TAX SEASON IS UPON US. . .

Filing taxes is a real-world wake up call. As a student, do you know when to file a tax return and what deductions and credits are available to you?

1. What if you attend school outside your home state?
   Your federal tax return should be filed with the IRS based on your permanent address. State taxes are a different story and you need to check your local state tax code to determine if you must file a return.

2. Do you have to pay taxes on a scholarship?
   You do not have to pay taxes if the scholarship is used to cover the cost of tuition and required fees. Money used to pay for housing, travel, and research is taxable and should be included with wages on the W-2.

3. Are there any tax breaks?
   The American Opportunity Tax Credit is good for the first two years of college and can be claimed twice per student. This tax savings offers up to $1,500 in savings.

4. When is my tax return due and what records do I keep?
   Federal returns are due April 15, state deadlines vary. You should keep all your receipts for tuition and books, scholarship information, financial aid, and any proof of enrollment.

BICYCLING ON CAMPUS

All bicycles parked on campus are required to be registered, either by SIU or by the City of Carbondale. Registering your bicycle aids the Department of Public Safety and local law enforcement agencies with the recovery of your bicycle in the event of loss or theft.

The SIU Parking Division registers bicycles for students and staff for free. You must bring your bicycle along with your student/staff ID to our office to complete the registration process. You can complete a registration form at the Parking Division when you bring your bicycle and student/staff ID to obtain your decal.

The Parking Division cannot register any bicycles without the following required equipment:

- Reflectors on each pedal
- Side reflectors
- Front and rear reflectors
- Front white lamp and rear red lamp or reflectors (required at night).

For complete rules and regulations, click HERE.
Spring break is a time for students to relax and escape the everyday grind of college, but it has also become notorious for traveling to party spots and engaging in risky behaviors. Make this year's spring break memorable by having fun and helping yourself, your friends, and others stay safe and healthy. Remember you can be held responsible at SIU for what happens on Spring Break.

**Don’t put yourself at risk**

- Follow the local laws of your destination.
- Be aware of your surroundings, do not travel alone, and avoid dark, isolated or questionable areas.
- Always keep hotel and balcony doors locked.
- For security and fire safety reasons, choose a hotel room between the 2nd and 6th floors.
- Check to see if your health insurance coverage is valid out of state or out of the country.
- Remember to bring prescriptions in their original labeled containers with your name.
- Decide as a group what your plans are: If you leave as a group, come home as a group. **DON’T LEAVE ANYONE BEHIND!!**
- Designate a driver before going out, or put money aside for a cab.

If you become the victim of a crime, contact the local police to report the incident and get immediate help. If you or someone you know has been a victim of crime overseas, please contact the Office of Overseas Citizens Services at 1-888-407-4747 (from overseas: 202-501-4444) or the **U.S. Embassy or Consulate** nearest you.

*Article by Mary Stark, DPS Police Officer*

**Crime Prevention Programs**

DPS offers several educational crime prevention programs and safety services to the campus and surrounding communities. The Crime Prevention Program is comprised of officers who provide public relations programming to university affiliated persons, other schools, and community groups by request. Programs offered are:

- Alcohol, Drugs, and DUI - General information about the effects of alcohol and drugs and how they can affect your daily life.
- Basic Crime Prevention - Basic Crime Prevention techniques you can use in your home or car.
- Sexual Assault/Common Sense Self Defense - General information and techniques to avoid becoming a victim of sexual assault. This does not include physical self defense training.
- Violence in the Workplace - Current information to help you recognize and combat violence in your workplace. Offered the first Wednesday of every month at 3:00 P.M. at the SIU Police Department.

To request a program, please contact Sgt. Willmore or Ofc. Cox at 453-3771.
Identity theft occurs when someone uses another's personal identifying information, such as their name, identifying number, or credit card number without their permission to commit fraud or other crimes.

To guard against identity theft, minimize the amount of identification information that you carry on your person. Try not to carry your Social Security card in the event you lose your purse or wallet. Put passwords on your credit card, bank, and phone accounts, but do not use an obvious password such as your birthday, address, or phone number. Never provide personal information over the phone, through the mail, or over the internet, unless you have initiated the contact or know who you are dealing with. Frequently check your online bank or paper statements for unauthorized charges.

If you think you are the victim of identity theft, notify your credit card companies and banks immediately. Notify the police to file a report as soon as possible. Supply them with as much information as you can. Call the national credit reporting organizations immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Security number. For more information, click here.

Calling All Game of Thrones Fans & Red Cross Blood Donors

To celebrate the final season of Game of Thrones, HBO and the Red Cross have partnered to ask fans and blood donors to Bleed #ForTheThrone this March. This is the largest blood donation promotional effort by an entertainment company in Red Cross history. As part of the partnership, fans who come to donate blood or platelets with the Red Cross now through March 17 will automatically be entered for a chance to win one of five trips to the season 8 world premiere of Game of Thrones. The trip includes travel for two, up to two nights hotel accommodations and a $250 gift card for expenses. Terms and conditions apply and are available at RedCrossBlood.org/HBOGameofThrones.

Additionally, fans who donate at the Carbondale City Hall, located at 200 South Illinois Ave., on March 11 will receive exclusive Game of Thrones swag including a T-shirt, stickers to unlock a unique Snapchat filter and other items, while supplies last.

Newsletter ideas or topics

If you have a topic or idea you would like us to consider for a future newsletter please email the idea to Sgt. Allan Willmore at allanw@dps.siu.edu. Questions submitted may be featured in future newsletters. The person submitting the question will not be identified.
Mental Health: Depression and Resources Available

College can be an exciting time. It can also be overwhelming and stressful. College students are faced with difficult to handle situations in regards to academics, finances, and relationships. The most common conditions that college students face is depression. Be supportive of friends and family who are experiencing a mental health condition and assist them with getting professional help. If these conditions are left untreated, they can become debilitating and worse for a college student over time. If you or a friend is experiencing any of the symptoms described here or other conditions that affect your day-to-day life, take action now. The following information is not a substitute for treatment, but resources and assistance that can help to identify signs and symptoms of depression and anxiety disorders.

Depression is the number one reason students drop out of school and can lead to other illness and suicide if left untreated. Depression wears many faces among college students with nearly 37% of college students reporting they have experienced some level of depression in 2013. (Association for University and College Counseling Center Directors) Depression is a common but a serious illness that leaves a person feeling discouraged, helpless, detached from the world, and interferes with life, making it difficult to attend school, work, study, sleep, and eat.

Symptoms are different from person to person and are caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain. For this reason symptoms emerge differently in everyone, but there are similarities that can be seen in a person suffering from depression. Symptoms may include: feelings of sadness, change in appetite, slowed speech or thinking, loss of interest in activities or social events, sleeplessness, loss of energy, feelings of guilt or anger, trouble concentrating, or thoughts of dying, death, and suicide.

Everyone faces some of the above symptoms, but that may not mean you or a friend is depressed. If these symptoms are becoming regular or several of the symptoms are occurring at the same time, it is time to seek assistance.

If you or someone you know is experiencing any of the above symptoms, please contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at the SIU Student Health Center. CAPS provides crisis walk-in counseling, therapy groups, and individual and couples counseling. Appointments can be made by calling 618-453-5371 or in person at their office located in room 253 of the Student Health Center. More information about CAPS, additional self help resources, parents resources, and faculty resources can be found at the Counseling and Psychological Services website.