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SIGNAI NEWSLET

The Defense Never Rests

AFTER SERVING HIS COUNTRY, STUDENT BRIAN DARLING IS NOW FOCUSED ON HIS COMMUNITY

As a paralegal noncommissioned officer, Staff Sqt. Brian Christopher Darling supports the legal arm of the U.S. Army in matters pertaining to administrative law, military justice and legal assistance.

It is his work on behalf of fellow U.S. service members that he finds the most rewarding.

"My work often brings me face-to-face with deploying and returning members of our military," said Darling, a Master of Public Service Leadership (MPSL) program student who serves in the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Joint Force Headquarters for the New Jersey Army National Guard.

"What I find most gratifying is connecting returning combat veterans with their entitlements under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA)," he said.

A federal law establishing the rights and responsibilities of military members and their civilian employers, USERRA stipulates that service members returning to their civilian careers be reemployed in the same position, status and pay scale they would have attained had they not been absent due to military service. Having recently returned from his third overseas deployment, Darling understands the implications of this law on the livelihood of military members and their families.

Maintaining a service member's place in an organization while they defend their country sounds like it would be a given, but it isn't. Between the years of 2011 and 2015, the U.S. Department of Labor reviewed 6.230 USERRA cases for disputes ranging from military obligations discrimination and job reinstatement issues, to reasonable accommodations for disabled veterans.

When he's not assisting fellow U.S. service members, Darling serves as an Information Management officer under the supervision of the Staff Judge Advocate. In this position, he is responsible for maintenance and upkeep of computer systems and peripherals at his worksite. Continually enhancing his military leadership skills, he recently completed the

Advanced Leader Course through the Judge Advocate General's Legal Center and School in Charlottesville. Va., and is scheduled to attend the Senior Leader's Course in the fall.

This past July, Congressman Tom MacArthur (R-NJ 3rd District) honored Darling on the floor of the United States House of Representatives by recognizing his outstanding service, describing him as a, "Selfless and dedicated member of the community who continues to serve and protect the freedoms and ideals of our nation."

Off the clock, Darling is immersed in taking care of his 3-year-old son, Jacob, while completing his MPSL degree in Community and Economic Development program course work.

"As a busy father, I thoroughly enjoy the flexibility of the course methods offered and the online experience allows learners to interact with other students in similar fields," he said. "I absolutely recommend the University's programs to other members of the military. As a student, I was

always able to meet my military and professional obligations and still have time for my family. It takes discipline, but there is a great feeling of accomplishment when one completes a course."

Darling joined the U.S. Army in 1995 as a transportation management coordinator and was promoted to the level of staff sergeant during his second deployment. He originally heard about the University through a fellow service member and later enrolled, tackling his MPSL course assignments while he was still stationed in Oatar. Prior to enrolling at Thomas Edison State University, he earned his bachelor of arts in English with a minor in history and a master's degree in liberal arts from Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.



Changes Coming to Your Academic Evaluation

EVOLVING FORMAT WILL MAKE IT EASIER TO UNDERSTAND AND NAVIGATE



Cathy Punchello-Cobos, University Registrar

One of the things that sets Thomas Edison State University apart from other institutions has been the development of Academic Evaluations for applicants and students.

As an applicant to the University, you received a customized Academic Evaluation that continues to serve as a comprehensive guide in planning your academic journey, fulfilling your degree requirements and working with an academic advisor toward that all-important end game – earning your degree. According to University Registrar, Cathy Punchello Cobos, utilizing your Academic Evaluation is about to become easier.

"We've made changes to the current Academic Evaluation to make it more user-friendly and easier to interpret," said Punchello-Cobos. "We've streamlined the terminology so that applicants and students can more readily understand what has already been applied toward their degree program and which courses they have left to take."

Punchello-Cobos explained that the culmination of these upgrades will occur later in the fall when students' Academic Evaluations are expected to convert to a web-based format.

"We think students will welcome this development because the web-based evaluation will incorporate improvements already in the existing format and introduce a more visually appealing and easier to interpret and navigate evaluation," she said, "Relevant sections can be expanded or collapsed as needed, and the body will be color coded so that students can see at a glance which of their courses is in-progress, pending, not started or already completed."

The content will also feature embedded links to area of study requirements and specific course descriptions on www.tesu.edu so that students can refer to descriptive content more seamlessly.

