Finals week is generally associated with stress. Students have a lot of work to fit into a relatively short time, and final exams and projects can have a heavy impact on their course grades for the semester. But stress is not necessarily a bad thing. It’s a normal mental and physiological response. Learning to listen to stress instead of trying to avoid it can help you to better manage stressful times.

Here are some general Finals Week stress reduction tips:

- **Prepare, prepare, prepare.** The more prepared you are, the less stress you will feel.
- **Know what to expect.** Do everything within your power to find out as much as you can about your finals. The more you know, the better you will be able to prepare.
- **Meticulously plan your studying and final projects strategy.** Make a detailed finals schedule. Time will run out fast. The more in control you are, the less stressed you will feel.
- **Eat and sleep.** Sounds simple, but many student skimp on both as they run out of time. Not eating well and sleeping enough will affect your ability to retain information while you study, recall information during exams, and drastically increase your stress levels.
- **Take breaks.** Breaks will also help you to remember more. Self-care is key.

**Finals Week: To Stress or Not to Stress...**

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**Tip of the Month: Prioritize Self-Time**

While you may be more than ready for the semester to end, you may also be wondering how you will fit in everything you still have left to do. As you make your final exam schedule, be sure to also work in time for yourself, even if you can only spare a little time. Doing so when you are really busy may seem impossible, but it is during those busy times that self-care is the most important. It will help to give your brain a break, which can actually help you to retain more information. It will also help you to prevent burnout stress. Get your work done but not at the expense of your physical and mental well-being.
Preparring For Exams

Exam Schedule Fall 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Exam Period I 9:00-11:00 a.m.</th>
<th>Exam Period II 12:30-2:30 p.m.</th>
<th>Exam Period III 3:00-5:00 p.m.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday, May 3</td>
<td>All Classes meeting 12:00 Monday</td>
<td>All Classes meeting 12:00 Tuesday</td>
<td>All Classes meeting 9:00 Monday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, May 4</td>
<td>All Classes meeting 1:20 Monday</td>
<td>All Classes meeting 10:00 Monday</td>
<td>All Classes meeting 2:10 Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, May 6</td>
<td>All Classes meeting 2:40 Monday</td>
<td>All Classes meeting 11:00 Tuesday</td>
<td>All Classes meeting 6:30 Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, May 7</td>
<td>All Classes meeting 6:30 Monday &amp;/or 6:30 Wednesday</td>
<td>All Classes meeting 8:00 Tuesday</td>
<td>TBA classes and All other classes; Make-up exams with Dean’s approval</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Daily Priority List:

I **MUST** do!  
1. ___________________  
2. ___________________  
3. ___________________  
4. ___________________  
5. ___________________  
6. ___________________  
7. ___________________  
8. ___________________  
9. ___________________  
10. ___________________

I **SHOULD** do!  
1. ___________________  
2. ___________________  
3. ___________________  
4. ___________________  
5. ___________________  
6. ___________________  
7. ___________________  
8. ___________________  
9. ___________________  
10. ___________________

I **COULD** do!  
1. ___________________  
2. ___________________  
3. ___________________  
4. ___________________  
5. ___________________  
6. ___________________  
7. ___________________  
8. ___________________  
9. ___________________  
10. ___________________
Faculty Guest Column: Jaime Klein, Instructor of Education

Creating Your Personalized Set of Best Study Practices

Choosing the best way to study for exams is as varied and unique as each individual. Just because your roommate can pull an "all-nighter" and do well on a test, doesn’t mean that doing the same will be successful for you. Sit down and think about your past studying efforts. Be completely honest. What methods did you feel were successful for you? Which methods weren’t?

For example, some people find it helpful to study in groups, where collaboration and group discussions can help solidify the understanding of content knowledge. Others, however, feel that group study doesn’t address their specific needs and provides distractions. Which is true for you? Making a list of the study strategies that have worked for you in the past can provide you with a personalized set of “best study practices” that you can refer to each semester.

Academic Counselor’s Corner: Preparing for New Challenges Next Fall

There may still be plenty for you to do before you finish out the semester. Then, of course, your summer break begins. And the very last thing you may be thinking about—if you are thinking about it at all—is the fall semester.

However, the summer lasts a long time, and a lot of the information you learned, as well as the new study habits you acquired this semester, may atrophy from lack of use.

Keeping your mind active, working to actively apply some of the new things you learned to your life, and keeping up with some of the study habits (which are also life habits) you implemented this semester will put you in a better position to re-adjust to the rigors and daily grind of college life in the fall.

You learned a lot this semester about a great many things, including yourself and what your study habit strengths and areas to work on are. Transitioning from high school to college is a large and significant life transition. But that transition and adjustment does not end after your first year. Every year—every semester even—you will have to make adjustments to meet the specific challenges of a new semester. And similar to how you had to adjust your high school study habits to meet the demands of college-level work, habits that worked well during prior semesters may not be as effective for subsequent semesters.

