



**Parent & Family Newsletter
December 2021**



Introduction from the Vice President for Student Affairs

Seasons Greetings!

I hope this message finds you and your family well and in good spirits.



Indeed winter is coming. This is not meant to be an ominous warning or any reason to be alarmed. But in contrast, it is a statement of fact. Living in the northeastern part of the United States provides us the opportunity to witness the changing of the seasons. Undoubtedly, you have looked out of your windows and noticed communities are adorned in winter themed decor as people excitedly await what the end of the calendar year will bring. Well, that is where we are today. As students begin

finals, we trust they have an excitement to finish the fall term on a high note as they boldly walk into winter prepared to make this the best academic and engaging year yet.

As you read through our newsletter, pay particular attention to the resources available to your student to assist them through finals preparation and subsequent exams. Final exams have a funny way of generating stress and anxiety. I like to encourage students to approach exams as an opportunity to demonstrate their newly acquired knowledge and understanding or in some instances, recover from minor setbacks. Let's be partners in easing stress and encouraging the utilization of campus resources.

Everyone I know at The College of New Jersey truly wants the best for every student. My colleagues work tirelessly to deliver on our best hopes for our students but understandably sometimes we fall short. How do we deliver the best? In the spirit of partnership, I would like to ask that you trust our intentions and encourage your students to work with our committed staff to help make their college experience a better place. If they are challenged by an experience in the residence hall, provoked by an experience in a student organization, or take issue with something observed on campus, a major resource for students is Student Government. Student Government is the representative body of students that helps us prioritize the issues facing students. Beyond SG, we are a committed group of professionals who remain ready to help students learn, grow, and work through each of the aforementioned challenges. We call this building resilience. It is a critical component of the tenets of Student Affairs. The Division of Student Affairs, through its various

departments, seeks to connect with students to help build the skills students will use for a lifetime. We want to be sure that our students are adequately prepared to confront the changing seasons of life. We remain in this together!

Sean O. Stallings
Vice President of Student Affairs

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Homecoming and Parent & Family Day

Thank you for attending the TCNJ Homecoming and Parent & Family Day on Saturday, October 2! We loved seeing all of our families and students who attended the events throughout the day. We hope you enjoyed the day as much as we did!

We would love to hear any feedback you have about the day! You can find the link to our feedback survey [here](#).

Interested in purchasing your Professional Spirit Photos? You can find the link to purchase photos [here](#) and click on the album entitled "School Year 2021-2022".

Message from the Provost

Provost and VP for Academic Affairs Jeffrey M. Osborn

Dear Parents and Family Members,

It was a terrific Fall 2021 semester with our students and faculty back in the classroom! The energy of in-person instruction and co-curricular life has revitalized our campus and has resulted in renewed academic, intellectual, and social engagement.

These interactions were evident in fall programs such as the world premiere of *Weather*, which was performed by TCNJ's Wind Ensemble and Choirs, and was the college's first live musical performance in 19 months; the campus visit of Oscar-nominated *Judas and the Black Messiah* screenwriters Keith and Kenny Lucas '07; and the annual Gitenstein-Hart lecture by Professor of Sociology Elizabeth Borland, who discussed her sabbatical year in South America.

We have truly valued being back together on campus; therefore, we appreciate the diligence of our campus community in complying with the vaccination and indoor mask requirements as we slowly approach the other side of this pandemic.

As we look forward to the spring, we wish you, your families, and everyone you hold dear all the best for the upcoming holiday season.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey M. Osborn



Winter Closing Information



By the Department of Residential Education and Housing

All residence halls will close for Winter Break on Tuesday, December 21, 2021 at 8:00pm, reopening on Sunday, January 23, 2022 at noon.

Residents are expected to vacate their room 24 hours after their last exam or by the close of campus, whichever comes first. If there are any issues where your student is unable to leave by this time, please contact housing@tcnj.edu to discuss potential next steps.

As staff will not be available to let people back into their rooms before the halls reopen, please remind your student to pack appropriately. This includes taking home any valuable or essential items like electronics, jewelry, passports, medication, textbook rentals, etc.

