

A message from the Dean of
Students

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January 2020

Message from the Dean of Students

Greetings Catamount Families and Friends!

Happy New Year! I hope that you had a wonderful holiday with your student. It is my sincere wish that 2020 will be an amazing year for all Catamounts, their families, and the ones they love! As you might be experiencing, students have been given the gift of an extended break this year as classes will not resume until January 13. Before they know it, they will need to be ready for things such as a new class schedule, fraternity/sorority recruitment, housing sign-up for 2020-21, exams, papers, class projects, social life, and much more. This newsletter is to remind you of some important matters to discuss with your student before they return to campus. Remember, we are partners in the education of your student and we thank you for all that you do.

Please feel free to contact [me](#) if you have specific questions and/or concerns.

Sincerely,

BaShaun H. L. Smith



Important Information for Families

Happy New Year and New Decade Catamount Family!

This academic year is a season of change:

- Several units are in new locations: [Opening of Semester](#)
- OneStop has transformed from a physical location to a virtual resource: [Virtual OneStop](#)

To aid with the Opening of the Semester, a new **Opening Service Center (OSC)** concept in Killian Annex 136 will be staffed as the term gets underway:

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| • Thursday, January 9 | 8:00 am - 5:00 pm |
| • Friday, January 10 | 8:00 am - 5:00 pm |
| • Saturday, January 11 | 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm |
| • Sunday, January 12 | 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm |
| • Monday, January 13 | 8:00 am - 5:00 pm |
| • Tuesday, January 14 | 10:00 am - 5:00 pm |

(Special Note: Student Financial Aid has moved to the west wing of Camp Building, but Financial Aid representatives

will also help staff the OSC)

Student Accounts/Cashiers are now located at the first-floor Killian Annex service desk and offices:

- Student Accounts/Cashiers will specialize in cash payment and billing issues

Unsure where to go or direct someone for assistance or answers?

Go to [Opening of Semester](#) or

Go to [Virtual OneStop](#) or

Go to the Opening Service Center in Killian Annex 136 during its hours of operation

For your convenience, the opening of the semester website lists the office hours of numerous units and services.

Welcome to Spring 2020!



Welcome Back to Cullowhee and a Healthy and Happy New Year

As the spring semester is getting underway, so is the 2020 flu season. I want to update you on flu activity in our area and ask for your help in preventing the spread of flu in our community.

Influenza, the flu, is a contagious respiratory virus that can cause mild to severe illness and can pose high risks for people with certain health conditions or compromised immune systems.

The Center for Disease Control's (CDC) surveillance map shows widespread flu, or flu-like illness, activity throughout the southeast United States. More specifically, the NC

Department of Health and Human Services' [Surveillance Summary](#) demonstrates increased flu activity at this point compared to the past two years in North Carolina. To help avoid the flu, prevent the spread of flu, and to keep our campus healthy, the information below has been shared with your student:

- The first and most important step in protecting yourself from the flu is to GET a flu vaccine. It is not too late to get a flu shot. While the flu shot may not prevent you from getting the flu, it is proven to be effective in helping reduce the severity of symptoms and shorten recovery time if you do get sick. Health Services still has shots available.
- Know the symptoms of the flu, and seek medical care at Health Services if you experience these symptoms:
 - Fever of 100.4F/38C degrees or higher or feeling feverish (not everyone with the flu has a fever)
 - Headaches and/or body aches
 - Cough and/or sore throat
 - Runny or stuffy nose
 - Chills
 - Fatigue
 - Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea (most common in children)
- Practice good prevention habits by WASHING your hands routinely. Particularly after you have touched surfaces in common areas--avoid touching your face. Wash your hands with either soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer rubbing your hands together until they are dry.
- Cover your mouth if you need to cough or sneeze, using a tissue or your elbow if necessary.
- Prevent the spread of germs! If you become ill, self-isolate until at least 24 hours after your fever subsides. If you visit a medical provider, ask for a mask, even if you are not experiencing symptoms, you may be exposed while at that medical office.

If you are diagnosed with the flu, the Office of Student Affairs can assist with documented medical [absence notifications](#) to professors. This may allow you the necessary time to recuperate without further spreading illness to the rest of the campus.

