First-Year Newsletter

How Are You Ending Your First Semester?

You've almost made it through your first semester of college; however, you're not quite done yet! With about a month left of school, now is the time for you to focus on buttoning up any loose ends to finish this semester strong. You may be feeling overwhelmed with schoolwork and might need some extra guidance—and that's okay! Use this next month to take care of important end-of-semester tasks and to find the help you need. The rest of this newsletter is designed to help guide you.

Know that NIU still has plenty of great activities and events lined up for you. From community service to laser tag, there are still opportunities available on campus to get involved.

Before we part for a little over a month, First- and Second-Year Experience would like to wish you the best of luck with final exams and a wonderful winter break!
Finish Your Semester Strong

Dates to Remember:

Class Registration
- Begins Nov. 16

Thanksgiving Break
- Nov. 23 - Nov. 27

Final Exams
- Dec. 5 - Dec. 10

Winter Break
- Dec. 11 - Jan. 16
  (classes resume Jan. 17)

Need Help Preparing for Final Exams?

Tutoring Centers
A free way to help you get the grade you want in that difficult class! Check out ACCESS tutoring at niu.edu/access.

University Writing Center
There are now three locations where you can get assistance with your writing:
- Stevenson Hall South: by appointment, McMurray Hall, room 106: walk-in sessions and workshops.
- Founders Memorial Library, room 260: walk-in sessions.
Find out more at niu.edu/uwc.

Study Groups
Sometimes the best way to get through a difficult class is by connecting with your peers and forming study groups! Chances are you’re not the only one in that class who’s looking for support. Try to ask a few people around you if they’d like to study together, or you can ask your professor to make an announcement for students interested in forming a study group to meet after class.

Talk to Your Professor
Your professor has office hours for a reason—because they want to help! Go chat with them if you find that you are having a hard time or if you want suggestions on how to best succeed in their class. They can offer you helpful tips and support. Don’t wait until it’s too late. Go now!

In need of some finals encouragement?
Click here to check out this video from your fellow Huskies.

Check out pages 3 and 4 for an end of semester checklist and survival guide!
• It is crucial for you to visit your advisor before spring semester registration to ensure that you are on the right track. Make sure you sign up for an appointment as early as possible because spots fill up fast!

• Remember to check and keep track of your exam schedule, because it may be different than your class schedule! Click here to check out the Exam Schedule Details.

• Practice healthy habits. The night before each exam, pack your bag with everything you need, such as a calculator, pencils, or erasers. Get some good rest knowing that you will be ready first thing in the morning. Make sure to eat healthy and exercise throughout your day. Mental health is just as important! If you realize that you are struggling in class it is important to get help early. Start reviewing notes as soon as you can, even if it is only for fifteen minutes at a time!

• The first semester GPA of college is important, so take the time to bring your grade up. Check your syllabi to determine what grade you need to earn on each assignment to achieve your desired class grade. Tutoring, writing help, and faculty office hours are available to help you succeed, but you should make sure to act now!

• Professors can seem scary...but they are human too! Most professors are more than willing to help students and all professors have office hours that students should use. Find them on your syllabus!

• It is crucial for you to visit your advisor before spring semester registration to ensure that you are on the right track. Make sure you sign up for an appointment as early as possible because spots fill up fast!

• You can log in to MyNIU and view the panel on the right side of the page to find your registration date for spring 2017. You can even choose your spring classes and add them to your shopping cart so you are ready to register on your registration day!
Visit myniu.edu to make sure you have no holds on your account.

- You can log in to MyNIU and view the panel on the right side to find out if you have any holds on your account. You must take care of any holds before you are able to register for spring semester classes.

Make arrangements for your winter break move out date (if you live in the residence halls).

- If you are returning home for winter break make sure you know your move out date! It is important for you to bring home any items that you will need over break and to also plan your transportation.

Complete your FAFSA (financial aid) application for the 2017-2018 school year.

- The FAFSA application for your sophomore year is now open and available. The sooner you fill it out, the better!

