

TRIO

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

September 2019

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE VISIONS AND RX PROGRAMS

IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome to Fall 2019!

by Gaurav Khanna

Director of the Visions and Rx Programs

It's great to have all of you back for a brand new semester. Summer flew by and we have been busy! TRIO students visited Washington D.C. and experienced many educational and do Senator Warren's staff and discussed the importance of TRIO programs. We also loved seeing so many of you on campus taking classes and in the office. However, we're excited for the fall! The staff of the Visions and Rx Programs have been busy getting ready for your return!

New Staff: We have had a few changes over the summer. Joyce Kulig retired at the end of the spring semester. Emma Lynch, our evening advisor was offered a full time position at Bridgewater State University. Lisa Burns likewise was offered a position at Mt. Holyoke College. Joyce's position is being filled by Lauren Clifford who brings a wealth of TRIO experience to her role. Susan Ivás will be filling our evening advisor role. Kayla Coates is our new staff assistant who you'll see as you enter the office. Lorna Rouleau will be joining us as our SI Biology tutor. Amy and Katt are the new work study students in the office. Stop by the office to say hi and introduce yourself!

Check-ins: We love seeing you and all the energy you bring to the office as you head back to classes. A quick conversation can help us connect you with the resources and strategies you need to be successful this year.

Tutoring: If you know you need help with specific subjects now is the time to sign up tutoring appointments. Tutor schedules are wide open at the beginning of the semester and you can lock in times that work well for your schedule.

Help-a-friend: If you have a friend or classmate who you think would benefit from the services of the Visions and Rx Programs and meets the eligibility criteria (first generation, limited income, or documented disability) feel free to bring them to the TRIO offices!

Every semester is a fresh chance to do well, no matter what the past has been. Let us be your guides and your cheerleaders on your journey—as long as you are committed and dedicated, we stand ready to support you in any way that we can. Let's make this your best semester yet!



Fall Success Strategies

The Visions and Rx staff share their strategies for success.



Popcorn, Planners, & Productivity

Learn more about one of our many activities on pg. 5.



Student Spotlight

Read Hanna's story and how she has become a leader at MWCC.



Mount Wachusett
Community College

AA/EEO Institution

How to Become a “Usual Suspect”: Maximizing your TRIO Resources

by Catherine Maddox-Wiley
Rx Retention Specialist

Congratulations and welcome to the students who are new to the Visions and Rx Programs! Returning students, we are excited to continue your journey with you!

To all of you, **we encourage and expect** your full participation in TRIO. Why? We know that the most successful students are those who utilize support services, seek out resources and participate in their college communities. TRIO students have the benefit of receiving a variety of services from a caring and dedicated staff, all in one location. Our small community within the larger community makes it possible for TRIO advisors, tutors and staff to get to know you, help you identify your strengths and challenges, and implement the strategies, paths and decisions that will help you succeed.

How does all of this come together? Teamwork! TRIO provides the services and encouragement, and you bring your motivation and commitment to your education.

The program requirements are simple, efficient and effective!

Check-ins and Intakes

Early September

Newcomers who attended one of our August orientations are off to a great start! Once classes begin, you will meet with an advisor for a **brief check-in**. We will review your academic plans and finances as well as schedule tutoring appointments and address any concerns you may have.

All **new TRIO students who did not attend an August orientation** must complete an **intake appointment** with a TRIO advisor. It is best to schedule this one-hour appointment by calling the TRIO Office at: 978-630-9297.

Returning students! You know the drill! Stop in or schedule an appointment to **do your check-in**. We want to catch up on your summer and talk about your forward movement.

Gatherings: Lunch is on Us! September, October and December

The Visions and Rx Gatherings help you meet other TRIO students – and we feed you! Perhaps you didn't know that the person sitting next to you in Psy 105 is also a TRIO student. You can meet study-buddies, note-taking partners, and other supportive peers amongst fellow TRIO students as well as make friends. Enjoy the company! Enjoy the pizza! Win raffle prizes!

First up: Kick-Offs

Rx Program
Tuesday, September 10
12:30 – 1:30pm
North Cafe

Visions Program
Wednesday, September 11
12:30 – 1:30pm
North Cafe

Four-Week Assessments October

This is a valuable opportunity for us to catch up on how the mid-way point of the semester is going. You will review your faculty's written evaluations of how you are doing in classes and discuss any early alerts you may have received about your progress in those classes. This is also a time for you to get “pats on the back” for jobs well done and discuss any study strategies and changes you may want to explore. We will also look ahead to events, to-do's and deadlines on the horizon.

