

THE LION'S ROAR



The monthly newsletter for Penn State Berks

Important Dates



General

- 2024-2025 On-campus Housing Contracts Process Continues*
- Spring 2024 Course Registration Continues in LionPATH

December 8 Withdrawal Deadline at 5p.m.**

December 11 - 15 Final Exam Week

December 16

- Fall Commencement (Graduation) at 10a.m.***
- Residence Halls Close at 12p.m.****

December 18 - January 5 Winter Break (no classes)

December 22 - January 1 Berks Campus is Closed

LOOKING AHEAD

January 2 - 22 Intent to Graduate Activation Period^

January 5 Leave of Absence Deadline

January 7

- Residence Halls reopen at 11a.m.
- Spring Course Registration Deadline at 11:59p.m.

January 8 Spring Classes Begin

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

****Withdrawal** will impact degree progress and may have financial implications. Learn more [here](#) 🖱️

*****Fall 2023 graduates**, learn more about the Berks campus graduation ceremony held at Santander Arena [here](#) 🖱️

****During **Winter Break**, residential students returning in the Spring semester can leave their belongings in their room. TIP: take all necessary personal devices, device chargers, and medication.

^Learn more about **Intent to Graduate** [here](#) 🖱️

What's Inside:

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IS ANYONE OUT THERE?

Help us gauge readership and improve! Take our brief survey related to the Lion's Roar Newsletter and campus Stall Stories. Your input will guide us in understanding how many people engage with our publications and what content interests them the most.

Complete the 3-minute survey at

<https://forms.office.com/r/C5iAwgcg4X>



WINTER BREAK HOURS

The Penn State Berks Campus will be closed beginning Dec 22 and re-open on Jan. 2! Review the below list to see how campus resources/services are impacted.

ACADEMIC ADVISING CENTER

- Dec 22 - Jan 1: Closed

COUNSELING SERVICES

- Dec 18 - Jan 1: Closed
- See page 5 for a list of mental health resources!

FOOD SERVICE LOCATIONS

- Dec 15: Cyber Café closed. Tully's and Creekside Market close at 8p.m.

LEARNING & WRITING CENTERS

- Dec 11 - Jan 15: Closed

RESIDENCE HALLS

- Dec 16: Residence Halls close at 12p.m.

THUN LIBRARY

- Dec 17: Closed
- Dec 18 - Dec 21: Open from 9a.m. - 5p.m.
- Dec 22 - Jan 1: Closed

DID YOU KNOW?

SEASON OF OPPORTUNITIES

FACT: Winter Break is the best time to search for and apply to summer opportunities as well as 2024-25 scholarships!

TIP: Dedicate time during winter break to seeking out opportunities such as scholarships, internships, undergraduate research, as well as volunteer and/or employment experiences related to your career interests.

HOW TO START: Speak with Career Services, PSU alumni, your professors, or your assigned academic adviser to strategize your search.

WHERE TO START: [Internships](#) 🖱️ | [Scholarships](#) 🖱️

ENDING THE FALL SEMESTER

Final Exam Week: Dec 11 - Dec 15

END OF SEMESTER ASSESSMENTS

Professors typically end a course by assessing students' overall learning. This can be done through final papers, projects, presentations, or exams.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Will there be an assessment in every course?
- When are assessments held/due?
- Are assessments cumulative (i.e., from the start of the course)?
- Are assessment grades weighted?
- Are assessments to be completed online or in-person?

FINDING YOUR FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE

- On your LionPATH Dashboard, scroll to "Final Exam Schedule" which will list of all your exams scheduled during Finals Week.
- Click "More" in the right corner of the "Final Exam Schedule" section to see a comprehensive list.
- Confirm LionPATH information by checking your course syllabi and Canvas!

DID YOU KNOW?

- Students with three (3) or more exams in one day can speak with their professors about moving one exam to another day.

Enrollment Dates MORE

Enrollment Appointment

There are no Enrollment appointments to display at this time.

Shopping Cart Appointment

There are no Shopping Cart appointments to display at this time.

Final Exam Schedule MORE

There are no results at this time.

