



# Student Engagement

**50 CAMPUS INITIATIVES TO MOTIVATE  
AND ENGAGE TODAY'S STUDENTS**

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# Student Appreciation Week Emphasizes Familiarity and Belonging at Montclair State

Montclair State University (NJ) held over 50 events and activities during its first Student Appreciation Week in October 2022. The goal was to show students how appreciated they are while also helping them become more familiar with the university and its offerings.

Student life and academic offices throughout campus sponsored the activities. They included a pizza social with President Jonathan Koppell and the Volunteer Center so students who participated in Hurricane Ian relief efforts

## Activities for Student Appreciation Week

Here's a sampling of Montclair's activities and who sponsored them...

### **GET WARM INSIDE THE KASSER THEATER!**

With hot cider and goodies. *Sponsored by Arts + Cultural Programming/CART Performance Operation*

### **MAKE YOUR SPACE GREEN (PLANT**

**GIVEAWAY)** *Sponsored by the Department of Earth & Environmental Studies*

### **ECONOMICS HONOR SOCIETY MEET AND**

**GREET & BAKE SALE** *Sponsored by the Economics Department*

### **"DEAR ME" GOAL PLANNING EXERCISE**

*Sponsored by the Office of Student Belonging*

### **REC NIGHTS CUPCAKE DECORATING**

*Sponsored by Campus Recreation*

**TRICK OR TREAT** *Sponsored by the Global Center on Human Trafficking*

**THE OFFICE TRIVIA** *Sponsored by the Center for Student Involvement*

**COOKIES AND FAQs** *Sponsored by the Office of Student Accounts and Financial Aid Office*

**VISIT STUDY ABROAD** *Sponsored by the Study Abroad Office*



See the full list of activities here: <https://montclair.campuslabs.com/engage/news/265625>.

could chat with the president. Other activities included craft nights, self-care kits, De-Stress with the Deans, last chance voter registration, karaoke, a barbecue hosted by the facilities department, free LinkedIn headshots, guest speakers and much more (see box on previous page).

### A Focus on Belonging

Belonging is a key piece of the appreciation week, according to Red Hawk Central director Tara Zurlo. “I do hope that there are some impactful moments of feeling truly appreciated,” she said. “We want to really bring it to them in a way that they can feel it and understand that they belong here.”

“At Montclair State University, we always pride ourselves on putting students first,” said vice president for enrollment management Wendy Lin-Cook. “We have many offices and services to ensure our students have a successful academic career and enjoy their campus life. Our first student appreciation week is designed for our students to get to know us better so they can take better advantage of what is available to them.”

“*You are the heart and soul of Montclair State University! The academic and administrative offices got together to plan activities to connect with our students and show you that you belong here.*”

— Student Appreciation Week 2022 site

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**Sources:** Student Appreciation Week 2022 listing, <https://montclair.campuslabs.com/engage/news/265625>; Montclair University News, 10/13/22

# U. of Tenn. Knoxville Pays Students to Reconnect with Campus Life

At the University of Tennessee Knoxville (UT), returning students have been re-engaging with the on-campus experience through the “Vols Start Back” program. It’s so named because members of the UT community are called “Volunteers.” Students participate in a zero credit-hour seminar that is customized around key success topics and activities that take place from August to October.

The program is solely designed for continuing UT students, helping them reconnect to campus life. According to UT’s Division of Student Success, students who participate in Vols Start Back will:

- “Participate in engagement activities focused on developing the five elements of well-being: academic and career, social, financial, physical, and community well-being.
- Understand how engaging in campus activities can foster holistic well-being and collegiate success.
- Apply knowledge of holistic well-being to future academic and career planning.”

## Five Key Learning Opportunities

Vols Start Back consists of five customized modules, including:

1. **SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT** This module allows participants to explore the over 500 student organizations as well as how to connect with peers, faculty and staff to find their campus fit.
2. **ACADEMICS & CAREERS** This module reminds students of the UT resources available to support their academic life, from the Vol Study Center to Vol Success Tips. Plus, it helps prepare them for what’s next after UT through self-discovery, experiential learning, building professional connections, and demonstrating their story and qualifications to employers and graduate schools.

### Paid to Participate

What’s the incentive, beyond learning, since it’s a zero-credit program? Students receive a \$50 award for registering for the program and \$200 to complete it. University officials told WBIR.com that students can choose to receive the award directly or have it applied to their student account balance.

