



**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY**  
WASHINGTON, DC  
OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

December 5, 2014

Dear American University Student:

**Winter Break is almost here!!** You'll be busy over the next week studying, writing, and taking final exams; then you'll be packing to travel home or elsewhere. In the midst of your hectic schedules, keep in mind the following tips to stay safe and healthy:

**Feeling the Stress? Take care of yourself!**

- Maintain a balanced diet; avoid too much caffeine and go easy on the holiday treats!
- Get some sleep; take a nice winter's nap!
- Spend some time at the Jacob or Cassell Fitness Center or go for a quick walk.

**Celebrating with friends? Be careful and be considerate of your neighbors!**

- If you go out on the town, make plans for when and how you will return home.
- If you host a gathering, take steps to monitor and control your guests' behavior. Keep noise levels to a minimum, and end your party at a reasonable hour.
- Look after your friends and ask them to look after you.

**Decorating for the Holidays? Be Safe!**

- Don't overload electrical outlets and remember to turn off holiday lights and extinguish candles before going to bed or leaving your place.
- If you have a live Christmas tree, keep the stand filled with water at all times and never place live or artificial trees close to a heat source.
- Take down and put away outdoor decorations before you leave. You will be glad you did when you return in January, and your neighbors will be grateful too!

**Leaving for the winter break? Secure your residence and make it ready for your return!**

- Remove perishable food from your refrigerator and agree that the last roommate to leave takes out the trash! If you are leaving on a day when trash is not collected, ask a neighbor to assist you by putting out and bringing in your trashcans from the street.
- Lock all windows and doors; set lights on a timer; secure valuables or take them home with you.
- Save money and energy! Set your heat to low but no lower than 60 degrees.
- Make arrangements for snow removal while you are away if you are required to do so as a tenant.
- Provide contact information to a neighbor or two in the event they need to reach you during the break.

**Have a restful break and Best of luck on final exams....see you in 2015!**

Sincerely,  
*Michelle Espinosa*  
Associate Dean of Students