

Calendar of First Year Issues



What's Happening with Your Student At Baldwin-Wallace College

AUGUST

- They are adjusting to a new life, new responsibilities, new relationships, new roommates, and new freedoms. The first six weeks of college are a challenging time for new students who are trying to make these adjustments all at once.
- They are excited about moving away from home but may also be homesick.
- They may be insecure about fitting in, being as smart as everyone else, or navigating unfamiliar surroundings.
- They are separated from friends, loved ones, and familiar surroundings.
- They are unsure of what to expect academically – the unknown workload and expectations from faculty.
- They are starting over. They are no longer a big fish in a small pond and no one here knows their former status in high school (this may be a relief for some students; a concern for others). International students may sense confusion, vulnerability and lack of any advocate in power positions.

Meeting
new
friends

SEPTEMBER

- “In loco Parentis Blues”: students feel depressed because of real or perceived restrictive policies and regulations of the college.
- They are questioning their identity, pushing boundaries, and experimenting with new things. Experimenting may include challenging previous beliefs about religion or politics, experimenting with alcohol/drugs or sexual activity, and challenging social norms.
- They may have trouble managing time. In September, it's common for students to have a false sense of comfort because papers and projects aren't due until October, and this may lead to procrastination.
- They are learning about opportunities to get involved with campus groups and should be open to trying new things.
- They are starting to understand what worked for high school academics won't necessarily work for college and that a new level of work is expected. This may result in feelings of inadequacy, and they may ask themselves, “Can I really make it here?”
- Some may be experiencing test anxiety, time management challenges and/or have roommate conflicts.
- A new trend with college students is an increased dependence on high school friends, which enables them to avoid getting involved with new people and the college community. The presence of cell phones, email, and instant messaging now make it easier than ever to keep in touch with old friends at other colleges, and it results in an increased feeling of “not fitting in” at their new college.

OCTOBER

- They are stressed out about tests and midterms. They may have fallen behind in September because they weren't accustomed to the type of time management skills required for college.
- They may receive their first college grades, if not sooner, on papers, exams and projects. This helps students understand what professors expect of them. It may also mean that a student realizes they are no longer "top of the class," and students who once got all A's now get B's and C's. Students may feel like a failure or lose self-esteem because they are unaccustomed to receiving poor grades.
- They are facing competing social demands. Students who got involved in too many campus organizations may have trouble balancing the demands of the organizations with the demands of coursework.
- They will begin to work on papers and must learn to navigate a college library system. The library system is an important campus resource, but because it is different from libraries that they have used in the past, it may be intimidating.
- They are learning to manage their own money and may have trouble sticking to a budget. College presents many pressures to spend money – pizza, movies, clothes, etc., and they may run out of money sooner than expected.



Keep
Studying

NOVEMBER

- They may get sick as the change in weather brings on cold and flu season.
- Stress levels are high as academic demands continue and many papers and projects are also due. They also begin to realize that the term is almost over. Procrastinators may panic as they face the consequences of falling behind in coursework. Students may pull "all-nighters" to get work done.
- Students may get very little sleep, neglect proper nutrition or exercise, increasing vulnerability for illness.
- Some students will have financial concerns as the money they budgeted for the semester runs out earlier than planned. They may turn to credit cards to help them in their budget crunch.
- They try to make time for parents who may be visiting.
- They will continue to struggle with time management and balancing social activities with academics.



