



PARENT & FAMILY NEWSLETTER

December 2025

With winter break approaching and your students preparing to return home, this is a natural moment to pause and reflect on all they have achieved. Below is President Lesperance's holiday message, which speaks to the gratitude we feel for our students and the families who support them. We hope it brings a sense of connection as we wrap up the semester.

Dear New England College Community,

As the holiday season arrives and lights begin to glow across campus, I want to extend my warmest wishes to each of you. This time of year invites reflection and gratitude, and I am reminded daily of how fortunate we are to share in a community defined by care, connection, and purpose.

Our faculty and staff give their energy and talent to support every student's journey. Our students bring curiosity, resilience, and a drive to learn that inspires all of us. And our alumni and friends continue to strengthen NEC through their steady encouragement and generosity. Together, you make this College a place where people matter.

As you move into the weeks ahead, whether celebrating with loved ones, taking a well-earned break, or simply enjoying a quiet moment of rest, I hope you find joy, peace, and a renewed sense of possibility.

May your holidays be bright, your Christmas merry, and your New Year filled with hope and momentum.

Thank you for all you bring to New England College. I look forward to what we will build together in the year ahead.

With warm holiday wishes,

Dr. Wayne F. Lesperance, Jr.
President
New England College



Supporting Your College Student's Transition Home for Winter Break

As winter break approaches, you are welcoming your student back home for an extended period of time. While this reunion is often filled with excitement, it can also come with its own set of challenges. After months of independence and self-reliance at college, the transition back into the family dynamic can sometimes feel like a jarring shift for both students and family members. Here's how you can support your college student as they adjust to life at home over winter break.

Manage Expectations and Foster Open Communication

The return home may bring some tensions, especially around expectations. College students have spent months adjusting to their own schedules, social lives, and personal routines. Coming back to family life often means stepping into a more structured environment with familiar rules and responsibilities. Parents might expect their child to resume old household duties, while students may feel the need for more freedom and autonomy. To navigate these differences have open and honest conversations with your student. Before they arrive, discuss expectations for the break—what activities you'd like to do as a family, any household responsibilities, and how they're feeling about the transition. This dialogue helps avoid misunderstandings and promotes mutual respect as everyone adapts to being together again.

Be Mindful of Their Need for Space

College students often experience a sense of independence that can feel overwhelming when they return home. After living in dorms or apartments with little supervision, the more structured environment of home might feel stifling. While students may be thrilled to reunite with family, they may also need time to themselves to decompress, reflect, or adjust to the slower pace of life at home. As a family member, recognizing the need for space is important. Encourage your student to take time to unwind, whether it's through their own activities, spending time with friends, or simply resting. Balancing family time with personal downtime can ease the transition and ensure your student feels both supported and respected.

Adjusting to the Pace of Home Life

The pace of college life is fast, with constant deadlines, social engagements, and extracurricular activities. When students return home, the rhythm can feel much slower, with fewer obligations and more free time. For some, this change in pace can lead to feelings of boredom or restlessness, while others may simply feel overwhelmed by the lack of structure. Encourage your student to take advantage of the slower pace to rest, but also offer suggestions for how they can stay engaged. They might want to pick up a hobby, read for pleasure, or tackle a small project at home. Providing them with opportunities to balance relaxation with purposeful activities can help them find a sense of fulfillment during the break.

Supporting Mental Health and Well-Being

Winter break can bring a variety of emotions—excitement about reuniting, but also the stress of adjusting back to home life. Your student may experience feelings of homesickness for their college friends or may feel disconnected from family members who have been living different lives during their time away. Recognizing these emotional shifts is important. Be a listening ear when your student expresses any concerns or frustrations, and validate their feelings. Encourage self-care, whether it's through relaxation, exercise, or hobbies. If you notice signs of anxiety or depression, don't hesitate to reach out to a counselor or therapist to support your child's mental health during this transition. Students from NH can telehealth with our counselors.

Encourage a Healthy Routine

Even though it's winter break, it's important to maintain a healthy routine. Students might have fallen out of their regular schedules during the semester due to late nights and fluctuating meal times. Returning home presents an opportunity to get back into a rhythm, with regular meals, exercise, and sleep. Encourage your student to get outside, exercise, or engage in other healthy activities. Offer family routines, such as meal preparation together or taking walks, to help restore balance. This can ease the transition back into their home environment and prepare them for the semester ahead.