Prepare and submit job applications due this fall, including job applications and leadership opportunities.

- Check out page 6 for information on two available job opportunities. You can also visit Career Services to help you prepare your resume.

STUDY TIP
When studying, be sure to review your notes, homework, and past tests! In addition, there are many great resources on campus to help you reach your academic goals (for help with math, check out the Math Assistance Center in DuSable 326 before they close on December 2nd).
What Can I Do for Fun Around Here?

Check out these great opportunities to help you have fun and destress before finals!

**Fear Factor**
Nov. 10, 6-8 p.m.
Holmes Student Center
An evening of real life fear factor!

**The Giving Project**
Nov. 10, 12-1 p.m.
Holmes Student Center, Glidden Room
Do you want to make gifts for people in need? This workshop is a way for you to help others.

**Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week: Knitting & Crocheting Scarves**
Nov. 14, 11-12:30 p.m.
Campus Life Building, Room 100
The University Honors Programs will be partnering with The Giving Project in an effort to collect scarves for those in need. Students who participate will learn how to crochet or knit scarves, which will be donated at the end of the event.

Please bring the following materials, if you have them:

- Crochet: 1-2 (7 oz.) or 2-4 (50 gram) skeins of worsted weight yarn and Size J crochet hook.
- Knit: 1-2 (7 oz.) or 2-4 (50 gram) skeins of worsted weight yarn and a pair of size 9 or 10 knitting needles.

**Karaoke Night**
Nov. 14, 6-10 p.m.
Holmes Student Center, The College Grind
Come enjoy a night of fun and karaoke.

**Laser Tag**
Nov. 17, 7-10 p.m.
Holmes Student Center, Duke Ellington Ballroom
You are welcome to enjoy an exciting evening of laser tag.

**Northern’s Got Talent!**
Nov. 17, 6-9 p.m.
Holmes Student Center, Carl Sandburg Auditorium
Come to Carl Sandburg and see the talent of your fellow Huskies. Get your free ticket at niutickets.com.

**Relaxation Night**
Dec. 1, 6-10 p.m.
Holmes Student Center
Wind down the semester with a relaxation night! Coloring and other fun activities will be provided.
Pawesome Leadership Opportunities! Apply Now.

Become a UNIV 101/201 Peer Educator!

Mentor students, connect with faculty and gain leadership skills!

Peer Educators (PEs) help new students adapt to life at NIU by assisting in either a UNIV 101 or UNIV 201 course. They plan course activities, facilitate class discussions, and provide information to students on a peer level. The PE position can be a paid or volunteer position and is open to undergraduate students.

Informational Meeting (not required):
- Tuesday, Nov. 15, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
  Campus Life Building, Room 100

Application Parties:
- Tuesday, Nov. 29, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
  New Hall, Swing Space
- Thursday, Dec. 1, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
  Stevenson Hall, Smart Classroom

How to apply:
- Online application and info at go.niu.edu/PEapp
- Priority deadline is Nov. 18, Final Deadline is Dec. 9
- Contact fsye@niu.edu for more info.

Want to Rock a Red Polo this Summer?

Apply to be an orientation leader or orientation program intern!

Gain significant leadership experiences, develop your communication skills, meet incoming students, and represent NIU. Plus you get paid! In order to qualify for either position—you must attend a 101 session! During the 101 session, you will learn more about each position, benefits, details surrounding the interview process, and you will even have the chance to chat with current/former orientation leader staff!

Attend one of the following required 101 sessions:
- Thursday, Nov. 10, 7:30 p.m
  Campus Life Building, Room 100
- Thursday, Nov. 17, 7 p.m.
  Stevenson North, Multipurpose Room

How to apply:
- Online application and info at go.niu.edu/OLapp
- Deadline is Nov. 30 at 4:00 p.m.
- Contact orientation@niu.edu for more info.
Pawesome Leadership Opportunities Continued.