It's important to note that the only changes in the Academic Evaluation pertain to formatting and usability. There are no changes to students' existing degree requirements or area of study rubrics. Stay tuned for University updates as these changes are formalized and the new web-based version is launched.

If you have questions about your Academic Evaluation, please email the Learner Support Center at LSC@tesu.edu or call (888) 442-8372, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET. ■

Thomas Edison State University Chosen to Participate in EQUIP Pilot Program

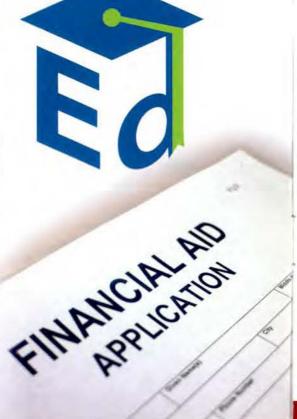
U.S. DEPT. OF EDUCATION SELECTS UNIVERSITY FOR ALTERNATIVE DEGREE PATHWAY PILOT PROGRAM

Thomas Edison State University, already distinguished for its alternative degree pathways and assessment of adult learning, has been selected by the U.S. Department of Education for a new pilot program: Educational Quality through Innovation Partnerships (EQUIP), that awards federal financial aid to students taking courses through nontraditional providers.

The goal of the program is to determine how to make financial aid available to low-income students for courses in nontraditional programs while ensuring the quality of those programs. The University is one of eight higher education institutions in the U.S. – and the only New Jersey-based institution – chosen for the program, which was unveiled in August.

Students participating in the program would pursue a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree or Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Studies program at the University and take at least half their degree credits through self-paced, online video courses with *Study.com*.

"We are honored to serve as a site of the EQUIP program and work to expand access, particularly for low-income students, to higher education programs that support an outcomes-based quality assurance process that is focused on learning," said Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of the University.



A Day at the State House for Nursing Students

HEALTH POLICY IMMERSION WAS THE AGENDA FOR BSN STUDENTS

W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing students already engaged in the study of health policy had an opportunity to witness legislation in action during a New Jersey State House visit hosted in June by the New Jersey State Nurses Association (NJSNA) Region 4 leadership.

During the sessions, Accelerated 2nd Degree BSN Program students learned the ways nurses can positively influence health policy legislation. Activities opened with legislative briefings led by NJSNA staff and current and former state legislators during which students reviewed the General Assembly agenda and specific bills impacting healthcare. Sessions were co-led by former Assemblywoman Barbara Wright, PhD, RN, FAAN, and 2013 alum Regina Adams, BSN, RN, NJSNA Region 4 past president. The day was rounded out with a State House tour and attendance in a General Assembly voting session.

To learn more about W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing programs, visit www.tesu.edu/nursing.



First row from left to right: Vicki Brzoza, MSN, MBA, BSN, RN, CCRN, program nurse educator; Kirsten Wenzel; Stephanie Blazin; Hanna Kate Warrington; Tara Cooney; and Lynne Capik, MSN, RN, APN-C, nurse educator. Middle row from left to right: Mercy Nnebe, Maribel Alvarez, Allison Schulte, Zehava Chapler, Laura Beveridge, Derya Barc, Cesar Rivero and Debra DeVoe, EdD, MSN, RN, nurse educator. Back Row from left to right: Thomas Scharibone, Husham Omer, Nijole Montvilaite, Miriam Leon and Victoria Barden.

COURSE NEWS

Note: A complete listing of all undergraduate and graduate courses and their availability may be found on our website at www.tesu.edu/courses.

NEW UNDERGRADUATE ONLINE COURSES:

AOJ-101 Introduction to Law Enforcement

AVF-472 Airport Management I

AVF-474 Airport Management II

AVT-305 Airline Marketing and Customer Service

BUS-210 Quantitative Methods for Decision Makers

ENG-205 History of the English Language

ETH-230 Ethics in the Digital Age

PHI-130 Critical Reasoning

RPT-270 Introduction to Nuclear
Engineering Technology
and Radiation Health Physics

NEW GRADUATE ONLINE COURSE:

ACC-507 Government and Not-For-Profit
Organization Accounting

NEW TECEP® COURSES:

ENG-202 Technical Communication

> continued from front cover



Sgt. Brian Christopher Darling

In 2006, he became a paralegal specialist with the Army National Guard. "My other deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq helped to inform my written assignments," he said. "My Capstone, for instance, was derived in part from my experiences in Rule of Law fieldwork while in Afghanistan."

