Is Vacation Over Already??

Feeling overwhelmed and not yet ready for books, homework, tuition, term papers, and tests?

The transition from vacation to school is sometimes difficult. The demands of school, assignments, deadlines, jobs, new roommates, course requirements, class waiting lists, and fees may at times feel overwhelming and discouraging.

University Counseling Services has found that the following may be helpful:

Prioritize

Make a list if the items that are overwhelming (e.g. errands, assignments, registration, tasks, etc.) and list them in order of urgency and due dates. Once these are prioritized, concentrate on the top of the list, taking care of the items in consecutive order. Focus on each item one (or two) at a time rather than the entire list, which is overwhelming.

Create Calendar Flow Charts

If you’re overwhelmed by too many deadlines and due dates, create calendar flow charts to visually organize which important dates need attending to first. If the deadline requires smaller steps that need to be completed prior to the deadline, organize subsections of the work and set up smaller “sub-deadlines” for yourself that would ensure that the entire assignment will be finished on time. If these sub-deadlines are distributed to allow a reasonable time for completion, adherence to the flow chart will facilitate completion of the entire assignment on time.

Create Balance

Require yourself to be devoted exclusively to school, work, and other obligations without allowing reasonable breaks for fun; or indulging in play exclusively at the avoidance of responsibilities may eventually create psychological stress, depression, or burn-out. It is ultimately more productive if a reasonable balance between work and play can be achieved.

Deal With Feelings

Holding negative feelings inside (or trying to numb oneself with excessive food, alcohol, drugs, etc.) may at first feel soothing, but eventually leads to additional problems that just compound the original ones. While it may feel like the suppression of negative feelings is an effective coping mechanism, these avoided feelings may create other problems (disturbed sleep, anxiety, depression, troubled social relationships, medical symptoms, etc.) that exacerbate your distress.
Take One Day At A Time
(or One Hour At A Time)

Focus on one day at a time (or even one hour at a time) if necessary. If you are stressed, don’t focus on all of your semester obligations, future coursework and life goals simultaneously.

Minimize Study Distractions

Since it is often difficult after vacation to switch back into “study mode”, use the library to study. The library offers a more academic environment with minimal distractions along with the constant companionship of others who are also studying. If you initially feel resistant and still unable to get into study mode, stick with it in order to decrease your resistance.

Reduce Loneliness and Homesickness

Join clubs or organizations with activities that are of interest to you. Even a connection with one nurturing friend or social group can diminish feelings of loneliness or the longing for family and old friends. (If developing relationships are a problem for you, counselors are available to help you with social anxiety.)

Minimize Procrastination

Procrastination with schoolwork, household tasks, and all other obligations ultimately intensifies stress and pressure. Reading assignments completed on time prevents falling behind which then makes subsequent assignments overwhelming (and makes class discussions more confusing). Procrastination creates a temptation for more procrastination, which ultimately compounds stress.

Ask For Help

Everyone needs assistance sometimes. Allow yourself to ask for help from a counselor if you are feeling too overwhelmed to handle your problems by yourself. University Counseling Services is provided on a confidential basis, so that your personal problems do not become part of your academic file.

Utilize Resources

CSUN students have access to a large variety of resources. It is helpful to familiarize yourself with these so that you can receive assistance when needed.

Referral Sources

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING SERVICES
Bayramian Hall, 5th Floor, Room 520
(818) 677-2366 | TTY (818) 677-7834
FAX (818) 677-7910
www.csun.edu/counseling

STUDENT HEALTH CENTER
(818) 677-3666 | TTY (818) 677-3692

LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER
(818) 677-2033

California State University
Northridge

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING SERVICES
Bayramian Hall, 5th Floor, Room 520
(818) 677-2366 | TTY (818) 677-7834
FAX (818) 677-2371