically and culturally. Our purpose is to provide these students with an enhanced experience, so that they are better able to achieve their full potential.

**Learning Objectives**
• Peer leaders will develop and improve personal leadership and teambuilding skills.
• Peer leaders will develop and improve oral presentation skills.
• Peer leaders will gain a basic understanding of student development theory as it relates to first-year students, and will apply this knowledge to facilitate problem solving.
• Peer leaders will learn to work effectively with their assigned FYS 1100 instructor.
• Peer leaders will begin to develop and improve teaching and group facilitation skills.

**Job Description**

**What is a peer leader?**
A peer leader is a kind of mentor. A mentor is a role model who assists someone with making an important transition, learning a new skill, or facing an unknown challenge. A peer leader is a student who has learned from experience and has developed skills to successfully guide other students as they enter college.

A peer leader uses their positive attitude, exemplary academic work, interpersonal skills, and personal experience to assist first-year students in their transition to university life. Peer leaders pair up with a FYS 1100 instructor and help educate students on topics including campus involvement, time management, critical thinking, campus resources, the public affairs mission, and more.
What are the requirements for becoming a peer leader?
- A 2.5 cumulative GPA
- Enrollment in LDR 2255, a 1 credit hour course for leadership instruction
- Completion of peer leader training
- Good interpersonal and communication skills
- Strong work ethic
- High standards for ethics and integrity
- Respect for the University and its students, faculty, and staff
- Desire to serve others

What do peer leaders do?
- Acquaint themselves and work with a lead instructor
- Help students by answering questions and acting as a resource
- Assist with class activities and teaching
- Develop positive relationships with students

How can Peer Leaders be used in the classroom?
- Attend class sessions and model appropriate classroom behavior.
- Present diverse points of view.
- Present icebreakers to the class.
- Assist students with ideas with classroom projects.
- Organize and coordinate any co-curricular activities for the class.
- Gather information about first-year concerns and refer to the appropriate resources.
- Provide success strategies for college.
- Provide student feedback to the professor.
- Consult with the professor about the class setting.
- Share study strategies.
- Inform students about academic and personal resources on campus.
- Inform students about extracurricular events occurring on campus.

What are the benefits of becoming a peer leader?
- Become a leader on campus
- Earn 1 credit hour for FYS 2255 each semester of service to a maximum of 3 credits at no cost to the student
- Obtain credentials for a resume following graduation
- Make a difference in the lives of first-year students
- Meet other leaders on campus, collaborate on ideas, and share resources
**Goals**

**Program Goals for Peer Leaders**
- To assist instructors in connecting with first-year students
- To provide new students with the skills and information they need in order to create a smooth transition to college life
  - Giving new undergraduate students the opportunity to meet with current students
  - Providing awareness of campus resources and connections to sponsored campus activities and events
- To help new students feel an early sense of belonging at Mansfield University
- To facilitate students’ developing a supportive environment.

**Personal Goal Setting**

Why did you become a peer leader? Some of you may say that you wanted to have this experience because you like sharing the knowledge you have gained from your time here. Others may see it as an opportunity to develop and enhance skills for future career aspirations. Whatever the reason, you should take the time to ask yourself why you truly want to become a peer leader, and set personal goals that will help guide you through the semester.

Remember to set SMART goals:

- **Specific**: When a goal is specific, it is clear and concise. You know what it is and can easily explain it to yourself and others.
- **Measurable**: A measurable goal can be monitored for progress. It will have steps that can be accounted for.
- **Attainable**: An attainable goal is one that you can achieve. You do not want to make it too easy, but it should be achievable.
- **Relevant**: Making sure the goal is important to you makes it relevant.
- **Time-Limited**: Finally, the goal must be time-limited. This means that you must set deadlines for completing it and be able to determine when it is completed.

**Peer Leader Do’s and Don’ts**

As mentioned previously, your job is to create connections and help provide guidance to first-year students who are still unaware of all the changes that college can bring. Do not try to be an instructor because that is not your purpose. Try to relate to your students and provide insight about yourself and how you survived to this point. If you can remember back to your days as a new student, what were the things you were most concerned and worried about? These are likely the same things your students are concerned with. Try to put yourself in the shoes of the students you are leading and provide them with advice to help them succeed.
**DO**

- Initiate and maintain regular contact with students in their FYS throughout the fall semester in order to develop positive relationships
- Use a variety of communication methods for first-year students
- Inform and update FYS Faculty of any important occurrences and of students with possible emotional, physical, social, and/or mental health concerns
- Ask about their experiences thus far living and studying at Mansfield University

**DON’T**

- Try to be a counselor. If necessary, refer them to the Counseling and Testing Center or other appropriate establishment within the university.
- Guarantee outcomes. E.g. “Everyone loves college!”
- Be overbearing. Your student is the decision maker; you are the guide.
- Impose your own ideas, values, or solutions as “the only way.”
- Encourage dependency or over commit your time.
- Dress inappropriately.
- Meet the class in a faculty member’s absence.

**Skills for Effective Peer Leaders**

As your relationships with your students develop, they may approach you with issues of a more personal nature. These issues will often have an impact on their success as a student. The most important thing to remember in any situation is that you are not a counselor. Sometimes the best way you can help others is by referring them to someone with more experience. Remember: we have professional counselors and psychologists on staff for these situations.

**Keys to Success:**

- Listen: Be an active and attentive listener.

- Ask open-ended questions: Any question that elicits a “yes/no” answer won’t be as helpful as a “what, when, how, who” question. “Why” questions seem like they would get more information, but keep in mind that they can sometimes imply criticism. “Why didn’t you…”

- Attend and respond to both content and feeling: Often there are two things happening at once: there is an issue, and the person has some kind of feeling or reaction to that issue. You need to attend and respond to both. Remember that issues presented to you could have some underlying themes and might even be symptoms of a larger problem. It’s important to understand the “big picture.”

- Allow students to solve their own problems: It’s easy to want to try to “fix” things for people, but that’s not as helpful as it might seem. Usually, the student knows the answer or knows how to solve the problem, but just needs someone to provide encouragement.
• Refer to and use your resources: Be familiar with campus resources. Help students make use of them. It’s okay to say, “I don’t know” as long as you can help find the information.

**Communication skills**

• Listening: Fully participate in a conversation by being an active listener and by asking questions. Be aware of how your body language can affect a conversation.

• Observing: Be aware of how the student is presenting the message or ideas through body language and unspoken words.

• Communicating: Be very clear in your presentation of facts and opinions.

**Personal skills**

• Being available: Even if a student does not need to seek you out, they see you as being a helpful mentor when you are present and available to them.

• Being proactive: Take the initiative in approaching your students. New students are less likely to approach you, especially at first, so don’t wait for them to come to you.

• Setting an example: Students will observe you closely. Your role is one of responsibility. Make good decisions in what you say and how you act when you’re interacting with them. Remember that you are a role model, both in and out of the classroom.

**Challenges You May Face as a Peer Leader**

There is no set process you, as a peer leader, can use to overcome obstacles you will face as part of your job description. That said, there are many resources available to you in your role that will both be beneficial not only to you but also to the students in your class. If you come across an obstacle you need help overcoming, never be afraid to contact your lead instructor, which is currently Nancy Clemens, or even to ask your fellow peer leaders for assistance. While the list below is in no way exhaustive, it will give you a general sense of some of the obstacles you may face in your job as a peer leader for the First Year Experience here at Mansfield University.

**Encouraging and Motivating Students**

• Keeping students in high spirits
• Working with the apathy of certain students
• Motivating students to complete assignments
• Motivating students to attend classes
• Challenging students to meet deadlines
• Encouraging students to “get involved”

**Student Perceptions of Your Role**

• Being seen not as a peer but as a teacher or someone in a position of authority
• Students will never see you as they see their fellow students; as a Peer Leader you will be seen as a figure of authority and they will not treat you like “one of the gang”

**Time Management**

• Balancing mentoring students with your own academics, extracurricular work, and social life (if you have one after all that)
• Planning your schedule to be able to do well academically and socially, all the while helping your students when required
• Building relationships with your students, classmates, faculty, and of course, that special someone…provided you have time for one of course. (Not likely)
• Keeping in contact with not only your Peer Leader instructor but your fellow Peer Leaders as well

**Personal Issues (We All Have Them)**

• Keeping your personal values and opinions out of advice given to your students
• Working past language barriers with international/exchange students
• Working out issues with roommates (I am the expert on campus on this…unfortunately)
• Keeping calm and reasonable when you must confront students about issues

**Customer (Err...Student) Inquiries and the Like**

• Helping undeclared students find the appropriate major for them.
• Helping those who need it but are too afraid/shy to directly ask you for advice or aid.
• Giving advice without directly giving the student the answers to assignments.

