



**Potsdam**  
The State University of New York

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## Seasonal Student Issues

There's a seasonal ebb and flow when it comes to student issues. Here are a few things your student may be experiencing this spring:

- ▲ Some students lose their motivation for the final push
- ▲ Spring fever hits and problems arise as students become restless
- ▲ Anticipating the end of the year
- ▲ Frustration and confusion develop because of class registration
- ▲ Papers and exams are piling up
- ▲ Summer job panic
- ▲ Feeling like they are no longer accountable for their actions—may turn to vandalism
- ▲ Sexual assault increases
- ▲ Concerns about moving home for the summer

## A Summer Planning Checklist

It's almost that time. The end of the term is right around the corner and there are decisions to be made and plans to be prepared. This checklist offers some food for thought so that you and your student are ready to dig into the summer season!

**Figure Out Storage.** Is your student moving off campus next year? Is his stuff too voluminous to fit in the family car? If so, you'll need to figure out storage options. Those might include checking with next year's landlord,

seeing if there's storage offered on campus or renting a storage facility in town. That stuff needs to go somewhere!



**Determine Classes for Next Term.** Is your student all set with classes for next term? Those might include summer classes, internship credits or fall term choices. Or maybe she's transferring. Just make sure those academic ducks are in a row.

**Have Graduation Specs in Place.** If your student is graduating, has he ordered his cap and gown and filled out all the necessary paperwork? Have plans been made for out-of-town visitors? What's the plan for after the graduation ceremonies when it comes to dinner reservations? These kinds of details can sneak up on you.

**Know What the Summer Will Bring.** It's difficult for students to plunge into their summers without having a plan. Does she have a job lined up? An internship? Or will she study abroad or take classes somewhere else? By getting these details hammered out now, your student will be able to take full advantage of her full summer.

## Other Summer Considerations

Some additional things to think about before the summer comes include:

- Scholarship deadlines
- Having housing lined up for the fall
- Transportation home after the spring term is over
- Budgeting for summer costs
- Living arrangements for the summer



# Preparing for Checkout to Make Move-out Day Less Stressful

If your student lives in the residence halls, he or she will be going through the room check-out process before leaving. Since that time is right around the corner, here are a few tips to share with your student to ensure that the process is smooth as can be:

**Go to Informational Meetings and Read Flyers.** The residence hall staff will distribute information about checkout and the process students need to follow. Encourage your student to go to informational meetings and to read the materials. Plus, he can ask questions of the hall staff, too—they'll welcome the interest!

**Don't Ignore It.** It's important to note that the checkout process isn't optional—failure to comply with hall policies will likely result in an improper checkout

charge. Students need to turn in their keys/cards and sign out of their rooms officially. Ignoring the process just makes the aftermath messy—and expensive.

**Make a Checkout Appointment with Your Student Staff.** Students should take a look at their final exam schedule and plan when they'll go home accordingly. Since staff members are students, too, going through finals while also trying to close the building, students are often asked to make an appointment with their staff member to check out. Encourage them to stick to this timeframe out of respect for the staff's schedule—and to make sure that, when they're ready to leave, there is a staffer ready to help. Otherwise, they may have to wait awhile when all they want to do is hit the road for the summer!

**Clean the Room!** Once students start packing and moving things around, the giant dust bunnies are bound to make themselves known. Encourage students to clean as they go so that they don't have a big mess to contend with when they're ready to check out. And leaving a room filthy is not only



disrespectful to the kind cleaning staff who have helped your student all year, there is also a hefty charge associated with it.

**Contend with Rug Residue.** If your student is holding his rug in place with duct tape, there will likely be sticky residue when he pulls it up. Have him ask the building staff what he should use to clean that up. Again, if left behind, he will be charged for floor cleaning.

**Think About Other "Little Things."** Furniture that was in the closet all year needs to be put back on the floor. Tape residue on the walls and doors needs to be removed. These "little things" add up.

**Know What You're Signing.** Once the room condition has been assessed, your student will probably be asked to sign her room contract, saying that she agrees with the assessment. Make sure that she pays attention to what it is that she's signing so there are no surprises over the summer.

## More Move-Out Thoughts

- ▲ **The Way Home.** How will your student get home? In his own vehicle? Will you borrow a truck or van to pick her up?
- ▲ **Storing Belongings.** Most residence halls don't allow students to store items over the summer. So, if your student is moving off campus, can he leave some bigger items—carpets, furniture, etc.—in that space, even if he isn't yet paying rent? Or will you need to rent a storage space?
- ▲ **Having Enough Containers.** Boxes, trash bags and other containers are often at a premium during the end of the year. Make sure your student is well-equipped to start packing so that doesn't need to happen on the actual move-out day! Consider using suitcases and duffel bags, too.
- ▲ **Stuff Disposal.** It's important that students find out how to discard and recycle unwanted items within the halls. They can't just leave items in their room or the hall, so encourage your student to talk with residence hall staff ahead of time.
- ▲ **Emotions May Surface.** Saying goodbye to friends and moving on can be emotional for many students. Be prepared so that move-out day won't be all about the tasky things—it'll likely involve seeking out friends, swapping addresses and more.



# Understanding the Census on Campus

It's time to stand and be counted! On campus, students are going to be experiencing the 2010 U.S. Census this month. As such, they'll likely have some questions about things like who should fill out Census forms, why and where they should fill out their forms (at school or at home?) and more.



