

The LAS Insider

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De-Stress Over Finals

While the month of December brings enjoyable things like snow and holidays, it also is filled with stress over exams and finals. Much of the stress students experience during exams can be avoided with adequate preparation. Though it is impossible to be absolutely stress free, there are ways to control stress during finals.

- Know and accept your limits. Remember that your entire life does not depend on the outcome of the exams and it is not the end of the world if you do not get an 'A'.
- Plan your time wisely. A common reason for feeling stressed is finding out that you have too much to do and too little time in which to do it. Learn to manage your time better, prioritize, and delegate when you can. Start studying early so you don't have to cram at the last minute.
- Remember to relax! There are many relaxation techniques to help combat stress. Try listening to



music, deep breathing or meditating.

- Another way to combat stress is with nutrition and exercise. Walking, jogging or aerobics are some good stress reducers. To reduce stress eat a well-balanced meal and

avoid stimulants like caffeine and nicotine, which can disrupt a much needed restful night's sleep required before an exam. Sugary foods are also a bad idea because they promote a feeling of fatigue.

Deep Breathing 101.....

Sit comfortably and close your eyes. With your mouth closed, exhale deeply through your nose. Imagine that you are pouring the breath out of a jug, starting at the top of your chest and moving down through your mid-torso and into your diaphragm. Pause for two counts at the bottom of the breath, then inhale through your nose. Refill the "jug" slowly, counting to five (or seven if you can make it). Start at the bottom, expanding your diaphragm and belly, then your mid-torso, and lastly the top of your chest and lungs. Pause for two counts and exhale as before. Repeat 5-10 times.

Inside this issue:

Strategies for Acing the Final!	2
Pre-Health: Prescription for Success (ASP 062)	2
Where to Reach Out for Help!	2
Important Dates and Deadlines	3
Issues with Repeating a Course	3
Jump-Start Your Spring Semester	4
Undergraduate Research Symposium	5
First Year Experience Essay Contest	5
How to Calculate Your GPA	6
Grades Aren't That Important... Are They?	6



Strategies For Acing the Final!



#1—Start studying for the final early. You should start studying during the last week of classes, if not sooner.

#2—Make a Study Plan. You have only a certain amount of time to devote to studying for finals. Allocate study time for each class. Invest extra study time towards your tougher courses.

#3—Go to review sessions and extra office hours. But, only after you've started studying. Come with specific questions about things you don't understand. Review sessions may provide suggestions about what might be on the final and what areas to focus on when studying.

#4—Manage your stress and stay in good health. Do some activities each day that are relaxing to you. Get plenty of sleep and eat healthy foods. You can't afford to get sick during finals.

#5—Shed Commitments. Steer away from nonacademic activities. Trim back on your work hours. Ask for help from others to relieve you of some of your personal obligations during finals.

#6—Develop a Test Taking Strategy. Preview the test and calculate how much time you should allot for each section. Make sure to note the point value of each question. If you are given

choices on the final, spend a few minutes picking the questions you plan to answer. If you find yourself running out of time, leave indications of how you planned to complete your answer. It is better to give even the briefest and most basic answer than to leave it out altogether.

#7 Use all of the time allotted. If you get done with a final early, spend the extra time reviewing your answers.

Where to Reach Out for Help....

It is easy to be overwhelmed during the end of the semester, but the university tries to provide students with ways to relax and manage their time. Check out **Campus Announcements** (<http://tigger.uic.edu/announce/>) and **Campus Programs** (<http://uic.cmpprgrms.googlepages.com/>) for more information on events that will help you relax.



Dec 4-8: Distress Days

(9:30-11AM) Pier Lounge Student Center East

InTouch Hotline

Call (312) 996-5535 between 6:00PM-10:30PM and talk about your problems with a trained volunteer.

“The mind is like the stomach. It is not how much you put into it that counts, but how much it digests.”
— Albert Jay Nock



Pre-Health Students: Prescription for Success

ASP 062, CRN 24956

8-Week Course Tues & Thurs, 2:00–3:40 Jan 16 to Mar 8

Sponsored by The Academic Center for Excellence

ASP 062 does not count towards graduation hours.

Doing O.K. but not great? Are you a freshman or sophomore who is in good standing at UIC (not on academic probation) but your GPA is not yet high enough to gain admission to a health field? This course will focus on the following:

- Study strategies for demanding science courses
- Strategies for math (with tutoring available)
- Vocabulary development for standardized exams (MCAT, PCAT, etc.)
- Reading comprehension & reading speed for standardized exams
- Test-taking strategies
- Test anxiety control

Questions? Call Cecelia Downs at 312-413-0032

Important Dates and Deadlines

Last Day for a University Withdrawal: December 1 or December 8 if you haven't earned final grades, but this requires you to track down instructors to get them to fill out additional paperwork.

Open Registration Begins (for students not currently enrolled): December 4
You should be registered by then for better course selection.

