

Calendar of Possible Stressors and Issues

The first year of college involves many changes for your IUPUI student. The following is a list of the possible stressors and issues that may occur during the upcoming year, whether your student lives at home, in off campus housing, or lives on campus. This month-by-month guide will help you know what to expect in the life of your college student and will hopefully make you feel better prepared to understand and support him or her through their adjustment.

August/September

- Time Management – Making time for multiple demands: social, academic, recreational, and possible employment.
- Adjusting to academic demands
- Social Pressure – Making new friends and “fitting in”
- Leaving the security of the known – Home, family, friends
- Dealing with the unknown – New environment, new people, new demands, and potentially a new city
- Adjusting to independence – Accepting responsibility for making one’s own decisions and dealing with the consequences of choice; exploring values.
- Indecision about direction of life – Pressure to select a major
- Learning to live in a community – Coping with new roles, policies and norms; tolerating differences.

October

- Midterm Exams – First major experience with college exams
- Conflicts with roommates, family and friends
- Class choice – Deciding on classes from the spring semester

November

- Increasing academic demands
- Less contact with family and friends at home
- Finalizing class schedule for spring
- For some, dealing with their first holiday away from home

December

- Preparing for exams and pressure to finish assignments
- Balancing social and academics demands
- Preparing for long break with parents, family and friends
- Anxiety about first semester grades
- Making sure they are taking care of themselves, physically and mentally

Winter Break

- Meeting back up with friends from high school who have all gone separate ways for school

- Readjusting to the routine of family schedules
- Dealing with a potential lack of independence while home after spending the past semester becoming more independent

Some students grapple with major decisions after the first semester. They may be in “crisis” over their grades and conflict because of a fear that they are not suited for or do not like their chosen major.

January

- Readjusting to school and returning to a routine
- Reestablishing relationships with campus friends
- Dealing with the reality of first semester grades – questioning competence and choice of courses
- Discussion with advisor about changing major- may be based on overall experience with courses taken first semester, grades, etc.

February

- Dealing with the routine – possible boredom
- Coping with bad weather
- Making plans for spring break
- Planning fall semester classes and deciding whether to keep or change current major

March

- Preparing for and taking midterm exams
- Expectations for spring break
- Running short on money

April/May

- Facing long weeks until the semester ends – spring fever as the weather gets nicer
- Increased academic pressure – preparing for finals
- Year-end social activities
- Registration for fall semester classes
- Saying goodbye to friends
- Concerns about finding a summer job
- Deciding whether to take summer courses
- Readjusting to living at home for an extended period
- Receiving grades

The Coordinator of Parent and Family Programs from the Office of Educational Partnerships and Student Advocacy is available to help parents and family members as they support their student through the transition to college life. Visit our website (www.life.iupui.edu/epsa) for more information or email Ashley Msikinya at jagfam@iupui.edu with questions, concerns, or comments.