Happy December!

A couple of notes, announcements and reminders as we head toward the end of the semester.

**Integrated Advising**

We are getting close to the launch of Pathways, our new integrated advising software!! (previously called by the vendor name “starfish”).

Pathways will help support our current advising work and improve our ability to connect with colleagues across campus around the advising need of students. The program will also centrally store information about students’ academic progress in courses, store notes from advising meetings and record actions steps.

You’ll hear more about the software, get to see how it works, and about how to access training materials and sessions in the near future.

**Academic Honor Board (AHB) Update**

Going into finals, it is important to be clear with students about what constitutes an honor code violation in your final course requirements. You may wish to review AHB guidelines for procedures and protocol at [https://www.mtholyoke.edu/academicdeans/academic-honor-board](https://www.mtholyoke.edu/academicdeans/academic-honor-board). Here you will also find an online report form that the Board reviews along with any evidence you submit. I am happy to discuss any case with you before you submit the form should you have any questions or concerns. Please do let the student know that you are submitting the report.

The value of reporting all violations is that we then have a record in the event of a repeat incident. The board views a first violation as a learning opportunity — the conversation, as part of the process, supports this.

There will be a **Overview of the Exam Process** information session for first-year students on final exam period concerns (December 7th, 4:30 PM, Hooker).

**Extensions (Incompletes) for Completion of Work Beyond the End of Final Examination Period**

Our expectation is that all coursework must be completed by the end of the examination period. It is up to an instructor whether or not to grant an extension on work that a student will submit before the end of exam period. Such requests do not involve official authorization from a dean or from other offices. Please remember, students with academic accommodations are entitled to use these for final work. This may mean that their work is due beyond the exam period — this does not constitute and extension.

Requests for an extension beyond the exam period due to extenuating circumstances require:

1) Authorization:

An extension beyond the last day of exam period must be authorized by Karen Engell, Director of Health Services, Beth Feeney, Director of Counseling Service, a Class Dean, or the Dean of Studies. Such authorization does not mean the instructor must grant the extension.

(continued . . .)
EXTENSIONS

- In general, extensions are authorized only when a student experiences an unanticipated medical or personal emergency in the last weeks of the semester. Extensions are authorized only for work due during that period, and are not intended to allow students to make up for a whole semester’s worth of work or poor attendance.

- The student also has the right to request an extension as an academic accommodation through AccessAbility Services. That office may then authorize an extension if the student is registered with them. In these cases, the instructor is expected to allow the extension.

2) Instructor Approval:

- The authorization of an extension by the Director of Health Services, the Director of the Counseling Service, or an academic dean does not mean that the instructor must grant it. Instructors should approve an extension only when the student has met course expectations throughout the semester—that is, until they experienced the emergency situation.

- Only an instructor can approve the request. Instructors can consult with the appropriate Class Dean or the Dean of Studies if uncertain about granting the request.

- If the request has been authorized through AccessAbility Services, this is an academic accommodation and is expected to be approved. Please note, however, that as with any extension, the extension applies exclusively to managing end of semester requirements. If you have any concerns or questions in these cases, please contact the AccessAbility Services office and/or the Dean of Studies.

- A student who has been authorized to request an extension must communicate with the instructor about the request and the terms of the extension (i.e., date for extended deadline, remaining work, and method for submission of work). Class deans will often consult with professors before authorizing an extension to be sure the request is realistic.

3) Once the student has consulted with the instructor and the instructor has approved the extension, the student must submit the “Request for Extension” form through MyMountHolyoke. This submission generates email instructions to both the student and the instructor.

- The instructor receives email notification and instructions on how to proceed only when the student submits the form.

- The instructor and student should agree on a reasonable deadline for completing outstanding work. Only under exceptional circumstances should a deadline beyond January 24, the first day of classes, be considered.

- On the “Request for Extension” form on MyMountHolyoke, the instructor should assign, whenever possible, a “guaranteed” grade. This is the grade the student will receive if the outstanding work in the course is not completed.

- The guaranteed grade is based only on the work already completed by the student. It is the lowest grade a student can receive and will become their final grade if the student decides not to accept the extension or does not complete the outstanding work by the agreed-upon deadline.

- It is essential for students to complete the process on MyMountHolyoke, either by accepting the extension or the “guaranteed” grade.
**Fall Grades 2017**

Please submit your grades as early as possible. The absolute latest date for submission is **Wednesday, January 3 at 11 PM**. On January 9, 2017 the academic deans will review student records from the fall and make academic-standing recommendations to the full AAB which meets on January 12, 2018. Missing grades delay actions by the AAB.

We request that when assigning a grade of "F," faculty include an "F Letter." The "F Letter" allows the professor to indicate the specific reason for the F. These letters are important for advising students, and can figure into our discussion during the meeting at which we discuss academic standing.

As always, if you have questions and think that I might be able to help, please don’t hesitate to get in touch.

All best,

Amber

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**Useful Advising Links**

- Academic Calendar
- AccessAbility Services
- Academic Honor Board
- Proper Use of Sources
- Graduate School Advising

**Looking Ahead**

**Grades Due** — January 3

**Intersession** — Tuesday, Jan 2 — Friday, Jan 19

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**In order to comply with copyright law, LITS will turn off student access to Moodle course sites a few weeks after the completed semester’s grades are due. Students are welcome to download copies of any materials they would like to keep before that date. Instructors will still be able to access all of their course sites, but some student data will be hidden. Instructors, please let LITS know if you would like help downloading copies of student data.”**

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