Advising and Registration

Early November

Actually, **advising is ongoing**, but in early November, you will meet with a TRIO advisor to talk about updated game plans, career choices and spring semester courses. We will keep you posted as to when to come in to schedule your appointments. Advice: Early is better!

Seminars and Activities for the Student Adventurer in You!

All Semester

Learning does not just take place in classrooms, so each semester, the TRIO Programs offer 15+ events that teach, inspire, and encourage you to discover! Need to tighten up your time management? Are your spending habits hurting rather than helping you? Have you thought about transfer but don't know your options? Do you like exploring and trying new things? We have an event for that! Review our Seminar and Activities handout and schedule events into your planner / calendar. You don't want to miss out!

See us when you need us!

All Semester

The first five items are the minimum expectations for being an active TRIO participant, and you can certainly attend as many activities as you want. The more, the merrier! We are more than happy to provide help with study and test-taking strategies, personal support, FAFSA assistance, career and transfer advice, etc., etc., etc. Have good news? Have questions or concerns? Share with us. We will be “your people.”

We hope you will maximize your college experiences, enjoy your academic journey and let TRIO be part of it all. TRIO is here for you!

Making a Positive First Impression

by Mary Roth

Visions Professional Writing Tutor

Whether you are a first semester or returning student or a job seeker, making a positive first impression will help you succeed in your academic or career goals. Making a positive first impression with your college instructors is a valuable way to create a network of mentors and professional contacts that can propel you toward future opportunities. Creating a positive first impression may sound stressful, but these simple tips can help showcase your best qualities.

Be Prepared. Have all the materials and items you need with you and organized in a way that works well for you. Arriving to class with all your materials sends a clear signal to your instructor that you are serious about learning and that you are motivated and committed enough to prepare beforehand.

Arrive On Time or Early. Being on time or early shows that you respect your instructor's time and his or her need to teach without unnecessary interruptions. It also allows you to choose a seat where you can see and hear the instructor well.

Dress for the Occasion. While many work settings have a formal dress code, most college classes do not. It may seem tempting to roll out of bed and attend class in your pajamas or to throw on sweats and race into class. However, if you want to create a positive impression, dressing for class is a must and does not require lots of effort or money. Clean jeans, a nicer shirt and clean sneakers will suffice for most classrooms and will create a positive impression on both your instructor and any guest speakers or potential employers you might meet on campus.

Use Your Best Manners. College can feel like it is moving so fast that manners are not necessary or even useful, especially if you are running late or under stress. However, using good manners can help you stand out because they demonstrate respect and a level of maturity that professors and potential employers value. Remembering to offer a handshake, hold the door for someone and to say "please," "thank you" and "you're welcome" are all ways of creating a positive impression and a positive and cooperative learning environment.

So, this all sounds good you say, but you're not sure where to begin developing some of these habits? The TRIO program offers helpful seminars and workshops throughout the semester to help you connect with resources on campus, and Visions and Rx students are always welcome to meet individually with the staff to work on developing skills and finding resources. Try these tips out to get a great start with your courses and build a strong foundation for your professional career.

Start Thinking Transfer This Fall

by Sarah Pingeton

Visions Transfer Counselor

Whether you're starting your first semester or last semester this September, it's never too early to start thinking about transfer! If you're interested in getting a Bachelor's degree after your time here at MWCC is over, you have a lot to consider. Getting in the mindset of transfer earlier can help you take advantage of opportunities and make sure you're taking the right classes to optimize transfer. Here I'll answer some FAQs about getting the process started:

When do I need to apply?

Application deadlines vary, but in general they're later than they are for students applying directly out of high school. If you're looking to transfer for January, most deadlines will be in October or November, but some will be as late as December. Make sure to check on the transfer admissions website for schools you're applying to. If you want to transfer for next fall, your application may not be available until after January 1st, so you can skip stressing about it this semester! (For MOST majors! Come

see me if you're thinking you might need to do an audition or submit a portfolio!)

Will all of my credits transfer?

Probably! We have lots of transfer agreements with Massachusetts State Universities and UMass, along with other agreements with private schools throughout New England. Check-in early to be sure your major will transfer the way you want it to! If your major doesn't have a transfer agreement with a school you want to go to, you'll still be able to transfer and likely take most of your credits with you. Make sure you work with an advisor to choose the best possible classes in that case.

How do I find out if a school I'm interested in has my major?

If you have a school in mind, you can check on that school's website! If you're set on a major but haven't yet decided on a school, there are online tools that can help you find

a school. Try bigfuture.collegeboard.org. If you want more help or more information about this, you'll probably want to check out the **Transfer Seminar: Transfer Basics** on **September 30th**!

