FAQ Resource for New Students

Introduction
This document was compiled from existing documents so that you as a new student have a handy resource as you begin your academic career here at Ship. This list is not meant to be exhaustive. Rather it is a place to begin. As you explore the information listed here, you will discover many additional resources that you will be able to use to help you be successful here at Shippensburg University.

The items below have been grouped into three general categories: 1) offices that can provide assistance to you; 2) policies that you need to follow; and 3) other items that should be helpful to you.

Offices You Should Know About and Use

1. Financial Aid Office
   Much financial aid is governed by federal and state laws so it is very important that all steps in the process are followed accurately. All questions related to paying for college using available financial aid need to be directed to the financial aid office. Their office is located in 101 Old Main and their web page is http://www.ship.edu/financial_aid/. You should contact a financial aid representative whenever you have a question.

   A few general points to remember about financial aid. Because financial aid is complicated, you are not expected to know all of the specifics. But you should know there may be serious financial consequences for not completing at least the current semester. In addition,
   - If the number of credits you are taking in any semester drops below 12 credits, financial aid is typically impacted in a negative way.
   - If your grades are too low, some forms of financial aid will be negatively impacted.
   - If you quit college and leave without properly completing the withdrawal paperwork, you may be required to pay back some or all of their financial aid.
   - Even after completing the proper withdrawal paperwork, there may be financial consequences for withdrawing during a semester.
   - There is a “Last Dollar” fund available for students who need just a bit more money to stay in college. Details are available from the financial aid office.

2. Student Accounts Office
   Directions for paying your University bills can be found at http://www.ship.edu/Student_Accounts/Billing_Payment/ The Student Accounts Office is in Old Main 100.

   Students who do not make payment for scheduled classes will have their schedules canceled and will not be permitted to attend class until or unless they make payment. Students who do not pay by the billing deadline will be assessed a $100 late fee. Remember, it is always best to contact the office before the payment deadline if you are not sure you can make the payment.
NO REFUNDS will be issued for ANY CLASSES dropped after the end of the schedule adjustment period, generally the 8th or 9th day of each semester. Visit http://www.ship.edu/Student_Accounts/Refund_Schedule/ to review refund information and schedule.

3. **Housing Office**
Information about on-campus housing can be found at http://www.ship.edu/housing/
Multiple options for on-campus housing are available and the costs vary based on the options included in the housing chosen. Costs for on-campus housing are billed through your Shippensburg account.

If you are interested in off-campus housing, you will find that information at http://www.ship.edu/Housing/Off_Campus/Off_Campus_Housing/ It is important to note that the Shippensburg University Foundation is a separate but affiliated organization. Housing obtained through the foundation is off-campus housing even though many of their communities border campus. The above web site also gives information about various landlords who offer rental housing in the local Shippensburg community. Off-campus housing is not billed through your university account so financial arrangements must be made directly with the off-campus provider.

If housing issues become/create a financial problem, you should discuss your particular circumstances with the Associate Director of Housing and Residence Life Administration.

4. **University Bookstore – Textbooks and Other Materials**
The university bookstore (http://www.bkstr.com/shippensburgstore/home/en) has information on required and recommended books for all courses along with a variety of options available to students and parents. While you are not required to purchase your books through the SU bookstore, it is the official source for information about what materials professors are expecting students to use for each course.

Professors generally assume that students will read the designated textbook as background information for the course. While some professors lecture from the textbook, many will provide much additional material not found in the textbook. It is important that you understand you are expected to have access to the textbook required for each course.

You also need to know the difference between a required item, a recommended item and a suggested item when it comes to books/supplies needed for any class.
- **Required** means the professor expects you to have access to the materials and expects you to know what is contained in the assigned portions of that material.
- **Recommended** materials generally contain supplemental information or sometimes the same information in a different format. They are not required but if you are struggling in a class, using one of the supplemental items might increase your learning/understanding of the topic.
- Suggested items are generally items that a student with a keen interest in one or more of the specific topics that are covered in class will find interesting and informative. Suggested items provide students a starting place for additional study of the subject above and beyond what is expected for the class. But as with the recommended materials, a struggling student may find an item or two in the suggested materials that helps get them “over the hump” in understanding material for a given class.