Last Day of Classes: December 8

Finals Week: December 11 – 15

Fall '06 Grades Available: December 25

Login to UIC Web for Student, Registration & Records, Student Records & Transcripts, then Final Grades

Next Semester:

Spring Semester Begins: January 16

Last Day for Late Registration (drop and add classes online): January 26

Last Day to Submit Intent to Graduate for Spring '07: February 2

Go online to UIC Web for Student to submit the form now!

Last Day for Late Drops: February 23



Repeating a Course? Issues with Duplication and Backtracking

You should be aware of the enforcement of the LAS policy regarding the repeating of courses. A course may be repeated only if the original grade was either a D or F. The duplication of a course results in loss of credit from the first course.

A course cannot be repeated if taken after another course for which the repeat course is a prerequisite—that is considered backtracking. Ex: You cannot go back and retake Chem 112 after having taken Chem 114. This policy is enforced even if UIC Web for Student allows the registration, so please be careful as the second grade will be discounted from the GPA.

The college appreciates your cooperation in adhering to this important policy. If you have questions, consult an LAS Academic Advisor.

In addition, repeating of courses in which credit was earned may impact financial aid standing (contact the Office of Financial Aid for further information).

LAS News

The LAS Office of the Dean is pleased to announce two first-year student winners in the Town Hall Meeting raffle.



Congratulations to Kyla Doetch and Erica Earnest, who each received a brand new, second generation iPod Shuffle as part of their LAS First Year Experience.

"We cannot change anything unless we accept it."

– Carl Jung

'Tis the Season to Jump-Start Your Spring Semester

As this semester is winding down, your thoughts start to go from final exams and projects to holiday plans and reunions with family and friends. Although you want to shut the books and take a mental vacation from Academia for a few weeks, there are some things you need to consider before you set foot on campus in January!!

Before the current semester ends:

- Review your schedule for Spring, confirm that these are the courses you need. If you still have concerns, consult an advisor. Also, keep checking the online system for new/open sections of closed courses.
- Check course pre-requisites. If you do not have the pre-requisite for a course, you will need to drop the course or get special permission from the department to take the Spring course.
- Do not toss all of your notes and books the minute finals are over! Courses in your major build upon each other and you will find yourself needing to refer to those old notes. Keep all the materials from each course organized in a file, drawer, or binder.

Over winter break:

- Final grades will be available through UIC Web for Student beginning December 25th. Check them out as soon as you can!
- As you review your grades, ask yourself: Did I do as well as I could have? What did I do right, or wrong? What can I do to improve or change my study habits? If you have concerns about your performance, make an appointment to see an Academic Advisor over break or first thing once Spring Semester starts.
- Compare your grades from fall courses to your Spring 07 schedule. If you failed any courses that are pre-requisites for your Spring courses, you need to remove yourself from those and possibly retake the failed courses. If you have questions, consult an LAS Academic Advisor.
- If you received a “D” in any pre-requisite courses, you should talk with an advisor (in LAS or the department) to determine if you need to retake the course before moving on to the next course in the sequence.
- Check out who your instructors are for your courses. Some instructors have websites and information online about who they are and their accomplishments. You never know if your teacher is a poet laureate or conducting research for a cure for cancer!
- Keep checking your UIC e-mail. Advisors and instructors will often send you important information over break.

Before you set foot back on campus:

- Classes begin on Tuesday, January 16th!
- Plan ahead for winter weather – school RARELY closes for snow days! Consider how much extra time you may need, and how to get around campus if there is more than a few inches of snow on the ground.
- Get your books early if you can— online or through the Campus Bookstore. Skim their contents to get a sense of what to expect in your courses.
- Write down your goals for the Spring Semester: your desired GPA, your plan to achieve an internship or scholarship. Put them somewhere where you can see them every day, set deadlines for them, and start working to achieve them from day one!



*“A moment’s insight is
sometimes worth a
life’s experience.”*

– Oliver Wendell

Holmes

Undergraduate Research Symposium by: Amrita Narang

The 8th Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium will be held on Friday, April 20, 2007 from 9:30 am to 6:00 pm in the Illinois Room of the Student Center East (SCE).

This year the URS will be part of a larger campus-wide event called the UIC Student Research Day which will showcase both undergraduate and graduate student research. Undergraduates from all disciplines, including physical sciences, life sciences, social sciences and humanities, are welcome and encouraged to present their research at this event. Students who submit abstracts are expected to give a 7-10 minute poster presentation to judges consisting of UIC faculty and alumni. Winners will be chosen in each category and awarded cash prizes.

The Symposium is growing every year, attracting more student researchers than the year before. The committee hopes to see this trend continue and with your help this year's Symposium will be a success. The committee is also planning to hold several workshops on poster planning and presentation to help students prepare their projects, so please take advantage of the opportunity to polish your skills.