**CONTACTING YOUR STUDENTS**

As a peer leader, it is your duty to be there for the students if they need somebody for advice during their freshman transition. Be sure to tell them on the first day of class why you are there and how they can contact you. The best way for contact is through Desire2Learn or Mounties e-mail. Some peer leaders may feel comfortable giving out their phone number, but this is not a requirement.

Sending an e-mail after the first class is a good way to immediately show them you are always available and ready to talk. It is also a good idea to send e-mails to the students when they are absent, just to check up on them and make sure they are doing okay. At the end of the year, send a closing email to make sure the students are ready for their final exams.

**Welcome e-mail example:**

Hello everybody,

Welcome to the first week of classes! My name is (insert name) and I will be your peer leader this semester for your Freshman Year Seminar class. I am a (insert year in school) studying (your major). I will be sitting in on many of your classes, so we will have lots of opportunity to get to know each other. I am here to give you advice and help guide you through your first year.
Sometimes, it’s easier to connect with another student than a teacher, and that’s my job. I can help you with study skills, organization, time management, campus questions, and anything else you may think to throw at me. Please don’t hesitate to ask me for any kind of advice. I look forward to seeing you all again soon!

Your peer leader,
(insert name)

**Absent e-mail example:**

Hey (insert student name),

I’m just checking up to see if everything is okay. You weren’t in class today, and we hadn’t heard anything from you beforehand. If you can, just respond letting me know what’s going on, if anything. If there’s anything I can do to help, please let me know! It is also important to contact (professor name) if you do not attend class so you can get missed homework and let (him/her) know ahead of time. I hope to hear from you soon.

Your peer leader,
(insert name)

*Some professors prefer that you only send this e-mail if the student has missed multiple classes in a row or more than the average student does. Discuss with them and decide from there what you should do.

**End of year e-mail example:**

Hello everyone,

Congratulations on almost completing your first semester at Mansfield University! The only things standing in your way are final exams. I wanted to check in with you all one last time beforehand to make sure you’re all caught up with your work, and you’re ready to prepare and study for finals. Please contact me in class or through email if you need any kind of help. If you have questions about other things, such as dorm rules, dining services, or anything else during/after finals, just let me know. Feel free to contact me any time after this class is over as well. I hope you were able to take some of what you learned in class and apply it to this semester, as well as your future ones to come. Have a good (winter/summer) break!

Your peer leader,
(insert name)

The above examples are an outline for the e-mails you may want to send out to your students. Feel free to alter and add on whatever you’d like to make it more personalized. Just make sure you stress the fact that you are always there for them, available and ready to talk.
WRAPPING UP THE YEAR

Often times it is a good idea to reward the class at the end of the semester for all of their hard work. Having a pizza party or bringing in cookies/other snacks is a good way to do this. You and their professor can meet up beforehand and plan some awards to give out for the students who participated most, tried their hardest, or achieved something especially noticeable to you. Another route would be to have a movie day where the students could vote on a movie or TV show to watch. You can write each student a personal note, or you can type up a survey asking for feedback on how the students think you were as a peer leader. Any combination above is acceptable. Feel free to add other ideas you may have. Talk to your professor and find out what you can agree on for the students.

Calendar of Common Student Issues by Month

Not all students will experience all these issues and concerns, and the issues won’t always surface during the month indicated. However, experience suggests that these issues often do occur during the months identified, and being aware of this might be helpful to you as you work with students.

SEPTEMBER

- **Homesickness**—This is a common issue for new students.
- **Roommate conflicts**—Conflicts might be caused by personality differences, lack of understanding, and unwillingness to compromise; or even the new experience of learning to live with someone.
- **Initial adjustment to academic environment**—Feelings of inadequacy and inferiority may develop because of the discrepancy between high school status and grades and initial college performance. Strategies used in high school may not be effective at the university level.
- **Exploration of values**—Students are confronted with questions of conscience over conflict in areas of diversity, alcohol experimentation, morality, religion, and changing social expectations.
- **New social life adjustments**—Students are adjusting to things like having the newfound freedom of not having to check with parents about what time to be in, having the opportunity to experience new areas, making their own decisions on when to participate in social activities, and establishing themselves in a peer group.
- **Initial social rejections**—It creates feeling of inadequacy when students are not immediately accepted in a peer group, social sorority or fraternity, or other student group.
- **Campus familiarization**—Students have not yet become familiar with campus classrooms, buildings, and meeting places.
- **Long distance relationships**—Students are torn between being loyal to their significant others from home and going out with new people.
• **Financial adjustments**—Students are adjusting to a somewhat tighter budget now that they are in college. Students who are supporting themselves have to adjust to budgeting money. Learning to responsibly use credit cards is also of concern.

• **International student adjustments**—Students experience a sense of “culture shock.” This includes confusion, vulnerability, and a lack of any advocate in higher positions while trying to make a successful cultural and academic transition.

• **Family problems**—These may seem amplified because the student may be caught in the middle or relied on for the answer. Being far away makes students feel helpless in reaching a solution.

• "**Administrative red tape**"—Students soon realize that it may be a long and frustrating process when trying to find an answer to what seems to be a simple question, or when trying to work something through the administrative process.

**OCTOBER**

• **Academics**—Stress from midterms builds because of the great demand for studying and preparation. For some students, this may be their first exam of the semester. For many students, the midterm workload pressures are followed by feelings of failure and loss of self-esteem.

• **Roommate problems**—These continue, but they are smaller in scope than in previous months.

• **Values exploration**—Students continue to explore values, especially in the area of sexuality.

• **Dating/non-dating/friendship anxiety**—Non-dating students feel a sense of loss of self-worth because so much value is placed upon dating. For women who date, the pressure to perform sexually increases, and consequently increases feelings of rejection, loneliness, and guilt. In some instances this leads to unwanted pregnancies.

• **Homesickness**—This may still be experienced by a number of students.

• **Sadness**—Sadness from not belonging to a group develops because of inadequate skills for finding a club or organization.

• **Financial issues**—This sets in from lack of budgeting experience.

• **Homecoming “blues”**—Students feel upset because of no date for social affairs, and lack of ability or opportunity to participate in activities.

• **Time conflicts**—Academic and social commitments might vie for students’ time.

• **Class registration**—Students need to start thinking about what classes they need to take in the spring semester as well as make an appointment with their advisors. This can cause a lot of anxiety.

• **New study skills**—More time and greater workloads need to be incorporated into students’ schedules for studying.
• **Disillusionment with college**—Student begins to realize that life at college is not as perfect as they were led to believe by parents, teachers, and counselors. Old problems seem to continue, and new ones are added.

**NOVEMBER**

- **Suicide**—Increasing thoughts and deliberations about suicide occur from an inability to cope with the pressures of academic and social expectations.
- **Academic pressure**—Pressure begins to mount because of procrastination, complexity of academic work, and lack of ability. Pre-finals stress starts to emerge as preparation begins.
- **Time conflicts**—Time management conflicts continue.
- **Depression and anxiety**—Students feel that they “should” have adjusted to the college environment by now.
- **Financial anxiety**—Students’ funds from parents and summer earnings begin to run out and loans and other bills are due.
- **Increased alcohol consumption**—Since students see this as an easy, acceptable way to relieve stress, drinking becomes more prevalent.
- **Roommate problems**—This is mostly due to the pressure of school. Tempers flare, and people are less tolerant of others.
- **Health issues**—Deteriorating health starts to affect performance. Reasons include the changing weather and either lack of food quality as well as stress from classes.
- **Dorm issues**—Living unit dissension causes uncomfortable feelings with residents, resulting from apathy, academic pressures, and need for vacation from school.

