



***The University of Montana Western
Student-Athlete Handbook
2021-22***

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The UMW Student-Athlete Handbook

This handbook has been developed to assist you, the University of Montana Western (UMW) student-athlete. It is a guide to help you navigate through your academic and athletic experience during your tenure at UMW. It is beneficial for you to refer to the information contained within this handbook from time to time. Although the intention of this handbook is to address the numerous details of your experience, it does not address ALL of those details. It is important that you utilize your coach, athletic department staff and college staff to help you with questions or challenges you may have.

The Intercollegiate Athletic program at the University of Montana Western facilitates the personal growth and education of students through their participation in a comprehensive sports program within the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), the Frontier Conference, and the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA). As an integral part of the University, the Athletic department actively promotes fair competition, fosters the pursuit of academic and athletic excellence, supports core institutional values of equity and diversity, and provides community enrichment.

The University is proud of the high caliber of its student-athletes who compete in one of the strongest NAIA conferences as well as our reputation as one of the top rodeo programs in the country. The Intercollegiate Athletic program is committed to the guiding principles of honesty, integrity, respect, ethical conduct, teamwork, and hard work in support of student-athletes in their roles as scholars, athletes, campus leaders, and community members.

The University expects its student-athletes to train and strive for their highest degree of athletic excellence and sportsmanship; to demonstrate academic integrity and accomplishment; and to conduct themselves responsibly as members of the campus and larger community.

The Department of Athletics

Department of Athletics Mission Statement

The University of Montana Western acknowledges the duality of the student-athlete. It embraces the concept that the student-athlete is first and foremost a student. The Department of Athletics collaborates with the campus community to educate, inspire, and enable student-athletes to achieve beyond their own academic, athletic, and personal aspirations. The mission of the University of Montana Western athletic department is to provide a successful and competitive program of varsity athletics designed to support and augment the mission of the University.

Core Values

Seven core values guide and govern our actions at all times and in all our affairs. They define "what we stand for" and "what we won't stand for." They include:

1. Excellence

We strive for excellence in all we do. We have an excellent attitude and outlook.

2. Integrity

At all times, and in all our affairs, we strive for integrity. We know that the right thing to do is the only thing to do.

3. Equity

We encourage and support diversity and promote a comfortable environment for student-athletes and staff to succeed.

4. Service

We approach all of our relationships with a spirit of service.

5. Respect

We treat others and ourselves with dignity, kindness, and respect.

6. Accountability

We are thoughtful with the use of our resources. We are personally accountable for our actions. We are an important part of a great team.

7. Discovery

We place a strong emphasis on discovery. We are always searching for more efficient and effective ways to get things done.

Frontier Conference Mission

The purpose of the Frontier Conference is to encourage, promote, sponsor and control athletic competition among participating colleges as an integral part of the total educational process.

National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Mission

The purpose of the NAIA is to promote the education and development of students through intercollegiate athletic participation. Member institutions, although varied and diverse, share a common commitment to high standards and to the principle that participation in athletics serves as an integral part of the total educational process.

The NAIA embraces the concept of the student and recognizes the importance of the individuality of each member institution, the value of the conference and regional structure, and the benefits of membership in a national association.

The NAIA supports gender equity. Gender equity is an atmosphere and a reality where fair distribution of overall athletic opportunity and resources, proportionate to enrollment, are available to women and men, and where no student-athlete, coach or athletics administrator is discriminated against in any way in the athletics program. That is to say, an athletics program is gender-equitable when the men's sports program would be pleased to accept as its own the overall participation opportunities and resources currently allocated to the women's sports program and vice versa.

National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association Mission

The mission of the NIRA is to foster and develop rodeo at the college level so that it will provide educational and competitive opportunities for students.

2021-22 Academic Calendar

Fall 2021

General Calendar and Deadline Information

Fall 2021 continuing student registration	March 29-August 22
Fall 2021 new student registration	April 12-August 22
New Student Orientation	August 19-22
1st \$40 late registration fee begins	August 25
Class schedules of non-paid students are canceled	August 27
Weekend classes begin	August 27
Labor Day observed (University closed)	September 6
2nd \$40 late registration fee begins	September 8
Deadline to apply for fall 2021 graduation	September 24
Deadline to submit a spring 2022 graduation application	October 29
Veteran's Day observed (University closed)	November 11
Registration for spring semester 2022 begins	November 9
Thanksgiving recess (no classes)	November 24-26
Thanksgiving observed (University closed)	November 25-26

Block 1

Classes begin	August 23
Last day to exchange or add block 1	August 24
Last day to drop a block 1 class with a grade of "W"	September 3
Last day to drop all classes (no record on transcript)	September 13
Block ends	September 15
Block break (no classes)	September 16-17
Final grades due from faculty	September 22

Block 2

Classes begin	September 20
Last day to exchange or add block 2	September 21
Last day to drop a block 2 class with a grade of "W"	October 1
Last day to drop all remaining classes with a grade of "W"	October 1*
Block ends	October 13
Block break (no classes)	October 14-15
Final grades due from faculty	October 20

Block 3

Classes begin	October 18
Last day to exchange or add block 3	October 19
Last day to drop a block 3 class with a grade of "W"	October 29
Last day to drop all remaining classes with a grade of "W"	October 29*
Block ends	November 10
Block break (no classes)	November 11-12
Final grades due from faculty	November 18

Block 4

Classes begin	November 15
Last day to exchange or add block 4	November 16
Last day to drop a block 4 class with a grade of "W"	November 30
Last day to drop all remaining classes with a grade of "W"	November 30*
Block/Semester ends	December 10
Final grades due from faculty	December 17

Full Semester Stringers

Classes begin	August 23
Last day to add a full semester course	September 3
Last day to drop all classes (no record on transcript)	September 13
Last day to drop all full term classes with grade of "W"	November 30*
Semester ends	December 10
Final grades due from faculty	December 17

First Half Stringers Block 1 and 2

Classes begin	August 23
Last day to add a first half stringer course	August 27
Last day to drop all classes (no record on transcript)	September 13
Last day to drop a first half stringer with grade of "W"	October 1*
Classes end	October 13
Final grades due from faculty	October 20

Second Half Stringers Block 3 and 4

Classes begin	October 18
Last day to add a second half stringer course	October 22
Last day to drop all full term classes with grade of "W"	November 30*
Classes end	December 10
Final grades due from faculty	December 17

