APRIL 2011

Page 1: Graduating? What are You Going to Do?
Page 2: The Beauty of Spring and the Allergies She Brings
Pages 3: Fighting the Procrastinator
Page 4: Take Some Time to Hear the Byrds...
Page 5: Campus Announcements
For many college seniors, that may be a constant question – “what are you going to do after graduation?” Your ability to have an answer to that question may determine if the conversation is a pleasant or unpleasant experience.

A major life transition, like graduation, always brings up a wide range of emotions. Finishing college should bring a sense of satisfaction and achievement, but it also can be a time of stress and anxiety about making big decisions and facing big changes. Keep reading and you will find some tips to ease the graduation transition....

Graduation and moving on from college is a life transition that you’ve probably anticipated. You may have been looking forward to this accomplishment for some time. Taking time to celebrate and savor the enjoyable aspects of your college experience lessens the shock of moving on. Often students hurry through their final few weeks of school stressed and somewhat in denial about the impending change. As a result, if you rush through the final days, you don’t have the chance to acknowledge and say goodbye to the people, places and things that have been meaningful to you during college.

Do yourself a favor and take the time to savor the joys in your life right now and give intentional goodbyes to the important people and experiences that have made your time at AU so rewarding. This effort will give you peace of mind as you make the separation from college life. It also acknowledges the life transition openly, so that your mixed emotions aren’t interfering with the coursework you still have to complete or the relationships you want to maintain.

As you are making the graduation transition, try to leave behind habits or behaviors you have outgrown. Let this be a new phase in life you are entering, with the freshness of a new beginning. Even if your post-graduation plans include more education, be clear that graduate school is very different from college. Take time to envision how you want to tackle your life’s next assignment including the time management and other success strategies that you wish to adopt. There is nothing like a fresh start.

Relationships and leisure activities can be important ways to weather the transition from student to professional. Work to maintain the supportive relationships from college through the next phase of your life, but also be open to new friends and the web of connections you are constantly building. Networking also can be valuable for career success.

You’ll find that job or graduate school responsibilities may have an intensity different from college. Participating in familiar exercise routines, hobbies or other leisure activities can keep your life in balance and help reduce your stress level. Keep in mind, though, that relaxing activities previously done at odd hours of the day or late at night may no longer fit into your work schedule, so you may need to be flexible about adapting to a new schedule.

There are many decisions that come along with the emotions around graduation. Some of the questions that graduating seniors face include: Should I live at home with family or take on the expense of moving out? Should I apply to graduate school? How do I find a job in my chosen field? Should I take a job in another part of the country? Should I break-up with the person I am dating, or try a long-distance relationship?

Finding clarity about your feelings, what choices you face, and what your goals are can help with the inevitable decision-making process. If you think you would benefit from some assistance with this process, counselors in the Counseling Center at 427 South Gladstone can help you talk through all that you’re facing, clarifying priorities and creating an action plan. Call 530-844-5118 for an appointment. Or, for job search information and resume-writing help, check with an advisor in the Crouse Center, 3rd floor of Eckhart Hall.

May we be the first to say: Congratulations on your graduation!
Spring has arrived; nature is starting to wake up. It is the time of year that people are normally affected by allergies. Flowers blossom and pollen from the flowers starts a journey of propagation. When the pollen gets airborne, allergy sufferers begin their annual ritual of sniffling and sneezing.

What happens inside the body?
The allergic reaction is the release of chemicals such as histamine, which in turn causes inflammation. Symptoms may include nasal congestion, sneezing, itchy nose, runny nose, allergic conjunctivitis (eye allergies) and allergy induced asthma.

POLLEN 101
- Pollens are released from flowering plants and carried by the wind.
- Levels in the air can vary from day to day.
- Levels tend to be highest from early to mid-morning (5AM to 10AM).
- When pollen is present in the air, it can land in a person’s eyes, nose, hair, lungs and skin to set up an allergic reaction.