Textbooks may be obtained in a variety of ways and in different formats. Some are available electronically. Some are available for a rental fee. Many are available as used books for a reduced price. Most are available as new books but often at a very expensive price. The library typically purchases copies of some of the most used textbooks that you may use in the library. In addition, many professors put an extra copy or two of the specific textbook for their course on reserve in the library. These may be checked out for a 3-hour block of time for use in the library only. Friends in the same class may also buy one book and share it. This works for books that have only text but not for any type of workbook that has problems to solve or activities to complete.

A word of caution if you are interested in rented, used, and shared textbooks. Publishers sometimes include an Access Code that is required to open additional (and sometimes necessary) information online. These Access Codes are typically restricted to the original owner of the textbook.

5. Calculator Loaner Program
All students who are currently enrolled in a Ship math class are eligible for the calculator load program. This includes graphing and non-graphing calculators. You need to follow these steps:
   a. Take your student ID card to the check-out desk in Lehman library and let the attendant know you want to borrow a calculator
   b. You will be asked to sign a liability waiver. You will be fined if calculator is not returned and eventually, a hold will be put on your SU account
   c. Calculators must be returned during finals week, preferably after your math class final exam.

6. The Learning Center
Academic help of various types can be obtained at the Learning Center, located on the main floor of Lehman Library. They offer a wide array of programs and services for all members of the campus community.

The Learning Center provides:
• Free tutoring provided by CRLA trained undergraduate and graduate students in most general education courses and many upper level courses.
• Small group tutoring in most general education courses and many upper level courses.
• Writing tutoring to help students with all stages of the composing process.
• Synchronous online writing tutoring for graduate students.
• Grammar workshops to help students gain proficiency with troublesome grammar rules.
• A wide variety of web resources for writing and study skills topics.
• Opportunities for students to meet individually with professional learning specialists.
• The Academic Improvement Plan that helps students develop skills and strategies to raise their cumulative GPA.
• A menu of study skill resources is available on the Learning Center’s website.

You may also make an appointment to complete a study skills assessment or work with a graduate assistant on a specific study skill. Professional learning specialists work with students who have more significant learning difficulties and students with disabilities who need academic support. You can learn more about Learning Center programs and the services they offer by stopping by the center, by calling 477-1420, or by visiting their website [www.ship.edu/learning](http://www.ship.edu/learning).

7. **Office of Disability Services (ODS)**

If you have an identified disability that may impact your academic success, you should register with ODS in Horton Hall 312. This office approves any accommodations you may need to be successful in your college coursework. However, registration with this office needs to be done at the beginning of the semester, not on the day before your first test. For more information, go to [http://www.ship.edu/ODS/](http://www.ship.edu/ODS/).

You do need to be aware that in college, you must be your own advocate. Parents are no longer permitted to be involved in the process. An IEP (Individualized Education Plan) or 504 Plan that was approved for you in high school will NOT automatically transfer to the college level. However, you may want to share those plans with ODS. If accommodations are approved, your professors will be informed by ODS. Professors are not required to honor any requests for accommodations except those requests that come from ODS.

Frequently, a first-year college student decides he/she has “outgrown” the need for any kind of disability services so he/she does not bother registering with ODS. It is prudent that, if you qualify, you register with ODS as soon as possible during your first semester at Ship, even if you think now you do not need the extra assistance. If you do NOT need to use the services you are entitled to receive, you have not lost anything by registering. However, if you do not register with ODS and you begin to struggle academically, there will probably be a significant time lag between the date of registration and the date when the accommodations can be implemented. If you are already struggling, you do not want to waste any additional time without help.

8. **Academic Advising Center**

Academic success at Ship is ultimately YOUR responsibility. You are encouraged to make sure you understand the requirements of your particular academic discipline/major. Academic/faculty advisors are one resource provided to help you be successful. Advisors are assigned from within the academic department of your declared major.

If you have not yet declared a major, you will have an advisor assigned to you through the Office of Exploratory Studies. Your assigned advisor’s name can be found in your
myShip portal under academics. The Advising Center (http://www.ship.edu/advising/) has a collection of information and resources for both you and your academic advisor.

9. Early Alert System Office
The early warning system at SU serves two purposes. It provides faculty with the chance to identify students who may be in need of intervention while there is still time to provide academic assistance. Identified students are contacted by the Early Alert Coordinator who meets with them to provide immediate assistance in meeting student needs. This is not a counseling service nor is it punitive. The coordinator helps each student develop an action plan targeted to meet the needs of the individual student to overcome obstacles to success.