**DECEMBER**

- **Suicide**—Increasing thoughts about suicide occur from students’ inability to cope with the pressures of academic and social expectations.
- **Final exam pressures**—Anxiety, fear, and guilt increase as exams approach and papers are due. Increased use of alcohol and drugs is related.
- **Co-curricular time strains**—Seasonal parties, concerts, social service projects, and religious activities drain student energies.
- **Financial issues**—Worries begin with the thought of holiday gifts and travel costs.
- **“Pre-holiday blues”**—This is a special concern for those who have concerns for family, and those who have no home because of family conflicts.
- **Friendship tensions**—These become high with the onset of final exams.

**JANUARY**

- **Academics**—Anxiety about second semester performance begins because students may not have performed as well as expected the previous semester. They have the added
pressure of doing well to be able to stay in school, to maintain scholarships/financial aid, or to keep grades competitive with their peers.

- **Loss of a loved one**—Some students lose a loved one, friend, or significant other over the break, and they find it hard to share the happiness and joy others experienced.

- **Transfer students**—Moving to a new environment causes feelings of intrusion because students move onto a floor where most of the friendships have already been established, priorities set, and expectations understood. Unfamiliarity with campus also creates some anxiety.

- **Financial issues**—Money problems begin because students were unable to find jobs during the holiday break.

- **Post-holiday depression**—Students are away from the security and familiar environment of home.

- **Weight gain**—Some students experience unwanted weight gain over the break with the holiday foods and home cooking.

- **Reestablishment**—Reestablishing social and academic life is difficult at first with not having to worry about classes for an extended period.

### FEBRUARY

- **Academics**—Hourly exams and other academic pressures approach.

- **Weather**—Depending upon the weather, some people will experience cabin fever if the weather forces them to stay inside for a lengthy period of time. With the lack of organized activities to compensate for this, anti-social behavior sometimes occurs, such as excessive property damage.

- **Financial issues**—Anxiety for finding a summer job begins. This is especially true for students who were unable to find work during the holiday break.

- **Relationship issues**—Relationship anxieties increase as either couples begin to strengthen their ties (engagement) or experience weakening relationships.

- **Housing issues**—Fall housing planning begins with trying to tentatively decide about living arrangements for the next year.

### MARCH

- **Suicide**—Increasing thoughts about suicide may occur from an inability to cope with the pressures of academic and social expectations.

- **Academic pressures**—These increase as mid-term exams approach.

- **Drugs and alcohol**—With the pressures of the end of the semester approaching, many students start to increase their use of alcohol and drugs. This can cause many problems, both biologically and behaviorally.
• **Housing issues**—Living arrangement anxieties occur with the forcing of decisions: Should I move out? Live in the same building? Stay with the same roommate? Will a friend be left out of the plan?

• **Financial issues**—Trying to find money to use for spring break is a problem, especially when your peers are going to a place other than home and you are not able to join them.

**APRIL**

• **Academic pressures**—These increase with the end of the semester. Also papers and exams are coming up.

• **Financial problems**—Financial strain from spring break effects social life. Summer job pressures continue.

• **Social anxiety**—Social life pressures increase during this time period: formal dances, parties, concerts.

• **Relationship issues**—Many students experience rejection and envy the friends who have successfully found a significant other.

• **Health problems**—Frustration from being ill sets into students. Students experience an increase in colds and lethargic feelings, which limit social commitments.

**MAY/JUNE**

• **Suicide**—Increasing thoughts about suicide may occur from an inability to cope with the pressures of academic and social expectations.

• **Academic issues**—Finals pressures are at a critical level with papers, take-home exams, and studying. Some of the major effects of the pressure include increased use of coffee, caffeine pills, amphetamines, and alcohol. **Financial issues**—Summer job pressures increase for those who have not yet found employment.

• **Relationship issues**—Couples who will be separated for the summer are anxious and the fear that their significant other will find someone else while they're apart.

• **Depression**—Having to leave the friends and people who have become close during the school year may get some students down.

• **Independence issues**—Students feel anxious at having to go home after having been independent the past year, especially if they are have conflicts with their parents.
**Campus Resources Contacts**

Academic Advisement Center South Hall (570) 662 - 4824  
Admissions Ground Floor - South Hall 570-662-4243  
Bursar’s Office South Hall (570) 662 - 4129  
Career Center Alumni Hall, Ground Floor (570)-662-4133  
Center for Learning And Writing South Hall Room 144 or call (570)-662-4436.  
Computer Services (TECH CONNECT) 101 Pine Crest (570)-513-5806  
Counseling Center 144 South Hall (570) 662-4695 / (570) 662-4436  
Disability Resource Center 144 South Hall Prof. William Chabala, Director (570) 662-4798  
Greek Life 102 Pinecrest Manor Office Phone: (570) 662-4937  
International Student Services Ground Floor South Hall, (570) 662-4243  
Multicultural Resource Center 311 Alumni Hall, Ext. 4381  
Police, Campus Doane Center, Ext. 4900  
Residence Life & Services 120 Pinecrest Manor, Ext. 4934  
Student Employment Services South Hall, Room 224  
Student Government Association (STUDENT ACTIVITIES) (570)-662-4982  
TRIO Programs Jessica Trump, Director 212 Doane Center (570)-662-4368

**Campus Resources Details**

**Learning Center**

The **Learning Center at Mansfield University** is committed to helping students achieve their academic goals. We are dedicated to providing a success-oriented learning environment that focuses on the essentials of what is needed to succeed in college. Our student support programs are designed to assist students in maximizing their academic potential.

We provide peer tutors, writing center tutors and supplemental instruction study sessions. Each of these student support programs focus on course content as well as collaborative student learning processes that are designed to actively engage the learner.

The **Learning Center at Mansfield University** provides helpful study strategies and tips online. We also hold a series of workshops to assist in enhancing your study skills and learning strategies.
**Writing Center**

Offers free tutorial sessions for all Mansfield University Students. Writing Center tutors do not proofread papers - they guide the process of writing. Tutors also assist writers in identifying patterns of errors. Writing tutors are also trained to assist students in areas of grammar and syntax. They are familiar with our Language Arts Program and are available to assist writers in further developing their grammar, usage, punctuation skills, and sentence syntax.

Appointments are highly recommended and can be made on Tutortrac.

**Supplemental instructors**

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an academic assistance program that utilizes peer-assisted study sessions. SI sessions are regularly-scheduled, informal review sessions in which students compare notes, discuss readings, develop organizational tools, and predict test items. Students learn how to integrate course content and study skills while working together.

SI is currently in place in over 800 institutions of higher learning both nationally and abroad. At Mansfield University, we have been serving students since the fall of 1999.

The Purpose of Supplemental Instruction:

1. to reduce rates of attrition within targeted historically difficult courses
2. to improve student grades in targeted historically difficult courses
3. to increase the persistence rates of students

**How SI Works:**

Supplemental Instruction is attached to specific historically difficult courses. These courses frequently are introductory or “gatekeeper courses” but also include upper level undergraduate courses and courses in professional schools. Once a "high risk" course has been selected, an SI student leader is hired. This is a Mansfield University student who has completed the course, earned a grade of B or higher, and received a recommendation from a faculty member. SI leaders attend course lectures, take notes, read all assigned materials, and conduct three to five out-of-class SI sessions a week. The SI leader is the "model student," a facilitator who helps students to integrate course content and learning/study strategies.

**Tech Connect**

Mansfield University has a range of technology services available to our Residence Hall students.
Provided in each room are cable television service and high-speed network connections to every pillow using the university’s Gigabit network.

For assistance in connecting to these services, contact our TechConnect Carry-In Center at 5806 or by Email at techconnect@mansfield.edu. If no one is available to answer your call, leave a voice mail including your name, phone number, room number, and the best time to be contacted. Your call will be returned by either the TechConnect Technician or the student covering your residence hall. If you receive a follow up call, you need to call the TechConnect technician with the requested information. Depending on the computer problem you are experiencing, you may be asked to bring your computer to the Carry-in Center for diagnosis.