If your student is moving into a new room for the spring semester, their Fall housing assignment must be vacated completely before they leave for winter break. Please note that any possessions that are left behind after they move out will be discarded as the space is being prepared for a new resident in the next semester.

Prior to the official closing, students will receive an email notice with a closing checklist, tips, updated dining hall times, and other important information for finals week. Please remind your student to check their TCNJ inbox for official communication from our office. This information will also be available on [our website](#).

Housing Application Information: 2022-2023

By the Department of Residential Education and Housing

On-campus housing applications for the 2022-2023 academic year will be available on Monday, January 24, 2022!

Applying is as easy as 1-2-3:

1. Your student will need to log into [MyHousing](#).
2. Click on the academic year “22-23 application”.
3. Fill out the required information and sign the housing contract.

Please note that students are signing their housing contract at the time of their application submission; without signing, their application is considered incomplete. The contract is a legally binding agreement for the full academic year of 2022-2023 (Fall and Spring semesters). If your student signs the contract but wishes to cancel the application, the deadline to do so without penalty is before room selection. Any contract release requests after this date will be processed in accordance with the contract release policy. As outlined by the policy, if a [contract release request](#) is granted it will be subject to the cancellation fee and refund schedule (please see the [current policy](#) which will be updated no later than January 15, 2022 with revised dates).

The fee schedule can be viewed below.

Housing will take place through a lottery and room selection process. Once the deadline to apply for housing has passed, students receive a computer-generated timeslot. This timeslot indicates the date and time for which your student may log into MyHousing and self-select their space for the next academic year. For more information on the lottery/room selection process, roommate groups, and on-campus living, please refer to [our Housing page](#) sometime around January 15, 2022.

If your student wants to engage with on-campus housing in a different way, Residential Education and Housing also offers special interest housing. Programs include: [Substance Free Housing](#), [Gender Inclusive Housing](#), and Multicultural Housing Community.

For any parents or families that may be worried about the lottery and

room selection process: for the last five years, all students who applied on time have received a timeslot and been able to select a space. If your student applies by the application deadline, it is anticipated that they will receive a time slot!

*On-campus housing for returning students in 2022-2023 may include: Norsworthy, Allen, Brewster, Ely, New Residence, Eickhoff, Decker, Cromwell, Townhouse East, Townhouse West, Townhouse South, Phelps and Hausdoerffer.

Cancellation Fee Schedule: 2022-2023

Fall 2022 Cancellation Schedule

Date Range	Amount
Before a room is assigned/selected	\$0
After Room Selection through June 30, 2022	\$250
July 1, 2022-July 31, 2022	\$500 (End of No Questions Asked)
August 1, 2022-September 7, 2022	\$750
September 8, 2022-September 20, 2022	25% Housing charge
September 21, 2022-October 4, 2022	50% Housing Charge
October 5, 2022 and after	100% Housing charge

Students will be permitted to cancel their Housing Contracts *no questions asked* through **July 31, 2022**. Requests made after July 31st will be reviewed in accordance with the contract release process. Please note that submission of a contract release request for financial and medical reasons before or after moving in does not ensure that a release will be granted.

Spring 2023 Cancellation Schedule

Date Range	Amount
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By October 31, 2022	\$250
November 1, 2022-December 20, 2022	\$500
December 21, 2022-January 31, 2023	\$750
February 1, 2023-February 16, 2023	25% Housing charge
February 17, 2023-February 27, 2023	50% Housing charge
February 28, 2023 and after	100% Housing charge

Unless otherwise notified the contract will be for the entire academic year and the only consideration for a release for Spring 2023 would be in accordance with the [contract release process](#).

Faculty Corner

Adapting How We Teach in the Age of Covid

By Matthew Bender, PhD

Professor of History, President of the TCNJ Faculty Senate

Faculty at TCNJ pride ourselves on excellence in teaching. We often use the term Teacher-Scholar, which reflects on the connection between our jobs as classroom teachers and as scholars in research and creative activity. In order to serve our students, we must be lifelong learners, willing to learn new ideas, approaches, and technologies.