The system also provides you with realistic, important, mid-semester feedback about how you are performing in your classes. You can learn more information about the early warning grade system by going to http://www.ship.edu/AdvisingArchive/Student_Resources/Early_Warning_System_FAQs/.

Early warning grades are informational only. They are NEVER included in your academic record and are NOT included in any GPA/QPA calculations. Early warning grades are collected and distributed strictly to give you an indication of your academic standing at the approximate mid-point in the semester.

10. University Counseling Center (UCC)
The UCC offers free, confidential counseling and psychological services for a wide range of issues, from personal growth and development to mental health concerns. Services include individual, couples and group counseling, crisis intervention and psychiatric services for undergraduate and graduate students; as well as prevention and consultation services for the entire university community.

Typical student concerns include the following: depression; anxiety; self-critical feelings; academic concerns, including procrastination and time management; sleeping problems; uncertainty about future/life after college; finances; relationships with family, friends, roommates or romantic partners; problems with body image, eating or weight; sexual concerns; and alcohol and other drug abuse.

The UCC is accredited by the International Association of Counseling Services, Inc. UCC records are confidential and do not become a part of students’ academic records. Only with a client’s written permission will information be released to anyone outside of the UCC, except as required by law. The UCC is located in the Wellness Center on the ground floor of Naugle Hall, and is open Monday through Friday, 8:30a.m. to 5:00p.m. when classes are in session. Call 477-1481 or visit www.ship.edu/~counctr for more information.
11. Etter Health Center
The Etter Health Center is also located in the Wellness Center on the ground floor of Naugle Hall. The health center is staffed by a physician and registered nurses. Routine services are provided to students at no cost and many medications are provided free or at minimal cost.

Appointments with a nurse or the physician can be made by calling the health center. For more information regarding health services, visit their website at www.ship.edu/health_center

12. Career and Community Engagement Center (CCEC)
The CCEC staff is excited to provide support to Shippensburg University undergraduate and graduate students, alumni up to one year post-graduation, faculty, staff, families, and employers and organizations. They offer a comprehensive range of services to all the populations they serve.

It is never too early to start planning your career. The CCEC staff can assist you with choosing a major/minor, finding an on-campus job, building a resume, finding a service opportunity, navigating the interview process and so much more. Take advantage of their services and schedule a one-on-one appointment today.

The CCEC staff also work with employers and organizations in the Shippensburg area and beyond; creating relationships that result in jobs, internships, and volunteer opportunities for Ship students and alumni.

You are invited to visit them in their office located on the second floor of the Ceddia Union Building (CUB) 108, directly behind the Multi-Purpose Room (MPR). They are open Monday- Friday 8:00 am-4:30 pm. You can stop by their office or call their front desk to schedule an appointment: (717) 477-1484. You can also email them at career@ship.edu

13. Jobs Office
While the college experience can be considered a full-time commitment, it is understood that many college students need some type of work while enrolled at Ship to help meet their financial obligations. You can find information about on-campus jobs at www.ship.edu/Career/On-Campus_Student_Employment/

The Career and Community Engagement Center also has information about employers in the immediate area who are looking for students who want to work part-time. You also have the option of finding your own employment through off-campus connections.

14. Student Senate Office
The Student Association’s purpose is to form a more representative, unifying, responsible student government; to develop and encourage positive relations between the students, the faculty, and the administration; to promote favorable relationships between the University and the community; to maintain a high quality of student life which ensures
every student’s rights and privileges; and to appropriate Student Association funds to
student groups in the best interest of all students.

For more information concerning the Student Association structure, Constitution and By-
Laws, visit their website at http://ssi.ship.edu/senate/ or stop by their office located in
CUB Room 201.

Student Activity Fee
The Student Activity fee is used to fund the numerous extracurricular student activities
on campus, including men’s and women’s intercollegiate athletics, intramural athletics,
club sports, classes and councils, performing arts, student media groups, and the
Activities Program Board (APB).

Student Groups
For a complete listing of Student Groups, contact the Student Senate Office at 477-1651,
visit their office in CUB 201 or visit their website http://clubs.ship.edu
Policies Students Should Know and Follow

1. **Course grades**
   The grade you receive for any course offered at SU is determined by the course professor. How your grade is determined for each course should be outlined in the course syllabus made available to all students enrolled in the course early in the semester. If you do not understand the process outlined in the syllabus, you should talk to the course professor to get clarification.