* Students may not drop or withdraw from any classes that have ended

Spring 2022

General Calendar and Deadline Information

Deadline to submit spring 2022 graduation application	October 29
Spring 2022 continuing student registration	November 8-January 10
Spring 2022 new student registration	November 29-January 10
New Student Orientation	January 7
1st \$40 late registration fee begins	January 12
Class schedules of non-paid students are canceled	January 13
Weekend classes begin	January 14
Martin Luther King Day observed (University closed)	January 17
2nd \$40 late registration fee begins	January 26
President's Day observed (University closed)	February 21
Spring Break (no classes)	March 7-11
Deadline for Commencement Participation forms	March 18
Deadline for early commencement participation appeals	March 25
Deadline for summer 2022 graduation applications	April 1
Fall and summer 2022 continuing student registration begins	April 11
Fall and summer 2022 new student registration begins	May 2
125th Annual Commencement	May 7

Block 5

Classes begin	January 10
Last day to exchange or add block 5	January 11
Last day to drop a block 5 class with a grade of "W"	January 21*
Last day to drop all classes (no record on transcript)	January 31
Block ends	February 2
Block break (no classes)	February 3-4
Final grades due from faculty	February 9

Block 6

Classes begin	February 7
Last day to exchange or add block 6	February 8
Last day to drop a block 6 class with a grade of "W"	February 18
Last day to drop all remaining classes with a grade of "W"	February 18*
Block ends	March 3
Block break (no classes)	March 4
Final grades due from faculty	March 10

Block 7

Classes begin	March 14
Last day to exchange or add block 7	March 15
Last day to drop a block 7 class with a grade of "W"	March 25
Last day to drop all remaining classes with a grade of "W"	March 25*
Block ends	April 6
Block break (no classes)	April 7-8
Final grades due from faculty	April 13

Block 8

Classes begin	April 11
Last day to exchange or add block 8	April 12
Last day to drop a block 8 class with a grade of "W"	April 22
Last day to drop all remaining classes with a grade of "W"	April 22*
Block/Semester ends	May 4
Final grades due from faculty	May 11

Full Semester

Classes begin	January 10
Last day to add a full semester course	January 21
Last day to drop all classes (no record on transcript)	January 31
Last day to drop all full term classes with grade of "W"	April 22*
Semester ends	May 4
Final grades due from faculty	May 11

First Half Stringers Block 5 and 6

Classes begin	January 10
Last day to add a first half stringer course	January 14
Last day to drop all classes (no record on transcript)	January 31
Last day to drop a first half stringer with grade of "W"	February 18*
Classes end	March 3
Final grades due from faculty	March 10

Second Half Stringers Block 7 and 8

Classes begin	March 14
Last day to add a second half stringer course	March 18
Last day to drop all full term classes with grade of "W"	April 22*
Classes end	May 4
Final grades due from faculty	May 11

* Students may not drop or withdraw from any classes that have ended

Important Campus Phone Numbers

Director of Athletics	406-683-7391
Athletic Department Office	406-683-7220
Sports Information Director	406-683-7491
Kendall Athletic Training Clinic	406-683-7329
Football Head Coach	406-683-7421
Men's Basketball Head Coach	406-683-7341
Women's Basketball Head Coach	406-683-7317
Rodeo Head Coach	406-683-7001
Cross Country/Track Head Coach	406-683-7418
Cheer Coordinator	406-683-7220
Volleyball Head Coach	406-683-7444
Campus Security	406-683-7141
Residence Life	406-683-7565
Community Health	406-683-4441
Registrar's Office	406-683-7371
The Learning Center	406-683-7200
Dining Services	406-683-7355
Lucy Carson Library	406-683-7541
Student Affairs	406-683-7388
Student Counseling	406-683-7388
Bookstore	406-683-7281

Academics

In maintaining the UMW Athletic Department's philosophy that academic success is a priority, the student-athlete's educational experience will be emphasized at all times. The department will make every effort to minimize student-athlete absences from classes and exams in scheduling athletic competitions. **When practice schedules conflict with class schedules, student-athletes are required to attend class.** Competitions will be scheduled to minimize the number of class absences. A Hold Harmless Policy form is provided for student-athletes to present to their instructors for athletics-related travel. The forms should be presented to instructors as soon in the semester as possible. Student-athletes who will be traveling to away competitions should verbally notify their instructors at the beginning of the week. **Student-athletes are responsible for making arrangements with instructors for making up missed assignments, quizzes or tests for days they were absent from class.**

Formula for Success in the Classroom:

- **Go to EVERY class.** As a professional, you will be expected to be present at work and on time every day; therefore, start developing your professionalism now. Be in class so you hear and experience firsthand what is happening. Being there demonstrates your commitment to the learning process and professors are more likely to help you if you are willing to help yourself. **TURN YOUR PHONE OFF AND PUT IT AWAY!**
- **Go to EVERY class prepared.** Being prepared is essential if you are to understand the material and be an active participant in class. Sit in the front of the classroom. Managing your time and studying efficiently are critical to your academic success. The skills you develop now will be valuable to your success as a professional and a lifelong learner. Study, Study, Study!
- **Initiate and maintain contact with professors and your faculty advisor(s).** Let those who are instructing and mentoring you know who you are and you will get to know them better. This is a partnership and you have to demonstrate, through your actions as well as your words, that you are committed to your own success.
- **Read the syllabus for each class.** If necessary, visit with your professor and discuss any possible conflicts with exams, projects or papers. If possible at that time, arrange to make up missed course work resulting from traveling with your team.

Hold Harmless Policy

The University of Montana Western administration and faculty agree that students will be held harmless for absences due to University sanctioned activities in so far as possible. All parties recognize that not all classes are amenable to alternative assignments and in some cases, it is impossible to reschedule critical learning experiences. Though faculty has the final decision regarding the appropriateness of alternative assignments or experiences, in all cases they will make a good faith effort to accommodate.

Students should work with their advisors and potential faculty members to design student course schedules that minimize absences in those courses with learning experiences that present special challenges for replication at an

alternative time. Wherever possible, all student work should be completed before the end of the course block. If it is not possible for a faculty member to replicate a learning experience that produces similar critical learning outcomes to the missed experiences in a particular course within the same block, incompletes may need to be issued to the student until such time as suitable learning experiences, if possible, can occur. Final decisions regarding the appropriateness of assigning incomplete grades are made exclusively by the faculty.

This policy is effective so long as:

1. The student provides both verbal and written communication to the faculty member or employer on **day 1** or **day 2** of any given block.
2. The student is engaged in a University-sanctioned event necessitating the student's absence.

Examples of such events include (but are not limited to) athletic activities, career fairs, and field experiences. The faculty member or employer must be able to verify this activity if so desired.

The student is not excused from academic work required for a course, but in these instances will be allowed to work with a faculty member or employer to alter deadlines, or complete alternate assignments, or make up work as assigned by the faculty member or employer in so far as possible.

