It is that time of year, midterms are over, the weather has changed, finals are approaching, and students are facing some of the highest levels of stress! Stress is a normal part of the university experience. It is quite normal for students to tell friends and family that they feel behind, pressure to get good grades, and that they need to study more. Students that are able to successfully identify and create strategies to manage stress during their university years are more likely to handle stress in their careers and personal lives after they graduate.

We know that managing stress is one of the keys to a successful and enjoyable university experience, but what are the main sources of stress? I will present the most common sources of stress that I have seen at the University of Regina Counselling Services, as well as some solutions:

1. Adjustment to university. While this seems like an obvious choice, many students do not recognize all the supports they had in high school that were just there waiting to help them out. In high school, most students had teachers that would provide them with reminders about when assignments were due and feedback as to how they were performing academically. In university, due to class size and instructor’s time, this is not always possible. University professors are more than willing to help students out, if the student asks for the help. Office hours are a great time for students to clear up any questions about their course, as well as an opportunity for the student to get feedback about assignments or exams.

2. Lack of Healthy Habits. While pulling an “all nighter” may seem like a good idea at the time, 7-8 hours of sleep are generally required to be able to function as a student. Other common health habits that fall by the wayside during the semester include proper nutrition, exercise, and socializing. I always find it amazing that many students report making exercise, nutrition, sleep, and socializing a regular part of their daily lives when things are going well, but when midterms come around these are the first activities that they stop doing. Students that find a way to add healthy habits during the semester are much more likely to report manageable levels of stress.

3. Trying to do it all. One of the biggest sources of stress I see from students is the belief that they should be perfect in every assignment or exam they write. The truth is, most students get better over the course of their university career and many students have found out just how much their grades can improve if they develop better academic skills. There are numerous programs and supports offered by the university that help students become better at being a student. Time management, note taking, research librarians, and writing support are just a few of the services offered to students. Best of all, many of these services are free to the student, the only cost is time!

The main point for each student to remember is that there is a lot of support offered by the University of Regina if they are feeling overwhelmed. There are numerous programs and supports put in place to help students manage stress and perform better academically, but it is up to each student to recognize they need help and to seek it out.

Dr. Kent Klippenstine
Manager, Counselling Services
Getting Involved — A Student’s Perspective

Some students have difficulty finding the time or motivation for extracurricular activities, especially if they have jobs. However, in my opinion getting involved on campus helps ensure that students have the best university experience possible.

My parents have been very supportive of my involvement, and I have found all of the things I am a part of to be very rewarding. Right now, I am involved in the University’s Concert Choir, Wind Ensemble, and Orchestra. I am also the Vice President of the Campion College Students’ Union and the secretary of the Music Students’ Association. I am part of the Campion Connect Mentorship Program, the UR Guarantee Program, and I work as a student assistant at the Student Success Centre.

Even though I am a busy student with seventeen credit hour semesters and work, I have been able to fit all of these activities and studying time into my schedule. These activities and programs have helped me through my university career and help me make the most of my time here. Being involved, I have made new friends and new connections with people around campus. I have also gained valuable knowledge on how to plan an event, how to connect with other students and the community, and the value of teamwork. From my experience, and from what I have learned from others, students should not only focus on academics, but they should also have an enjoyable university experience.

As well, I have found that many workplaces and scholarship applications ask what kind of activities students have participated in. They like to see that students have been proactive in the community and have balance in their lives.

While I am involved in many different activities, some students may want to get involved in just one or two things in order to maintain balance in their lives. There are many opportunities to get involved at the University of Regina, and many of them don’t take up much time. I encourage parents to be supportive of their children and remind them of the importance to have fun and make great memories in university.

Shina Hom
3rd Year
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