   Using the process outlined in the syllabus, you should be able to keep track of your grade as each completed assignment is graded and returned. If the professor is using a point system, you need to remember that an “A” on a 10-point assignment is good but not nearly as significant as an “A” on a 100 point assignment. It is the total number of points that matter, not the number of “A” grades.

2. **GPA/QPA and How It Is Calculated**
   GPA (grade point average which is also known as QPA – quality point average) is a numeric way to calculate a student’s academic progress in college. A student’s GPA/QPA ranges from a 4.0 (an “A” grade in all courses) to a 0.0 (an “F” grade in all courses). Each student’s semester GPA/QPA is calculated at the end of every semester and is included in the transcript section of the student’s myShip account. Each student also has a cumulative GPA/QPA based on all of the courses the individual has taken at Ship. Transfer grades are generally NOT included in the GPA/QPA calculations.

   A GPA of 2.0 or higher is required for graduation with a bachelor’s degree although some majors have higher GPA requirements (i.e., PA requires a cumulative graduation GPA of 3.0 or higher for anyone wanting to be certified as a K-12 teacher). For more information on GPA and how it is calculated refer to http://www.ship.edu/Advising/Instructions_on_Computing_your_GPA/

3. **Predicting Future or Desired GPA**
   There are a number of resources available to help you identify what grades you will need to obtain to earn a specific GPA. One can be found at the Ship Learning Center web site http://learning.ship.edu/ld.php?content_id=18031413

   The University of Kansas (KU) has a calculator that does the same as the one above. However, it also allows you to calculate how many semester hours are required to raise your GPA to a certain minimum and/or what semester GPA you will need to raise your overall GPA. The KU calculator can be found at https://degreeprogress.ku.edu/gpa
   Simply enter Ship data where the web site asks for KU data.

4. **Transfer credits**
   Students who have taken college-level work before enrolling at Ship have all of their transfer credits evaluated and included in their Ship record as part of the admission process.
As a person who is currently enrolled as a student at SU, you may take classes at another institution. However, before those credits can be counted as part of the required credits you need for graduation from SU, permission must be obtained using the undergraduate course transfer request form. When this form has been completed and approved, the transfer course will be counted as part of your graduation requirements at SU as long as a grade of C or higher is obtained and an official transcript is received by SU from the other institution showing the grade earned.

NOTE: You are NOT permitted to take an equivalent course at another institution to replace a failed grade in a course originally taken at Ship. To have an “F” grade dropped from GPA calculations, the same course must be retaken here at SU.

5. FERPA
The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. FERPA restricts who has access to those records including with whom SU personnel may talk about a student’s performance as a Ship student. For more information about how FERPA impacts parents, students and faculty, go to http://www.ship.edu/registrar/FERPA

In general, no information about you, beyond basic demographic information, can be shared with any non-Ship academic personnel without your written permission. You also have the right to withdraw any written permission previously submitted. You may be asked to sign multiple FERPA release forms in different offices for different purposes.

6. Drop/Add procedures
Scheduling of classes is done online through your myShip portal during designated registration times each semester. After meeting with your academic advisor, you will be given a registration pin and a registration time. You may register for (add) classes any time after the listed registration time. Please be advised that skipping a class to meet a specific registration time will NOT be counted as an excused absence. During the designated drop/add period of time, you may drop and add classes as often as necessary to create the schedule that will allow you to meet your academic goals.

You may also use your myShip portal to withdraw from a single class after the drop/add period ends. If you need to withdraw from all of your classes, you should visit www.ship.edu/Registrar/Withdrawal_Request_Form/ for more information. You should always check with your advisor and/or with the financial aid office about the impact that withdrawing from one or more classes may have on your financial aid.

7. Ship E-mail and Password
It is SU policy that only the assigned Ship e-mail address is used for all official university communications with students. You may use any e-mail address to contact professors or in communication with other students. However, all official communication from Ship will be sent to you using your official Ship e-mail address. The Ship catalog indicates that you need to check your Ship e-mail at least four times each week, even during breaks, vacations, and summers. Not reading an e-mail notice cannot be used as an excuse for failure to meet deadlines or to meet communicated expectations.
Your Ship e-mail address is typically the your first and last initials followed by a computer-generated, random, 4-digit number and @ship.edu. Typically, the e-mail address remains the same even if you change last names because of marriage, divorce, or other reason. Your e-mail address remains active as long as you are enrolled at Ship. If you take a leave of absence for any reason, you must send a notice to IT asking that your Ship e-mail account remain active. Ship e-mail accounts are deactivated within 4-6 weeks following graduation or withdrawal from the university. However, if you return to take additional classes or to earn an advanced degree, the original e-mail address will generally be reactivated.