NAIA Eligibility Requirements

As an intercollegiate student-athlete **YOUR ELIGIBILITY IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**. Your coach and UMW athletic department staff are here to document and submit eligibility requirements as required by the NAIA and Frontier Conference. **YOU** need to pay close attention to credit hour and GPA requirements which are listed below. If you have any questions, see your coach or UMW athletic department staff.

An NAIA student:

- May compete during their first 10 semesters only
- May compete during four seasons only
- Must meet freshman, continuing, and/or transfer eligibility requirements

- Must be enrolled in at least 12 credit hours during semester of competition
- Must be making normal progress toward a baccalaureate degree (48 credits completed for junior and 72 credits completed for senior eligibility)
- Must have a 2.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale

Terms of Attendance

An NAIA student may only compete during the first 10 semesters

- Any term (excluding summer sessions) in which the student becomes identified will be considered a term of attendance.
- Exceptions
 - Pregnancy
 - Debilitating illness
 - COVID-19 exceptions

Identification

A student identifies with an institution if:

- Competes in a contest ✓ Charged with season
- Is enrolled in 12 credit hours and attends even one class ✓ Charged with term

Upon identification, the term immediately counts as one of the student's 10 semesters.

Requirements for Initial Eligibility

To establish initial eligibility, all student-athletes must register with the NAIA Eligibility Center.

Freshman: A student who has not been previously identified at any institution of higher learning for 2 semesters/3 quarters.

To be eligible for competition, a freshman must be:

- Graduate of accredited high school or be accepted as regular student in good standing, *AND*
- Meet *two of three* requirements:

Test Score
Minimum score of:
ACT — 18
SAT — 970

High School GPA
Minimum overall
high school GPA
of 2.00 on
4.00 scale

Class Rank
Top 50% of high
school graduating
class

International Students

- Must meet initial eligibility requirements through NAIA Eligibility Center
- Required academic records required and interpretations will vary per country

Transfer Student

- Eligibility must be initially established through NAIA Eligibility Center.
- Transfer students must meet 12 Hour, 24 Hour, and Progress rules to establish eligibility.
- Transfers from a 2-year institution, from a 4-year institution at which they did not participate in sport, or those who have graduated from another school and enter a post-graduate program have no residency requirement = can play immediately.
- Transfers who have competed at a 4-year institution **must sit out 16 calendar weeks** to establish residency and attain eligibility.
Exemption: 2.0 GPA and written release from previous school = can play immediately
- Transfers between Frontier Conference schools **must sit out 365 days** to establish residency and attain eligibility.
- Students who represent 2 institutions in one academic year can be charged with two seasons of competition.
 - Junior College (JC) Exception: JC grad who participated at JC, transfers to NAIA school in same sport season and is otherwise eligible
- Mid-Year transfers and Spring events
 - Student must be certified as eligible to participate
 - Must be certified even for spring scrimmages, but student won't be charged a season of competition if only participation is in scrimmages.

Requirements for Continuing Eligibility

Applies to any student who has previously identified for 2 semesters/3 quarters

To be eligible for competition, must meet:

- 12 Hour Rule - enrollment in a minimum of 12 credits during the semester (see below)
- 24/36 Hour Rule - completed a minimum of 24 credits in previous two semesters (see below)
- 2.0 GPA minimum
- Progress Rule

12 Hour Rule

- To compete, a student must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 institutional credit hours.
 - At least 9 hours must be at the NAIA institution
 - Maximum 3 hours may be from another institution (with prior permission from registrar)
- If a student drops below 12 hours at any time, student must immediately stop competing.

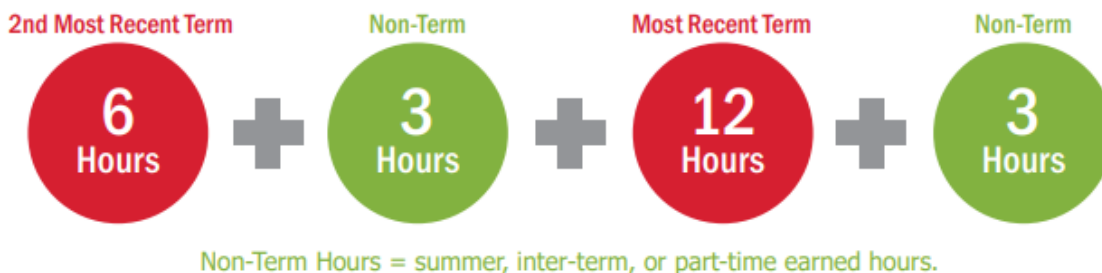
24/36 Hour Rule

After completion of the second semester term or third quarter term of attendance and from then on, a student must have accumulated a minimum of 24 institutional credit hours in the two immediately previous terms of attendance in a semester system or 36 institutional credit hours in the three immediately previous terms of attendance in a quarter system.



Meeting the 24/36 Hour Rule with Non-Term Hours

Non-Term hours must be earned in between or after the two most recent full time terms. A maximum of 12 non-term hours can be used for the 24/36 Hour Rule.