The TechConnect Carry-In Center (100 & 102 Pinecrest Manor) is staffed by one full-time technician and students working for Residence Life to assist students with connection to these services. TechConnect Carry-In Center services do NOT include repairing your computer, printer, telephone, etc but will offer a computer diagnosis service that will help you sort out what is required when you go to a repair center. TechConnect Carry-In Request Form (Fill out form and bring to 100 or 102 Pinecrest Manor with your computer)

Counseling Center

Help IS available. Whatever your concern, we are here to assist you in finding a solution. If you feel you are getting nowhere or don't know where to turn, stop by and see a member of the counseling staff.

Having someone who will listen to your concerns and offer advice can, in some instances, prevent a situation from developing into a crisis. ALL discussions will be kept completely confidential so feel free to talk about any and all concerns or issues you may have.

Remember: Everyone needs help sometimes!

Greek Life

Greek Life at Mansfield University offers opportunities for:

Scholarship: As Greeks, we pride ourselves on high academic achievement. Our chapters hold their members to a high standard of excellence. Chances are you will meet someone that is in your major, someone that has had the professor before, or just someone to talk with about a class.

Friendship: As a member of the Greek community you will have the opportunity to:
a. Forge lifelong friendships-Chances are you will meet someone that you instantly click with. You will meet people that are in your class, your major, possibly your hometown.

b. Develop a career and personal network-Did you know that most of the top CEOs and influential leaders in the US are Greek? It’s true, people such as: Condoleezza Rice, Coretta Scott King, Kenny Chesney, Ronald Reagan, and many others are Greek!

c. Develop friendships within your organization and across the country-As a member of a Greek organization, you will have the opportunity to attend a national convention of your organization. You get a chance to meet organizational leaders, possibly make policy decisions, or get a chance to share ideas with other chapters.

**Leadership:** At Mansfield University, Leadership is something that we take very seriously. As a member of a Greek Organization, you will have opportunities to run for positions both in your organization and on a governing council. Also, most of our Greek students are part of outside organizations such as: SGA, Mansfield Activities Council (MAC), WNTE, MUTV, among many others.

We encourage you to come check us out!

**Campus police**

The mission of our department is to work with our students and staff to keep the university a safe place to live and learn and work; to welcome visitors and ensure their stay is enjoyable; to protect life and property; and to reduce the opportunity for crimes to occur on campus.

To accomplish these goals, the department provides many services, including parking and traffic control, safety escorts, emergency assistance, criminal investigations, enforcement of Pennsylvania laws, ordinances and university regulations, to name a few. In addition, the department has the responsibility of informing the campus community of incidents that affect the safety of its members.

Awareness is key to maintaining a safe environment, and the department takes this responsibility very seriously. Through news releases, various publications, and programs, the department encourages the community to be informed.

The department is comprised of 9 commissioned officers that have all successfully completed the Pennsylvania Municipal Police Officers Training Academy. All of the officers also complete annual training to maintain their certification. It has been the tradition of the department to integrate fully into all aspects of campus life.

As the only department on campus that is staffed around the clock every day, the campus relies on the officers to provide many services. The officers, by virtue of their 24-hour presence, are an essential element of a university that is “up and running” each day of the year.
Residence Life

Alcohol/Drug Policy

Possession or consumption of any alcoholic beverage or illegal drug in the residence halls or anywhere on campus is strictly prohibited. Possession of drug paraphernalia is also prohibited.

Assistant Director of Residence Life

The possessor of this title is a professional employee of the university with a background in counseling. He or she carries much of the responsibility for the operation of the hall you live in. The Assistant Director works with the RA's, hall council and Residence Life Office on programs and improvements in the hall. But mostly he or she is interested in knowing and helping you. The Assistant Director is a full-time professional with a master's degree prepared to help you. Utilize the Assistant Director's skills whenever you have a problem your RA can't solve.

Cable Television

Each residence hall room has its own hook-up for cable television. All you supply is the television and the cable. Premium cable channels are available directly from Blue Ridge Cable Company.

Closing Hours

All residence halls are locked 24/7. Your ID card is your "key" to enter the buildings and your key gives you access to your room. Doors are locked to keep you and your possessions safe from intruders, so do yourself a favor and keep rugs and other foreign objects from propping doors open. Any person propping open a door or letting persons in through a locked door will face disciplinary action.

Consolidations

Each semester some of the students find themselves without a roommate. This may be for a variety of reasons such as the failure of an assigned person to come to school. This consolidation policy details the options available to student with no roommate. Mansfield University requires that all students living alone in double rooms pay the double as single room rate or be consolidated with another person in the same situation.

Exceptions to this policy are made when other individuals in a residence hall are alone in a double room and when there are less than 30 days remaining in the semester when a vacancy occurs. Students will not be required to move to another residence hall to consolidate spaces or off their own floor after the first month. If you do not have a roommate, you will be contacted by a Residence Life staff member and given 72 hours to take one of the following steps:

1. If space is available, you may agree to pay the applicable, pro-rated, double as single room rate and remain in the room alone.
2. You may find another roommate to move into the open space in your room.
3. You may decide to move into the room of another student who needs a roommate. You must notify your GA once you have made a decision.

Students who fail to notify their GA prior to the 72 hour deadline will have their housing situation resolved by the Residence Director in consultation with the GA. When two people in a residence hall are both alone in double rooms and fail to reach a decision in the required time frame, they will be moved together. The person with the highest number of credits will remain in the room and the other student will be required to move. Students need to understand that persons who, in the judgment of the RD/GA mistreat their roommate in an attempt to force them out will either be immediately billed for a single room or forced to move in with another student even if they have more credits.

**Damage Charges**

Students are held financially responsible for damages they or their guests cause anywhere on campus.

**Electrical Regulations**

For reasons of safety and hygiene, the following electrical items may not be used in residence hall rooms: space heaters, air conditioners, irons, cooking devices of any kind (hot plates, immersion coils, George Foreman grills, microwave ovens, toasters, popcorn poppers, coffee makers, etc.)

In addition, any article in poor condition (frayed cords, etc.) may not be used.

Rented microfridges from Residence Life are permissible in student rooms.

The following kinds of items may be used, along with good judgment: table lamps, heating pads, U.L. approved decorative lights, small fans, refrigerators not over 5 cubic feet in size, and electric grooming aids. Sewing machines and electric typewriters are also allowed if they do not disturb others.

Cooking devices may be used in residence hall kitchens.

Extension cords also may be used only on low wattage appliances and then only to increase the length of a cord, and NOT to plug more than one item into an outlet.

**Extra Added Attractions!**

All halls have equipment which you may sign out and use. Included are such handy items as vacuum cleaners, games, and pool equipment.

**Fire Procedures**
By university policy, it is required to conduct fire drills once a month in all halls. It is a serious violation of university policy not to leave the building when an alarm sounds. It is also very dumb. Do the following when you hear an alarm:

1. Grab your keys, cell phone, and put on a pair of shoes for protection. Dress appropriately for the weather.
2. Close windows, raise blinds or shades, open curtains, and turn on lights.
3. Feel the door. If it is hot, do not open it. Put towel under the door to block smoke, and open your window. Call for help, **DO NOT JUMP!**
4. If the door is not hot, open slightly and put your hand out into the hall. If the hallway is hot, **DO NOT GO OUT.** Close the door and follow Step 3.
5. If hallway is not hot, and is clear, close your door and proceed to nearest exit and evacuate building as quickly as possible. **DO NOT TRY TO USE ELEVATORS.** Move away from the building and outside doors a minimum of 50 feet.
6. Never turn your back on the fire.
7. If you are unsure as to whether or not your exit is blocked, proceed with Step 3.
8. Do not return to the building until you are told to do so.

**FAILURE TO EVACUATE BUILDING IMMEDIATELY WILL RESULT IN SEVERE DISCIPLINARY ACTION!**

**Real Fires**

**Discovering A Fire:** Extinguish small fire ONLY if no risk is involved. Pull the nearest fire alarm or call 911, if appropriate. If you attempt to extinguish the fire, maintain an avenue of escape at all times. Aim the extinguisher at the base of the fire, pull the pin, squeeze the handle and sweep from side to side. Evacuate the building via the nearest exit. Report all fires, regardless of the size, to campus police (4900) or residence life personnel.