[Overload Conflict Exams UP, EB, HB Only](#)

Grades MORE

END OF SEMESTER RESOURCES

ACADEMIC

- **READ (click on the links below)**
 - [10 Things to Remember on the Day of Your Exam](#)
 - [6 Tips to Beat Final Exam Stress](#)
 - [Tips on Studying for Finals](#)
- **WATCH (click on the links below)**
 - [Finals Week! - 6 Study Tips & Tricks](#)
 - [How to Make a Final Exam Study Schedule - College Info Geek](#)
 - [Exam Tips: How to Study for Finals - College Info Geek](#)
- **CONNECT**
 - Make an appointment with a **Learning Center Tutor here** for help with Math, Science, and/or Study skills
 - Make an appointment with a **Writing Center Tutor here** for help writing a paper, speech, resume, or other written material
 - Attend Peers & Profs on Mondays and Wednesdays during Common Hour (12:15-1:15p.m.) in 222 Luerssen Math support. No appointment necessary!

MENTAL HEALTH

- See page 5 for a comprehensive list of Mental Health Resources!

DE-STRESS FEST

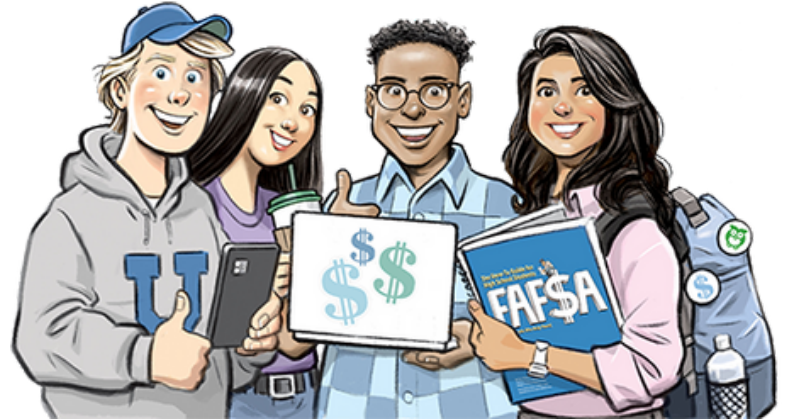
- **WHEN:** Dec 7 - Dec 13
- **WHAT:** Relaxation activities and hot chocolate in the Thun Library lobby. Bring your own mug to receive a University Libraries beanie hat!
- **FEATURES:**
 - Meditation with New Age Club (NAC): Dec 11 from 12:15-1:15p.m. in Thun 145
 - Yoga with NAC: Dec 13 from 12:15-1:15p.m. in Thun 145
 - Therapy dogs (hosted by Counseling Services): Dec 11 from 11:30a.m.-1:30p.m. in the Thun Cohen Lounge and MPR 1 (007 Perkins)



FINANCIAL AID NEWS

FAFSA APPLICATION 2024-25

- The 2024-25 FAFSA application will **open in December**.
 - Learn more about the FAFSA from Penn State at <https://studentaid.psu.edu/node/1025>
 - Learn more about the FAFSA from the Department of Education at <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/afsa-support>
- The FAFSA must be **completed annually** to be considered for financial aid eligibility.
 - For help on filling out the FAFSA form visit <https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/afsa/filling-out>
 - In order to access the FAFSA, you will need your **FSA ID and password**.
 - To complete the FAFSA, use **2022 tax documents** for yourself and your contributors (if you are a dependent student).
 - Completing the FAFSA early can lead to **improved odds** of securing more FREE aid (i.e., grants and scholarships).
- After you've completed the FAFSA, monitor LionPATH for Holds or To Do List Items which may prevent aid from disbursing.
- Click the FAFSA icon to access the 2024-25 application.



MAXIMIZING FALL AID

COMPLETING VERIFICATION

If you have not yet completed your verification for the current 2023-2024 FAFSA (aid year 2024 in LionPATH), you could be at risk of losing your federal aid for the entire (current) academic year.

- Review Holds and To Do List Items in LionPATH to determine what documentation is needed. Submit all documents (as outlined in the Hold or To Do List Item description) as soon as possible and before the last week of class.
- If verification is not **completed** by the last week of classes, you will lose your federal aid for the year.
- Learn more about verification at <https://studentaid.psu.edu/aid-the-bill/verification>

ACCEPTING LOANS

If you have an unpaid balance for Fall 2023, check LionPATH to see if you were offered loans that have not been accepted. If you would like to accept those loans, do so as soon as possible and before the final week of classes.

- First time loan borrowers of Federal Direct loans must complete the tasks below before funds can be distributed.
 - Sign a Master Promissory Note (MPN). Learn more [here](#)
 - Complete Loan Counseling, an online tool designed to help you understand your rights and responsibilities as a borrower. Learn more [here](#)

UNPAID FALL BILLS

DID YOU KNOW?

