

Student issues concerning transitions: A month by month assessment....

September

- “ Homesickness - especially for freshmen
- “ Roommate conflicts caused by personality differences, lack of understanding and unwillingness to compromise or the new experience of having to live with someone.
- “ Initial adjustment to academic environment - feelings of inadequacy and inferiority develop because of the discrepancy between high school status and grades and initial college performance. Class size, especially in mass lecture halls, lack of personal interest by professors and performance expectations are also major factors.
- “ Values exploration - students are confronted with questions of conscience over conflict areas of race and alcohol experimentation, morality, religion and social expectations.
- “ New social life adjustments - including new freedom of not having to check with parents about what time to be in, having the opportunity to experience new areas, making your own decisions on when to conduct social activities and establishing yourself in a peer group.
- “ Initial social rejections - creates feeling of inadequacy when not immediately accepted in a peer group, or into a social sorority or fraternity.
- “ In-loco prentis problems - students feel depressed

- because of real or perceived restrictive policies and regulations of the college.
- “ Campus familiarization - includes becoming familiar with campus, classrooms, buildings and meeting places.
- “ Long distance relationship - torn between being loyal to your significant other from home and going out with new people. Can the expectations of both people be adequately met?
- “ Financial adjustment - involves adjusting to a somewhat tighter budget now that they are in schools opposed to when they were living at home. Students who are supporting themselves have to adjust to budgeting their money also.
- “ International student adjustment - experience a sense of confusion, vulnerability and a lack of any advocate in higher positions while trying to make a successful cultural and academic transition.
- “ Family problems seem amplified because the student may either be caught in the middle, relied on for the answer or because they are far away, feeling helpless in helping reach a solution.
- “ Adjusting to "Administrative Red Tape" with students soon realizing that it is usually a long and frustrating process when trying to find an answer to what seems to be a simple question, or trying to work something through the administrative process.

October

- “ Academic stress from midterms builds with the great demand for studying and preparation. For some students this may be their first exam of the semester. For many, the midterm workload pressures are followed by feelings of failure and loss of self-esteem.
 - “ Roommate problems continue, but they are smaller in scope than previous months.
 - “ Values exploration continuing, especially in the area of sexuality.
 - “ Dating/non-dating/friendship anxieties extremely high. Non-dating students feel a sense of loss of esteem because so much value is placed upon dating.
- For women who do date, the pressure to perform sexually increases and consequently increases feelings of rejection, loneliness and guilt and in some instances leads to unwanted pregnancies.
- “ Homesickness may be still felt by a number of students.
 - “ Job panic for mid-year graduates starts with the onset of resume preparation and interviewing.
 - “ Students decide to withdraw from school because they either realize that college is not the place for them, they return home for personal reasons or they transfer to another school.

- “ Grief from not being part of a group develops because of inadequate skills for finding a group, or from not being selected by one.
 - “ Financial strain sets in from lack of budgeting experience.
 - “ Homecoming blues develop because of no date for social affairs, and/or lack of ability/opportunity to participate in activities.
 - “ Graduate school syndrome starts to emerge from graduating seniors. Signing up for graduate school exams, wondering if you will be accepted, wondering which school to apply to and questioning whether graduate school is the right thing to do.
 - “ Time conflicts between academic and social expectation emerges.
 - “ Signing up for classes involves starting to think about the following semester
 - “ Adjusting to new study habits includes not just being able to study the way they did in high school.
- More time and greater workload needs to be incorporated into their schedule for studying.
- “ Disenchantment with school - low reward level because student begins to realize that life at college is not as perfect as they were led to believe by parents, teachers and counselors. Old problems seem to continue and new ones are added. An external reality they had put their hopes in has failed them.

November

- “ Increasing thoughts/deliberations about suicide occur from inability to cope with the pressures of academic and social expectations.
- “ Academic pressure begins to mount because of procrastination, difficulty of work assigned and lack of ability.
- “ Pre-finals stress starts to emerge as preparation begins for taking the exams.
 - “ Time management conflicts continue.
 - “ Social apathy causes frustration because of academic pressures.
 - “ Depression and anxiety increase because of feelings that one should have adjusted to the college environment.
 - “ Economic anxieties increase from increase because funds from parents and summer earnings begin to run out; loans become due.
 - “ Problems develop due to increased alcohol consumption because students see this as an easy acceptable way to relieve stress and from not knowing how to handle alcohol responsibility.

- “ Pregnancies start to show.
- “ Roommate problems may start to emerge again. This is mostly due to the pressure of school; tempers become shorter and people are less tolerant of others.
 - “ Deteriorating health starts to affect performance. Reasons include the changing weather and either lack of food quality or the negative feelings about institutional foods. Students tend to eat more ice cream and salads because they don't find as much red meat, yogurt etc. on the line or the lack of new items force them to eat other places. Health is also affected by the perceived inadequacies of the student health center.
 - “ Students have given up making attempts to establish new friendships beyond two or three parasitic relationships.
 - “ Living unit dissension causes uncomfortable feelings with residents. Results from apathy, academic pressures, need for vacation from school.