You MUST change your Ship e-mail account password every 90 days. Your e-mail account will get a system-generated e-mail every day for the 2-weeks before the current password expires. That e-mail provides directions for changing the password. Since passwords may expire over winter break or during the summer, it is wise for you to check your Ship e-mail account four times a week even when you are off campus. It is much easier and involves much less hassle to change the current password before it expires than it is to have the account reopened after it has been deactivated for an outdated password.

8. **myShip**

Your myShip is the portal that allows you access to the entire campus information system. This portal uses the same login and password as your Ship e-mail account and allows you to access all of the various systems used on campus. Your myShip portal can be accessed from the SU homepage or by going to [https://manifest.ship.edu/myship/login](https://manifest.ship.edu/myship/login).

9. **Technology issues/questions**

Access to the University’s computing/information network facilities and resources is a privilege granted solely to Shippensburg University faculty, staff, registered students, those with special accounts, and individuals using public access computers. All users of the computing/information network facilities must act responsibly and maintain the integrity of these resources. The University reserves the right to limit, to restrict, or to extend computing/information network privileges and access to its resources. You should be aware of the more specific policies outlined in the [*Swataney*](https://manifest.ship.edu/myship/login).

There are computer labs in CUB 124, GRH 124, MCT 054, MCT 158 and SPH 240. The technology help desk is available to answer questions at ext. 4357. There also are laptops that can be checked out and used in the library on a temporary basis.

10. **D2L**

D2L is short for Desire2Learn, the learning management system used by SU. For more information about D2L, you should check out [http://ask.library.ship.edu/faq/17108](http://ask.library.ship.edu/faq/17108).

11. **Student Conduct**

There is a structure and process related to the student conduct system at Shippensburg University. The Dean of Students and designees bear the responsibility for administering the process and ensuring that all participants are accorded fundamental fairness. It should
be noted that the strict rules of evidence and procedures used in criminal and civil courts do not apply. A “preponderance of the evidence” standard is used to make all student conduct decisions. For an individual to be found “in violation” according to a preponderance of the evidence standard, the decision must be based upon evidence sufficient to make a reasonable person believe that a fact sought to be proved is more likely true than not.

For more information, refer to the current issue of the Swataney.

12. Turnitin

Turnitin is a computer program that compares a student’s written work to already published works. It is used to identify possible evidence of plagiarism. It is accessed through Desire2Learn (D2L), the learning management system used by SU. Individual professors will give you specific directions for any course/assignment that requires you to use this service.
Other Items of Interest

1. Dining Services
   The Dining Service website, www.dineoncampus.com/ship provides you with a quick look at the daily menu, the ability to find operating hours/locations, the opportunity to submit a favorite recipe and the ability to manage your dining service meal plan account. There is an online comment card to capture and route any feedback, as well as weekly polls, and you can find wellness resources there, also.

2. Fraternity/Sorority Organizations
   Shippensburg University recognizes that Greek social organizations are an integral part of the university community, and that they can make a positive contribution to the co-curricular environment of the campus and to individual students’ growth and development.

   It is further recognized that a special relationship exists between the University and the fraternities and sororities, and there is a need to define this relationship clearly, so both parties understand the rights and responsibilities of University recognized fraternities and sororities.

   For the most up-to-date information about joining/participating in a fraternity/sorority, visit the Greek Life website at www.ship.edu/greeks

3. Ship ID Number
   All Ship ID numbers are only a 9-digit number even though your Ship ID card has 11 digits. The last 2 digits on the Ship ID card represent the # of the actual card that has have been issued to you, beginning with 01. If you lose that ID card, the ID#-01 will be deactivated (so no one else can use it) and a new ID card will be issued to you with the same ID#-02. This procedure ensures that your unique ID number remains unchanged even if multiple ID cards need to be issued to you.

4. Ask Us Anything
   The Ezra Lehman Memorial Library has an electronic “Ask Us Anything” feature on their web page. Not only will they answer your current question(s), but the page also lists answers already given to prior questions. This feature can be accessed at http://ask.library.ship.edu