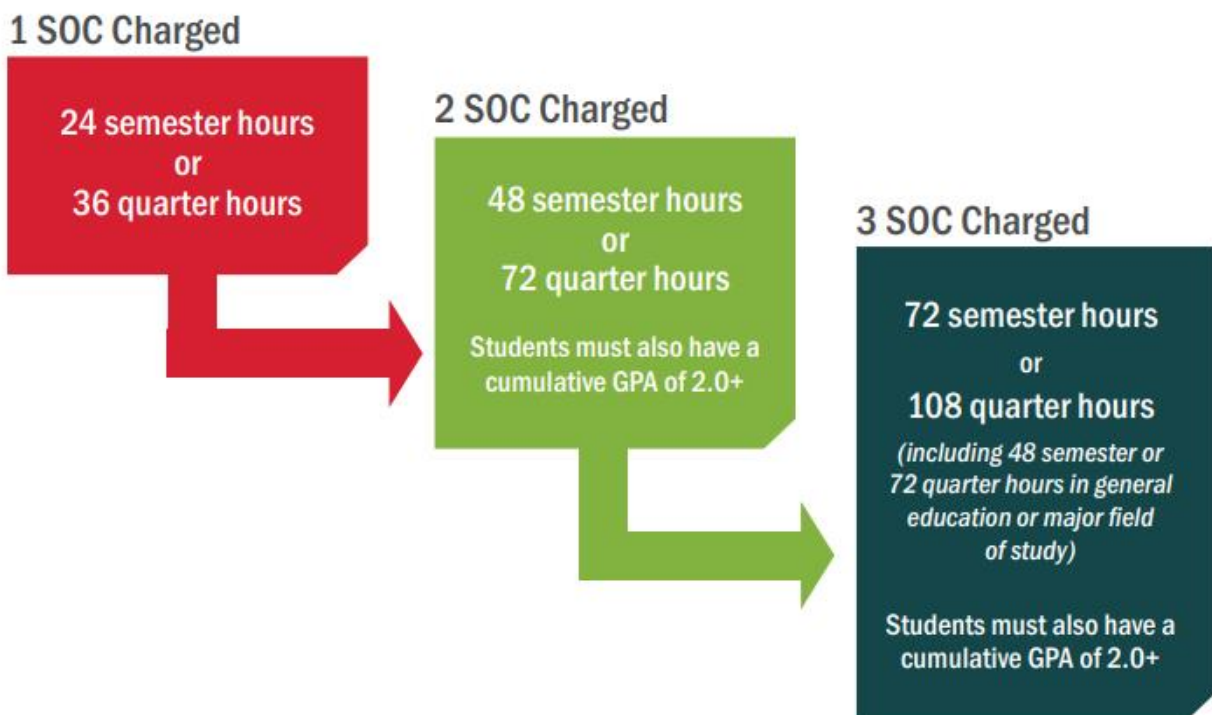
24/36 Exceptions

- Student participation and withdrawal from institution prior to start of academic term and courses do not show on transcript (*Note: Progress Rule still applies*)
- Junior College transfer who needed less than 24 hours during last two semesters to get associate's degree IF:
 - Identified in no more than five semesters
 - Passed all hours during term in which degree was earned

Repeat Classes

- Repeat courses previously passed with a grade of “D” in the initial attempt and retaken, earning a grade of “C” or better, shall be considered toward satisfying the 24/36-hour rule.
- One repeat course/term previously passed with a “D” may be counted towards 12-hour enrollment rule.
- Courses for which a student previously received an “F” are not considered repeat classes.

Progress Rule



Beginning in 2022, the 2.0 GPA requirement will apply to all seasons of competition.

Seasons of Competition

A student may compete in 4 seasons of competition in any sport, including:

- Intercollegiate competition – any participation, one play/one second
 - Varsity, JV, or Freshman
 - Transfer students’ seasons of competition are determined by previous association/institution
- Non-intercollegiate “professional level” competition

NIRA Eligibility Requirements

As an intercollegiate student-athlete **YOUR ELIGIBILITY IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**. Your coach and UMW athletic department staff are here to document and submit eligibility requirements as required by the NAIA and Frontier Conference. **YOU** need to pay close attention to credit hour and GPA requirements which are listed below. If you have any questions, see your coach or UMW athletic department staff.

The NIRA allows 6 years from high school graduation (or 18th birthday if GED completed) to complete 4 seasons of eligibility. See NIRA rules for exemptions including military service, humanitarian or religious service, and COVID-19.

Requirements for First Year Eligibility

Beginning freshmen are immediately eligible unless they have taken college courses while in high school. Student-athletes with college credit must have earned a 2.0 GPA in all college credits.

Requirements for Continuing Eligibility

Student-athletes must complete 12 credits per term with a minimum 2.0 GPA to maintain eligibility, passing grades must be earned for 9 or more of the 12 credits per semester. Of the 12 required credits per semester, least 9 credits each term must be through the main campus for which the student-athlete is competing.

Transfer Penalty and Eligibility

Student-athletes who transfer after participating for a NIRA-member 4-year are subject to the 25% transfer rule penalty. In the Big Sky region this traditionally means 3 rodeos. The student-athlete must establish eligibility using continuing student eligibility requirements before the 25% transfer rule penalty period begins.

The following student-athletes are exempted from the 25% transfer penalty: transfers from a junior college or 2-year school who have completed a minimum for 48 semester credits (or AA degree) with a minimum 2.00 GPA; student-athletes that did not participate in NIRA at previous school; students from non-NIRA member schools; students who have graduated and transfer to pursue an additional undergraduate or graduate degree; or transfers from discontinued academic programs.

The Learning Center

The University of Montana Western's Learning Center is located in the Lower Library Commons (LLC 006).

Program Manager Susan White (406) 683-7143
Learning Center Tutor Line (406) 683-7200

Learning Center Mission

Our mission is to help all students reach their academic potential by providing academic support and promoting scholastic growth. The Learning Center tutor provides peer-tutoring services to UMW students, youth challenge students and the local community.

Learning Center Assistance

The Learning Center offers free peer tutoring services. Students are welcome to stop by during scheduled tutor hours or call 406-683-7200 to make an appointment.

The Learning Center will:

- Provide **friendly**, helpful tutoring services to you
- Provide a **comfortable** place to study
- Provide computer workstations and **resource materials** available for use in the Learning Center

Peer tutor focus:

- The Learning Center strives to offer tutoring in most major subjects
- Tutors can help you strengthen your writing self-editing and revision skills
- Tutors can help you improve your organization and study skills
- Tutors can help you **save time** by learning more effective writing techniques
- Tutors can help you **learn** proper citation to avoid unintentional plagiarism
- Tutors can **supplement** your understanding of subject content to enhance your classroom learning

Get the most out of your tutoring experience:

- **Attend** class and take notes
- **Complete** all assigned reading for class
- **Visit** the Learning Center as soon as you need help

- **Bring** assignments, calculator, notes, papers, syllabi, tests, and textbooks, etc.
- **Come prepared to work!**

Career Services

University of Montana Western's Career Services office is located in the Learning Center in the Lower Library Commons (LLC 006).

Program Manager: Susan White 406-683-7143

The UMW's Career Services office is available to assist students in finding employment throughout their collegiate career and after graduation. We offer guidance to students and alumni in career exploration and job searches. Additional services include assistance with resume and cover letter development, enhancing interview skills, portfolio building, and completing job applications properly.

Optimal Resume Career & Talent Suite

UMW provides access to Optimal Resume software where you can create resumes, cover letters, portfolios, websites, and prep for an interview. Video tutorials on the site give tips on creating a resume and how to ace an interview, as well as developing an "elevator speech" and learning about transferable skills. You can go to the Career Services homepage and click on the Optimal Resume logo to access the UMW Optimal Resume page

Media Guidelines

Suggestions for Student-Athletes Regarding Media Relations

Cooperating with the media is an important part of being a student-athlete at any University, and that is especially true here at UMW. Since UMW is a NAIA program in an isolated area with limited media outlets it is imperative that our coaches and student-athletes establish good relations with the media. Here are some pointers for dealing with members of the media:

1. **ALWAYS** be polite to members of the media. It isn't that difficult. Regardless of how stupid the question is, or despite the fact that a reporter might not know anything about you or your particular sport, BE NICE. Use the opportunity to educate the interviewer about you and your sport. Members of the media remember those athletes who are courteous and usually come back for more interviews.
2. **DO NOT** give "yes" or "no" answers to questions. Most experienced

members of the media know better than to ask something that can be answered with a "yes" or "no", sometimes, however, they forget and ask something that you can easily say "yes" or "no" to. Do them a favor and answer with a complete sentence.