How will I know if a school is right for me?

Get on campus! The best way to know if a school is going to be a good fit is to take a tour and check it out for yourself. We'll be going on tours throughout the fall semester. You might want to come along on our upcoming trips to **Westfield State University** on **September 27th**, or to **UMass Lowell** on **October 4th**. We can also schedule tours at other colleges and universities, so let us know where you want to go!

Transfer Trips
Westfield State University September 27
UMASS Lowell October 4

CREATING A BUDGET

by Lauren Clifford

Visions Retention Specialist

At one point or another, we all intend on creating a budget and sticking to it. But let's be honest—it can be overwhelming! Like any new challenge, it's best to take it one small step at a time. Here are some tips to get you started:

Put it down on paper- Or in an app. Or a spreadsheet. Whatever method works for you is the best method, but you need to lay out all your income and expenses in one place.

You don't have to reinvent the wheel- There are plenty of great online templates and apps that are available; just find the one that fits your needs!

Be realistic- Everyone has their non-negotiables, and that's okay. If you plan for a budget that cuts out all your favorite things, you'll never stick to it. Decide what you can't live without and account for it in your budget.

Pay yourself first- You have to make savings a priority. We all have the best intentions of putting money aside, but if you wait until after your weekend out with friends, you might find you have less leftover than you expected. So do your future self a favor, and put money in your savings before treating yourself.

Plan ahead- Holiday shopping, vacations, school expenses, and emergencies are all examples of things that can be costly. If you're proactive and start saving in advance, they are easier to fit into your budget.

Be flexible- It can take a few months of trial and error to settle on a budget that works for you, and that's okay. Maybe food costs more than you expected but you had excess allotted for gas. Maybe you've decided you're willing to cut down your Dunkin' trips in order to keep Hulu.

Accountability is key- If possible, it can be helpful to have an accountability partner. Choose a parent, partner, or close friend whom you trust and share with them how your financial wellness journey is going.

Ten Reasons Why Every Student Should Use Google Docs

by Stephanie Giguere

Visions Professional Writing Tutor

1. It's FREE

Need I say more?

2. Easily name and organize documents

To name your document, click on the box that says 'Untitled Document.' Google Docs will suggest a name based on the first few words in the document, but you can name it anything you would like. It's also easy to organize documents into folders.

3. Never lose your work again

Google Docs saves your work automatically. At first, it feels very risky to close the document without clicking a save button, but as long as the computer is still connected to the internet, your document is saved. It also saves all previous versions of the document, so you can look at your complete revision history.

4. Access your work anywhere

Because Google Docs saves your work to the Cloud, you can access your work from any device connected to the internet. Worried you'll lose internet connection? Don't worry—after opening your document, you can continue to work in Google Docs even if you lose internet connection.

5. Easily share files

It's easy to share files with Google Docs. When you share a document with another user, that user will receive an email inviting him or her to review the document. If you are working on a group project, all members of the group can revise and edit the same document at the same time.

6. Compatible with other file formats

Unfortunately, you can't upload Google documents directly to Blackboard, but it is easy to download a Google Doc and save it to your computer as a Word document or .pdf. Once the document is downloaded as a Word document to your computer, you can submit the paper through Blackboard as you normally would.

7. Speech to Text

Want to write your paper without typing? Try using Voice Typing. This option is only available when you are using a Google Chrome browser.

8. Cool add-ons

Add-ons are free, extra features that you can use with Google Docs. There are hundreds of add-ons, and some of them are useful for writing papers.

Here are a few useful examples:

EasyBib: EasyBib makes citing sources easier. Paste the URL of a website into the search bar, and EasyBib will generate a citation and insert it into your document.

SAS writer: SAS Writer is a powerful grammar tool that shows you what sentences may be run-ons or fragments, what words you may have repeated too often, what phrases may be too wordy, and so much more. I highly recommend trying out this add-on!

MLA Formatting: MLA Formatting helps transform your paper into MLA format.

9. Explore the web

Paper too short? Need to add more information? Try using the Explore the Web option on Google Docs. Explore the Web will give you a list of topics you wrote about and invites you to easily research them on the web.

10. It's easy to use

All MWCC students are given a google email (or Gmail) account, so you don't even have to sign up for Google Docs—you already have access to it. If you are comfortable using Microsoft Word, you will find most of the buttons and functions look the same. If you've never used Google Docs before and would like some help, stop by the TRIO office and one of our staff can help you.



Popcorn & Planners

by Lauren Clifford
Visions Retention Specialist



I don't know about you, but when I was in high school I NEVER used my planner. My teachers reminded me at the end of every class what I was expected to take to class the next day, and for the most part, it was always something I could get done in one night.