- Students who enrolled in Spring 2024 courses **but have an unpaid bill** will have their Spring courses automatically cancelled on Dec 15.
- Students with an unpaid balance can avoid course cancellation if their account is paid in full by Dec 14.
 - **TIP:** avoid issues by paying before 5p.m. when university offices are still open--just in case you need support.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

- **ONLINE:** Bills can be paid on LionPATH by clicking MY FINANCES, then MY ACCOUNT, then MANAGE MY ACCOUNT/MAKE A PAYMENT.
 - **eCheck:** Payments with an eCheck must be made from a personal checking account drawn on a US bank. An eCheck payment will appear on your monthly bank statement as PENN STATE UNIV PAYMENT. There is no fee to pay by eCheck.
 - **Credit Card:** We cannot accept credit card payments via mail, phone, or in person. There is a 2% Service Fee for each payment made by credit card.
- **IN-PERSON:** Bills can be paid at the Bursar's Office in 125 Franco during normal business hours. Acceptable forms of payment include cash, check, and money order.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

UNIVERSITY WITHDRAWAL

- **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WITHDRAW?**
 - Student action where they unenroll from ALL courses in the current semester.
- **WHEN IS THE WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE?**
 - Friday, December 8, 2023, at 5p.m.
 - **Pro Tip:** do NOT wait until Dec 8 just in case you run into any issues and/or need support.
- **WHY MIGHT A STUDENT DECIDE TO WITHDRAW?**
 - There are various reasons why a student may decide to withdraw from the university. The most common reason is because they are at risk of failing ALL of their courses. A student may elect to withdraw to protect their grade point average (GPA).
- **WHAT SHOULD A STUDENT CONSIDER AND/OR DO BEFORE WITHDRAWING?**
 - Speak with their assigned academic adviser.
 - **IMMEDIATE IMPACT:** Once the withdrawal is processed, **both** current semester and next semester courses will be canceled. If the student plans to return in the next semester, they will need to re-enroll. Learn more [here](#)👉
 - **QUESTIONS:** How will a withdrawal impact degree progress and/or graduation timeline? What is the re-enrollment timeline and process?
 - Speak with **Financial Aid**.
 - **QUESTIONS:** Will there be financial implications this semester and/or in the future? How will financial aid (i.e., scholarships, grants, and loans) be impacted if you don't re-enroll for the next semester?

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DEFERRED GRADES

If a student is prevented from completing a course within the prescribed amount of time, it is possible to have the grade for that course deferred. This allows students to complete the course at a later date. Approval for a deferred grade must be given by the instructor of the course and is typically approved only when extreme and well-documented circumstances inhibit student progress.



Learn more about Deferred Grades at

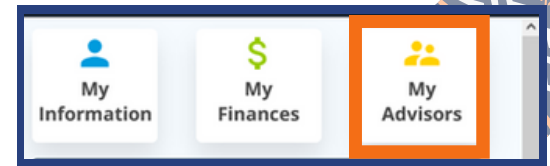
<https://www.registrar.psu.edu/grades/deferred-grades.cfm>

SPRING 2024 COURSE SCHEDULE

The Spring 2024 semester begins on Monday, Jan. 8. Do not delay, complete your enrollment today!

FOLLOW THESE 3 EASY STEPS TO GET SCHEDULED.

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



MAKING THE MOST OF TUTORING

1. **Make a plan:** Demand for tutoring increases around assessment deadlines. Establish enough time before your exam(s) and assignment(s) for tutoring.
 - **Pro Tip:** Make an appointment one week ahead!
2. **Try it out:** Even when you feel completely lost, it is beneficial to attempt your work alone. It can give you a clear idea of where you are struggling.
 - **Pro Tip:** Bring 2-5 attempted questions or problems to maximize your session. For written work, bring an outline or draft to the session.
3. **Bring course materials:** While tutors are trained to support specific subjects, it could be helpful for them to see the course lecture notes, textbook, study guide, and/or assignment guidelines.

