

Mentor Messenger

A message from the peer mentor subcommittee

The peer mentor subcommittee was organized to support the needs of mentors and their coordinators.

We hope that you will find the tips and information shared in this newsletter useful as you begin working with your Learning Community students. We also invite you to share tips or to make announcements.

Please send information or comments to jenl@iastate.edu.

Important Dates to Remember

- October 22, 2008— Spring 2009 registration period begins. Hours for AccessPlus registration are 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday-Saturday
- October 31, 2008— Last day to add/drop full-semester courses or withdraw without extenuating circumstances
- November 24-28, 2008— Thanksgiving break, classes recessed

Balancing Work and Academic Responsibilities

Managing work and school tasks can be challenging, particularly as exam week approaches. You may feel that your free time has been overtaken by your many obligations. If this sounds familiar, it may help to prioritize your academic, work, and personal goals in order to make the best use of your time.

Identify your peak study time. After attending classes and activities all day, you may find you are too tired to open a book at night. If so, try to find pockets of time during the day when you can study. For instance, 30 minutes reviewing coursework between classes or reading assignments while eating lunch may help decrease the amount of studying you have to do in the evenings. Jotting down potential project and paper topics while riding the bus to and from campus may reduce the amount of time you spend brainstorming at night as well.

Set correspondence limits with your mentees.

As the semester moves along, you may find that your students are contacting you more frequently and while you need to stay connected, you should set boundaries. Defined “office hours” may help students understand that you lead a busy life and that you have a specified time during which you can assist them with their questions and concerns. This limitation can be applied to all forms of communication, such as IMing, texting, answering emails, face-to-face meetings, etc.

Remember to add free time into your schedule.

We all need down-time to relax and rejuvenate. Taking time for yourself allows your body and mind to rest so that you can tackle the next task with renewed energy. A simple 20-minute nap may be enough of a break to help you regain your focus.

Are Your Students Experiencing Mid-Term Anxiety?

Tests can unnerve even the most confident students. Couple that with the fact that this may be the first time your mentees have taken a mid-term college exam and you can see why some may be a bit apprehensive. You can try to ease their concerns by referring them to campus resources that may help them prepare for their exams and manage their stress.

Two such resources are the Academic Success Center and Student Counseling Services. The Academic Success Center offers one-on-one

academic consulting services, tutoring, supplemental instruction, and online worksheets outlining how to prepare for examinations. Counseling Services provides individual counseling to students dealing with stress, depression, academic motivation issues and more.

For more information about the Academic Success Center, visit: <http://www.dso.iastate.edu/asc/>. For more about Counseling Services, visit: <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~stdtcouns/>