Well it has finally happened, the leaves have changed their colors, and snow is starting to fall. Temperatures have dropped to the point that shorts are no longer an option, so the march towards winter has begun.

I love the winter months and the darker nights, as it allows me to reflect on the year, and to remember all of the wonderful things that TRiO students have achieved in 2015. We collected “Cans for Cookies” on National TRiO Day in February, and exceeded all expectations in what we would donate to our food pantry. We had the highest number of participants ever in the areas of Good Academic Standing, Graduation, and Retention (returning to college). We had an increase in the number of students who made Dean’s and President’s lists in the spring.

And then, in September, we made history, both for the TRiO SSS Program, and for SUNY Potsdam. Molly Clough (’92) is a TRiO alum who was nominated and then awarded the 2015 National TRiO Achievers award. Molly won this award because of all of the wonderful work that she does. Molly is an advocate for local charities such as United Helpers, The Red Cross, Salvation Army and Toys for Tots. Through the experience of her own humble beginnings that allowed her to benefit from the TRiO services, Molly’s law firm offers free consultations and carries out pro-bono work for those who are normally unable to afford legal representation.

Molly also serves on the SUNY Potsdam College Counsel, and regularly gives her time and financial support to her alma mater, and the TRiO program that helped her on her way. She has provided a scholarship to the local high school, and can often be found in elementary classrooms talking to young children about what it is like to be an attorney. In addition, Molly offers free lectures and presentations at various locations throughout the local area.

Molly’s husband, Eric Firnstein, President Esterberg, and I, were very proud as we all watched Molly receive her award in Atlanta, GA in September, but here is my challenge to all TRiO participants, both past and present.

Are you going to be the next award winner?

Stay warm!
--MM
Preparing for Academic Advising

Are you ready to choose your courses for next semester? Are you hoping your advisor will tell what you should take?

YOU are responsible for choosing the best selection of courses to fit your overall plan, so DO YOUR RESEARCH!

BEFORE meeting with your advisor, take a look at your general education audit sheet and compare it with your course summary on BearPaws, OR BearDen to review your completed and outstanding requirements. Also, review your checklist of courses for your major and minor(s). I would suggest you make a general list of courses and/or general education attributes (such as AH, PI, SC) that you still need to complete.

There’s still more to consider! How many credits should you take? Are there prerequisites for the courses you want to take? Do you need to repeat a course? Course selection can be overwhelming, but the more research you do, the more confident you will be in your choices. These forms should help:

Courses Scheduling Worksheet
http://www.potsdam.edu/offices/registrar/upload/Student-Scheduling_Worksheet.pdf

Registration Advising Form
http://www.potsdam.edu/offices/registrar/registration/upload/Student-Registration-Advisement-Worksheet.pdf

TRiO is here to help! We are ready and willing to meet with you prior to your Advising session to review your progress and answer questions. Give us a call to schedule an appointment today! 315-267-2347

Classes available on BearPaws October 19th.

Registration dates:

SR: November 15
JR. November 16
SO: November 17
FR: November 18/19
Wow, where has the time gone? We are halfway through the semester already. Family weekend has come and gone. Fall break is over and before we know it, Halloween and Thanksgiving will be here and the end of the semester will be looming.

There are a few dates to keep in mind as you go through the rest of the fall semester.

The last day to withdraw or S/U a class is November 6th.

Daylight Savings Time ends October 31st. Remember to turn your clocks back one hour before you go to bed Saturday night.

Halloween is Saturday, October 31st.

Thanksgiving break is November 25th through November 29th.

Last day of classes is December 11th. Final exams are December 14th through December 18th.

As these dates approach, do not hesitate to contact TRiO for any help you may need.
Test Taking Strategies for College Midterms and Finals

Time Management Skills

Finishing a test on time is difficult for many students. When taking long tests, plan how long you’ll spend on each section before beginning the test. These strategies will help you better manage time:

- Sit where a clock is visible or wear a watch. Make a mental note when you begin, and periodically check the time.
- Briefly review all test sections before beginning, and determine how much time should be devoted to each one. For example, set aside a half hour for each section while taking a two hour test with four sections. However, divvy appropriate time for each section since it takes longer to complete an essay than a multiple choice section.
- Develop brief outlines with the arguments you’ll make when answering essay questions.
- Don’t waste time dwelling on a single multiple choice question. Answer questions you know first to save time for confusing ones. Students often answer confusing questions correct when they have time to analyze and eliminate incorrect answer choices.

Test Day Preparations

Refrain from pulling an all-nighter the night before a test. Being groggy affects concentration. Utilize these tips to adequately prepare for tests:

- Set an alarm or have a friend call you when tests are scheduled during early morning hours.
- Eat protein rich food on test day. Protein is a reliable energy source while sitting and concentrating for extended periods of time. Avoid simple carbohydrates and excessive amounts of caffeine since consuming these substances often lead to energy crashes.
- Shower on test day. Being self-conscious about appearance is a distraction.
- Arrive early for the test. Having extra time will allow you to clear your mind and focus on the test.
- Come prepared to the test with blue books, note paper, pencils, calculators, and other permitted items.
- Briefly review notes just prior to the test. If you’re sufficiently prepared, summarizing notes will refresh what you’ve learned.
- Use the restroom before entering the test center or classroom.

Relieving Test Taking Anxiety

It’s normal to feel anxiety on test day. Stress often motivates students to study hard, but excessive stress can affect performance. Utilize these strategies to alleviate test taking anxiety:

- Participate in deep breathing exercises before taking the test. Continue doing this if you experience extreme anxiety while taking the test. Deep breathing is an excellent strategy to calm nerves.
- Take some time to stretch prior to sitting down for the test to relieve tension. If permitted or granted a break, stretch your limbs again while taking the test.
- It’s ineffective to evaluate test preparation during the test. If you don’t perform up to expectations, assess performance and make changes after the test.
- Don’t overreact to a poor test score. Move on since you’ll have opportunities later in the semester to make up for a bad score.
- Meet with the teacher or an academic counselor if test taking anxiety is affecting performance. Counselors can teach you strategies for overcoming anxiety. Some teachers grant students who struggle with extreme anxiety additional time to finish a test.
- Never compare yourself to peers, and don’t get distracted by students who finish early. Devote all your attention to focusing on the test. The best way to decrease test taking anxiety is to study hard for the test. You must make time to study. There is no easy route to success. Even if you’re prepared, it’s still normal to feel nervous. Utilize the aforementioned tips, and you’ll be fine.
TRiO Student Support Services is a federally funded program, which serves 200 eligible students throughout the year. The goal of the program is to provide the academic support necessary to help students remain in school and reach graduation.

Students are selected to participate in the TRiO program based on the students’ request for assistance and federal eligibility. Students may stop by 119 Sisson Hall to fill out a short application.

TRiO participants must have a need for academic support. They must be U.S. citizens and accepted for college enrollment. Participants must also meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Are a first generation college student, i.e. neither parent has a four year college degree
- Fall within income limit set by the U.S. Department of Education and verified by the TRiO office
- Have a documented physical and/or learning disability

TRiO Staff

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Web: www.potsdam.edu/support/ssc/sss

Important Dates

Nov 6: Last day to withdraw or elect S/U
Nov 25: Thanksgiving break begins
Nov 30: Classes Resume
Dec: 11 Last days of classes
Dec: 14-18 Final Exams