CULPRITS

POLLEN 101
- Pollens are released from flowering plants and carried by the wind.
- Levels in the air can vary from day to day.
- Levels tend to be highest from early to mid-morning (5AM to 10AM).
- When pollen is present in the air, it can land in a person’s eyes, nose, hair, lungs and skin to set up an allergic reaction.

Common Allergy Symptoms
- Nasal congestion, or a stuffy nose, is a common allergy symptom. Congestion occurs when the immune system releases chemicals in response to an allergen. This causes the blood vessels inside the nose to swell, which in turn causes the lining of the nose to become swollen.
- Sneezing is the body's reaction to an irritation of the mucous membranes of the nose or throat. While repeated sneezing can be annoying, it is not considered dangerous.
- An itchy nose is tingling or uneasy irritation of the skin that makes you want to scratch the nose.
- Runny nose refers to the discharge of mucous-like fluid from the nose.
- Allergic conjunctivitis is inflammation of the tissue lining the eyelids (conjunctiva) due to a reaction from allergy-causing substances such as pollen. Symptoms include red eyes, intense itching or burning eyes, puffy eyelids & tearing.
- Allergy induced asthma is triggered by inhaled allergens such as pollen resulting is asthma symptoms (coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness).

WANT2KNOWMORE?
To learn more about seasonal allergies, check out Pollen.com and the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI) website (http://www.aaaai.org/patients.stm).
How can I treat my allergies?

Doctors treat spring allergies with a number of over-the-counter and prescription drugs. Over-the-counter allergy drugs are effective for many people and include the following:

- **Antihistamines** reduce sneezing, sniffling, and itching by lowering the amount of histamine (the substance produced during an allergic reaction) in the body.
- **Decongestants** clear mucus out of the nasal passageways to relieve congestion and swelling.
- **Antihistamine/decongestants** combine the effects of both drugs.
- **Nasal spray decongestants** relieve congestion and may clear clogged nasal passages faster than oral decongestants, but may cause a rebound effect when stopped.
- **Cromolyn sodium nasal spray** can help prevent hay fever by stopping the release of histamine before it can trigger allergy symptoms.
- **Eye drops** relieve itchy, watery eyes.
- **Nasal saline spray** works by rinsing irritants and mucous from the nose.

Plan ahead to minimize exposure!

- Pollen counts tend to be highest in the early morning when plants and flowers first open. Try to stay indoors between 5 and 10 a.m. Avoid outdoor exercise at this time.
- Rainy, cloudy or windless days lessen conditions, causing pollen to disperse. The best time for outdoor activities for a person with allergies is after a heavy rainfall.
- Don’t bring outdoor allergies indoors. Shoes and clothing worn outside should remain outdoors or be washed immediately in hot water. Since pollen can track in on your hair and skin, take a shower immediately after outdoor activity.
- Pollen can remain in clothing and bedding for days.
  - Keep windows closed when possible to prevent wind-borne allergens from coming indoors.
  - Turn air conditioners on to decrease humidity inside your room/home and to circulate air.
  - Obtain a good quality filter for your home ventilation system to trap particles that make their way inside.
- Follow pollen counts in your area online. Track these counts and plan outdoor activities accordingly. Go to weather.com or pollen.com.

When in doubt, check with your physician.

Even though you can buy these allergy drugs without a prescription, it’s a good idea to talk to your doctor first to make sure you choose the right medication. Some antihistamines can make you feel sleepy, so you need to be careful when taking them during the day (although non-drowsy formulations are also available). Decongestants can cause increased heart rate and blood pressure. Don’t use over-the-counter antihistamines and decongestants for more than a few days without talking to your doctor. Prescription drugs may be needed if over the counter medications aren’t working.
Procrastination - You know the excuses. You may have used them at one time or another. I am hyper. I am not feeling it. It is not due tomorrow. I do not understand the material. My friends are here.

In college, there are many opportunities, and Aurora University wants you to take advantage of as many as you can, but it has to be balanced with academics. I introduced this article like a boxing match because when you habitually procrastinate, the solution can feel like a battle. You also do not have to be in the zone, feeling the adrenaline, to see the rewards of working ahead.