Congratulations on ALL your achievements this year! Your upcoming break is well-deserved! But be prepared and expect to continually refine and add new study habits and skills next fall...and every semester after that. This may seem discouraging, but it is actually an opportunity to continue to grow as a person. And with each new semester, you will become better able to adjust more quickly to new challenges. Another important life skill!

Dimitrios Jason Stalides, TRiO Academic Counselor
Tips For Preparing For Exams

- **Begin preparing** for final exams in a **timely manner**. Make certain that you are able to maintain a regular schedule of both sleep and exercise.

- **Create a daily study plan**—budget your time based on your priorities and your prior level of preparation.

- **Use daylight hours**—research shows that 60 minutes of study during the day is equivalent to 90 minutes of study at night (Pauk, Walther, *How to Study in College*, Second Edition, 1989, p. 45).

- **Plan blocks of time**—in general, optimum efficiency is reached by planning to study in one hour blocks (50 minutes of study, followed by a 10 minute break) (Pauk, 1989, p. 45).

- **Have a specific agenda for each study period**; this will assist in keeping you focused and goal-directed.

- Studying in **bed or in a dorm room** is generally **NOT recommended**, as these are environments which students tend to associate with “relaxing” and “sleep.” This type of mindset is not helpful in facilitating an intense study session.

- Investigate study locations in which you can be ‘free’ from typical roles and responsibilities (e.g. friend, roommate, member of student organization)—**make it a priority to find an environment that maximizes your productivity**.

- Plan to **study when you are most alert** and tackle the most difficult tasks first.

- **Build in moments of relaxation**—schedule study breaks effectively (e.g., taking a five or ten minute break every hour or hour and a half).

### Intense Study Sessions

1) **2-5 minutes**: **SET GOALS**

2) **20-50 minutes**: **STUDY** with **FOCUS** and **ACTION**
   
   (Read your text, create flash cards, create maps and/or outlines, work problems, write summaries, quiz yourself, etc.)

3) **5 minutes**: **Take a BREAK**

4) **5 minutes**: **REVIEW** the material just studied

5) **Repeat**
Learning From My Mistakes—Portals of Self-Discovery

As a first-generation student, I had no idea what my first year of college would be like. The transition from high school to college is one of the most difficult situations first-year students struggle with. I quickly realized college is not a joke—and not how it is often portrayed in the media. There is a massive amount of work both inside and outside the actual classroom, in addition to a multitude of campus events such as clubs, organizations, or campus jobs. My first semester helped me to change my study habits, including my time management skills, my homework and study environments, and my communication with professors.

There are many ways to manage your time. I prefer daily planners; you will never see me without one. Other effective forms of planners include calendars, to-do lists, and even online time management tools. My daily planner is where I keep all my homework assignments, meetings, appointments, projects, and exam due-dates. Without a daily planner, I would have a difficult time balancing my school work and other activities. If you become too involved in campus activities, it is more than likely your grades will start to drop—and it will then take you much longer to raise those grades again. You will also become overwhelmed as you are playing “catch-up” while attempting to balance your academic and non-academic obligations.

I used to sacrifice sleep in order to get my homework done. I would run on two to three hours of sleep just to complete my assignments. I used to put off homework and studying for exams until the last minute. But it’s impossible to remember a semester’s worth of notes in one night. I learned how to balance my school work with activities through trial and error. I believe many students fail to manage their time well due to unrealistic expectations, but perhaps such negative experiences can serve as an eye opener freshmen can utilize to implement positive changes. Time-management is the key to success in college, and without it, students will struggle in and out of the classroom.

Utilizing a distraction-limited environment is another key study habit I learned to implement. My first semester, I studied in my residence hall, and I was often distracted by friends or RA socials. The setting was too distracting, and I was not completing all my homework. By my second semester, I realized I could perform better by spending time in the library rather than my room. After I made this adjustment, I was able to finish my homework and studying well before midnight—which also meant I was finally able get seven to eight hours of sleep!

I also started talking more and creating connections with my professors. It is important to become acquainted with professors outside of class. Professors want their students to succeed, but it’s up to the student to take the first step. Once you do, they will notice you are responsible and serious about your college career. Professors can serve as friends to help you succeed in a class, as mentors you can often talk with about personal concerns, and as professional references for internships or jobs.

My first semester of college provided experiences that allowed me the opportunity to discover what worked and what did not in order to make adjustments for my second semester. Managing my time better was an obvious first step. However, utilizing a distraction-limited study environment, as well as taking advantage of my professor’s office hours, helped me to better realize my potential. The changes I made will help me with my goals of graduating from Illinois College in four years and attending graduate school.
Treats with TRiO: Stop in to Relax and for a Quick Bite

Join us in the TRiO Room on **Reading Day, Thursday, May 2**, for a study break and FREE food!!