CAMPUS RESOURCE LIST

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

- **24/7 Penn State Crisis Line** can be used in consultation for those at PSU to support someone who is experiencing a crisis or for yourself. You can reach the Crisis Line by:
 - Calling 1-877-229-6400
 - Texting "LIONS" to 741741
- **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention** offers resources and tips on how to support a friend -- or get help yourself.
 - Check it out at <https://seizetheawkward.org/> 🖱️
- **Berks County Crisis Line** can be used by residents of Berk County to assist children, adolescents and adults experiencing varying levels of crisis.
 - Call the line at 610-379-2007
- **Counseling Services** are available to all Penn State Berks students for FREE.
 - Learn more at <https://berks.psu.edu/counseling-services> 🖱️
- **Life Hack Kits** are free step-by-step wellness packages designed to help navigate and demystify the perplexing parts of being human.
 - Learn more at <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/wellness-services/life-hacks> 🖱️
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** is free and confidential support for any person in distress, providing prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones.
 - Call the line by dialing 988 or calling 800-273-8255
- **Online Mental Health Screenings** are free and anonymous for several areas of mental health, including depression, anxiety, academic distress, eating concerns, frustration level, family stress, and alcohol use.
 - Begin a screening at <https://tinyurl.com/CAPSScreening> 🖱️
- **Red Folder** at Penn State is a guide to help faculty, staff, student leaders, and others who interact with students to recognize, respond effectively to, and refer Penn State students in distress.
 - Review resources specific to Penn State Berks at <https://redfolder.psu.edu/campus-resources/> 🖱️
- **Safe Berks Campus Advocate** provides support for survivors of domestic and sexual violence as well as offers Prevention and Awareness Programming.
 - **Campus Contact:** Dairicelis Rodriguez-Guzman | **Email:** Dairicelisr@safeberks.org | **Office:** 311 Gaige
 - **Phone:** 484-769-7606 (call or text)
- **WellTrack Boost** is a tool designed to help understand the activities associated with changes in mood and motivation, as well as to identify patterns in daily activities and how they are associated with changes in emotional states.
 - Get FREE PSU access at <https://psu.welltrack.com/> 🖱️

GENERAL

- **ACADEMIC ADVISING** [160 FRANCO]
 - Questions about **course scheduling, degree progress, changing your major, or advising policies** contact your assigned academic adviser (listed in LionPATH). You can also reach out to Academic Advising for support.
 - **Email:** bkadvisingcenter@psu.edu | **Phone:** 610-396-6280
- **BIAS INCIDENT REPORT FORM**
 - To report concerns regarding bias, intolerance, discrimination, harassment, and/or incivility, use the form found [here](#) 🖱️
- **BURSAR** [125 FRANCO]
 - Questions about your **bill** or **payment options**, contact the Bursar's Office
 - **Email:** bkbursar@psu.edu | **Phone:** 610-396-6040
- **CARE REPORT FORM**
 - To express concern for a student experiencing distress of an academic, health, safety, or financial nature, use the form found [here](#) 🖱️
- **FINANCIAL AID** [014 PERKINS]
 - Questions about your **aid, holds, or to do list items**, contact the Financial Aid Office
 - **Email:** BerksFinAid@psu.edu | **Phone:** 610-396-6070
- **HOUSING & FOOD SERVICES** [106 PERKINS]
 - Questions about ID Cards or Residence Hall and Housing Contracts email HousingBK@psu.edu
 - Questions about meal plans and food services, including reporting food allergies, email absfoodservicebk@psu.edu
- **THUN LIBRARY**
 - Looking for a **place to study, access course materials, a lounge with vending machines, or support with technology**, visit Thun Library.
 - Webpage: <https://libraries.psu.edu/berks> 🖱️
 - Access their full calendar [here](#). 🖱️
 - Course Reserves (free access to textbooks for your classes) can be used in the library in 2 hours intervals. [Check here](#) 🖱️
- **TUTORING**
 - Need help with **Math or Science**, schedule a tutoring session with a Learning Center Tutor [here](#) 🖱️
 - Need help with a **paper, speech, resume, or other written material**, schedule an appointment with a Writing Center Tutor [here](#). 🖱️
 - Need help with math, attend the **"Peers and Profs"** help sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12:15-1:15p.m. in Luerssen 222. No appointment necessary!
 - **Courses Supported:** Math 4, 21, 22, 26, 41, & 110
- **VETERAN BENEFITS** [125 FRANCO]
 - Questions about **VA certifications**, contact the Registrar's Office
 - **Email:** BKVeterans@psu.edu
 - **Phone:** 610-396-6085

FOOD PANTRY



The Nittany Corner food pantry was funded and established by the Penn State Berks class of 2017. Pantry items are FREE to Penn State Berks students! Visit the pantry in the Thun Library's Cohen Lounge