The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic created numerous challenges for our campus community. For us faculty, we faced a serious dilemma: how do we change our approach to teaching to meet the moment? How do we take our academic experience, known for small classes, deeply engaged learning, and close working relationships between faculty and students, and translate it to a world of remote instruction? Furthermore, how do we do this in a way that is high quality, inclusive, authentically TCNJ, and keeps to our values?

In the summer of 2020, TCNJ faculty sprang into action to prepare ourselves for the year of remote instruction. First, many of us went to class ourselves. Over 600 of us enrolled in the Summer Training Program (STP), an online training program developed by our Office of Instructional Design. This consisted of curated resources and training opportunities, as well as group discussions and individual coaching sessions, aimed at preparing faculty for remote and hybrid instruction.

At the same time, TCNJ's Media and Technology Support Services office worked to retrofit more than 300 classrooms with new technology, including microphones and cameras, to prepare them for remote instruction.

Faculty also worked in their academic departments to adapt their curriculum and courses to remote and hybrid instruction. At TCNJ, we have a broad, diverse range of academic offerings, and the challenges in areas such as the sciences are very different from those in the arts.

Here's just a few examples of how TCNJ faculty adapted how they teach:

Our Chemistry Department embraced a "flipped classroom" model for introductory chemistry courses. In this format, students viewed lectures outside of class time, and then used live Zoom sessions for practice problems and self-reflection. Some chemistry faculty also used at-home lab kits, which enabled students to do hands-on experiments at home.

Our History and Political Science faculty embraced new tools, such as Perusall, for group reading and annotation of documentary sources. This enabled students to engage in deep, meaningful analysis of primary source documents and academic articles.

Our Nursing and Health and Exercise Science faculty developed simulation labs to train students in essential skills, such as how to take blood pressure readings and use a stethoscope.

Our Music faculty made extensive use of video technology to enable “group” performances from individual spaces. In the spring 2021 semester, our choral courses also used a temporary tent classroom, so that students could sing together safely outdoors and socially distanced.

Many departments offered students the option of academic credit through virtual internships, taking place using technologies such as Zoom. Our Center for Global Engagement even made new International Virtual Internships possible for some of our students.

This past semester, we moved our classes back to in-person instruction. Thanks to a vaccine requirement for both students, faculty, and staff and an in-door masking policy, we have been able to do so while keeping our community safe. We are also bringing back many of our field experiences, such as study abroad and internships, which were hindered in the first year of the pandemic.

We are thrilled to be back in-person, to the essence of a TCNJ academic experience. Yet the lessons of the past year remain with us, and many of the skills we learned and applied to our courses have become a regular part of how we teach. We have taken the best of what we learned and used it to further strengthen the academic experience at TCNJ.

Best wishes for a pleasant and safe holiday season.

Student Health Services
Helping College Students Stay Healthy During Final Exams



(Google images, retrieved November 12, 2021)

*Written by Barb Clark, Nurse Practitioner
TCNJ Student Health Services*

Winding down the fall semester while heading into final exams and completing end-of-semester projects can be a stressful time for college students. This added stress comes at a time of the year when in the northern hemisphere, we typically experience an increase in circulating viral illness including the common cold, influenza “the flu” (1), and gastroenteritis “the stomach bug”. This year there is also the added expectation of an increase during the winter months of COVID-19 cases and vaccinated individuals are still at risk (2). *How can parents and families best support their students and encourage behaviors that increase their chances of staying healthy during the end of the semester and through the winter months that follow?*

Let’s start with discussing with our students the “healthy lifestyle basics”, which include eating healthy, avoiding or limiting alcohol, exercising regularly, decreasing stress and getting adequate sleep. Remind students that pulling “all-nighters” to study for their final exams is often self-defeating. Getting the recommended 7-9 hours of sleep each night (3) has been shown to not only increase mental acuity which is important in completing academic work, but it can also be helpful in keeping the immune system better equipped to fight off illness (4).