For more fire safety information, go to [http://mansfield.edu/environmental-health-safety/](http://mansfield.edu/environmental-health-safety/)

**Firearms Policy**

All firearms/weapons brought to campus for hunting or target purposes must be registered and stored at the University Police Office. At no time are firearms, fireworks, bows/arrows, hunting knives or ammunition allowed in the residence halls or in any other location on campus including stored in trunks of cars. Persons possessing weapons on campus will have the weapon confiscated and face prosecution under criminal or campus codes — or both.

**Floor Plans**

Rooms include the basic furnishings supplied by the university. Students are free, where appropriate, to rearrange furniture and add their own personal touches to their room. You may not remove any contents of your room at any time. The university does not provide storage for student's personal belongings. All furniture must be returned to the original position at the end of
the year. Floor dimensions are listed to help you plan for carpets if you so desire. The mattress is twin size 34"x75".

**Graduate Assistant**

A Graduate Assistant (GA) is a Residence Life employee who facilitates room changes, supervises student workers and works in harmony with the Residence Director. All that, as well as taking a full schedule of graduate level classes!

**Hall Program**

Activities of a social, cultural or educational nature which take place in the residence halls are called programs. These are initiated by Hall Council, RA's or Residence Directors, and are designed to help make living in the halls fun and interesting. These programs can only be successful, however, if you attend. If you have ideas for programs, speak up. A hall can be more than just a place to sleep and study if you get involved.

**Health Services**

Health care is provided to our students in a clinic setting. You are encouraged to call ahead for an appointment but can be seen on a walk-in basis if it is urgent. In addition, both the residence hall staff and campus police are trained to deal with medical emergencies. Our community ambulance service is available on a 24-hour basis to transport serious emergencies to local hospitals, at no charge to the student.

**Household Hints**

The university employs people to maintain its buildings, but you're responsible for some things too. **These are the do's and don'ts:**

**Do:**

- bring your own pillow, linens, wastebasket, clock, coat hangers, drapes, decorative items;
- clean your room occasionally;
- be kind to furniture;
- report needed repairs to your RA or GA.

**Don't:**

- take lounge furniture for your room
- remove screens
- mar walls with tacks, nails, tape, or markers.

See other university publications, especially the Mountie Manual for more information on university life.
Things not to bring with you

The following items are either not allowed at all in the residence halls or can only be used in a restricted basis (see Residence Hall Agreement section no. 10), so you should not bring them at all: candles, darts, microwaves, cooking appliances, space heaters, air conditioners, weapons, pets, refrigerators over 5 cu. ft., water beds and gasoline.

Special No-No's

University officials are particularly upset when irresponsible individuals tamper with fire and safety apparatus. Persons found doing so are generally arrested and face rather stiff penalties. Individuals who maliciously damage university property also are frowned upon and students involved in such behavior can expect to make full restitution and face disciplinary action as well.

Judicial System

When students are accused of violations of university policy, their cases can be brought before the University Hearing Board which is composed of students, faculty members and administrators. Evidence is heard by the board and penalties imposed on people found guilty. Details of the judicial system can be found in the Mountie Manual or are available from any residence hall office.

Keys Lost? Locked Out?

If you lose your room key, your Graduate Assistant can order a new one. This will cost you money though, so think twice before losing a key. If your roommate locks you out or the wind blows your locked door closed while you're standing in the hall, an RA can let you back into your room. This is an emergency service, though, and is not intended to make up for the fact that you can never seem to remember to carry your keys. Many halls (out of desperation) charge real money to let you back into your room.

Laundry Facilities

Each residence hall is equipped with laundry facilities. The fees for laundry services are included in your housing charge, so you don't need to come to campus armed with rolls of quarters! You will want to bring a laundry basket or tote, plus detergent.

Liability for Losses or Thefts

The university assumes no liability for losses or thefts of student property (except in the case of negligence on the part of a university employee). It is your responsibility to see that your possessions are insured, should you wish such coverage. In many cases your parent's homeowner policy will cover your possessions while at college. Also, lots of trouble can be avoided if you keep your room locked!
Mail Call

To avoid delays in getting your mail, have mom, friends, fan clubs and other correspondents address letters as follows:

Sadie A. Student
STREET ADDRESS # (See below)
Mansfield, PA 16933-1623

Street addresses for the halls are as follows:

- Hickory Manor--66 Morris Drive
- Laurel Manor -- 20 College Place
- Maple Manor -- 40 Clinton Street
- Oak Manor--64 Morris Drive

So, if you live in Hickory, and your PO Box number is 25, your address is:

Sadie A. Student
66 Morris Drive #25
Mansfield, PA 16933

Moving Off Campus

The university requires all students to live on campus. Exceptions to this rule are made in cases of student teaching, graduation, withdrawal, or living with parents. Students moving off campus without permission are billed for room and board. Requests for exemption must be in writing and submitted to the Residence Life Office. Your housing and dining charges will not be taken off your account until your exemption has been approved.

Pets

We love animals as much as you do, but a residence hall is no place for them. So with the exception of fish in reasonably sized tanks, pets are prohibited.

Questions?

We all expect that new members of the Mansfield family will have questions (we had them when we were new); don't hesitate to ask even if you think your question isn't anything special. There are people around (RA's, GA's and Residence Directors) who are itching to answer them for you.

Residence Director

The possessor of this title is a professional employee of the university with a background in counseling. He or she carries much of the responsibility for the operation of the hall you live in. The Residence Director works with the RA's, hall council and Residence Life Office on
programs and improvements in the hall. But mostly he or she is interested in knowing and helping you. The Residence Director is a full-time professional with a master's degree prepared to help you. Utilize the Residence Director's skills whenever you have a problem your RA can't solve.

Residence Hall Government

At the beginning of each year you will elect representatives to the Residence Hall Association which allocates funds to individual buildings, provides activities for all resident students, suggests changes in residence hall policies and serves as the voice of the resident students. Residence hall government at Mansfield University is very active and needs your interest and support to stay that way.

Residence Hall Life Styles

LAUREL is a 500-bed hall with two wings of four and six floors each. This corridor style building offers standard double rooms, large multi-purpose lounge areas, floor study rooms, recreation areas, and project rooms. In addition, the upper floors of Laurel offer a spectacular view of the beautiful Tioga river valley. Laurel B-side is housing for the Greek community.

MAPLE is a 500-bed twin wing building housing freshmen men and women in a co-ed arrangement with alternating floors. Each wing is comprised of standard double rooms with study and TV lounges on each floor. The one-story common area which joins the two wings together houses the recreation areas, large study carrel area, lobby and offices. It offers a wide variety of programs for both male and female residents.

Residence Life Office

Coordinating the flurry of activity that is residence life is (you guessed it) the Residence Life Office. The office hires staff, supports physical improvements in the halls, provides assistance with hall programming, handles discipline, counsels students, coordinates maintenance, and otherwise takes responsibility for everything connected with on-campus living. The Housing Operation is an integral part of the RLO that oversees room assignments, changes, and custodial services. The office welcomes suggestions and takes your complaints seriously, so speak up! (We also accept compliments).

Resident Assistant

A Resident Assistant (RA) is a person who cares about others, and is interested in you. An RA is a student like you who is hired by the Residence Life Office to provide information to campus residents, to see that hall regulations are upheld, to provide and support hall activities, and most of all to help you with problems and questions. Get to know your RA. He or she has been carefully selected as a person who cares about others, and is interested in you.
Room Assignments and Changes

Room assignments are made in the spring for returning students and over the summer for new students. This is a difficult and time consuming process for the Housing Office, so requests for room changes are not met with cheers from us, (or the computer center, or the phone company, or all the departments on campus who want to know where you live). So, requests for room changes should be based on absolute desperation, not on the color of your room, or the snoring of your roommate. All the harried offices on campus will thank you for it. All room changes are done during the second and third weeks of each semester.