One of last year's URS participants writes:

"Participating in the Undergraduate Research Symposium was the culminating event of my initial research project. This forum provided me with the opportunity to reflect on and examine my studies from a different perspective. This was a great learning experience. It is my sincere opinion that an undergraduate research experience is not complete without participation in a forum such as URS. This allows the student a chance to put all the pieces of acquired knowledge and skills together and to appreciate their work to a great extent."

Zarina Tchinibekova
Major: Movement Science

The deadline to submit abstracts is **March 31, 2007**. Visit our website <http://tigger.uic.edu/orgs/urs/index.html> for more information and feel free to contact us at uic.urs@gmail.com with any questions.



*"If you feel that you
have both feet planted
on level ground, then
the university has
failed you."*

*— Robert F. Goheen
President of Princeton
University, 1956-1972*

First Year Experience Essay Contest

\$1000 Scholarship for First Place

\$500 Scholarship for Second Place

\$250 Textbook Scholarship (good at the UIC Bookstore) for two Runners Up



ENTER THE SUMMER READING PROGRAM ESSAY CONTEST!

Are you a first-year undergraduate at UIC?

Did you read Barack Obama's *Dreams from My Father*?

Enter the Summer Reading Program Essay Contest for
First-Year Students and

TELL US HOW YOU PLAN TO LIVE YOUR DREAMS!

For complete guidelines stop by the UIC Writing Center (100 Douglas Hall)
or visit www.las.uic.edu/info/fye.

LAS Academic Advising Center
3rd floor of University Hall
Phone: 312-996-3366
Hours 8:30-4:45

Appointments:
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
Walk-ins: Tuesday 8:30-11:30, 1-3:30

Comments or
Questions About Submitting an Article:
Contact Melinda Finkle at
mfinkle@uic.edu



GPA and Deficit Points

Do you know how to calculate your GPA?

UIC uses a 4.0 grading scale with an A worth 4 pts, B worth 3 pts, and so on.

Take the number of credit hours for each graded class times the points for the grade earned (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0). Add up the points earned for each class and then divide by total attempted credit hours.

Your GPA can also be viewed on your DARS Report or through UIC Web for Student. Grades will be available online by December 25th.

Do you know how to tell what grades you need to raise your GPA to a 2.0?

If your overall GPA is below a 2.0 you should calculate your academic deficit. By calculating your deficit points, you can tell how many hours of B's it will take to raise your GPA to a 2.0. Take the number of credit hours for each graded class times the points for the grade earned (A=2, B=1, C=0, D= -1, F= -2). Add up the points earned for each class.

The negative number indicates how many hours of B's you need to get off of academic probation. Ex: If you have a -6 deficit that means you need 6 hours of B's to raise your GPA to a 2.0.

Grades Aren't That Important... Are They?

You've almost made it. The semester is (finally!) drawing to a close. As you reflect on the work you've done over the course of the past 4 months, some of you may be eagerly awaiting your final grades so you can hang them on your refrigerator. Many of you, however, are dreading seeing those grades, and wishing that you had made it to class a few more times, skipped a couple of those late-night parties, or studied a little harder for exams.

You may be asking yourself, "My grades aren't really that important... are they?"

The answer to your question is... maybe.

I know, I know~ that wasn't quite the concrete answer you were looking for. But the answer to how important grades

are to your success depends on what you plan to do after graduation.

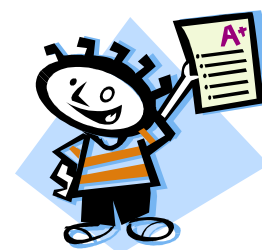
To some extent, grades are important for everyone. You'll need to maintain a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average throughout your college career in order to continue as a UIC student and not be on probation. (That's a C average.) If you've earned multiple semesters below a 2.0, you can be dismissed from the University.

That means it is possible to squeak by for 4 years with a 2.0 GPA, and you can even graduate. But don't expect to be able to go on to graduate or professional school with those grades! Medical schools are generally looking for upwards of a 3.5 GPA, as are many of the other health professional programs

(ie Nursing, Pharmacy, Dentistry, etc.), and most graduate programs want students with at least a B average, if not higher.

If you're shaking your head at this point and thinking "What if I don't want to go to graduate school?" hear this: believe it or not, some employers will ask for your transcripts, too—and they may not be impressed with a student who graduated with the bare minimum. A strong academic record demonstrates to a potential employer that you are hard-working, dedicated, and (duh!) intelligent; in other words, perfect employee material!

While one bad semester isn't necessarily going to make or break you, it does mean that you'll have to work that much harder the next semester to



make up for it. Be prepared to explain exactly what happened—and how you overcame your obstacles—whether it be in a graduate school application or job interview.

Does that mean that students with low undergraduate GPAs never go on to successful careers? Of course not!

With all this talk of GPAs, are grades the only thing that graduate schools and potential employers are looking for? No way! They're also looking for work experience, leadership, and volunteer work, plus a great attitude and interpersonal skills. So you're striving for a combination of experience, leadership and high grades!