The time has come for students to decide on their housing plans for the 2014-2015 academic year. For students who currently reside in on-campus housing and want to do so again next year, return housing applications are now open. A $250 deposit will be required when making the reservation. The application process will stop when students reach the point where they must select rooms. Students will come back to this portion of the application later in the semester during their Room Reservation Timeslots. A Room Reservation Timeslot is assigned based on the date of a student’s deposit, so it is important for students to complete the first part of the application as soon as possible.

For students who choose to live off-campus next year, ODU’s off-campus housing site can be an invaluable resource. Students can find out more information about their responsibilities as tenants, as well as their landlords’ responsibilities. There is also a list of questions to ask the landlord and other things to find out about before signing a lease, as well as information about how to set up their utilities and how to budget their money appropriately. Finally, the website also provides listings of off-campus properties to suit a variety of budgets and living arrangements. Students should also keep an eye on the university calendar for the off-campus housing fair later this semester.
Getting Where They Need to Go

ODU offers 3 shuttle bus routes to help students get around campus and the surrounding area, a great option for those without a car.

- The **Monarch Loop** route services the perimeter of campus and all the residence halls. A bus leaves every 10 minutes from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and every 15 minutes from 6 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

- The **Wal-Mart/Kroger** route takes students off-campus to go shopping for groceries and other supplies. A bus leaves campus every hour on Fridays from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. and every half hour on Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

- The **Ghent/MacArthur** route takes students off-campus to go shopping, dine out or go to the movies. A bus leaves campus every half hour on Fridays from 6 p.m. to 12:30 a.m., Saturdays from noon to 12:30 a.m. and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Sports Spotlight

**ODU Women’s Tennis**

vs Howard 4-1 (W)
vs Norfolk State 7-0 (W)
@ Penn 4-3 (W)
Next game: vs Maryland 2/7

Monarch Pride

ODU’s Dr. Helen Crompton, an assistant professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning, has been selected to join a team of nine experts from around the world to work on a project for the United Nations. Dr. Crompton was selected for the international team based on her expertise in mobile learning.

Important Information for Tax Season

Tax season is upon us, and when filing your taxes, keep in mind that students and their families may be able to claim an education tax credit. To do so, tax preparers will need a copy of the student’s 1098T, a statement of **qualified college tuition charges** from the previous year. All eligible students were issued a form on January 31, for the 2013 calendar year. The form was sent to the student’s permanent address on file with ODU. See **IRS Publication 970** for more information about education tax credits.

Tax season also means it is time to fill out the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid**. This application is required for any student who wants to apply for financial aid, such as federal grants, loans or work-study. The application asks for **federal tax return information**, but those who have not yet filed their taxes can use estimated income information and later return to provide the correct data. The priority deadline for filing the application is February 15. It is important for students to complete the FAFSA by this date in order to have access to the widest availability of financial aid. Even if students have completed the FAFSA before, it must be filed again each year to apply for aid.
This month, new tolls are impacting the commutes of ODU students who travel between Portsmouth and Norfolk. Electronic tolling has been instituted on both the Downtown and Midtown Tunnels, and drivers will pay $0.75 during off-peak hours and $1.00 during peak hours, which are Monday through Friday from 5:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Drivers without an E-ZPass will be billed by mail and charged additional administrative fees. It may be more cost-effective for commuter students who use these routes frequently to purchase an E-ZPass. E-ZPasses can be purchased online, by phone or at various retail locations and can be used on all Virginia toll roads as well as those in 14 other states.

**ODU Alerts**

ODU Alerts is the University’s urgent notification system, which provides ODU with a way to contact students via text messages, email, instant messages, and phone calls in any urgent situations. This includes any time there is a required action on the part of the university community, such as sheltering from a storm, cancelling classes, or avoiding a dangerous situation on campus. The messages are sent from either University Relations or ODU Police. Students can sign up for ODU Alerts here. They can list up to six contact methods, and when there is an alert, the system will cycle through these contact methods to deliver the message, starting with the first available. It will continue to cycle through the contacts until the student confirms receiving the message.

**Career Preparation Programs**

Spring semester is a great time for students to prepare for their future careers. Whether your student is a senior about to graduate and start that first job or a freshman who has not even decided on a major yet, it is never too early to start preparing. The Career Management Center offers a variety of programs to help. First, on February 11, students can attend a workshop to find out more about how to dress for success in their careers. Then they can attend mock interviews on February 12 to brush up on their interview skills. Finally, students who are interested in teaching can attend the Teacher Recruitment Fair on February 18. Encourage your student to get a head start on career preparation with one of these great events.

**Healthy Habits**

In the weeks leading up to spring break, students may start to feel a bit restless. They can help fight cabin fever by

- Getting outside for a bit, even if it’s cold.
- Taking time to do some spring cleaning.
- Trying a new restaurant or activity.
- Finding volunteer opportunities.

**Numbers to Know**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Management Center</th>
<th>757.683.4388</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing and Residence Life</td>
<td>757.683.4283</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office of Finance</td>
<td>757.683.3030</td>
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<tr>
<td>Police Department</td>
<td>757.683.4000</td>
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<td>Student Health Services</td>
<td>757.683.3132</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Transition and Family Programs</td>
<td>757.683.3428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and Parking Services</td>
<td>757.683.4004</td>
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