Once stateside again, Darling continued taking courses while completing his U.S. Naval War College of Distance Education requirements. "I felt the Community and Economic Development area of study at the Watson School would provide a steppingstone to law school and a future leadership role in the area of public service," noted Darling. He and fellow online students explore the ways local leaders and government can collaborate to develop or enhance community-based services, cultural

centers, downtown business districts or urban revitalization projects. Student-practitioner concerns often encompass environmental and sustainability issues as well as communal access to employment, healthcare, education or legal assistance.

Darling and his son have a Toy Fox Terrier, Gabby, and two American Shorthair cats, Diamond and Oreo.

"All together, they keep me very busy and very happy when I'm not trying to study," he said. Academically, he said he partially owes his success to Maj. Christopher Lazas, his supervisor and a fellow graduate student at the University, who he said, has been very supportive of his continuing education.

University and Statistics.com Partner on Data Science Degree

The Institute of Statistics Education at Statistics.com and Thomas Edison State University have partnered to create a Bachelor of Science degree in Data Science and Analytics that can be completed entirely online.

Students enrolled in the program will earn their degree from the University and earn 33 credits from online courses in data science and analytics offered by *Statistics. com.*, which have been evaluated and recommended for credit by the American Council on Education's (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service (CREDIT*).

"OUR PARTNERSHIP IS DESIGNED TO PREPARE WORKING ADULTS WITH THE SKILLS TO HELP ORGANIZATIONS INTERPRET DATA AND MAKE DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS."

Dr. John Woznicki

"Today, businesses and nonprofits have the ability to collect more data than ever before, but organizations need to be able to understand and analyze that data for it to be truly beneficial," said Dr. John Woznicki, dean of the Heavin School of Arts and Sciences at the University. "We are excited about our partnership with Statistics com and this new area of study, which is designed to prepare working adults with the skills to help organizations interpret data and make data-driven decisions."

Credits earned by successfully completing the *Statistics.com* courses identified for the degree fulfill the area of study requirements of the University's Bachelor of Science program.

"Our data science curriculum has been in place for a number of years, and we are pleased that this partnership will allow students to apply our program to a degree at Thomas Edison, a recognized leader in flexible online education," said Peter Bruce, founder and president of Statistics.com.

The program is open to the general public as well as students taking *Statistics.com* courses and those already enrolled at the University.

Thomas Edison State University Mentors in the News

Geo2YC, the Two-Year College Division of the National Association of Geoscience Teachers (NAGT) recently awarded University Mentor Thomas Vaughn the NAGT Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Award. "I am truly humbled and honored by this recognition," said Vaughn. "I have devoted my professional career to adjunct teaching and am truly blessed to know that my students will be better stewards of our planet during their lives from what they've learned in their course work." According to the Geo2YC website, adjunct faculty members are a key component of the geosciences community because of the enthusiasm, professional experience and creative approach they bring to the field. At the University, Vaughn mentors General Earth Science (EAS-101) online courses, and serves as a TECEP" assessment



Thomas Vaughn

mentor and on the University's General Education Committee. Vaughn also teaches oceanography, marine biology and environmental studies courses at Middlesex Community College, N.J. He is a past recipient of the national Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science and previously garnered Science Teacher of the Year and the Science Leader of the Year awards as well as the Pathfinder Award for innovative use of technology in the classroom by the state of Massachusetts.



George Haber

Mentor George Haber's book, Outrageous and Indefensible: The Sinking of the \$5 Robin Moor, which focuses on the sinking of the American merchant ship by a German U-boat in May 1941, was recently published by the American Merchant Marine Museum in Kings Point, N.Y. Haber explains that the sinking occurred at a pivotal time — six months before the U.S. entered World War II. The book's title references the impassioned speech made by President Franklin D. Roosevelt following the incident that added fuel to an already growing debate between those who wanted to support the allies against Germany and those who preferred to avoid a conflict. Haber's book was written as a companion piece to the museum's exhibit on the 75th anniversary commemorating

the torpedoing of the merchant ship. He has been with the University for 13 years and mentors interpersonal Communication (COM-330), Public Speaking (COM-209), Intercultural Communication (COM-335) and Technical Writing (ENG-201) courses.