Example: Reporter: "You played great today, Didn't you?"

UMW student-athlete: "Yes." WRONG ANSWER

UMW student-athlete: "We played an outstanding team today, and I was just fortunate that.... (elaborate on your performance in the game)
...RIGHT ANSWER

3. **DO NOT** say things off-the-record to any reporter. There is no such thing as an off-the-record quote. Once you reveal something, there is a good chance it will be used and your name will be quoted. If a reporter is pressuring you about a subject, and you do not wish to discuss it, just say something like "I really don't know anything about it" or "I can't talk about that." Those types of answers should satisfy a reporter in most cases. If they continue to pressure you, contact the Sports Information Director immediately, and they will handle the situation.
4. **ALWAYS BE ON TIME** for an interview. If a reporter has a 1 p.m. interview with you, please be there at 12:55 or earlier. **DO NOT BE LATE.** Members of the media take it personally if you are not on time for an interview.
5. **BE HONEST.** It is very important that you tell the truth to the reporter. Members of the media do not like to be lied to. This may also harm your reputation as a student-athlete.
6. **DO NOT** talk negatively about game officials, opponents, or other teammates. Give your teammates credit when due.
7. **NEVER CURSE!**
8. **DRESS APPROPRIATELY.** The media will understand the appearance after a game, but if it is not a game day, wear something appropriate (i.e. polo or pullover with nice pants).
9. **STAY CALM AND HAVE FUN.** Again, if you have any questions concerning the media, contact the Sports Information Director.

Standards of Conduct

It is a privilege and not a right to be a student-athlete and all student-athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that exhibits honor and respect to their team, athletic department, University and surrounding community for the duration of their tenure as a student-athlete. As a member of the student body at the University of Montana Western, student-athletes must act in accordance with the UMW *Student Code of Conduct*, published by the institution and can be found at <https://w.umwestern.edu/section/student-code-of-conduct/>. The University of Montana Western student-athletes are accountable to the following authorities (hereafter referenced as "governing authorities"):

- Local ordinances, state & federal laws, both civil and criminal ("laws")
- National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA)
- National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association (NIRA)
- Frontier Conference
- University of Montana Western (UMW)
- Department of Intercollegiate Athletics
- Respective team rules

For clarification of the governing authorities, student-athletes should consult with a member of the administration. Violation of any of the standards of conduct encompassed in these authorities may result in discipline as described in Section IV below, as well as civil and/or criminal liability.

Reporting Obligation

All student-athletes are obligated to report any violations of this Code of Conduct to their head coach or to the Director of Athletics within 24 hours of becoming aware of the violation. This obligation is in effect year-round, including block and summer breaks.

Prohibited Conduct

Prohibited conduct includes violation of any of the standards established by the governing authorities identified above. By way of illustration, and without limitation to these prohibitions, student-athletes must not violate any of the policies described below. These and other prohibitions are described in more detail in UMW's *Student Code of Conduct*, the Frontier Conference Manual, the NAIA Manual, and the NIRA Manual.

A. Academic Dishonesty. The Department of Athletics expects students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner beyond reproach. Offenses against academic honesty are any acts that would have the effect of unfairly promoting or enhancing one's academic standing, including cheating, plagiarism, knowingly permitting or assisting any person in the commission of an offense of academic dishonesty, or any violation of the University of Montana Western Academic Code of Conduct.

B. Alcohol. Prohibited acts include (1) possessing or consuming alcohol if under the age of 21, (2) operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, (3) misrepresenting one's age for the purpose of purchasing, possessing, or consuming alcohol, (4) purchasing, furnishing, or serving alcohol to or for an underage person, (5) being dangerously intoxicated to the point where State law mandates being taken into custody, (6) other prohibited acts as outlined in the *UMW Student Code of Conduct*, (7) violations of additional Team Rules regarding alcohol use, and/or (8) consumption of alcohol during team travel or at team functions.

C. Marijuana. Federal laws prohibit marijuana use, possession and/or cultivation at educational institutions and on the premises of other recipients of federal funds. The use, possession, and/or cultivation of marijuana is therefore not allowed. See

D. Other Drugs. Prohibited acts include (1) possessing or using illegal substances, as defined by law, (2) improper use or possession of controlled substances, (3) distributing, selling, or possessing with the intent to distribute illegal or controlled substances, as defined by law, (4) using tobacco products during practice, competition, or other team functions, (5) other prohibited acts as described in the *UMW Student Code of Conduct*.

E. Nutritional or Dietary Supplements. Many nutritional/dietary supplements contain substances banned by the NAIA. In addition, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration does not strictly regulate the supplement industry; therefore, the purity and safety of nutritional/dietary supplements cannot be guaranteed. Impure supplements may lead to a positive NAIA drug test and thus affect the eligibility of student-athletes. To avoid violation of this standard, as questions arise student-athletes should contact their athletic trainer and/or consult the list of banned drugs.

F. Hazing. Hazing in connection with membership or participation in University athletic teams or team activities is strictly prohibited. See "Hazing Policy" on page 27 for more detailed information.

G. Violence. UMW's violence prevention policies, and response procedures for violent incidents, are intended to protect the health and safety of the campus and the community and ultimately to advance the educational mission of the University. Student-athletes are prohibited from engaging in violent acts including sexual violence (sexual assault, rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment); hate crimes; hazing; assault on a person or property; stalking, or any other conduct prohibited by University policy and/or law.

H. Disrespect. When serving as representatives of the University athletic program, student-athletes are required to comport themselves in a manner respectful of themselves, their team, the University and its Department of Athletics, game officials, opponents, and property. Student-athletes are to refrain from disrespectful conduct such as unsportsmanlike conduct; profane, abusive, demeaning, harassing, threatening or obscene expression; or deliberate damage to equipment or other property. Disrespectful conduct will be reviewed by the head coach and Director of Athletics and may result in disciplinary action.