Give Them a Sense of Purpose

While the winter break is intended to be a time to relax, students often feel a sense of unease if they aren't staying productive. Encourage them to set goals for the break, whether it's revising for upcoming exams, working on personal projects, or helping out around the house. Giving them a sense of purpose can help ease feelings of restlessness or boredom. However, ensure that their break isn't consumed entirely by expectations. This time away from school is also a much-needed opportunity to rest and recharge before the busy spring semester.

Conclusion

Welcoming your college student home for winter break can be a joyful, rewarding time for both parents and students. While the transition from college life back to home life might present some challenges, maintaining open lines of communication, respecting each other's needs, and encouraging balance and self-care can help ease the process. Ultimately, winter break is a chance for your student to recharge, reflect, and reconnect with family—and, with your support, they'll return to school refreshed and ready for the next chapter.

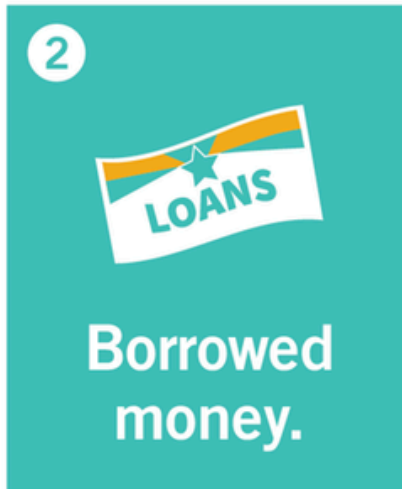
Enjoy the break and the time with your student!

FAFSA 2026-2027

3 Types of Federal Student Aid



Grants are usually based on financial need and don't have to be repaid.



Loans are an investment in your future. But remember, they must be repaid with interest.



A **work-study** job lets you earn money while you're in school.

The 2026–2027 FAFSA is now open! Apply for financial aid for next year by completing your FAFSA today at studentaid.gov.

What is FAFSA?

The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is the application you need to complete each year to apply for financial aid to help pay for school.

Why should I file now?

- The FAFSA must be renewed annually.
- The 2026–2027 FAFSA is for classes starting after June 30, 2026
- Some forms of financial aid are limited, so applying early increases your chances of receiving the maximum amount of aid.
- Submitting early allows you to focus on other aspects of attending college and removes the stress of last-minute planning.

Need help?

You can schedule an appointment to get in-person, phone or Zoom assistance with your FAFSA filing [here](#).

Academic Advising Updates

Hello NEC Community,

We have reached the end of the Fall Semester! We hope our students feel proud of their accomplishments and are ready for a restful break ahead.

As a reminder, Winter Term begins Monday, December 15. There is still time for students to add a course onto their schedule ([Winter-2025-Tentative-Class-Schedule](#)). This is a great opportunity for students to earn additional credits during their break.

Students are also encouraged to continue to contact us with any questions they have about their spring schedule ([Spring-2026-Tentative-Class-Schedule](#)). The Spring Semester begins on Monday, January 12.

As always, we are available for any questions or concerns by emailing advising2@nec.edu.

We wish you all a wonderful holiday season!



**SAVE
the DATE**

**COMMENCEMENT
2026**

Saturday, May 2, at 10:00 a.m.

The Simon Green
98 Bridge Street; Henniker, NH 03242

nec.edu/commencement



Writing and Academic Support Center

Tips for a Productive Winter Break

The fall semester is over! Hopefully students are giving themselves a pat on the back and are preparing for six weeks of basking in the glow of a job well done. Many students are taking courses over the winter term. Should students need assistance in their winter courses, the Writing and Academic Support Center is open during the break. Tutors and writing coaches are available both in person and over Zoom. Students should email wasc@nec.edu to ask about scheduling an appointment. For students who are not enrolled in a winter course, there are still plenty of things they can do to make sure their time off is both productive and relaxing. Below are three ideas and tips for a productive winter break:

1. Practice Self-Care

There is no question that feelings of stress can run high during the semester. One way to make the most of the break is for students to practice self-care. This can mean different things to different students, but some good places to start might be:

- Prioritizing adequate sleep
- Getting some sort of exercise
- Spending time on creative pursuits
- Spending time with friends and family

2. Reflect and Reset

Taking some time to reflect on how the fall semester went is another important step to take during winter break. Students should consider what went well for them and what strategies worked to help them achieve their goals. Additionally, they should think about areas that did not go according to plan and what they might do differently in the spring.