New Graduate Certificate Programs Announced

YOUR PATHWAY TO EXECUTIVE AND NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP

Two new graduate certificate programs offered by the John S. Watson School of Public Service and Continuing Studies can enhance your undergraduate degree, advance your graduate studies and build on your strategic planning and nonprofit leadership expertise.

The Graduate Certificate In Strategic Planning and Board Leadership for Nonprofits examines the influence of successful strategic planning in employee recruitment and retention, program analysis and evaluation, and examines critical issues in nonprofit management and board leadership.

The Graduate Certificate in Fundraising and Development provides students with a practical

understanding of fundraising and the skills to implement best practices in development for nonprofits. Students will be able to identify the financial needs of their organizations and craft an effective development plan that engages funders.

Students enrolled in a Bachelor's to Master's Program at the University may be able to apply credits earned in these certificate programs toward a graduate degree program. All of the School's graduate certificates are worth 12 credits, are in 12-week formats and are offered completely online. To learn more, email WatsonSchool@tesu.edu.

Meet a Mentor: Paul Sam, PhD

BRINGING PROJECT MANAGEMENT TO LIFE

The first step of Dr. Paul Sam's academic journey took him more than 5,000 miles from his childhood home. He's been making huge strides ever since.

As a young adult, Sam left his birthplace of Nigeria in pursuit of the gold standard — a college education in the U.S. Earning a Bachelor of Science degree in economics and finance from the University of Texas-Dallas, in 1987, he continued his education to earn a Master of Business Administration degree from Amberton University in Dallas; a Master of International Business from the University of St. Thomas in Houston, Texas; and a PhD in Organization and Management from Capella University in 2005.

"TO PLAY A PART IN IMPROVING OUR STUDENTS' ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL LIVES IS A VERY REWARDING EXPERIENCE FOR ME."

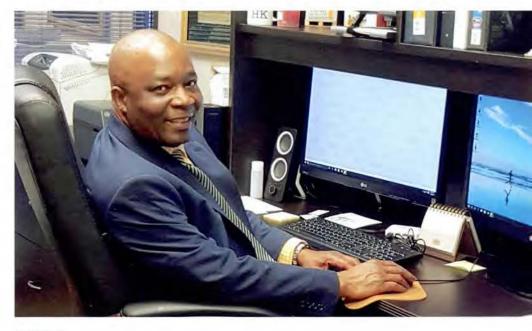
Dr. Paul Sam

"As an educator, I was initially attracted to Thomas Edison State University (TESU) because of its focus on adult learners," said Sam, who serves the institution as a peer mentor by providing instructional coaching to new mentors working with School of Business and Management students.

On the student side, he mentors master's-level Total Quality Management (OPM-411), Project Management (PJM-510), Project Leadership and Communications (PJM-520) Project Risk Management (PJM-530), Procurement and Vendor Management (PJM-540) as well as Global Project Management (PJM-640), Project Management for Technology (APS-510) and Strategic Operations Management (SOP-720) courses for the School.

The enthusiasm he has for working with adult learners is tangible.

"Our master's-level students are confident, intelligent, honest and respectful, globally experienced and focused go-getters. They come to their courses fully prepared to share their occupational experiences and challenges," he said. "They are often professionals in their fields who are turning to TESU to build on their expertise. To play a part in improving our students' academic and professional lives is



Dr. Paul Sam

a very rewarding experience, and I work hard to push all of my students to higher levels of achievement by using formative feedback, and sincere praise and recognition. My aim is to inspire them to greatness!"

Sam knows that a valuable component of the academic experience at TESU centers on the quality of its course mentors. "As a peer mentor, I motivate other mentors to challenge students with follow-up questions to their written assignments. I coach new mentors to use a combination of the Socratic Method, pedagogy and andragogy, as necessary, since these approaches and strategies often help enhance students' learning and business decision making."

Sam is acutely aware of the value of critical thinking and problem solving in the workplace. As the CEO of Throttle Energy, Inc., a gas-to-power company, he oversees global projects from flare gas capturing and conversion, to the development and construction of power plants. Prior to his current position, he held leadership roles in project management, IT, operations management and global planning in a series of Fortune 500 companies.

