Tips Concerning Spring Break and Mid-term Exams

This time of year can be stressful for students, as exams and other commitments sometimes tax their abilities to cope. Here are a few tips which may help in your work with students:

- Encourage students to learn about and engage in good time and stress management skills.
- Encourage students to preserve or begin healthy eating and sleeping patterns.
- Encourage students to use good judgment and stay safe and healthy during spring break activities.

Consider referring students with concerns in these areas to the Counseling Center and the Student Health Center. You can learn more about counseling referrals at www.counseling.ua.edu/referrals.cfm.

Signs of Distress

It is always helpful to be attentive to signs of distress in students, especially during periods which are known to be more stressful for them, such as exams. All faculty and staff received information about this, along with the 911 Guide, in the mail last fall, so consult those documents frequently. You can also find a resource on this topic at www.counseling.ua.edu/distressedStudents.cfm. Far and away the most common sign of distress is depression. Others include agitation or acting out, disorientation, drug and alcohol abuse, suicidal thoughts, and indications of violence or aggression. At the link above you can learn more about such signs as well as some basic guidelines about interacting with distressed students.

Positive Use of Course Drop Options

Sometimes students wait until it’s too late to address their academic issues involving poor attendance or performance. Sometimes they avoid it altogether. We all know these strategies don’t work well, for students or for faculty, as it creates undue stress for all concerned. This is a reminder that course drop options exist for students when it is appropriate to use them. Of course we would all prefer that students persist positively in classes, and we all want to work with them in this direction. However, a course drop is sometimes the needed remedy to a host of problems which may emerge when students persist in class negatively. March 25 is the deadline for course drops without penalty.

If students express career-related concerns regarding this decision, please encourage them to meet with a consultant at the Career Center for further assistance. Career Center staff can assist students with a variety of needs ranging from career exploration to interview preparation. Learn more at http://career.ua.edu.

Counseling Center
www.counseling.ua.edu
348-3863

Student Health Center – Health Promotion and Wellness
www.chhs.ua.edu/shc/health-promotion/
348-3878