3. **FINANCIAL WELLBEING** This module connects students with professionals and resources to assist in managing their finances, reducing financial stress, and enhancing their economic well-being now and in the future.
4. **MENTAL & PHYSICAL HEALTH** This module emphasizes how good mental and physical health is a cornerstone to overall success. Students are introduced to campus psychological and physical health resources, from the Counseling Center to RecSports, and more.
5. **COMMUNITY BUILDING** This module stresses how UT is “a community where everyone belongs and every story matters.” Participants will learn how to engage with the UT community and encourage others to do so, too. As the Vols Start Back site says, “Being a Volunteer means showing up as your authentic self, stepping forward, and having the courage to act.”

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**Sources:** Division of Student Success “Vols Start Back FAQs,” <https://studentsuccess.utk.edu/faq/>; WBIR.com, 8/13/21



# Earning Presence Involvement Points at Washington State University Global Campus

Students at the Washington State University Global Campus earn Presence Involvement Points by attending various events, meetings, workshops and more, with different point values offered for each one. Students may also earn points by responding to surveys.

Events include anything from a Time Management workshop to a course on Stress Management to participating in a Mental Health Check-in. Training programs such as the Campus Connect two-hour suicide prevention training and a Mental Health First Aid workshop are also available.

Each campus engagement opportunity is listed via their online hub, with the number of Involvement Points for each one highlighted in green.

## And Then There are Prizes!

Once students earn a few Involvement Points, they may redeem them for college swag funded through the WSU Global Campus Services and Activities (S&A) fees. Prizes may only be awarded to current Global Campus students who pay S&A fees as part of their tuition. Those students enrolled in certain programs who do not pay S&A fees are not eligible for prizes.

College swag includes:

- A stainless steel drink mug for 100 points
- A WSU Cougars license plate frame for 200 points
- A WSU baseball cap for 300 points

## The Point System

Global Campus students can earn points by attending Global Campus events, with the following point values assigned to each event type:

- **GAME/ACTIVITY** (i.e., Bingo, Trivia, Pictionary, etc.) = 10 points
- **WEBINARS** 20 points
- **ONLINE OPEN FORUMS** (i.e., Book Club, Cougs & Cubs, Town Halls, etc.) = 30 points
- **BONUS** When specified, participation in student surveys could also award students points

- A WSU banner flag for 400 points

Students can redeem their points online by filling out a Points Redemption Form.

**Source:** Washington State University Global Campus Student Involvement Headquarters, <https://globalcampus-wsu.presence.io/>

# OnTheGo Commuter Programs Engage UNC Greensboro's Commuter Students

University of North Carolina Greensboro (UNCG) OnTheGo programs meet commuters where they are to engage them in campus life. Daytime programs often meet in parking lots, academic buildings and the University Center.

They include...

- **SPARTAN HOUR TUESDAYS** often feature food truck rodeos, programs and unique student experiences from 11 am to 2 pm each Tuesday.
- **ONTHEGO & FIT PROGRAMS** harken back to UNCG's designated "Walking Period" that used to be required of students from 5 to 5:45 pm each afternoon to promote the "health of the students and for the good of their souls." Now students are encouraged to get exercise to relieve stress or clear their heads amidst their busy lives. They can log their activities and participation in wellness programs through the OnTheGo & Fit Log. Plus, UNCG Dining promotes MyFitnessPal as a way for students to log their meals and their exercise.
- **ONTHEGO & FIT WALKING TRAILS** were created by staff in Human Resources to give campus community members an easy way to fit in some recreation. Maps of the seven .7- to 2.1-mile campus walks are available online and in the University Center.

## Being Accessible to Commuter Students

Here are some other services that are designed to engage commuter students in campus life at UNCG...

**UNCG's Writing and Speaking Centers** have evening hours during the week and are also open on Sunday afternoons into the early evening. Plus, they have online consultations available for commuters who need assistance but aren't scheduled to be on campus.

**The Jackson Library** is open 24-hours-a-day from Sunday-Thursday and is also food/drink-friendly so students can eat while they work.

**The Campus Rec Center** is open to commuter students with families on weekends, beginning Fridays at 5 pm. Parents, spouses, partners and kids are welcome to share recreation together.

- **COMMUTER APPRECIATION DAY** happens in the springtime, providing commuter students with treats throughout the day.
- **COFFEE CARTS** are held several times each semester in some of the busiest campus areas, both indoors and outdoors, depending on the weather. They offer free hot chocolate and coffee.
- **A FAMILY-FRIENDLY PROGRAMMING LOGO** is attached to certain campus programs that students can participate in with their children or other family members.



You can learn more at: <https://cap.uncg.edu/onthego/programs/>.

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