Roommate

Most all people living in residence halls have roommates. They can be fun, they can teach you things, and they may wind up to be your very best friends. But you have to give the same in return. A roommate is a person too, and needs your understanding. If you have a gripe about your roommate, don't complain to the kid next door; talk to your roommate and try to work it out. Part of your education is learning to get along with others. You don't learn this by asking to change rooms the first time your roommate looks at you cross-eyed. Roommates are one of the most challenging and rewarding college experiences. Think about it!

Safety Hazards

The following things are not allowed in your room: open flames of any kind including incense and candles, firearms and other weapons, ammunition, darts, explosives or highly combustible materials. Firearms can be kept in the University Police Office if you are a hunter. Due to fire regulations, personal items are not allowed in the hallways or stairways.

Sales in the Residence Hall

Any off-campus organization wishing to sell on campus may do so with the written approval of the Associate V.P. for Residence Life. Beware of any off-campus concern which calls you and asks you to sponsor its selling program on campus. Their offers of free gifts may sound tempting, but many of these outfits are trying to sell at inflated prices that in the end will wipe out the value of your “free gift.”

Search and Seizure

The university reserves the right to enter and search student rooms, but in all cases, tries to respect the privacy of students. Rooms will be entered only with probable cause, and searches are made (very rarely) in cases relating to health or safety. In the case of entry and searches, we make every effort to have the resident present. The university may also enter rooms for maintenance purposes, or occasionally, on matters relating to the comfort or safety of others, for example, to close a window, turn down a stereo, etc.
Study/Quiet Hours

The hours of 8 p.m. - 10 a.m. are designated as study/quiet times in all residence halls. During all other hours, however, you are expected to be considerate of others. In a residence hall noise carries easily and so, for the comfort of everyone, keep it down.

Telephone

Land lines are no longer available in the residence halls due to the overwhelming popularity of cell phones. Should you not have a cell phone, you can request a land line in your room, payable by the semester. Stop in the Residence Life Office and we will get you set up with a land line. You will need to have your own phone if you choose this option.

Vacation

All students are required to vacate the halls during university vacations. Exact dates and times of hall closings are published before vacations. Before leaving your room, get rid of perishable food (empty out that microfridge, please), unplug everything, close windows, and lock your door.

Visitation Policy

Visitation by the opposite sex in a residence hall is determined by current residence life policies and the wishes of the people living in the hall. Normally, surveys of the building residents are taken at the beginning of the year by hall councils, and proposals for specific hours and regulations are made by the council to the Residence Life Office. In the case of co-ed buildings (Cedarcrest, Maple, Laurel, and Pinecrest) visitation by residents of that building is allowed at any time.

The following general regulations regarding visitation apply in all buildings:

1. Residents are responsible for the actions of their guests.
2. Visitors must be in the building to see a specific person not just to wander around.
3. Guests must use designated bathrooms.
4. Resident may exclude visitors from his/her room.
5. It is the responsibility of the resident to make sure the visitor knows the specific rules of the building he/she is visiting.
6. Guests must be escorted at all times.

TRIO

Student Support Services (SSS) is a comprehensive federally funded TRIO program that offers academic assistance to up to 173 eligible undergraduate students at Mansfield University. Students can become a participant at any point in their undergraduate program (freshman through senior) and remain in the program until they receive their undergraduate degree from MU. There is no charge for services provided to students through Student Support Services.
All SSS participants are assigned an individual advisor who will help them in determining their specific strengths and weaknesses so that the program can offer the most appropriate assistance for each student.

Mission Statement:
The goal of the SSS TRIO Program at Mansfield University is to increase persistence and graduation rates of eligible students and to foster an institutional climate supportive of the success of low-income and first-generation college students and/or college students with disabilities.

The ultimate goal of TRiO programs is to help students persist in school in order to attain their bachelor's degree.

**Ice-Breakers, Activities, and Community Service Projects**

Being a new student at any College or University can sometimes be overwhelming but there are things that you and other students can do to get over this feeling. Doing things that will allow you to get to know one another through ice-breakers, activities, and even community service projects can help you to make new friends, network, and learn from one another! The following pages contain many ideas of activities for you to do with groups of people in order to get to know one another and have fun while doing so!

**Ice Breakers:**
Ice breakers are an important way to get to know everyone in your class and as a peer leader it is important that you get to them. Work with your instructor daily to discuss what you will be doing in your class. We used a couple of different ice-breakers the first week and I also found some that I would like to use in the future.

- **Stand up until you speak**
  - This icebreaker everyone in the room stands up and cannot sit down until they say something about themselves that not everyone knows about them.
  - This is a great way for the students to start building that level of trust with their peers.
  - As a peer leader I also included myself in this activity because it is important that they trust me as one of their leaders.

- **Pair up and tell**
  - The students will pair up and tell the other student basic information about themselves.
  - When everyone is done, they introduce the other person. This is a great way to meet others and also start presentation skills.
• **Five-Fingers Icebreaker.** Have each student give the following information using the five fingers on her/his hand as a prompt.
  o Thumb – name something you’re good at or something you need luck for
  o Pointer – say where you’re headed, your direction
  o Middle – tell the others something that makes you mad
  o Ring – name someone or something special to you
  o Pinky – state something to remember you by (how about a name?)

These are all ways to get to know each other. As college freshmen they are starting a new “world”. Learning that they can present and speak in front of others is very important.

**Activities:**
Along with Ice-breakers there are many activities that you can do with fellow students in order to get to know them, make friends, and be able to feel comfortable around. This is important to do because the more people you know the better you are at getting help when needed and being able to perform your best. Most of these activities are geared towards team building and this is also a significant part of your college experience! Below are a list of ideas that you can do together in order to get people to moving, talking, and having fun:

• **Name Game:** In this activity you and a group of students (10-15 depending on the size of a group) are to take an index card and write your name on it and one thing that you like to do. For example, my name is Jackie and I like to write. After everyone has done this they are to switch cards with someone. After this is done one person will start and read off the name and statement on the card. Whoever name is read that person will read the name and statement that they have and so forth until everyone name has been said!

• **Musical Chairs with Statements:** In this activity, a group of students are to sit in a chair that is in a large circle. One person will be in the center of the circle and he/she will say a statement about themselves such as “My birthday is in December.” If students that are in the circle also have a birthday that is in December they have to get up and run to an empty seat other than the one they was in. Whoever does not make it to a seat in time they are the ones that will be in the middle. The game stops when everyone told at least one thing about themselves.

• **Rolling Ball:** In the activity the students have to try and get a small ball into a basket using only small tubes. The tubes can be whatever you find that can roll the ball by itself once placed. As a team the ball must reach from point A to point B. You can do this activity in a room and everyone must work together to get the job done.

• **About Me:** In this activity the students will learn about others through the use of questioning with as little talking as possible. The students will stand in a circle and one person will said in the middle of the circle and ask a series of general questions about
things they have done in their lives. If the students have done the things that were said they would simply take one step in front of them and then go back. This is another way to get to know someone even by not physically talking.

• **Count to Ten:** Have the group come together into one group, side by side with each other. When everyone is together, tell them the game is to count to ten as a group. But the catch is that each person is only allowed to say one number. If two people speak at the same time you must start over. The same person cannot start the exercise twice in a row. To make it even more challenging, have the group members close their eyes.

• **Two Truths and a Lie:** Go around the group and have everyone say two true statements about themselves and one false. The rest of the group has to guess which one is false. If participants find it hard to think on the spot, give them index cards and let them write it down. Then, toss the cards into the middle of the circle so you have to guess who the person is *and* what is false. You may be surprised. You can learn some crazy things about each other!

• **Floor Designs:** This activity requires one package of computer or copier paper and a large, open floor space. Have one participant in the group draw a picture on a piece of paper of anything they’d like. Then, give the group the stack of paper and tell them to mimic the drawing on the floor. To make it more interesting, silence certain people in the group. For instance, only allow one person to do the talking and instructing or, perhaps, only the guys. If there is a large number of participants, divide the group in half and have the groups compete to see who can lay out a more accurate picture. This activity is especially fun if timed and allows for a fun photo opportunity at the end.

