

TO: EXCEL Students
FROM: Elaine Belovich, Director
Matt Sopko, Assistant Director
SUBJECT: Fall Semester 2011 Highlights
DATE: August 22nd, 2011

Welcome to the Fall Semester 2011. Please take a moment to read on to find out what will be happening this semester.

NEW STUDENTS! We are happy to welcome our new students to EXCEL, both those who joined us this summer and those we are continuing to accept. If you are a continuing student, please introduce yourself to our new students and help them learn the ropes.

STAFF: Most of the EXCEL staff have returned this year. Robbin is in her usually role providing office support and Matt and Elaine are here to provide advising – academic, financial aid, personal finance, transfer, personal, and career. Don't forget to schedule a meeting with Matt or Elaine to update your Student Action Plan for the semester. And, if you are planning to graduate in December 2011, you must have your Graduation Application turned in to the Registrar by Friday, September 2nd. Your application must be signed by your advisor and your degree plan must be attached. Matt or Elaine will be happy to help with your degree plan. A \$40 nonrefundable processing fee must accompany your application.

Tutoring Coordinator Bernie Ratliff and Academic Specialist Rachel Neumeier have returned to anchor the tutoring staff. They will be joined by veteran peer tutors Lydia Poole, Christin Dush, and Melissa Eckhoff. New to the tutoring staff this semester are Trever Morgan and Matthew Bone. Check the Tutor Schedule, which will be posted on the EXCEL web page, to find out tutor hours and subjects in which tutoring is available. The EXCEL tutoring staff provides tutoring in all general education courses, advanced math and science courses, and many electives. Most tutoring is individual tutoring by appointment. Group tutoring is also an option.

Personal contacts with advisors and tutors are preferred, but *email and phone tutoring and advising are possible options for those who are unable to schedule on-campus meetings.*

FALL ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE (attached): See the attached schedule of workshops and trips that are planned for the fall semester. Sign-up sheets are available in the EXCEL Office – C3.

EMAIL: Don't forget to check your email and the EXCEL web page regularly. Scholarship and SSS Grant Aid applications, workshops, special events, EXCEL trips, and other information are sent to your MAC email address and posted on the EXCEL web page at:

www.mineralarea.edu/students/studentResources/TRIOProgram/excel/default.aspx

LAPTOP, TAPE RECORDER, CALCULATOR, & VIDEO LOANER PROGRAM: Seven laptops are available for short-term loans. EXCEL students may also borrow tape recorders, scientific calculators, and study and personal development skills videos.

SSS GRANT AID & EXCEL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS: SSS Grant Aid will be distributed in the spring semester to qualified EXCEL students. Applications will be available in the EXCEL Office and on the EXCEL web page. *Two \$500 EXCEL Scholarships*, funded by Mineral Area College, will be awarded this fall. Applications will be available by in early September. Check your email for updates!

EXCEL PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS: Returning EXCEL students are required to meet with Matt or Elaine three times each semester. These minimum participation requirements *must be met* to be eligible for SSS Grant Aid, EXCEL scholarships, tutoring, field trips, and short-term loans of laptops and other equipment. The meetings are:

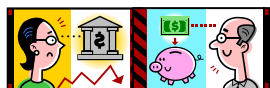
1. SAP Update
2. Mid-semester Review & Class Schedule
3. SAP Review

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EXCEL succeeds only if you succeed. Improve your chance of success by seeking tutoring and advising sooner rather than later. **Use our resources, schedule appointments with us, and let us know how we can help you!** If in doubt, **JUST ASK!**

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and need this publication in an alternative format, notify us at (573) 518-2131. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your special needs.