The “treats” will be available from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We had a blast last semester, and we hope to see you there again this semester.

As an added bonus, for the pleasure of hanging out with us and eating our free food, you will also earn workshop credit!

There is only one small catch: get back to work after you finish! 😊

Transferring Credits: Summer Classes

Planning on taking classes during the summer at you local community college? Before you pay for any classes, be sure to verify whether or not the classes you are interested in will transfer over to the college and fulfill your intended IC degree requirements.

Call the registrar or your TRiO Advisor for details. The process is relatively easy, but it does take a little leg work. Don’t get stuck paying for a class that won’t contribute to your degree.

Last Workshop of the Semester: Coping with Stress and Test Anxiety

Our last workshop will enable you to better cope with the stressors associated with finals exams. Templeton Counseling Director Bill Tennill, College Health Nurse Mallory Bejster, and Professor Adam Jones will explore different aspects of reducing stress during final exams tomorrow, **Tuesday, April 30, at 7:00, in Kirby 110**.

Congratulations to our Graduating TRiO Seniors!!!!

**Ross Barker**, *Communication & Rhetorical Studies and Music Majors*

**Anna Booher**, *English and Theatre Majors*

**Jessica Dunkirk**, *Biology Major/Psychology Minor*

**Danielle Hillis**, *French and English Majors/Philosophy Minor*

**Alishia Jacks**, *Biology Major/Chemistry and Environmental Biology Minors*

**Jessica Johnson**, *Environmental Biology Major/Management & Organizational Leadership Minor*

**Carmen Kremitski**, *History Major/Political Science Minor*

**Jacob Lord**, *Computer Science Major/Accounting Minor*

**Kaylyn Nelson**, *Management & Organizational Leadership Major*

**Precious Newburn**, *Communication & Rhetorical Studies Major/Sociology Minor*

**Emilee Trenter**, *Education Major (Elementary Education Concentration)*

Check out what some of our graduates’ favorite IC memories and future plans are on the following page!
Graduating TRiO Seniors: Looking Back and Moving Forward

IC Memories and After Graduation Plans

“I plan on either pursuing my MBA at UIS or hopping into the work force! And as to my favorite memory/experience on campus, I would have to say all of them because good or bad, they’ve all had a hand in shaping me into the man I am today, and for that, I am grateful.”

—Ross Barker, Communication & Rhetorical Studies and Music Majors

“After graduation, I may be going back to work at The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. I’ve also been writing a blog while overseas that I really want to get published. My favorite memories have been onstage in Hairspray and being with friends in my English classes. I’ve loved being Homecoming Queen and just going to Walmart or the Frozen Penguin with my friends.”

—Anna Booher, English and Theatre Majors

“When I graduate from Illinois College I plan to work for a year and begin applying to graduate schools. I have found a job using my degree. I will be using my time off from school to think about the type of work that I would like to attend graduate school for. One of my favorite memories of IC is from the Fall of 2010, my first semester at IC. I lived in Fayerweather Community Service and Leadership House with several other people. I loved living in the house, but in October there was a cold snap and the heat had not been turned on in the house, so it was freezing. It was so cold; it would have been impossible to stay in our rooms. So about seven or eight of us moved our beds into the living room to conserve heat. It was a great night.”

—Danielle Hillis, French and English Majors/Philosophy Minor

“I am going to attend an accelerated Bachelor of Nursing Program, so in twelve months, I will have my Bachelors in Nursing and my RN license, during which I plan on continuing to study for the MCAT and then apply to Medical school to become a General Physician or Family Doctor. My favorite memory would have to be getting stuck on the roof of Parker. I was doing research and went to the greenhouse on the roof but forgot to wedge the door open. It locked behind me, and I was stuck there for about a half hour until security came and then questioned me for being on the roof.”

—Alishia Jacks, Biology Major/Chemistry and Environmental Biology Minors

“I will be attending Illinois State University for their College Student Personnel Masters Degree program. Favorite memory: Working with other IC interns at New Salem! We always had a blast :)”

—Carmen Kremitski, History Major/Political Science Minor

“My future plans after Illinois College are to continue the job hunt. Ideally in human resources. My favorite memories here at IC are the wonderful friends that I have made!”

—Kaylyn Nelson, Management & Organizational Leadership Major

“I am planning to move back to Chicago and take a marketing position at PowerHRG after graduation. My favorite memory at IC is meeting all of the wonderful people of TRiO and Yates.”

—Precious Newburn, Communication & Rhetorical Studies Major/Sociology Minor