I. Poor Sportsmanship. Student-athletes at UMW are held accountable to a high standard of ethical conduct in all activities affecting the athletics program. "Unsportsmanlike" conduct, as defined by the NAIA, Frontier Conference, The University of Montana Western, will be reviewed by the Director of Athletics and may result in disciplinary action.

J. Gambling. Student-athletes shall not knowingly (1) Provide information to individuals involved in organized gambling activities concerning intercollegiate athletics competition, (2) Solicit a bet on any intercollegiate team, (3) Accept a bet on any team representing the institution, (4) Solicit or accept a bet on any intercollegiate competition for any item that has tangible value (e.g. cash, clothing or equipment, meals), and/or (5) Participate in any gambling activity that involves intercollegiate athletics or professional athletics through a bookmaker, a parlay card or any other method employed by organized gambling.

K. Unexcused Class Absences and Poor Academic Performance.

Student-athletes are expected to attend class regularly and punctually, and to fulfill course load and academic performance requirements. Failure to meet such obligations may affect eligibility to participate in intercollegiate athletics and scholarship eligibility, as well as academic standing.

L. Failure to Meet Team Obligations. Student-athletes must complete training requirements; arrive promptly for team practices, meetings, and departures for away games and other team events; attend team functions;

and otherwise fulfill their responsibilities as team members. Absences must be excused in advance by the Head Coach unless an unforeseeable emergency arises.

M. Misuse of Media. Student-athletes are highly visible representatives of the University and they are expected to uphold the values and responsibilities of the University while meeting all requirements set forth by the NAIA, the Frontier Conference and UMW's intercollegiate athletics program. It is important that student-athletes recognize the power of public media domains and the potential negative image that they can portray about student-athletes, coaches, the athletics program, and the University. The UMW Department of Athletics prohibits the malicious use of on-line social networks or any public media domain. The malicious use of on-line social networks or any public media domain will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action.

Disciplinary Process and Sanctions

The Department of Athletics' disciplinary process is independent of, and supplements the University judicial process. The Department of Athletics may levy sanctions above and beyond those levied by the normal University judicial process, and for violations that do not fall under the rules of other authorities. Sanctions will vary depending on the type and circumstances of the violation. A first-time offense may be serious enough to warrant any of the possible sanctions listed in section IV. A, below. Failure to participate and cooperate in Department of Athletics, Frontier Conference, NAIA or NIRA investigation of a possible violation of this *Code of Conduct*, Frontier Conference, NAIA or NIRA rules, may itself constitute a basis for disciplinary action.

A. Possible sanctions include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Warning.** The issuance of a written warning or letter of expectation.
- 2. Probation.** Special status with conditions imposed for a limited time.
- 3. Community Service.**
- 4. Restitution.** Payment for damaged property.
- 5. Indefinite Suspension.** Removal of a student-athlete from all Department of Athletics activities, including athletic participation in team events, for a limited period of time.
- 6. Suspension.** Removal of a student-athlete from all Department of Athletics activities, including athletic participation in team events,

for a specified period of no less than one season.

7. Expulsion. Permanent removal from a team and Department of Athletics activities.

B. Violations of Team Rules. Head coaches will establish team rules consistent with this *Code of Conduct*. Team rules shall be in writing and distributed to team members at the start of each academic year or the beginning of the playing season, whichever comes first. The head coach and the Director of Athletics have the authority to impose sanctions for the violation of team rules but the head coach shall not impose the sanction of suspension or expulsion from the team without first discussing the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion with the Director of Athletics.

C. Violation of Rules or Policies other than Team Rules. For violations of rules and policies other than team rules (*e.g.*, violations of Frontier Conference, NAIA or NIRA rules, the UMW *Student Code of Conduct*, etc.) the Director of Athletics, or the head coach with the approval of the Director of Athletics may impose sanctions.

D. Violation of Criminal Law. When a student-athlete has engaged in conduct alleged to be in violation of criminal law, immediately upon receipt of notice of such possible violation the head coach must report the information to the Director of Athletics.

Student-athletes arrested for, or charged with, violating criminal law will be placed on immediate administrative suspension from involvement in team activity pending further investigation. If a violation would constitute a misdemeanor, the Director of Athletics, in consultation with the head coach, may in the exercise of their reasonable discretion lift the administrative suspension. If a violation of law constitutes a felony, the administrative suspension may be lifted only upon authorization of the Director of Athletics in consultation with the UMW Chancellor and/or Provost. **In all cases in which a student-athlete is arrested for or charged with felony illegal use of drugs, illegal gambling, sexual misconduct or violence, the student-athlete will be immediately suspended, and the suspension may be lifted only by the Director of Athletics in consultation with the UMW Chancellor and/or Dean of Students.**

E. Suspension Guidelines: When suspended from involvement in team activities (competition, meetings, practices), a student-athlete may be allowed use of facilities for academic services, athletic training and strength and conditioning.

The head coach may, for violation of criminal law, impose team sanctions on the student-athlete apart from the athletic department issued suspension with the approval of the Director of Athletics.

By suspending the student-athlete, the UMW athletic department is not pre-judging guilt or innocence, rather the suspension protects the integrity of UMW, our athletic department, our student-athletes and sports programs.

F. Termination of scholarship benefits: The Director of Athletics may pursue revocation or modification of athletically-related financial aid, such as a scholarship, as a consequence of any and all level of misconduct. Any action to revoke or modify athletically-related financial aid will be in accordance with NAIA, NIRA, Frontier Conference, and institutional procedures.

G. Multi-Sport Athletes. Multi-sport athletes will not be relieved of any sanctions previously imposed in connection with rules violation while participating in another team sport when changing sports.

Appeals

It is the goal of the UMW athletic department and all its staff members to provide the best opportunity for student-athletes to achieve success. It is understood that from time to time a student-athlete may feel they are not being treated fairly. Student-athletes have the opportunity to appeal any decision made by a coach, staff member or the Director of Athletics.

Coaches are expected to provide the opportunity and time for a student-athlete to discuss a coach's decision that affects a student-athlete's participation in the intercollegiate athletics program. Every attempt should be made to resolve disagreements.

A. Appeal of a Coach's Decision If a disagreement cannot be resolved between a coach and player, the student-athlete may appeal the decision in writing to the Director of Athletics. This appeal must be made within 24 hours from the student-athlete's meeting with the head coach. In the event there is a disagreement on a decision that cannot be deferred until a meeting with the Director of Athletics is held, the decision of the head coach shall stand until such time as a meeting can be arranged.

B. Appeal of a Director of Athletics' Decision A student-athlete (or a sport team or sports program) may appeal a decision of the Director of Athletics, either in independently imposing a sanction or upholding a coach's sanction, to the UMW Dean of Students if the decision affects participation in intercollegiate athletics.