December

- “ Increasing thought/deliberation about suicide occur from inability to cope with the pressures of academic and social expectations.
- “ Final exam pressures including anxiety, fear and guilt increase as exams approach and papers become due. Increased use of alcohol and drugs is related.
- “ Extracurricular time strains - seasonal parties, concerts, social service projects and religious

- activities drain student energies.
- “ Financial worries occur with the thought of Christmas gifts and travel costs.
- “ Pre-holiday blues emerges, especially for those who have concerns for family, those who have no home because of family conflicts.
- “ Friendship tensions become high with the onset of final exams.
- “ Pressure increases to perform sexually because of the approach of vacation and the extended separation.

January

- “ Anxiety about second semester performance begins since they did not do as well as expected the previous semester, and they have added pressure of doing well to be able to stay in school or to keep grades competitive with their peers.
- “ Some students lose a loved one, a friend or significant other by death over the break and they find it hard to share the happiness and joy others experienced over the break.
- “ Moving to a new environment causes feelings of intrusion because students move onto a unit where most of the friendships have been established,

- priorities set and expectations understood. Unfamiliarity with campus also creates some anxiety.
- “ Money problems begin because students were unable to find jobs over the holiday break.
- “ Post-holiday depression occurs at the beginning because students are away from the security and positive strokes.
- “ Some students experience unwanted weight gains over the break with the holiday foods and home cooking.
- “ Reincorporating social and academic life is difficult at first with not having to worry about school for an extended period.

February

- “ Hourly exams and other academic pressures approach.
- “ Depending upon the weather, some people will experience cabin fever if the weather forces them to stay inside for a lengthy period of time. With the lack of organized activities to compensate for this, anti-social behavior sometimes occurs, such as excessive property damage.
- “ Vocational choice anxieties set in with the onset of job interviews.
- “ Worry of hunting for a summer job begins. This is especially high for students who were unable to find work during the Holiday break.
- “ Relationship anxieties increase as either couples begin to strengthen their ties (engagement) or experiencing weakening relationships.
- “ Fall housing planning begins with trying to tentatively decide about living arrangements.

March

- “ Increasing thoughts/deliberations about suicide occur from an inability to cope with the pressures of

academic and social expectations.

- “ Academic pressures increase with the approach of mid-term exams.
- “ With the pressures of the end of the semester approaching, many students start to increase their use of alcohol and drugs. This can cause them any problems, both biologically and behaviorally.
- “ Existential crisis for seniors - Must I leave school? Is my education worth anything? Was my major a mistake? Why go on?
- “ Living arrangement anxieties occur with the forcing of decisions - Should I move out? Live in the same building? Stay with the same roommate? Will a friend be left out of the plan?
- “ Summer job hunting will be heavy over spring break. Worry about finding a job or not finding one will cause severe anxiety.
- “ Trying to find money to use for spring break is a problem, especially when your peers are going to a place other than home and you are not able to join them.

April

- “ Increasing thoughts/deliberations about suicide occur from an inability to cope with the pressures of academic and social expectations.
- “ Academic pressures increase with the end of the semester approaching.
 - “ Paper and hourly exams approach.
- “ With nicer weather, women fear the threat of sexual assault.
 - “ Summer job pressures continue.
 - “ Senior job recruitment panic continues.
- “ Financial strain from spring break affects social life.
- “ Many students are forced to select a major and are not sure what field they would like to enter.
 - “ Social life pressures increase during this time period - formal dances, parties, concerts.
- “ With spring arriving, everyone wants to fall in love. Many students go through rejection or the fear of rejection or envy towards their friends who have successfully found a significant other.
 - “ Frustration from being ill because weather changes so dramatically. Causes colds, lethargic feelings and limits their social commitments.
 - “ As the pressures build, students tend to become disenchanted with many normal services and food service is the primary target. They tend to get tired of eating "the same old" institutional food.

May/June

- “ Increasing thoughts/deliberations about suicide occur from an inability to cope with the pressures of academic and social expectations.
- “ Anxiety develops because of the realization that the year is ending and a deficiency in a number of

- academic areas still exists.
 - “ Finals pressures are at a critical level with papers, take-home exams and studying. Some of the major effects of the pressure include; increased use of coffee, no-doz, vivarin, and amphetamines; and increase or decrease in floor consumption. Less sleep and a lower tolerance level with friends/peers.
- “ Senior job panic about employment (or lack of) increases as well as trying to determine how to finance oneself until the first paycheck arrives.
- “ Summer job pressures increase for those who have not yet found one.
 - “ Anxiety for couples who will be separated for the summer. Also, the fear that their significant other will find someone else while they're apart.
- “ Depression over having to leave the friends and people that they have grown close to during the school year.
 - “ Anxiety of having to go home after having been independent the past year, especially if they are having conflicts without their parents.