Managing Exam Stress
As we all know this is the season for increased stress among our students related to final projects and exams. Encourage students to deal productively with stress they may experience by focusing on a few key points:

• The best stress management is preventive. Learn positive coping methods and skills long before stressful events arise.

• While there are many approaches to managing exam stress, one of the most powerful methods is adequate preparation and study. Study which is distributed over a period of days and weeks is superior to massed study, known as “cramming”, not just for performance but also for stress management.

• The body and brain must be appropriately nurtured to perform well. Students who consume a healthy diet, who get plenty of high quality sleep, and who do things in moderation will perform better and experience less stress than those who do not.

• During stressful times it is important for students to reach out to others. Communicating with a counselor or healthcare provider can help them acquire needed skills and feel less isolated. Students can also gain needed perspective by talking with concerned others, including faculty and staff.

Students can learn more about nutrition services offered at the Student Health Center at http://shc.ua.edu/clinic-services/, and about stress management at http://www.counseling.ua.edu/outreachResources.cfm. Students should also check out the resources at the Center for Academic Success at www.cas.ua.edu

Planning for the Summer Months
Part of effective stress management for students involves planning for time to rest and rejuvenate during the interim and summer terms. While they may be working and attending class during this time, this does not mean they cannot or should not find healthy ways to relax while they have the opportunity. Too often students may continue a pattern of frenetic activity or other unhealthy or stressful activities during the summer, leading to a less-than-ideal approach to the fall term. Encourage them to continue in their academic and personal endeavors while also taking care of themselves in a responsible manner. Also, students may need to readjust and/or may experience some difficulties if they are moving back home for the summer. As one example, students may have gained skills related to independence but sometimes parents may not be prepared for that (or the opposite). It is not unexpected that conflicts may arise. These can be addressed positively through assertiveness and other communication skills.

Our Offices Remain Open!
Please know that the Student Health Center and the Counseling Center remain open during the summer months. Continue to refer students to us during this time, and also contact us for assistance in your important work in developing our students and maximizing their experience at the University of Alabama.