The appeal will follow the subsequent steps:

- The appeal must be made in writing to the Dean of Students within 24 hours after exhausting any prescribed appeals within Intercollegiate Athletics and **only if there is new information related to the circumstance.**
- The appeal will adhere to the following procedure:
 1. The appeal letter must include a summary of any meetings about the decision with personnel in Intercollegiate Athletics including coaches.
 2. The Dean of Students will collect evidence by research and interview. Insofar as possible, all parties directly involved in the appeal will cooperate by honoring the Dean of Students' requests for information. Both the student-athlete and personnel in Intercollegiate Athletics will have the right to defend their positions.
 3. The Dean of Students will review other relevant information, including information from public authorities, court records, law enforcement officers, University officers and agencies, and other persons.
 4. At the hearing, the student-athlete will be given the opportunity to make an oral and written statement about the circumstances and why he or she feels reinstatement is warranted. The student-athlete may be accompanied by a personal adviser. This advisor must be a member of the University community (e.g., student, faculty, or staff), may play no other role in the hearing (e.g., as witness), and may neither speak nor otherwise represent their advisees in the hearing.
 5. All information regarding the appeal and the Dean of Students' deliberations must be held in strict confidence.
 6. The Dean of Students will review the appeal, render a decision, and send written notification of this determination to the student-athlete, Director of Athletics, and other directly affected personnel in Intercollegiate Athletics.
 7. The Dean of Students' determination will be final and will be based upon the evidence which was presented to them orally or in writing during the appeals process.

Student Counseling Center

The Student Counseling Center is available free of charge to all UMW Students. Counselors are available to help students work through a wide range of challenges including homesickness, depression, anxiety, trauma, and even career advice. Contact the Dean of Students Center (406-683-7388) to schedule an appointment with a counselor.

Additionally, Department of Athletics staff may identify a need for professional counseling assistance refer students to the Student Counseling Center. It is the student-athlete's responsibility to follow up on this referral and to adhere to professional recommendations.

Records Privacy

Federal and State law, and related university policy, governing the access to student records applies to the administration of this Handbook.

Drug Testing

UMW Athletics reserves the right to screen a student-athlete anytime there is particularized suspicion that they may be engaged in the use of banned substances. Events or conduct contributing to particularized suspicion include but are not limited to: (a) a student-athlete's possession or use of a prohibited substance; (b) a student-athlete's arrest or conviction related to the possession of, use or trafficking of banned substances; or (c) abnormal conduct interpretable as being caused by the use of banned substances.

Particularized suspicion is not a mere "hunch" or "intuition." It shall be based upon a specific event or occurrence and related to the student-athlete's individual circumstances and behaviors, leading to a conclusion that a student-athlete has used a banned substance.

1. Such belief may be engendered by direct observation, a physical or mental deficiency, medically indicated symptomology of banned substance use, suspicious conduct, or unexplained absence.
2. Such belief may also be engendered by information supplied by reliable third parties corroborated by objective facts.

Please see UMW Athletics Drug Testing policy for additional information.

Hazing Policy

The Department of Athletics at the University of Montana Western supports only those activities which are constructive, educational, and inspirational and that contribute to the intellectual and personal development of students. UMW Athletics unequivocally opposes any situation created intentionally to produce mental or physical discomfort, embarrassment, harassment or ridicule.

The University of Montana Western interprets hazing as any act, whether physical, mental, emotional or psychological, which subjects another person, **voluntarily or involuntarily**, to anything that may abuse, mistreat, degrade, humiliate, harass or intimidate the person, or which may in any fashion compromise the inherent dignity of the person; and, any type of initiation or other activity where there is an expectation of individuals joining a particular team to participate in behavior designed to humiliate, degrade or abuse them regardless of the person's willingness to participate. In addition, any requirements by a member which compels another member to participate in any activity which is against University policy or state/federal law will be defined as hazing.

Any student-athlete in violation of the hazing policy will be subject to discipline that may include, but is not limited to, departmental or University probation, suspension from the team and/or the University and expulsion from the team and/or the University. In addition, the team may be subject to group discipline that can include, but is not limited to, team probation, cancellation of individual contests and/or cancellation of the entire season.

Accommodations & Non-Discrimination Disclosure

The University of Montana Western is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities. Students who have disabilities on our campus are offered a variety of services to accommodate their disability so that students will have complete access to UMW athletic and academic programs. This is in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations and other relevant state and federal legislation policies, with respect to making reasonable accommodations and auxiliary aides available for eligible qualified students with disabilities. If you have accommodation needs, please contact Student Affairs (406) 683-7388.

The University of Montana Western does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age or veteran status in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:
Dean of Students, Nicole Hazelbaker (406) 683-7388.

Commonly Asked Questions

Academic Questions

How do I find my grades?

Each student has a self-service account through the DAWGS system. You should log on to your account at <https://dawgs.umwestern.edu> to access to the following information:

- Grades
- Class Schedules
- Course Offerings
- Enrollment
- Admissions Application Status
- Required Enrollment Items
- Financial Information
- Unofficial Transcripts
- Holds

Where do I get my books? Where do I return them?

The Montana Western Campus Bookstore, located in the Student Union Building) serves the students, faculty and staff of Montana Western. Students are given the option to purchase or rent their textbooks at reasonable prices. Buybacks and rentals are returned to the UMW Campus Bookstore on the last scheduled day of class.

How do I find a tutor?

You can receive free tutoring in the Learning Center in the Lower Level of the library (LLC 006). While faculty at Montana Western are readily accessible to you, sometimes you may need additional help. The Learning Center offers free peer tutoring. Students are welcome to stop by during scheduled tutoring hours or call 683-7200 to make an appointment.

Who is my advisor?

All incoming new and transfer students work with one of the academic advisors in the Advising center (MH 214) to get registered for classes for

their first semester. During the first semester, a faculty advisor will be assigned to you based on your chosen major. If you are in a 2-year program, need to complete remediation, or have not declared a major then you will stay assigned to one of the advisors in the advising center. To find out who your primary advisor is, students should access your DAWGS account, log in (8000# and PIN), choose Student Services, choose Student Records, choose Student Information and your advisor is listed on this page.

How do I change my major/advisor?

Students who wish to change a major or advisor will need to fill out the appropriate form in the Advising Center, MH 214 or access the form online at <https://w.umwestern.edu/info/academic-advising-center/>

Who should I talk to before changing my schedule?

Changes to your schedule always must be considered from an eligibility standpoint. Start this conversation with your coach, no one wants a surprise in eligibility! After consulting your coach, you may need to visit with Registrar's Office personnel to make a fully informed decision. Finally, you will need your academic advisor's signature before completing the schedule change.