Fast forward to college. The assignments got longer and more complex. My professors didn't tell me what was due; it was just expected that I would read the syllabus. At first I tried not using a planner—to say the least it did NOT go well.

So why might **YOU** want to try using a planner, even if you haven't in the past:

Everything is in one place. Why flip through all your syllabi when you can have all your assignments in one central location?

You can see when things overlap. When you put ALL your assignments and appointments in one place you can see when things are due at the same time and you can plan accordingly.

You can make your own due dates. Some assignments will be too large to do in one night, maybe even in one week. When you add these assignments to your planner, give yourself a start date and a half-way point to ensure you won't be pulling any all-nighters.

Put in dates for tutoring. If you know when that big project will be due or when that big exam will be, then you can plan ahead to get the support you need.

Have all areas of your life in one place. Work schedule, social commitments, appointments, school work, group meetings, club meetings, family obligations...the list goes on! It can be stressful to try to keep this all in your head; using a planner can help reduce this stress!

Pro Tip: If you're worried you won't remember to review your planner, set an alarm on your phone to remind you until its second nature.

Okay, okay! I know sitting for an hour putting everything in your planner doesn't sound like the time of your life. That's why we are hosting **Popcorn & Planners!** Bring all your syllabi and your planner; we'll provide the popcorn and we'll all hang out together to start the semester off right!



Popcorn & Planners
Sept. 23- 27
12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
TRIO Complex

Fall Semester Checklist

- Buy/Rent textbooks** and gather school supplies
- Attend and **participate in all classes**
- Check-in with your Rx or Visions advisor**
- Attend your program's **Kick-Off Lunch**
- Schedule tutoring**
- Attend at least **one seminar**
- Read the weekly **eletter**
- Build connections** with students, staff and faculty
- Check your email daily**

Use this checklist to make sure you are on the path to success!

Free Passes to the MWCC Fitness Center!

The Rx and Visions Programs have a limited number of free passes to the MWCC Fitness Center. These memberships include access to fitness equipment, classes and more!

If you are interested, please stop by the TRIO Complex by September 18th

Student Spotlight: Hanna Shailer

By Dawn Babineau

Visions Learning Specialist

Visions own Hanna Shailer is a stellar example of overcoming adversity and using it as fuel to craft a new pathway for herself and others around her. We are proud to share with you some highlights of all Hanna has accomplished thus far.

Hanna is a current IDSH student taking the necessary courses for admission into the RN program. Hanna is a very strong student who takes her studies very seriously! If you were on campus this summer, you probably saw her taking not one, but TWO Anatomy and Physiology classes in an advanced format. She is completed the Visions' First Year Experience course. On several occasions, Hanna has graciously been a guest speaker, sharing her thoughts on the benefits of the First Year Experience course and the Visions program services.

Hanna is active both on campus and within her community. Since the age of fifteen she has had the calling to regularly participate in "missions" to support others in need with her church, the Tree of Hope. Several of her missions have been within the States, but she has also visited Chile and in the

upcoming year she will visit Haiti for the third time. This next trip will last 7 months. Hanna says she feels very strongly about this service to others because so many people have shined light on her in her life and now she is in a position to give back.

When asked what social causes she is passionate about, Hanna quickly mentioned food and housing insecurity. She would like to see herself as a champion for helping others to break down the barriers to attaining healthy food and having a place to call home. In her youth, a safe home and a warm meal were not always staples Hanna could depend upon. As an adult, she is now a proud home owner. She is also the student coordinator for the Food Pantry on campus, assisting others with securing nutritious meals when resources are low.

On campus, you are likely to see Hanna in many locations, holding multiple roles. In addition to being the student coordinator of the campus Food Pantry, she is a student leader for the Brewer Center, a work study for the Advising Center, a member of the



Cultural Engagement club, and an active member of the Visions program. In her free time she enjoys spending time at the beach. More times than not however, you can see Hanna tucked away somewhere quiet on campus with her nose in her books trying to realize her dream of being accepted into the nursing program and becoming a Registered Nurse.

Hanna's favorite quote is by James Bryant Conant: "Behold the turtle. He makes progress only when he sticks his neck out." She says this quote rings true to her because sometimes you have to step out of your comfort zone to say yes to achieve your dreams.

Meet our New Staff



Lauren Clifford

Visions Retention Specialist

Lauren earned her bachelors in Elementary Education and Psychology from UMaine and her M.Ed. in Higher Education from Merrimack College. She has spent the last 5 years working for Fitchburg State's TRIO SSS program and was a Talent Search/Upward Bound student herself. Lauren lives in Fitchburg with her family and enjoys baking and being creative in her free time. She is looking forward to getting to know everyone here in the Visions & Rx programs!