Adding to the basic healthy lifestyle recommendations, let’s add the lessons that we have all learned from the emergence of COVID-19, and continue to encourage students to wash their hands thoroughly, especially after touching commonly touched surfaces such as shared desktops and computer keyboards, ATMs or cash register terminals,

door knobs and elevator buttons. Wearing a mask in indoor spaces or outdoor spaces when physical distancing is not possible is also a good measure to avoid not just COVID-19 but other viral illnesses.

This discussion would not be complete without a word about vaccinations. Immunizations keep us safe. They save lives and prevent severe illness. Please encourage your student to receive the seasonal flu vaccine and if for some reason they have not been vaccinated for COVID-19, please consider encouraging this vaccine as well. In fact, both the flu vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine can be administered at the same time. It is easy to find a flu vaccine or a COVID-19 vaccine at <https://www.vaccines.gov/find-vaccines/> (5).

Parents and family members can discuss these strategies on staying well with their students and can hopefully help to minimize the chances of their students getting sick at a time of the year when they need to stay well for their final exams and for their return home for the holidays.

1 Centers for Disease Control, "Flu Season", Retrieved November 11, 2021 from <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season/flu-season.htm>

2 Scientific American, "This COVID Winter May Cause Fewer Deaths but Still Cause a Surge", Retrieved November 11, 2021 from <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/this-covid-winter-may-cause-fewer-deaths-yet-still-bring-a-surge/>

3 Sleep Foundation, "How Much Sleep Do We Really Need?", Retrieved March 10, 2021 from <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/how-sleep-works/how-much-sleep-do-we-really-need>

4 Sleep Foundation, "How Sleep Affects Immunity", Retrieved November 11, 2021 from <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/physical-health/how-sleep-affects-immunity>

5 Centers for Disease Control, "Vaccines.gov", Retrieved November 11, 2021 from <https://www.vaccines.gov/find-vaccines/>

Dean of Students

As the Fall 2021 term is coming to a close, we would like to remind families that the Dean of Students Office serves as a crucial service and advocates for the intricacies that occur in our students' lives here at

TCNJ. Every students' experiences are unique on our campus and we make sure to offer a variety of resources to those who seek them. For instance, our CARE Office (within the Dean of Students Suite) actively seeks to create a culture of support and unification on campus making sure all students feel heard and understand the part they play in the TCNJ community. We make sure to work avidly with other organizations to inform the student body of the resources available to them and teach them the crucial information to prioritize their overall health and wellness. Our Office of Student Conduct and Off-Campus Services prides itself in making the students' physical and mental safety its priority. They want to ensure your experience at TCNJ is not impacted by bias, harm, disputes, and/or other issues that may impact your students ability to be academically successful. Lastly, our Office of Title IX & Sexual Misconduct protects all TCNJ students who have experienced sexual discrimination or violence. Furthermore, we make sure to explain the students' rights and that they have a support system they can rely on here at our offices. We look forward to the coming Spring term as the campus repopulates and the feelings of revitalization take hold. Please don't hesitate to have your student reach out if they need anything; we are here to help. If you have any concerns about a student, you can submit a CARE Referral [here](#).

Athletics

The TCNJ women's soccer team had a magical season, ending with a tough loss in the national championship game on December 4. It marked the end of the careers of longtime head coach Joe Russo and a very distinguished senior class. In the week leading up to the Final Four,

Andy Edwards of TCNJ Athletics profiled coach Russo and the senior class on the season and their careers, click [here](#).

Home for the Holidays
A Survival Guide for College Students and Parents

By Dr. Mark J. Forest

AVP for Health and Wellness, Director of MHS

The holidays can be a stressful time for families, especially when students return home from college. Dr. Mark J. Forest, AVP for Health and Wellness and Director of TCNJ's Mental Health Services, offers guidance on keeping the peace during the holiday season and recognizing signs of mental unrest within your student. You can review the article [here](#).