3. Catch Up on Reading

For the book lover, it can be difficult to carve out the time for pleasure reading during the semester. Winter break is a great time to catch up on reading. In fact, reading for pleasure offers a variety of mental health benefits including reduced feelings of isolation, stress, and anxiety. Ebooks, audiobooks, and graphic novels, as well as young adult, middle reader, or even children's books all offer these same benefits and absolutely count! If that's not enough of a reward, how about a raffle prize? Danforth Library and WASC are teaming up again for our fourth annual Winter Break Book Bingo challenge. Students, Faculty, and Staff who read five books in any of the bingo categories and return their bingo card to WASC get entered to win a raffle prize. If they get a Bingo, their name gets entered twice! Students can pick up a paper copy of the Bingo sheet at the WASC front desk or ask at the library circulation desk. Additionally, they can use a digital copy, available below.

WRITING AND ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTER / DANFORTH LIBRARY

WINTER TERM BOOK CHALLENGE

BINGO

MAIN
CHARACTER IS
AN ANIMAL

AUTHOR HAS
YOUR FIRST OR
LAST NAME

HAS BEEN MADE
INTO A MOVIE

READ IN ONE
SITTING

BORROWED
FROM A
LIBRARY

FOR YOUNG
ADULTS

RELATED TO
CURRENT
EVENTS

PUBLISHED
BEFORE YOU
WERE BORN

CELEBRITY
AUTHOR

A BOOK YOU
OWN BUT
HAVEN'T READ

NATIVE/
INDIGENOUS
AUTHOR

SOMETHING
GREEN

FREE
CHOICE

WESTERN

READ WITH
A FRIEND

RATED 4+
STARS

BIOGRAPHY/
MEMOIR

READ IN
BED

BECAUSE YOU
LIKED THE
COVER

ANY HOLIDAY
THEME

FANTASY OR
MYSTERY

SOMETHING
FUNNY

NUMBER IN
THE TITLE

UNLIKEABLE
PROTAGONIST

LOCAL AUTHOR
(NH OR HOME)

FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY & STAFF: READ BOOKS FROM 5 CATEGORIES OVER WINTER BREAK/ WINTER TERM AND BE ENTERED TO WIN A \$25 GIFT CARD TO AN INDEPENDENT BOOK STORE OR AMAZON. GET 5 IN A ROW BINGO AND BE ENTERED TWICE!

EMAIL WASC@NEC.EDU YOUR BINGO CARD BY 1/26/26

TELL US ABOUT YOUR BOOKS AND IF YOU RECOMMEND THEM!

Anna's Writing Corner

On Writing: A Personal Statement



We're at the end of the semester. Students in the first-year composition courses have written several genre-specific papers: an annotated bibliography, an academic essay, a revised essay, and an analysis. Their last writing prompt is something we call a reflection.

For new students, I tell them to write with a kind of chronology. They'll continue to learn, so absolute statements are not necessary nor expected. A reflection should demonstrate some kind of narrative storyline that reveals the student-writer's habits, lessons, and limitations experienced in the last three months.

My students have learned that writing is hard. Perhaps not the act of writing itself, but understanding the genre of the text and what analysis means. A reflection is something that marks time, but it's not quite like a journal or diary entry. To write one requires the student to chronicle what they've learned and what they think they will continue to learn.

It's a statement about themselves for themselves.

Dr. Carrie Colbert was recently interviewed by Private University Products and News.

Read the article by clicking on the image below!



A Commitment to Real Relationships at New England College

BY CYNTHIA MRENJA, PhD

Carrie Colbert, professor of Business Administration at New England College (NEC)—affectionately known as “Dr. C” on campus—continually shows a vital interest in everyone around her, and her students and campus colleagues bloom in response. She also draws on her extensive real-world marketing experience—paired with her trademark energetic style—to deliver innovative lessons which encourage students to learn a great deal, even as they're having fun in her classes.