EXCEL FALL 2011 ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE



What	When	Time	Where	Presenter	Topic
EXCEL Open House	Monday Aug. 22	9:00 AM to 1:00 PM	EXCEL Computer Lab (C2)	EXCEL Staff	Jumpstart the new semester with cookies and conversation!
Workshop -- Dealing With Math Anxiety	Wednesday Aug. 31	10:00 AM to 10:50 AM	A & S Room C9	Rachel Neumeier, Academic Specialist	It's hard enough learning the math -- you don't want to ALSO be dealing with crippling anxiety on the tests! What can you do to cope with this common problem?
Workshop -- Succeeding in Your Classes	Wednesday Sept. 7	10:00 AM to 10:50 AM	A & S Room C9	Rachel Neumeier, Academic Specialist	Proven strategies for succeeding in all your courses - even the ones that are boring or hard (or both).
Workshop -- Money 101: Personal Finance Management	Wednesday Sept. 21	10:00 AM to 10:50 AM	A & S Room C9	TBA	Tips on budgeting, getting out of credit card debt, and managing student loans -- more important than ever in today's rough economy! Attend this workshop and learn what you can do to get control of your finances, even if Washington D.C. can't control their budget!
Workshop -- Writing Successful Comp I Papers	Wednesday Oct. 5	10:00 AM to 10:50 AM	A & S Room C9	Bernie Ratliff, Tutor Coordinator	How to make sure every paper you write gets the best grade possible -- AND make sure you're prepared for Comp II.
SEMO Show-Me Day	Saturday Oct. 8	8:15 AM to 5:00 PM	Meet at the EXCEL Office	Elaine Belovich, Director	Thinking about transferring to SEMO? This is your chance to check out the campus and see if it'd be a good fit for you.
Workshop -- Preparing for a Test	Wednesday Oct. 12	10:00 AM to 10:50 AM	A & S Room C9	Rachel Neumeier, Academic Specialist	Got a test coming up? Maybe more than one on the same day? What can you do to make SURE you're prepared -- plus strategies to avoid "going blank" and other common test-taking crises.
Workshop -- Critical Thinking (In Your Classes and In Life)	Wednesday Oct. 19	10:00 AM to 10:50 AM	A & S Room C9	Rachel Neumeier, Academic Specialist	Critical thinking isn't just for class -- it's REALLY all about making good decisions in every aspect of your life. What do we mean by "critical thinking" and how can you develop the habit?

EXCEL FALL 2011 ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE *continued*



What	When	Time	Where	Presenter	Topic
Workshop -- Increasing Your Self-Confidence	Wednesday Oct. 26	10:00 AM to 10:50 AM	A & S Room C9	Mark Easter, Counselor/Advisor	Do you compare yourself to others and feel that you don't "measure up"? If an instructor or supervisor offers constructive criticism, do you take it personally and/or overreact? Are you afraid of new challenges? Are you reluctant to share your ideas or opinions in class or socially because you think they are not worthwhile? If so, attend this workshop and learn how you can increase your self-confidence!
UMSL Day	Saturday Nov. 12	8:15 AM to 5:00 PM	Meet at the EXCEL Office	Matt Sopko, Assistant Director	Would UMSL be the right place for you to complete your degree? This is your chance to check out the campus and see what you think. Admissions and financial aid sessions are included.
Workshop -- Beating the Odds in a Tough Economy	Wednesday Nov. 16	10:00 AM to 10:50 AM	A & S Room C9	Jenny Campbell, Workforce	Landing a good job is tough these days, even with a degree! So, what can you do to stand out from everyone else applying for the job you want? Attend this workshop to get tips on identifying employment opportunities in your field of study, what to include in your resume, and interview etiquette.
Finals Breather	Wednesday Dec. 12	9:00 AM to 1:00 PM	EXCEL Computer Lab	EXCEL Staff	Join other EXCEL students and staff to unwind from the semester (and recharge for finals).

NOTES:

* Trips to four-year colleges, including all St. Louis colleges, SEMO, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, and Washington University, will be based on student interest. Please contact Robbin or Elaine in the EXCEL Office to schedule a trip to the four-year school of your choice.

** All workshops are generally limited to the first 20 students who sign up. The sign-up sheets are in the EXCEL Computer Lab. Field trips where advance purchase of tickets is required are generally limited to the first 18 students who sign up. Students who sign up for these trips and are "no shows" must reimburse EXCEL for the cost of the ticket UNLESS they find another EXCEL student to take their place. If there is a last-minute emergency and you will not be able to attend an event you have signed up for, please notify Robbin in the EXCEL Office as soon as possible.

For accommodations with any activity or event listed, please contact the Access Office at (573) 518-2152.

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