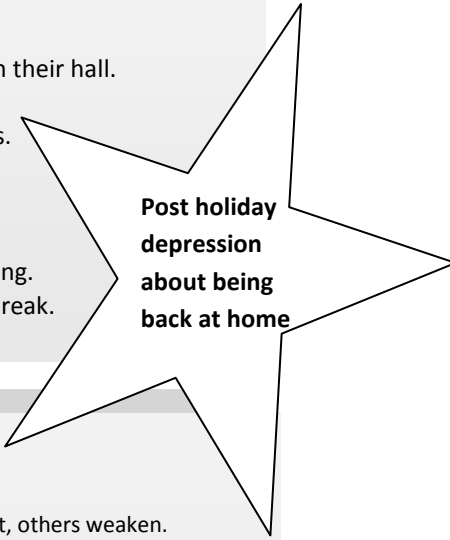
Stay
warm

DECEMBER

- After Thanksgiving, there is very little time until finals. Term papers and projects are due, and they may be the longest papers or projects that students have ever done. Students will continue to be stressed.
- They will be stressed about finals. For freshmen, this will be their first experience with college finals and they will have the added fear of the unknown.
- They will probably sleep a lot over the winter break as they try to "catch up" on four months' worth of lost sleep!
- Pre-Holiday depression for some especially those who have concerns for family. Some won't be able to go home to visit and those who can't go home because of family conflicts.
- Financial strain because of pressure to get holiday gifts and for some, stressing over travel plans & costs.
- Anxiety or internal pressure for those who want to go home to see family and friends
- Final realization that some may not be able to return for second semester due to grades.
- Many may wonder if their major is really right for them.
- Continued thoughts/deliberations about suicide due to grades.
- Realization that they have made it through the first semester (joy).

JANUARY

- If the winter is particularly cold, residents will be spending a lot of time indoors in their hall.
 - This may cause high levels of frustration.
- People begin talking about how good it would be to be back at home with friends.
- Some students experience unwanted weight gains.
- Reincorporating social and academic aspects of school.
- Possibility of new students moving in and changing wing/floor dynamics.
- New students may feel like outsiders and experience difficulty fitting in on the wing.
- Money problems may continue or be created for those unable to find jobs over break.



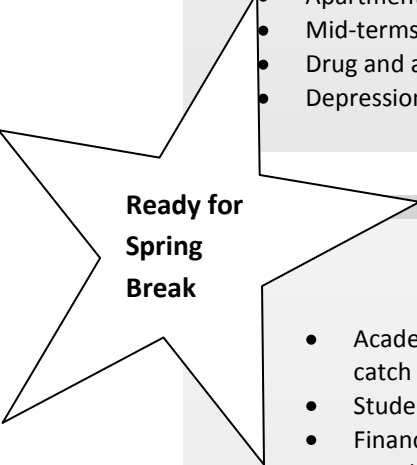
**Post holiday
depression
about being
back at home**

FEBRUARY

- Vocational choice causes anxiety as students select majors or change them.
- Some couples begin to establish “long term” relationship, some even talk of engagement, others weaken.
- Depression continues and increases for those students who have failed to establish social relationships or achieve a moderate amount of recognition.
- Damage and vandalism may increase at this time as people show signs of frustration of being inside so much.
- Students worry about finding a summer job.
- Mid-winter “blahs” and general apathy may become apparent.

MARCH

- Roommate conflicts may resurface due to cabin fever.
- Trying to find money for spring break becomes a paramount issue.
- Continued and increased anxiety over searching for summer jobs.
- Students begin worrying about living arrangements for the following year.
- Apartment hunting and roommate selection becomes a concern.
- Mid-terms bring about increased academic anxiety.
- Drug and alcohol use increases.
- Depression begins due to anticipation of separation from friends and loved ones at college.



**Ready for
Spring
Break**

APRIL

- Academic pressures continue as the quarter is coming closer to an end; procrastination begins to catch up with them.
- Students start worrying about summer job pressures and opportunities.
- Financial strains worrying about summer job pressures and opportunities
- Weight loss becomes a concern with spring and warm weather approaching.
- Papers and exams pile up.
- The mounting pressure forces some students to temporarily give up.
- Spring fever sets in; people express all the energy built up inside them from the winter.
- Spring fever may cause students to be rowdy due to disinterest in school work.
- People without a significant other begin to get desperate as the “love blossom in Spring” attitude develops.

MAY/JUNE

- Anxiety develops because of the realization that the year is ending and that a deficiency exists in the number or academic areas.
- Stress and pressures increase because there is a lot of work to be done and students want to see their friends before they leave for the summer.
- Students are anxious to get home (good and bad).
- Students are anxious to get set for the next year picking a house, choosing a roommate, etc.
- Anxiety for couples who are parting for the summer.
- Final exam pressures.
- Anxiety centers around whether or not their major is the correct one for them.

*Adapted from the University of Montana State, University of Indianapolis and Beloit College