• **Human Knot:** Everyone stands in a circle and puts their right hand into the middle. They clasp hands with someone across the circle. Then, everyone puts their left hand into the middle of the circle and clasps the hand of a *different* person. The group is now in a “knot”. The object is for the group to untangle itself without releasing anyone’s hand.

• **Have you Ever:** In two facing lines, tape small pieces of paper to mark spots for people to stand on. If you have 20 people, make 19 spots. Leave enough room between the lines for plenty of movement. The person without a spot stands in the middle and asks a question. “Have you ever eaten a kiwi?” Anyone who can say, “Yes”, must then leave their space and find a new one. They can’t stay in the same spot or move to a spot immediately to their left or right. Whoever is left without a spot now asks the next question. As a moderator of the game, don’t be afraid to “accidentally” not find a spot and be in the middle. In doing so, you can change the tone of the game to more serious questions or more humorous questions, depending on the group dynamic.

• **Directions:** Divide the students in equal groups and appoint one leader from each group. Except the team leader, all other members of the group will be blindfolded; they have to cross an obstacle course. It will be the duty of the group leader and group members to guide each other, group members have to cooperate with each other to understand the directions. The team which crosses the obstacle course and reaches the destination first,
wins. However every member of the group should have successfully crossed the obstacles, only if all the members have crossed the obstacle course, only then the team wins.

- **Stressful Game:** This is one of the best games for teaching the students to deal with stressful situations. Divide participants in two groups with equal number of participants. Each team has to be given one ball; all the members have to do is throw the ball to their partner. Sounds simple? Well, the number of balls has to be increased after a certain amount of time. If the ball falls down even once, the team loses. The students have to pay attention to see which ball is being passed where.

- **Raffle Ticket:** Preparation: Create and make copies of raffle tickets; get a box to use for the drawing. Distribute raffle tickets. Instruct participants to find their partner based on their answer to first question on their raffle ticket. Participants complete the rest of the raffle ticket with their partner and put it in the drawing box. After everyone has completed their ticket draw a winning pair and give out small prize. Then each person introduces his or her partner saying the person’s name and something he/she is good at. Then the partner introduces the other person and shares their partner’s favorite thing to do.

**Community Service Projects:**
Service learning in the First-Year Seminar helps students gain valuable skills in:
- understanding academic content insofar as the service activity is tied to specific learning objectives
- solving problems and communicating effectively
- developing greater self-understanding and a sense of personal efficacy
- dealing with diversity and, more fundamentally, with that which is unfamiliar
- developing positive peer relationships and working collaboratively with classmates
- interacting purposefully with community members
- reflecting morally on affective experiences
- achieving and sustaining social activism

In addition, service-learning projects expose students to the assets, institutions, and dynamics of the wider community and introduce them to various ways in which they can make an impact and become involved as active citizens. Moreover, service learning projects demonstrate MU’s commitment to building an engaged campus and to being a good institutional citizen.

**Community Service Ideas:**
1. Set up a web page for a non-profit agency.
2. Share a talent through teaching a class.
3. Run or walk in a charity race with friends.
4. Volunteer for 1890’s weekend or set up a table.
5. Organize a food drive for Thanksgiving.
6. Decorate a Christmas tree at a nursing home, hospital, school or homeless shelter.
7. Organize a self-defense workshop.
8. Tutor students who are learning English as a second language.
9. Collect school supplies to give to an elementary class.
10. Assist an after-school little league or other sports program for younger children. Check with the YMCA.
11. Provide a voter pick up or transportation service for seniors.
12. Make "I Care" kits with combs, toothbrushes, shampoo, etc. for local agencies.
13. Set up a Saturday Reading Hour at the local library or here on campus.
14. Make gifts with friends for kids in the hospital.
15. Clean an elderly persons’ yard who cannot do it themselves.
16. Set up an art exhibit at a local business, school or nursing home.
17. Participate in an Annual parade. (1890’s weekend—conservation float???)
18. Organize a local blood drive with the American Red Cross.
19. Get your martial arts or dance class to give a demonstration at a youth center, nursing home or school.
20. Start a collection drive for old sports equipment and donate it to needy families.
21. Get together with friends and make conservation posters for the community center.
22. Rake leaves, shovel snow, clean gutters or wash windows for a senior citizen.
23. Hold an afternoon dance for your local nursing home.
24. Teach a senior friend how to use a computer or the Internet. Organize a class on campus.
25. Volunteer at an animal shelter. Help clean up, play with the animals, or do whatever's needed to make the shelter a nicer "temporary" home for the animals. (Animal Sanctuary in Wellsboro)
26. With the support of a vet clinic, organize a neuter and spay campaign to get animals neutered and spayed at a reduced rate.
27. Set up donation centers for animal products to be donated to needy.

Understanding Your First Year Students

Ways to promote student development

- Let students know they have the freedom to disclose their innermost thoughts and feelings without fear of attack or rejection.
- Recognize that students must begin at their own level and move at their own pace and master each succeeding level of learning to pursue and how to proceed.
- Create opportunities to identify emerging developmental needs and give students an equal voice in deciding what learning to pursue and how to proceed.
- Create ways for students to be able to observe and interact with others who effectively model the characteristics, values, and processes that best represent the outcomes to which the environment is committed.
- Make sure that students are receiving accurate and usable feedback and reinforcement in response to their behavior.
• Create opportunities for students to practice and test out new ideas and actions.
• Encourage students to learn increasingly complex behaviors and apply them, as appropriate to situations of daily life.

**Tips for Implementing a Supportive Atmosphere for Students to Grow and Develop**

• Take a genuine interest in the individual student’s personal situation so that an atmosphere of support and care can be established, which promotes awareness and exploration.
• Provide avenues (people, places, activities) in which a student can explore the options and opportunities beyond the present situation. Suggestions and non-threatening forms of challenge can be impetus for the student to move to a higher level.
• When impasses and problems arise, demonstrate problem-solving strategies to move the student towards solutions. These may be activities you apply yourself of by referral.
• Help students assess where they are through the use of reflection and feedback.
• Be proactive by providing programs and activities that anticipate the needs of students based upon what is known concerning developmental level.

**Ten Transitional Stages of First Year Students**
The following phases are typical of a new student’s adjustment to college. Stages may not occur in the sequence described, and students may not experience all of the phases. However, this information can serve as a useful guideline to the challenges your student might face during the coming year.

1. POST-HIGH SCHOOL SATISFACTION/PRE-COLLEGE ELATION
   At this stage, students experience much excitement over the prospect of attending college. Expectations tend to be unrealistic and are based on brief glimpses of college life from campus visits or the movies.

2. EARLY SEPARATION ANXIETY
   As they begin to pack and prepare for college, students realize that they are actually leaving behind the support systems of family and friends.

3. ACUTE SEPARATION ANXIETY
   As students actually leave home, they experience emotional moments with loved ones. They realize that they do not know the unwritten rules of this new campus culture. At this stage, it is especially critical to meet experienced older students, such as resident advisers, who can assist with the adjustment process.

4. THE HONEYMOON
   This is a time of euphoria as students anticipate intellectual excitement and a satisfying social life. Students feel ready to experience all that campus life has to offer.
5. THE END OF THE HONEYMOON
   After the frantic rush of orientation subsides, students realize that college life consists of hard work, frustration and disappointment. Normal events such as long lines and class schedule changes may be unsettling to the new student. Initial grades may be lower than expected, which can come as a shock to the students who “coasted” through high school. Students may work much harder than ever before, only to receive lower grades. At this point, students often experience feelings of homesickness. Students should realize that this is normal and that they are not alone.

6. THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREENER
   Midway through the first year, students often think they can solve their problems by transferring to another institution. At this point, students should be encouraged to give the college they are attending at least a full years try. Students should be reminded that they might have had a worse experience at another school and situations that seem impossible in the first semester often disappear altogether later in the year.

7. YOU CAN’T GO HOME AGAIN
   A first visit home is often traumatic due to a sense that things have changed. Siblings are curious about college life, and reunited high school friends tend to exaggerate college success. At this time students may realize that they themselves have changed and may long to return to campus.