There is good news. Studying, time, and happiness have a relationship to each other. When you first sit down, you will find that the material is complex. This is when you have to resist the desire to get something to eat or take a walk to clear your head. Do not think of the first 30 minutes as a way to get through the material as fast as possible, but for getting over the restlessness hurdle. Stick with it, and I bet your energy level increases and the material gets easier to learn.*

Reasons we procrastinate and resolutions.

Perfectionism: Reassure yourself that the effort will be good enough. Praise what has been done so far. Finally, writers and artists all need to complete their work; so it will be okay to say that your paper is done. You will need to move on.

Anger/ Withholding your best to get even: Understand you are not getting even with professor you are mad at by not starting their assignment early. The only thing that gets harmed in the long run is your grades.

Overwhelmed: “It isn’t fair, this is too hard, no one else has to do it, and why does this happen to me.” Feeling overwhelmed and frustration go together. It is ok to vent, but that is not the end. You still have to return to the work. If you do not understand the material now, how are you going to feel when it is due and there is even more material to learn?

Burnout: Studying does not have to be a solo activity. You can make study groups with other students in the class so you can ask questions about the material. You can make a student group with non-classmates so you can keep each other motivated and on task.

But wait, I still need help!

Aurora University does not expect that you will spend your time here without us supporting you. We want to help you and there are numerous ways we can. Talk with your professors, but come prepared with questions. The Center for Teaching and Learning in the library is great for math and writing assistance, but plan ahead because they get busy at the end of the year. Counseling Services will listen and help you work through being burnout, frustration, or feeling of being overwhelmed. They can offer suggestions for moving forward and being successful.

Congratulations! We have reached the final month of classes. I am looking forward to a strong finish.


WANT 2 KNOW MORE?
Contact the following Aurora University offices: Center for Teaching and Learning (630.844.5520) and Counseling Services (630.8443.5118)
"How do you stay so calm?" This was a question addressed to me by one of the Resident Assistants the other day, while I was handling the day to day operations of being a Residence Hall Director. It isn’t always easy being responsible for 200 plus students, two residence halls, ten Resident Assistants and have time to do that one thing... what was it called...oh yeah, “having a life.” My routine, being a Film & Media major, used to be “watching a movie,” but as I learned while completing a Masters in Film and Television, when your passion and work are the same, it doesn’t always relax you. In fact, it can thump you on the head like an anvil in a Looney Tunes cartoon (this is the part where Foghorn Leghorn would come out and say “I say, I say he’s as smooth as gravel.”) The reality is I had to find a new way to relax. Easier said than done. I tried books, having always enjoyed reading, but it just wasn’t working for me. I tried a couple of hobbies, but not only does it tend to get expensive, but I am not always patient enough to sit down and color a small tail flap of a model airplane. Strike three was well on the way until I noticed something funny.

Since Graduate school I had packed on a few pounds (“for the hibernating months,” I told people) and also like most people starting their new job, I was nervous, scared, intimidated, etc. More so than anything, I was stressed out! Adding the two factors together and dividing by the fact I now had an iPod so I could listen to something to hide the noises of pain my body was going to be shouting at me, I started exercising.

However, on the day I decided to start my new routine, the stress was out of control. I had fifteen situations on my plate and I just had that gut feeling I was not going to finish everything. The day came to an end and to my surprise I was able to finish most of my list, but I just could not stop thinking about the not being able to finish everything. I thought I would just jump on the treadmill anyways and, to my shock, it felt amazing. My stress of the day had fallen away (unfortunately the pounds didn’t). I did the very same thing the next day, but with the battery dead on my iPod, I exercised without it. I noticed my stress did not go away. It dawned on me at that very moment I had found my new stress reliever: music!

Now this is not to say I was living in darkness, as I always listened to music, but never with the purpose of relaxing. I had to find a way to bring this reliever more into my life, especially at work.