Luckily, the federal government is making it fairly easy to get accurate information out to students and those who care about them. Just head to <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/> and type "Census on Campus" in the search box to gain access to four short, student-friendly videos that put the Census in understandable terms. Some of the facts include:

- If students aren't living with their parents during the school year, they'll be counted where they live, including on-campus residence halls and off-campus apartments.
- Wherever a student lives on April 1, 2010 is where he/she will fill out a census form.
- If a student doesn't live with his/her parents, parents should not include their student on their form.
- Everyone has to be counted where they are now.
- The Census only asks seven simple questions of college students, so the whole form will take less than 10 minutes to complete.
- It's illegal for the Census to share information with anyone so all answers are kept confidential.
- Students aren't exposing themselves to any dangers by filling out the form.

- The Census counts everyone living in the U.S., regardless of citizenship. So, even international student living in the U.S. are counted.

Census figures lead to fund allocation and a better understanding of the U.S. population. So, help your student get ready to be counted!

## Panic Attacks and Panic Disorder

When intense fear strikes without warning, someone may be experiencing a panic attack. Have you ever witnessed this in your student?

Symptoms include:

- |                    |                       |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Dizziness          | Shortness of breath   | Chest pain      |
| Heart palpitations | Feelings of unreality | A fear of dying |
| Abdominal distress |                       |                 |

Panic attacks start abruptly and often last about 10 minutes. They are almost always completely unrelated to the current situation the person is experiencing, and seem to come out of nowhere. Certain trigger points, however, can stimulate them.

### Who Gets Them?

Panic attacks are extremely frightening, and plague about 1 in 75 adults. Usually, they first occur between the ages of 20 and 30. Though many people who experience a panic attack will not have another one, some will develop what is known as Panic Disorder, which causes frequent attacks and, in some cases, an unwillingness to do activities or go to places the person associates with them. Panic Disorder sufferers are more likely to be clinically depressed, have suicidal thoughts, and abuse alcohol or drugs. This is why, when someone begins to notice a pattern of attacks, they should get professional help as soon as possible. Those diagnosed with the disorder may be prescribed an anti-depressant or an anti-anxiety medication.

### What Can Be Done?

Students should seek medical advice if their panic attacks are frequent, especially if they cause consistent apprehension (they think about them constantly and worry when their next one will be) or if they begin to interfere with regular behaviors. Also helpful and often recommended by doctors are regular psychiatric visits. With help from a psychologist or psychiatrist, sufferers will learn how to deal with their attacks—often through breathing and relaxation techniques—and also what triggers them, so they can have a better understanding of their condition. These methods have very high success rates.

Sources: [www.mayoclinic.com/health/panic-attacks/DS00338](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/panic-attacks/DS00338); [www.anxietypanic.com/](http://www.anxietypanic.com/); [www.apa.org/topics/anxietyqanda.html](http://www.apa.org/topics/anxietyqanda.html); [www.panicattacks.com.au/anxdis/sa.html](http://www.panicattacks.com.au/anxdis/sa.html); [www.nimh.gov](http://www.nimh.gov)



# Stimulants as Study Aids

Up to 25 percent of college students have abused prescription stimulants, according to the Higher Education Center for Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention. And during this time of year when students are studying through the night and cramming for finals, there may be an up-tick in illegal use. However, there are some things you can watch for that could indicate stimulant abuse.

## Warning Signs

These may include:

- The unexplained disappearance of meds
- Declining grades
- Loss of interest in usual activities
- Changes in friends and general behaviors
- Disrupted eating or sleeping patterns

And more.

## Why They Turn to Stimulants

Students often use stimulants to increase their energy, alertness, wakefulness and concentration. They may use them:

- To stay awake and alert beyond their natural ability
- As study aids
- To stay up all night
- To elicit feelings of euphoria

## Commonly Abused Stimulants

Ritalin  
Adderall  
Concerta  
Dexedrine

These prescription drugs are primarily used to treat ADHD.

- To control their appetite

Although prescribed stimulants are used to create a calming, focusing effect among people with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), they have a different effect on those taking them illegally. Students can become psychologically dependent on them. And once they start taking stimulants in higher doses, students may be at risk of everything from paranoia to high body temperatures to hostility to heart failure, seizures and death.

## Access & Methods

Students can gain access to prescription drugs like stimulants by:

- Stealing them from someone they know
  - Buying them from someone they know who has a valid prescription
  - Faking a medical condition to get a doctor's prescription
  - Buying them from online pharmacies not requiring prescriptions
- Students take stimulants in a variety of ways, including:
- Swallowing them whole
  - Chewing them
  - Injecting crushed pills in powder form
  - Snorting crushed pills in powder form
  - Taking them in combination with alcohol

So, keep an eye out for stimulant abuse, particularly at this volatile time of year.

Source:

[www.higheredcenter.org/high-risk/drugs/prescription-drugs](http://www.higheredcenter.org/high-risk/drugs/prescription-drugs)

## Great Care Package Ideas for the Final Push

Students can use all the support they can get, especially as final papers and exams kick in. Here are some ideas for things that many students would love to find in an end-of-the-year care package:

- ✍ Smart Food popcorn (to keep their brain humming!)
- ✍ A stress ball
- ✍ A fun pen or pencil
- ✍ Funny quotes or cartoons from the newspaper
- ✍ Coffee, tea or hot chocolate
- ✍ A modest gift card to a local restaurant or store
- ✍ A goofy photo from home
- ✍ Nice soap or body wash
- ✍ Nutritious snacks like nuts, granola bars or dried fruit
- ✍ A Frisbee for blowing off steam

## Credit Card Protection for Underage Consumers

The Federal Reserve's new rules for credit card companies went into effect on February 22, 2010. There are specific protections for underage consumers within these rules. For example:

- ✍ Those who are under 21 will need to show that they are able to make payments or will need a cosigner, in order to open a credit card account
- ✍ Those under age 21 who have a card with a cosigner and want an increase in the credit limit must have their cosigner agree in writing to the increase

For more on the new credit card rules, head to [www.federalreserve.gov](http://www.federalreserve.gov).