Thank You,

Pam Buchanan
Director, Health Services

Residential Living & Common Housing Questions

This is the time of year that many students have housing-related questions. The most common are 1) Do I have to live on campus next year?; 2) If I want to change rooms in the spring semester, how do I request the change?; and 3) How can I apply to be an RA for next year? Detailed information is on the [Residential Living webpage](#) but the following are general answers to those questions:

- 1) Do I have to live on campus next year? WCU has a two-year residency requirement as outlined in [Policy 96](#). First-year and transfer students have specific requirements for living on campus as outlined in that policy. Please encourage your student to check his/her WCU email account for specific information regarding Policy 96.
- 2) If I want to change rooms in the spring semester, please review the [Residence Life website](#), contact the building Resident Director, Graduate Community Coordinator or Assistant Director for Residence Life in the Residential Living Office in Brown Hall (2nd floor).
- 3) How can I apply to be an RA for next year? The RA position allows students the opportunity to earn money while gaining experience that will help them to develop skills that apply to any career choice. Students who are interested in learning more should watch for notifications about information sessions and/or contact a member of the Residential Living staff for details about the application process and timeline.

2020-2021 Financial Aid Application

If your student plans to be enrolled in the 2020-21 academic year, it is never too early to complete the [FAFSA](#). The FAFSA is the primary document used for consideration for Financial Aid and must be completed on

an annual basis. If you haven't taken the time to complete the FAFSA , now would be a great time to submit for the next academic school year.

Fraternity & Sorority Recruitment

At WCU, spring is the time most students are eligible to participate in fraternity/sorority recruitment. To be eligible for recruitment, students must have a minimum of 12 earned hours and a 2.5 GPA. Students interested in participating in recruitment and/or learning more about Greek life at WCU should contact the [Greek Student Engagement and Development Office](#).

Congratulations December 2019 Graduates



Academic Check-in

Some students are pleased with their academic performances in the fall semester. Other students know they need to make improvements to reach their true potential. If your student is one in the former category, please encourage them to keep up the good work. College is a marathon that requires steady progress and continuous work throughout. If your student is one in the latter category, please encourage them to keep working hard. Like any marathon, college requires a steady pace and is not won or lost in the first few miles.

If your student needs or wants to make improvements to their academic performance, recommend that they make a success plan at the beginning of the spring semester. Encourage your student to visit [Tutoring Services](#) for

assistance. The Writing and Learning Commons (Belk 207) and Mathematics Tutoring Center (Stillwell 455) promotes student success through math and course tutoring, writing support, academic skills consultation, exam prep activities is a great resource for students. Students can also speak with advisors and faculty members early in the semester to make sure they are progressing successfully. Finally, ask your student to review their course schedule for the spring semester to ensure it is accurate.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

MLK Week Theme: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Legacy of Connection: The Story of U.S.

Dr. Oralene Anderson Graves Simmons will be our guest speaker, January 22, 7:00 pm, Bardo Fine and Performing Arts Center. Dr. Simmons is an internationally recognized civil rights leader, is the award-winning visionary founder of Asheville's annual Martin Luther King, Jr., Prayer Breakfast and distinguished recipient of the national MLK Commission's "Making of the King Holiday Award" presented to her by Mrs. Coretta Scott King. Simmons speaks and teaches widely, inspiring audiences locally, nationally, and globally, about her journey in civil rights along a path of non-violence in the tradition of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. She is currently working on a memoir based on her inspirational lectures about her life, titled 'Journey to Myself.'

A native of Western North Carolina, Ms. Simmons is the founding president of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Association of Asheville and Buncombe County and former co-chair of the North Carolina State Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday Commission. For her pioneering civil rights work in the early 1960s, especially for her singular and courageous role in integrating all-white Mars Hill College in 1961, Ms. Simmons first gained worldwide recognition when she was featured as a young leader in both Jet and Time magazines, and later was honored with Mrs. Coretta Scott King at the United Nations headquarters in New York City in 1990.



Important Dates

January 8	Textbook Rental begins
January 9 - 14	Opening Service Center Open
January 10	Residence Halls Open
January 13	First Day of Classes
January 13 - 17	Drop/Add
January 20	MLK, Jr. Holiday
January 22	MLK, Jr. Speaker, 7:00 pm
February 1	Scholarship Application Deadline

Student Activities Calendar



Division of Student Affairs
Western Carolina University
Cullowhee, NC 28723

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