Financial Questions (Financial Aid/Business Services)

What does my scholarship cover?

Tuition, fees, and/or room, depending on your signed contract. You are responsible for paying the balance after your tuition and/or room waiver and other scholarships are applied to your account.

When is payment due for class?

Payment is due on or before the first day of the semester. Financial Aid is a means of payment, but you must ensure payment has been made even if your financial aid is not yet available. You may sign a deferred payment contract or pay in full out of pocket.

Who do I talk to about the remainder of my bill?

Stop by Business Services first. They may direct you to Financial Aid after reviewing your account.

Can I make payments on my bill?

If you cannot pay the balance in full on or before the first day of school, there is a deferred payment contract you can sign. This will break the balance up into 3 different payments. The first payment is due on or before

the first day of school, the second is due 30 days after the first, and the third is due 30 days after the second. Your balance has to be paid in full within 90 days from the start of the semester. If you are awarded work study you can use your paychecks to help you pay the balance on your account. You will need to visit the Business Services window to sign over your work study check on payday.

When does my financial aid money arrive?

Financial Aid (Pell Grant and Stafford Loans) must be applied directly to your balance before you may receive it. Once all charges are covered, if there is left over money, it will then be disbursed to you. Disbursement dates are set by the Financial Aid office, which can be found on the UMW website under the Financial Aid tab.

Why is there a "hold" on my account and what do I need to do about it?

Most holds occur because you owe money on your account. Stop by the Business Services window to resolve the matter. A hold might occur because of materials not returned to the library. Ask the Librarian what is needed to remove the library hold.

What are the financial consequences of dropping a class?

Keep in mind that anything 12 credits and over is the same cost. If you drop from 16 to 12 your balance will not change. If you drop a classes before the start of the semester you will not be charged. If you drop from the 1st – 5th day of instruction you will be refunded 90%. If you drop from the 6th to the 10th day of instruction you will be refunded 75%. If you drop from the 11th to the 15th day of instruction you will be refunded 50% and after the 15th day of instruction you will not get refunded.

How do I get an on-campus job?

On-campus jobs can be funded through department budgets or federal/state work study programs. Campus jobs are posted on the Career Services website and in the lower level of the Lucy Carson Library, next to the Learning Center. If a job indicates that it is a works study job, you need to check with the Financial Aid Office to determine your eligibility which is based a completed FAFSA.

For all positions, hiring paperwork must be completed through the Business Services Office in coordination with the job supervisor.

When is payday if I have an on-campus job?

Campus employees are paid on every other Wednesday.

When is my timecard due and where do I turn it in?

Timecards are due to your supervisor every other Friday. Students are not allowed to bring their time cards to Business Services, it must be brought in by your supervisor.

Residence Life Questions

What if I want to change roommates?

You may request a roommate on your housing application. The roommate request must be mutual and both students must request each other on the applications. Roommate requests are based on availability, and both roommates should submit applications together or within a short period of time in order to be accommodated. If a roommate is not requested, you will be assigned one based off of your preferences on the housing application. Roommates are matched using the profile questions each student submits with their housing application. If the semester starts and you find that your roommate really isn't the best match, you can fill out a [room change request](#). Any move without approval is subject to judicial action and possible financial sanctions.

When do I have to be out of the residence halls?

The residence halls and dining service are officially closed during Winter Break. Room and board charges do not include this scheduled vacation period. Board plans are not in effect during Thanksgiving Break and Spring Break. Stay-over arrangements may be arranged at the Residence Life Office for exceptional circumstances or University Business only. Each case will be reviewed independently. Food service may be available during these break periods after consultation with Dining Services. Housing will be provided for continuing students wishing to stay in the residence halls during Winter Break for an additional charge. Advance notice is required at the Residence Life Office for students who will be staying in the halls during break periods. At the conclusion of each semester, information will be provided to students about check-out procedures. A \$25.00 improper check-out fee will be assessed if check-out procedures are not followed.

What safety measures should I take while living on campus?

Residents are encouraged to take the following precautions for their own and others' safety and security.

1. Lock room/apartment whenever leaving it, even for just a few minutes to the bathroom, vending room, lounge, or to a friend's room. Always keep your door locked when sleeping.

2. Always take your key with you.
3. Do not allow others to be in the room while the resident is not there. The resident of the room is responsible for all behavior occurring in that room, even when the resident is absent.
4. Room windows readily accessible from the ground should always be secured when the room is unoccupied. Most rooms in JDC are equipped with a security stick.
5. Keep a record of serial numbers and manufacturer names for personal property.
6. Avoid keeping large amounts of cash in your room. Do not tell anyone, even a roommate or best friend, where money and valuables are hidden.
7. Keep security doors closed and locked. Do not prop locked doors open for any reason.
8. Be alert to strangers in the living areas and report suspicious activities to the RA, Hall Director, or the Residence Life office.
9. Never leave clothes unattended in the laundry rooms or bathrooms.
10. Carry personal property insurance. Some homeowner policies will cover possessions away from home, so check with parents and/or insurance agent.
11. Utilize the Campus Security escort service, 406-683-7141 or 406-925-9828, if crossing campus after dark.

What if I get locked out of my room?

A student who is locked out of their room/apartment/mailbox or temporarily misplaces a key may obtain a temporary replacement at the Residence Life office for \$1. For security purposes, residents must present their Bulldog Card. The key may be kept five days. If the original key is not located by then, the lock will be changed, a new key issued, and the resident will be billed a \$60 lock change fee for a room key. If the mailbox key has to be replaced as well, there is a \$10 lock change fee.

When is the cafeteria open?

UMW Dining Services has an open access meal plan. The cafeteria is open from Monday through Friday 7:00am to 7:00pm with the following minimal closures. In between hot meal time, the cafeteria is open for sandwiches, soups, cereal, fruit and other items.

What if I have a food allergy?

Please contact Katie Hartman, the Culinary Supervisor at her office in Dining Services. She can provide labels from purchased food products or recipes from foods prepared in-house for you to examine and see if they are acceptable for you to consume. Reasonable accommodations will be made if

allergies are so extensive that you have trouble finding sufficient amount of foods that you can eat in Dining Services.

What if I don't have my Bulldog Card at the cafeteria?

It is necessary to have a functioning (able to be scanned) UMW ID every time you visit Dining Services. Service is interrupted and slowed when you don't. A temporary Meal Pass may be obtained at the Residence Life office. This temporary pass will allow you time to get your card replaced. It is your responsibility to take care of your card, a card that does not scan properly will need to be replaced.