What's New @ TCNJ

Here's some of the latest news available at The College of New Jersey!

- TCNJ partners with Thomas Jefferson University to add 4+3 doctoral [physical therapy program](#).
- TCNJ announced as 2021 ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge [award winner](#).
- TCNJ receives [bronze](#) in Global Equity & Inclusion Scorecard for Global Education Programming.

Stay updated with more news about the College [here](#).

Dining Services

Are you aware that TCNJ Dining Services has a Registered Dietitian? Anne Sugrue, RD, is available to assist students with a variety of nutritional needs while dining on campus. TCNJ meal plan holders have free access to nutrition consultations for services such as management of food allergies and medical conditions, weight management, sports nutrition, and wellness. Anne hosts monthly tabling and interactive events called Mindful Moments & Eat Right @ Eick, to help promote healthy eating habits on campus. Students may reach Anne by emailing sdhrd@tcnj.edu or by texting "TCNJRD" to 82257!

TCNJ Dining Services provides students with a wide variety of dining options, including vegan and vegetarian options. In October 2021, TCNJ Dining Services was awarded an "A+" rating and added to the "Dean's List" by Peta2 for their Vegan Report Card. TCNJ was recognized and commended for "going above and beyond to provide all students with exceptional vegan food." TCNJ Dining Services was awarded a "B" rating in 2017 and has now held the "A+ rating" for two straight years. The state average for the Peta2 Vegan Report Card is a "B".

The Atrium at Eickhoff holds several special and varied dining events each semester. This fall, TCNJ Dining Services proudly offered So Long Summer Splash, Blue & Gold Spirit Lunch, Hispanic Heritage Celebration Lunch, Oktoberfest, Diwali Dinner, Out of this World Dinner, Fall Harvest Lunch & Fuel Up for Finals. These events provide students a unique dining experience and allows TCNJ Dining Services to

collaborate with student organizations across campus to enhance our inclusive excellence initiatives, while exploring and promoting different cultural groups on campus. For these events, The Atrium at Eickhoff is transformed using decorations and flowers, centerpieces and linens, and a unique menu that is custom built to enhance authenticity.

Beginning in the spring semester, we will have a dedicated concierge table in the dining hall at which staff will assist any student who may have concerns with the dining experience. Self advocacy and personal agency is very much aligned with the stages of student development. Personal agency, in the moment, allows us to verify and correct issues as they happen. Though we do expect students will take advantage of the resources put in place to assist them, we will continue to deploy secret shoppers to provide feedback on quality and presentation and dining ambassadors to identify areas in need of immediate attention.



Significant Dates & Deadlines

- **Reading Days:** Saturday, 12/11/21, 12am - Tuesday, 12/14/21, 5pm
- **Exam Period:** Tuesday, 12/14/21, 5pm - Friday, 12/17/21, 8pm
- **Reading Days resume:** Saturday, 12/18/21 - Sunday, 12/19/21
- **Exam Period resumes:** Monday, 12/20/21, 12am - Tuesday, 12/21/21, 5pm
- **Residence Halls Close for Winter Break:** Tuesday, 12/21/21, 8pm
- **Residence Halls Reopen for the Spring 2022 Semester:** Sunday, 1/23/22, 12pm
- **Housing Applications for the 2021-2022 Academic Year Open:** Monday, 1/24/22
- **First Day of Spring 2022 Classes:** Monday, 1/24/22
- **Spring 2022 Semester Course Add/Drop Deadline:** Tuesday, 2/1/22
- **Last day to Apply for May, August, and December 2022 and January 2023 [graduations](#) without a \$35 late fee:** Thursday, 2/17/22
- **Last day to submit change of major forms for Fall 2022 registration:** Friday, 3/4/22
- **Residence Halls Close for Spring Break:** Friday, 3/11/22, 8pm
- **Residence Halls Reopen:** Sunday, 3/20/22, 12pm
- **Residence Halls Close for the Spring 2022 semester:** Tuesday, 5/17/22, 8pm

You can find TCNJ's full academic calendar [here](#).

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