According to School of Business and Management Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies Camilla King Lewis, Sam serves as a best practices 'go-to,' "Dr. Sam has always eagerly provided hands-on instructional coaching and guidance to new mentors and has been an anchor in our master's-level project management courses," she noted." He is dynamic and engaging - consistently receiving high student satisfaction ratings in our end-of-term surveys."

Academically, Sam also teaches master's-level courses at Letourneau University in Houston, Texas, in the areas of strategic management, operations management, statistics, international business, integrated logistics, project management, supply chain management, organizational behavior, staffing, and organization change and development.

He points to his mother and father, both second generation educators, as major influencers in his life, and his wife, Judy, a nurse practitioner, who he said has been immensely influential in her support and encouragement. Off the clock, Sam is a professional auto racing enthusiast and owns two race cars of his own. He relaxes to gospel and reggae music and teaches Sunday school classes at his local church. "I have also had the privilege of visiting more than 27 countries during business-related travel," he added.

Sam and his wife have four children: Andre, who is a neurosurgeon; Gloria, who is a family practice physician; Nicole, an MBA graduate who is an investment banker; and Eric, who is a college student studying computer science.

1

School of Applied Science and Technology Launches New Bachelor of Science in **Cybersecurity Degree Program**

Thomas Edison State University's School of Applied Science and Technology is launching a new Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity degree program.

"During the past several years, cybersecurity threats have grown considerably across the nation," said Dr. Rory Butler, assistant dean, School of Applied Science and Technology at the University, "Protecting the information networks that support our financial markets, critical infrastructure, military systems and the intellectual property and private information of American citizens and businesses has become a national priority"

> The program was developed in direct response to demand outpacing the number of qualified entrants to the cybersecurity workforce. As a result, this shortage of workers has left a significant gap in the number of personnel adequately trained and qualified to protect the nation's computerized assets from attack



Dr. Rory Butler, assistant dean, School of Applied Science and Technology

The program focuses on the development of the skills and technologies needed to meet the demands of modern cybersecurity practice. these skills range from assessing threats, agents and attack routes, to creating secure systems using security design best practices.

To learn more about the program, contact Butler at rbutler@tesu.edu.

Prepared to Lead

HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM DEVELOPS INNOVATIVE LEADERS FOR MANY DESTINATIONS

The School of Business and Management's accelerated Master of Science in Hospitality Management (MSHM) degree program offers solid grounding in relevant theory, applied practice and policymaking in hospitality management.

After 25 years in the industry, James "Greg" Wathen knows that grounding will help him advance to the next stage of his career.

"What motivated me to enroll in the MSHM program is my desire to pass my industry knowledge on to others," said Wathen, a U.S. Army veteran, "I would like to become an adjunct professor in a hospitality management program at a local college, with the eventual goal of becoming a full-time faculty member."

The online, 36-credit program features eightweek courses and a practitioner-focused

curriculum that enables students, like Wathen, to gain the knowledge, competencies and skills necessary to lead and work effectively in the core business sectors of the industry

James "Greg" Wathen

"WHAT MOTIVATED ME TO ENROLL

IN THE MSHM PROGRAM IS

MY DESIRE TO PASS MY INDUSTRY

KNOWLEDGE ON TO OTHERS."

According to Dr. Michael Williams, dean of the School of Business and Management, course work in the program focuses on globally framed, cultural-specific models of hospitality management, including historical overview, trends and issues in the hospitality industry, gaming and resort markets, and relevant business, management and operations topics.

"The program enables hospitality professionals like Greg to expand their capabilities and advance their careers," said Williams. "With the rise of global travel, shifting demographics and the implications of social media, hospitality industry professionals must possess the competencies to adapt and lead."

"The course structure has worked out very well with my schedule," said Wathen. "With the online format, I am able to do my course work at my own pace while I advance my studies in a subject category I'm already familiar with. I have been in the hospitality industry for 25 years working in restaurants, bars and hotels and held many different positions from hourly to managerial. I am currently a purchasing manager for a hotel in central New Jersey with a multimillion dollar budget and now have a direct impact on the

hotel's bottom line. It is a physically demanding job. which I love, but I don't want to be doing all the heavy lifting forever, so my plan is to slowly transition

to the teaching profession."