8. LEARNING TO COPE
   After about six weeks, students have learned their way around campus and are expanding their circle of friends. Their self-confidence increases, they participate in more activities, and they enjoy campus life.

9. FEAR OF FAILURE
   Students often panic around the time of midterm or final examinations as they fully appreciate the amount of work involved. Students should be reminded that thorough course preparation is the best way to ensure a good grade. Warning signs which indicate trouble are panic attacks, procrastination, sleeping over twelve hours a day, and avoidance of academic responsibilities.

10. PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER
    By the middle of the second semester, students notice that classes, residence life and social activities have come together into a well-integrated lifestyle. Students are more confident, better able to make decisions, and aware of opportunities for personal and intellectual growth.

Special Issues Pertaining to the First-Year Classroom

Relevance- Try to help students think creatively to understand the relevance which exists at the interfaces – the margins of knowledge and personal experience. Most students take to the information presented if they can relate it back to personal experiences. Try to help students
think creatively in order to understand the relevance and make the connection between classroom knowledge and personal experience.

**Dualism/Passivity** - Most first-year students are both “dualistic” thinkers while also being anxious about their college transition. This combination creates intolerance of ambiguity and a striving for “the one right” answer. Many first-year students prefer passivity to activity.

**Critical Thinking** - Related to the above statement, many students are unaccustomed to being encouraged to think critically about academic material.

**How to Study** - Many students devote large numbers of clock hours to study, but with few observable results. Others study infrequently, if at all.

**Learning Styles** - Diverse learning styles characterize the first-year classroom. Active learning strategies should be used to engage first-year learners.

**Academic Dishonesty** - Whether through misunderstanding or intent, many first-year students cheat and accept cheating as part of the academic status quo. This may be a special issue with students from other cultures.

**Classroom Behavior** - Classroom behavior problems (such as laptop usage, cell phone disruption and e-mail etiquette) are on the upswing and many college faculty are uncertain about how to handle these situations.

**Feedback** - Early and frequent feedback is essential for first-year students to give them a realistic picture of their academic performance.

**The Need for ENTERTAINMENT** - Some research has shown that student evaluations of instruction are influenced by the perceived “enthusiasm” of instructor. Students need to know that their professors are passionate about what they are teaching.

### The Differences Between High School and College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOLLOWING THE RULES IN HIGH SCHOOL</th>
<th>CHOOSING RESPONSIBLY IN COLLEGE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* High school is <em>mandatory</em> and usually <em>free</em>.</td>
<td>* College is <em>voluntary</em> and <em>expensive</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Your time is structured by others.</td>
<td>* You manage your own time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>* You need permission to participate in extracurricular activities</td>
<td>* You must decide whether to participate in co-curricular activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>* You can count on parents and teachers</td>
<td>* <em>You</em> must balance your responsibilities</td>
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to remind you of your responsibilities and to guide you in setting priorities.

and set priorities. You will face moral and ethical decisions you have never faced before.

* Each day you proceed from one class directly to another, spending 6 hours each day--30 hours a week--in class.

* You often have hours between classes; class times vary throughout the day and evening and you spend only 12 to 16 hours each week in class.

* Most of your classes are arranged for you.

* You arrange your own schedule in consultation with your adviser. Schedules tend to look lighter than they really are.

* You are not responsible for knowing what it takes to graduate.

* Graduation requirements are complex, and differ from year to year. You are expected to know those that apply to you.

* Guiding principle: You will usually be told what to do and corrected if your behavior is out of line.

* Guiding principle: You are expected to take responsibility for what you do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of your decisions.

### GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES

**SUCCEEDING IN COLLEGE CLASSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES</strong></th>
<th><strong>SUCCEEDING IN COLLEGE CLASSES</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* The school year is 36 weeks long; some classes extend over both semesters and some don't.</td>
<td>* The academic year is divided into two separate 15-week semesters, plus a week after each semester for exams.</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Classes generally have no more than 35 students.</td>
<td>* Classes may number 100 students or more.</td>
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<tr>
<td>* You may study outside class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute test preparation.</td>
<td>* You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You seldom need to read anything more than once, and sometimes listening in class is enough.</td>
<td>* You need to review class notes and text material regularly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class.</td>
<td>* You are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class.</td>
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* Guiding principle: You will usually be told in class what you need to learn

* Guiding principle: It's up to you to read and understand the assigned
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<th>from assigned readings.</th>
<th>material; lectures and assignments proceed from the assumption that you've already done so.</th>
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**HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS**

- * Teachers check your completed homework.
- * Teachers remind you of your incomplete work.
- * Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.
- * Teachers are often available for conversation before, during, or after class.
- * Teachers have been trained in teaching methods to assist in imparting knowledge to students.
- * Teachers provide you with information you missed when you were absent.
- * Teachers present material to help you understand the material in the textbook.
- * Teachers often write information on the board to be copied in your notes.

**COLLEGE PROFESSORS**

- * Professors may not always check completed homework, but they will assume you can perform the same tasks on tests.
- * Professors may not remind you of incomplete work.
- * Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance.
- * Professors expect and want you to attend their scheduled office hours.
- * Professors have been trained as experts in their particular areas of research.
- * Professors expect you to get from classmates any notes from classes you missed.
- * Professors may not follow the textbook. Instead, to amplify the text, they may give illustrations, provide background information, or discuss research about the topic you are studying. Or they may expect you to relate the classes to the textbook readings.
- * Professors may lecture nonstop, expecting you to identify the important points in your notes. When professors write on the board, it may be to amplify the lecture, not to summarize it. Good notes are a must.
- * Professors expect you to think about and synthesize seemingly unrelated topics.
leading you through the thinking process.

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<tr>
<th>Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates.</th>
<th>Professors expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers carefully monitor class attendance.</td>
<td>Professors may not formally take roll, but they are still likely to know whether or not you attended.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guiding principle: High school is a teaching environment in which you acquire facts and skills.</td>
<td>Guiding principle: College is a learning environment in which you take responsibility for thinking through and applying what you have learned.</td>
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### TESTS IN HIGH SCHOOL

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<tr>
<th>Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.</th>
<th>Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material. You, not the professor, need to organize the material to prepare for the test. A particular course may have only 2 or 3 tests in a semester.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Makeup tests are often available.</td>
<td>Makeup tests are seldom an option; if they are, you need to request them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers frequently rearrange test dates to avoid conflict with school events.</td>
<td>Professors in different courses usually schedule tests without regard to the demands of other courses or outside activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers frequently conduct review sessions, pointing out the most important concepts.</td>
<td>Professors rarely offer review sessions, and when they do, they expect you to be an active participant, one who comes prepared with questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guiding principle: Mastery is usually seen as the ability to reproduce what you were taught in the form in which it was presented to you, or to solve the kinds of problems you were shown how to solve.</td>
<td>Guiding principle: Mastery is often seen as the ability to apply what you've learned to new situations or to solve new kinds of problems.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRADES IN HIGH SCHOOL</td>
<td>GRADES IN COLLEGE</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Grades are given for most assigned work.</td>
<td>* Grades may not be provided for all assigned work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Consistently good homework grades may raise your overall grade when test grades are low.</td>
<td>* Grades on tests and major papers usually provide most of the course grade.</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Extra credit projects are often available to help you raise your grade.</td>
<td>* Extra credit projects cannot, generally speaking, be used to raise a grade in a college course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Initial test grades, especially when they are low, may not have an adverse effect on your final grade.</td>
<td>* Watch out for your <em>first</em> tests. These are usually &quot;wake-up calls&quot; to let you know what is expected--but they also may account for a substantial part of your course grade. You may be shocked when you get your grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* You may graduate as long as you have passed all required courses with a grade of D or higher.</td>
<td>* You may graduate only if your average in classes meets the departmental standard--typically a 2.0 or C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Guiding principle: <em>Effort counts.</em> Courses are usually structured to reward a &quot;good-faith effort.&quot;</td>
<td>* Guiding principle: <em>Results count.</em> Though &quot;good-faith effort&quot; is important in regard to the professor's willingness to help you achieve good results, it will not substitute for results in the grading process.</td>
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