At NEC, Colbert teaches marketing, business, and leadership classes in addition to co-creating the Marketing major. Prior to entering academia, Colbert worked in marketing and data analytics positions at Nike, Nielsen, and Netflix, but when she moved overseas as a military spouse, she began teaching Marketing online. When she returned to the States and took another corporate job, she realized that she might make a more significant impact there.

One student in particular convinced Colbert that she belonged in the classroom. The student was a woman who had attended class faithfully but seemed tired and unengaged the whole time. Once the term was over, the student emailed Colbert to let her know how much she had enjoyed the class. She revealed her cancer diagnosis and said that her classmate's presence made it a real struggle to attend—but she appreciated Colbert's classes so much that she made every effort to be present. Colbert says that email meant more to her than any accomplishment she had

achieved in her corporate job—any major meeting or big client, that email “touched her soul.” As a result, Colbert thought, “Maybe I am doing something important,” even though teaching didn't feel like a job to her; it just felt like sharing the knowledge she had developed through her years in the field. That student showed Colbert the power of her classroom methods. Charlie Mason—the head men's basketball coach at NEC—explains her appeal for students like this one, stating that “Dr. C makes others better with that simple, openhearted investment in real relationship.” He confirms that her “genuine interest in others is real.”

Committed Student Mentor
As Colbert interacts with students, both in the classroom and beyond, she focuses on each one's individual needs. Patricia Corbett, vice president of Academic Affairs (VPAA) at NEC, notes that students go to Colbert for help because they see that “every student matters to her—every one is special, meaningful. She cares about their future, their careers, their in-class success, everything

about them.” Gina Sciorino, graduate assistant in Management at NEC, is one such student. She is thankful for the mentorship Colbert provided for two significant projects during her undergraduate years at NEC. In one, she started the NEC Morgan's Message Club, which focuses on helping people facing mental health challenges. In the other, Sciorino participated in a student showcase competition akin to Shark Tank, pitching a business which would prepare female athletes to take on corporate executive roles. Sciorino remarks that Colbert was a “rock” in her enthusiastic and consistent support for both projects.

Colbert also provides student mentorship in her role as the faculty advisor for the men's basketball team. Mason provides one example of the way Dr. C shows up for the players. He remembers that the team was playing in its first-ever NCAA tournament in 2018, and the first game was a three-to-four-hour drive away. On the day of the game, the biggest *Nor'easter* of the season blew in. Mason's own family did not make the drive, but Dr. C and



his family weathered the storm to show up for the team—and they were some of the very few who made the effort. This memory shows how Colbert is “all in” for the athletes, in Mason's words.

Active and Inspiring Teacher

Colbert's gift for connecting with students is most clearly revealed in her classroom practices. She intentionally takes time at the beginning of each class period to check in with each student—and they start reciprocating by checking in with her as the semester goes on. She demonstrates her interest in her students' lives outside of the classroom by attending their games and theatrical productions and becoming familiar with their personal interests. Sciorino appreciates the way Colbert engages with her classes on a personal level, as well as how she helps students to see the many professional opportunities available with the degrees they're earning.

Colbert likes to do “fun things” in class to make her students think. Sciorino loves this

aspect of Colbert's approach to teaching; she reports that “there's no boring lesson. Dr. C brings in real life examples, and she's entertaining and personable.” In one example of Colbert's innovative teaching, she discusses an exercise in which students partner up in her selling class. They stand back to back, one facing the board, and the other looking at a picture. The one with the picture has to describe it, and the partner draws it. This exercise really gets across to the students how well they need to communicate with the people they're working with.

VPAA Corbett points out that students also see that Colbert “knows everything about her subject matter.” Every part of each lesson is well-developed, and she understands effective pedagogical approaches. Rather than simply lecturing, Corbett says, Dr. C has the students participate in group work and experiential learning. Colbert offers the example of Colbert taking a class to Duke Woods, a local haunted house, to prepare the students for developing marketing materials for the venue.

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continued...

Criminal Justice Club Toy Drive

This year was wonderful for the third annual toy drive. There were a ton of donations in the forms of toys, checks, and cash for a truly worthy cause. Please enjoy the pics and note that the pile of toys grew by the hour.