Wathen finds the program's human resource components to be the most relevant and his former military experience helps him stay the course.

"This business is all about dealing with people - from guests to employees. Taking courses that make you look at different situations through the eyes of others has been a fantastic experience." he said. "The mentors in the program have been great in working with us and getting us to share our findings and professional experiences. The focus and determination I learned in the U.S. Army has helped me to stay on course and manage my time so I am able to work full time, take two courses each term and manage a family with two teenagers. My wife, Christine, was a major influence in my decision to advance my education. Now that I'm enrolled, what I like best is the balance that I have achieved, which allows me to still have time to enjoy my life."

Visit www.tesu.edu/business to learn about this and other programs offered by the School of Business and Management.



James "Greg" Wathen with his wife, Christine

Accelerated

Students in

Transition

STUDENTS RECAP THEIR

ONGROUND EXPERIENCES

The University's Accelerated 2nd Degree BSN

students shared their onground experiences

during Transition Presentations on Sept.16.

During the sessions, each student in the

2016 class gave a formal presentation to

an audience of W. Cary Edwards School

of Nursing staff and fellow students that

showcased their range of practicum

experiences in local health care settings.

Nursing Degree

According to Dr. Denise Tate, associate dean of Undergraduate Nursing Programs at the School, the program's Transition or "Capstone" experience has a successful history of pairing nursing students with RN preceptors in the field. The mandated 60 hours of clinical immersion is required of all BSN students immediately prior to graduation.

In collaboration with nurse educators in the School's program, students partner with their preceptors on selected areas of specialty at Capital Health facilities in Mercer County, N.J. At the conclusion of their clinical hours, the students are required to present their experiences in a PowerPoint presentation that reflects how they met their clinical objectives. Immersion courses of this type have become the standard as a mechanism to prepare nursing students to enter the workforce. "The experience plays an invaluable role in the transition from student to graduating nurse," said Tate, "In addition to the clinical experiences, it also provides students an opportunity to stand out as a potential nurse employee after graduation and licensure."

Students completing the 12-month program are now prepared to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN).

Success is Building

UNIVERSITY OPENS ITS NEWEST CAMPUS BUILDING

Brian Maloney, chair of the Thomas Edison State University Board of Trustees: Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of the University and Eric Jackson, mayor of Trenton, N.J., officiated the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the University's newest building, Glen Caim Hall, on Sept. 16.

The development of Glen Cairn Hall has transformed a previously blighted gateway to Trenton's Capitol Complex located a short distance away. The new 36,360-square-foot building, located at 301 West State Street in Trenton. is home to W. Cary Edwards School of Nursing and includes new, state-ofthe-art nursing simulation laboratories, lecture halls, conference rooms and a student advising center. The building also has a two-level parking garage that provides secure, onsite parking for more than 90 vehicles. Glen Cairn Hall is expected to earn LEED Silver certification by the U.S. Green Building Council for being resource efficient.



From left to right: Brian Maloney, chair of the Thomas Edison State University Board of Trustees; Dr. George A. Pruitt, president of Thomas Edison State University and Eric Jackson, mayor of

Academic Calendar	November 2016	December 2016	January 2017
Registration Dates	Sept. 16 – Oct 8, 2016	Oct. 14 – Nov. 12, 2016	Nov. 18 – Dec. 10, 2016
Late Registration	Oct. 9 - Oct. 13, 2016	Nov. 13 - Nov. 17, 2016	Dec. 1 – Dec. 15, 2016
Course Transfer Period	Sept. 16 - Nov. 4, 2016	Oct. 14 - Dec. 2, 2016	Nov. 18, 2016 – Jan. 7, 2017
Term Start Date	Oct. 31, 2016	Nov. 28, 2016	Jan. 3, 2017*
Midterm Exam Week **	Dec. 12 - Dec. 18, 2016	Jan. 9 – Jan. 15, 2017	Feb. 13 - Feb. 19, 2016
Final Exam Week**	Jan. 16 – Jan. 22, 2017	Feb. 13 - Feb. 19, 2017	March 20 - March 26, 2017
Term Ends	Jan. 22, 2017	Feb. 19, 2017	March 26, 2017

Term start date applies to both graduate and undergraduate courses.

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^{**} Certain courses have midterm examinations or online proctored midterm and final examinations; please refer to your course materials for details.