Since I was in high school, I have been collecting records. I know with having new technology there is no need for it, but there is just something about the sound of a record that brings me back and makes me happy. Full well knowing my Resident Assistants would laugh at it, I brought in my record player anyways, along with my record collection. When my stress gets up, I just
roll my chair over, pull out the ‘giant CDs’ as my niece calls them, place down the needle and let my stress spin away, right round baby right round… (you get ten points if you can name the song and original artist of that goodie!).

It is important to find your own stress reliever, especially with the end of the semester and finals coming before you knot it. If you know what relaxes you, great, as you are already ahead of the game to keep stress far away from you, but not everyone knows.

From her article for About.com, Additional Stress Relievers To Enhance Your Life, Elizabeth Scott, M.S., lists a few tips below that I feel are important to consider when looking for the stress reliever that you feel benefits you and ultimately will help you succeed as a student at Aurora University:

**Play Music During Your Commute:** Music has great stress relief and health benefits. Try this, and find additional ways to use music as a daily stress reliever.

**Get a Massage:** Massage can be a great way to relieve tension in your body, and a self-massager gives you an inexpensive massage any time.

**Take a Quiet Day:** If you don’t have the money or time for a vacation, taking a quiet day is a great way to get a break.

**Goof Off A Little:** With how busy we all are these days, it can pay off to take a little time to do nothing. We all instinctively knew this as children, but somewhere along the way got too busy to let our inner children come out to play.

**Laugh With Your Friends:** Laughter has significant stress management and even health benefits.

**Read a Book:** Getting lost in a good book can be a great way to relieve stress.

**Daydream:** Give your mind a break and let it wander for a while. On purpose. Imagine yourself swimming in a pool of chocolate, floating on the moon, or winning a Nobel prize and going to Disneyland to celebrate. You’ll feel less stressed in just a few minutes!

**Get A Hug From a Loved One:** Remember when you were little and a hug from Mommy or Daddy would fix it all? Hugs and other forms of social support can still make a big difference.

**Cultivate Mindfulness:** Worrying about the future or rehashing the past can really drain you in ways that you may not readily realize. Practice the art of ‘being in the now.’ With practice, you should find you have much more energy to devote to what’s going on right now.

**Get Moving!** Getting exercise is a great way to take care of yourself and your health.

**Visualize Your Ideal Life—And Make It Happen!** Guided imagery, self-hypnosis and visualizations can help you to visualize where you’d like to be in life, and then BE there. They’re also great ways to relieve stress—now, and in the future.

WANT 2 KNOW MORE?
For more on the article, please visit: http://stress.about.com/od/tensiontamers/a/stress_reliever_2.htm
Becca Smith, a counselor with Counseling Services is writing a blog for college students about sex and relationships. She is using a counselor’s perspective to give students insights on topics including safe sex, break ups, being single, dealing with conflict, and having healthy communication. Please feel free to click on the link to go directly to the blog. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Becca at 630-844-5220 or rsmith@aurora.edu.

### College Life- Sex and Relationships

A counselor’s ideas and insights about sex and relationships in college

---

**A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE**

**Spring Fling 2011**

**Monday, April 4**
**Comedian: Jay Black**
10:00pm-11:00p
University Banquet Hall

**Tuesday, April 5**
**Cookie Decorating**
11:30am-1:00pm
Spartan Spot

**Magician: Daniel Martin**
10:00pm-11:00pm
Crimi Auditorium

**Wednesday, April 6**
**Hypnotist: Frederick Winters**
10:00pm-11:30pm
Crimi Auditorium

**Thursday, April 7**
**Sand Art**
11:30am-1:00pm
Spartan Spot

**Mr. and Miss Spartan**
9:00pm-10:30pm
University Banquet Hall

**Friday, April 8**
**Spring Fling Carnival**
3:00pm-7:00pm
Alumni Hall Patio

**Saturday, April 9**
**Spring Fling Formal Dance**
6:00pm-Midnight
Dinner served at 7:00pm
Gaslite Manor Banquets, Aurora