First-year Students Invited to Apply for a McKearn Fellowship

The McKearn Fellows Program is now accepting applications for the 2017-2020 cohort. This program provides an unparalleled educational experience by creating coursework and an activity plan that feeds intellectual curiosity, entrepreneurial spirit and supports future career plans. You are able to explore research, artistry, leadership, and civic, social and global engagement in your selected field of study. Additionally, students selected for this program have opportunities to receive funding for participating and attending local, regional, national and international conferences within their field along with other opportunities to advance personally and professionally.

Several informational sessions on the McKearn Fellows Program have been scheduled to provide you information on the program. All sessions will start at 6 p.m. and will be held at Altgeld Hall, room 125.

Attend one of the following Information sessions:
- Monday, Nov. 21
- Thursday, Dec. 1
- Thursday, Jan. 19

Application deadline is Monday, Jan. 23, 2017, at 11:59 p.m. Questions can be directed to mckearn@niu.edu.

NIU PLUS: Make your learning experiences stand out

This semester, NIU launched a unique program open to all students called NIU PLUS, short for Progressive Learning in Undergraduate Studies. It is designed to help you explore your interests, focus your studies, highlight your accomplishments and maybe even “earn and learn.” Best of all, it could help you get hired after graduation.

Through NIU PLUS, you can customize your learning experiences and make them stand out to future employers. With registration for spring semester classes opening this month, you should be considering the benefits of NIU PLUS and asking academic advisors about the program.

NIU PLUS offers three components related to general education requirements, hands-on learning experiences and on- or off-campus jobs.

**Academics PLUS** allows you to customize general-education courses according to personal interests, career aspirations or a major or minor area of study. You have the opportunity to receive a “pathways focus” notation on your academic record. That way, prospective employers and graduate schools will see even more of your accomplishments.

**Engage PLUS** helps ensure you are recognized for high-quality experiential learning activities and involvement outside of the classroom. You can earn academic transcript notations for these experiences, so prospective employers or grad schools will be aware of these achievements.

**Jobs PLUS** is designed to help you build bridges between your college jobs and post-graduation careers. Jobs PLUS regularly hosts professional development events that teach teamwork, communication, time management and other skills important in any work setting. Through partnerships with employers, you could even be eligible to attend these events on paid work time.
Upcoming Events

**Edible Education: Test Preparation**

**Thursday, Nov. 10, 12:30 p.m.**
Altgeld Hall, Room 125
Learn about ways to prepare for and perform on your final exams.

**Grassroots Leadership: Promoting Change in the Social Media Age**

**Thursday, Nov. 10, 6:00 p.m.**
Holmes Student Center, Carl Sandburg Auditorium
Hear from former University of Missouri Student Association President, Payton Head, on how to incite institutional change on campus.

**What’s My Style? Learning to Communicate With Others**

**Tuesday, Nov. 15, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.**
Founders Memorial Library, 71 North
Understand your communication style and how to work with others.

**Leadership Academy: Leadership 101**

**Wednesday, Nov. 30, 3:00 p.m.**
Campus Life Building, Room 100
Learn about your leadership style and traits of effective leaders.

**Just Mercy Point of Action and Involvement Discussion**

**Wednesday, Nov. 16, 12-1 p.m.**
Center for Black Studies
Join us to discuss the Common Reading Experience book *Just Mercy* and how to use its themes to create action on campus.

**Huskie Food Pantry is open!**

**Every Thursday 5:30–7:30 p.m.**
Chick Evans Fieldhouse
The Huskie Food Pantry provides free food to NIU students who have found themselves in a circumstance where access to healthy food, or food in general, is inconsistent. Their motto is “take what you need.” To be eligible to use the Huskie Food Pantry, you must be an NIU student without an NIU meal plan. All students must bring their NIU OneCard. Visit go.niu.edu/foodpantry for more info.
Connect With Us

First- and Second-Year Experience
Email: fsye@niu.edu
Call: (815) 753-0028
Visit: Altgeld Hall, Room 100

For office updates, “Take Over Tuesdays”, live event recordings and more: follow us on Snapchat at @niufsye

For updates on upcoming events and other important information: facebook.com/niu.fysye