Pic 1: Team from Concord Police adjunct/Chief Brad Osgood, the 2 comfort dogs that attended (Liberty & Bailey) with some of the donations.

Pic 2: Prof. Frank Jones, CJ student Niyokwizera Sipola, a freshman, and Chief of Police for the City of Concord (and a CJ adjunct) Brad Osgood.

Pic 3: The four student Executive Board members for the CJ Club (L - R): Hailey Locano (from NH), Natalia Gonzalez (from Madrid, Spain), Kate Gagne (from NH), and Dylan Davis (from Maine).



Mentoring Program Tips

Fall semester ends on Friday the 12th (already?!) and with that comes the mad scramble to finish the remaining assignments due in these waning days. Remind your student that class attendance is still very important. They should make the most of each day by scheduling time to study for a final exam, polishing that research paper, and practicing their class presentation. Academic supports are readily available and can help ease the stress at this busy time. If your student registered for Winter Term (December 15th - January 11th), that course will start the week of December 15th. Your student should make sure to check Blackboard before the class begins. Note that Winter Term is shorter this year, and it will be even more critical for your student to stay on top of assignments during that period. The first college semester can be a whirlwind for first-years. Encourage them to debrief with you once they are home. What did they learn about themselves? Is there something they need to do differently next semester to improve their academic performance? Help your student think more deeply about their experiences both academically and socially. If you are the parent of a graduating senior, anxiety about what's next can interfere with their academic performance. Encourage them to meet with the Career and Life Planning office for help with all things job search related. Developing a post-graduation plan may ease some of that anxiety. Spring semester will begin on January 12th. If your student struggled in the fall, and you think they could benefit from extra support next semester, please contact the Director of Mentoring Erin Brooks (ebrooks@nec.edu) for information about the program and how to enroll. HAPPY HOLIDAYS and best wishes for the New Year from all of us in Mentoring! 🧑‍🎓

REQUEST YOUR PAT'S PEAK SEASON PASS!

Pats Peak uses RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) for electronic access to the lifts so NEC Students, Faculty & Staff need a current season RFID PAT'S PEAK SEASON PASS card to use when skiing, snowboarding and snowtubing.



2 Easy Steps:

1. Use link or QR code to fill out a form to request your Pats Peak Season Pass.

patspeak.com/nec



Please allow 24 hours for processing.

2. Pick up your Season Pass at Pats Peak Guest Services.



Have a fun winter on the mountain!



Shop For Holiday Gifts
NEC Pilgrim Shop Online:
nec.edu/pilgrimshop



NEC GIFTS AND APPAREL
20 MAIN STREET
M-F 11 A.M. - 5 P.M

Instagram: pilgrimshopnec

Updates from Wellness

Hello everyone and happy holidays!

The Wellness Center would like to send you a few important reminders to address over the next several weeks before the start of Spring Semester.

- **Re-stock your first aid kits.** If there was something you wished you had in the Fall, now is the time to gather it in preparation for when you return. Some suggestions that are good to have in your dorm: Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, whatever cold medicine you like to use, a bedside humidifier, a thermometer, antibacterial ointment, band-aids, ice pack, heating pad, Benadryl cream, Benadryl tablets
- **Update your vaccines.** If you are due for a vaccine, see your provider or pharmacy and get it done before you return and send Wellness the documentation. You will need to be up-to-date on all your vaccines to be allowed to attend your classes.
- **Refill your prescription medications.** Many offices require regular follow-up appointments for ongoing refills. Winter break is a good time to schedule this while you are at home. For those of you with asthma, make sure you have adequate supply of all your breathing medications.
- **Bring your winter boots and warm clothes.** It typically gets cold and snowy here in New England during these next few months.

We are excited to see you when we return. Taking the time to address these few things will help the whole community stay healthy so we can have a great second half of the year!

Take Care!

The Wellness Center 603-428-2253



WELCOME TO OUR

Newsletter

All are welcome!



[View Full Newsletter!](#)

OFFICE OF STUDENT
EMPOWERMENT AND
LEADERSHIP INVITES YOU TO
ENJOY OUR FALL 2025 RECAP



As the Fall 2025 semester draws to a close, the Office of Student Empowerment and Leadership reflects on a successful, hardworking semester.