Lauren is in the office Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:00pm



Kayla Coates

Visions Staff Assistant

Kayla is excited to be part of this great team! She has her BA in Communication Studies from Plymouth State University. In her free time, she loves taking Zumba classes, going to the movies and watching the latest Marvel film, bargain shopping and enjoying beach days. She's very happy to be back in a college environment and helping students!

Stop by to see Kayla, who is here Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

TRIO Takes D.C.

In May, eighteen students along with Gaurav, Alaina and Joyce visited Washington, D.C. This trip included a college tour at George Washington University, a tour of the National Mall as well as a trip to the Capitol. During this four-day trip, not only did students and staff learn about the history and culture of Washington D.C. and its influence in modern-day America, but they also formed friendships that will last a lifetime.



Meet Your TRIO Community at the Fall Kick-Off

Rx Program Kick-Off Lunch

Tuesday,
September 10, 2019
12:30-1:30 p.m.
North Café

Visions Program Kick-Off Lunch

Wednesday,
September 11, 2019
12:30-1:30 p.m.
North Café

Susan Ivas



Visions Academic Advisor

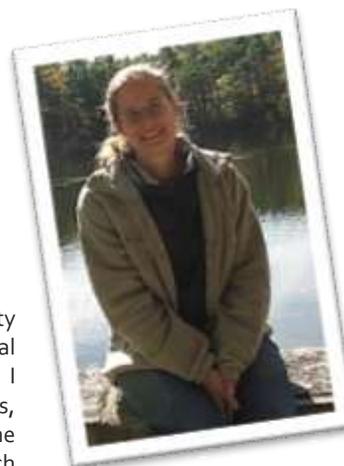
After spending many years as an educator and counselor, I welcome the opportunity to continue in this role at MWCC. I am a central Mass native and therefore an avid Patriots and Bruins fan. I enjoy gardening, travel and yoga and attempt to play tennis and golf. Since I enjoy meeting new and interesting people, I am delighted to be a new addition to the MWCC staff

Susan is available Monday-Thursday 1:30 – 6:00 p.m.

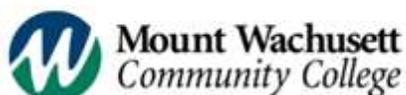
Lorna Rouleau

BIO 113 Supplemental Instructor

I'm a former high school and community college biology instructor with a BA in Liberal Studies and an MA in Science Education. I grew up in Minnesota, but have lived in Texas, England, the United Arab Emirates and for the last seven years, New England! I spend much of my free time with my family on our homestead micro-farm, where we keep bees, chickens, and milk goats, as well as tend to a backyard market garden and tap our trees for maple syrup. Whenever possible, I love to experiment with fermented foods, take long walks, go sea-glass hunting, and curl up with a good book and a hot cup of cocoa.



Stop by and welcome the new staff to our TRIO family!



444 Green Street, Gardner, MA 01440-1000

Start Smart with Your Check-In

Complete your semester check-in during the first two weeks of the semester to maximize your success.

September 2019 Calendar of Events		Check your email daily for the most up-to-date information on program events and campus news				
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Labor Day: No classes all campuses, day and evening	3	4 First Day of Classes!	5	6	7
8	9	10 Rx Kick Off 12:30-1:30 p.m. North Café Full Semester & Cycle 1: Last day to add classes and drop classes with 100% refund.	11 Visions Kick Off 12:30-1:30 p.m. North Café	12	13	14
15	16 Boot Camp: MyMathLab 12:30-1:30 p.m. W12	17 Boot Camp: Google Doc 12:30-1:30 p.m. W12 Full Semester & Cycle 1: Last day to withdraw with 50% refund	18 Boot Camp: Read Write Gold 12:30-1:30 p.m. W12	19 Boot Camp: ENG 101 12:30-1:30 p.m. W12	20	21
22	23 TEAS Workshop 12:30-1:30 p.m. W11	24	25	26 TEAS Workshop 12:30-1:30 p.m. W11	27 Transfer Trip to Westfield State See Sarah or Alaina for more info!	28
All this week: Popcorn & Planners 12:30-1:30 p.m. TRIO Complex						
29	30 Transfer Seminar: Transfer Basics 12:30-1:30 p.m. W11 Transfer for Healthcare Majors 12:30-1:30 p.m. RM 202					
If you have a disability and require accommodation in order to participate fully in program activities, please contact the Program Director to discuss your specific needs. Affirmative Action/ Equal Opportunity Institution						