

APAC ALMANAC

In this Edition: Prepping for Finals!

Accountability Sessions

Feeling unmotivated to get your work done? What better way to stay focused than making an appointment for an accountability session! Meet with a tutor to set a SMART goal for the duration of the one hour meeting:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Time-bound

Setting a goal that you can accomplish helps you stay on top of your work and make forward progress in your studies. Whether you want to finish up HW, work on a paper, or get some extra studying in, the time is yours! The tutor will be available on the video call in case you have any questions. Once the session concludes, you will check back in to discuss what you accomplished and where to go from there in creating your next goal!

Review Sessions

Every week we offer group study sessions held by peer tutors. No appointment necessary, just click the links below at the following times:

PSYC: Tuesdays, 5-6pm
<http://s.uconn.edu/apacpsych>

MATH: Mondays, 1:30-2:30pm
<http://s.uconn.edu/apacmath>

CHEM: Mondays, 5-6pm
<http://s.uconn.edu/apacchem>

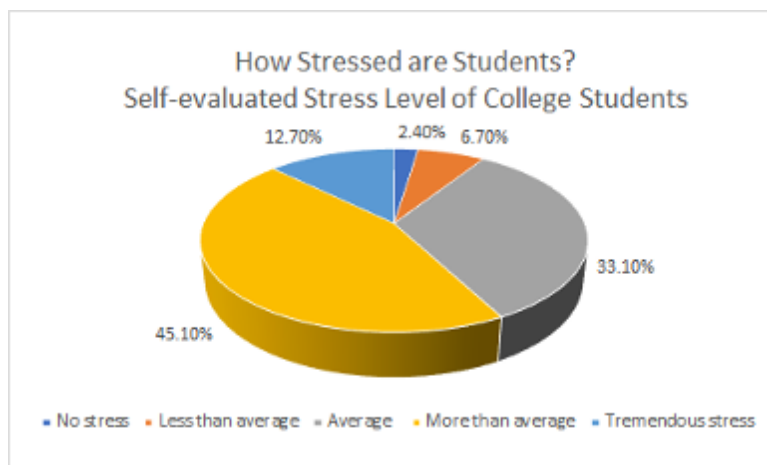
BIO: Tuesdays, 12-1pm
<http://s.uconn.edu/apacbio>

April is Stress Awareness Month!

by Deja

As college students, we are prone to extreme amounts of stress. Homework, papers, exams, and other academic work can be overwhelming, especially when you take into account that the average full-time student takes about four classes each semester. The month of April has, therefore, been designated as Stress Awareness Month since 1992 in order to create public awareness for this epidemic.

As you can see in the figure below, when given a self-evaluation on their stress levels, 41.5% of college students reported feeling more than average levels of stress.



American College Health Association (2018). *ACHA/NCHA II Fall 2018 Reference Group Data Report*. Hanover, MD: [ACHA](https://www.acha.org/).

Taking into consideration that these are pre-COVID statistics, these numbers could be drastically different seeing as students are taking classes under unique circumstances. If you are struggling with feeling overwhelmed, try some of these tips!

- Practice meditation
- Exercise
- Do not be afraid to ask for help from classmates, professors, or the Avery Point Academic Center
- Contact Jessica Musgrove, the case manager at Avery Point, to talk about your stress - jessica.musgrove@uconn.edu



How to Study for Extended Periods

by Fatima

- 1. Keep water and snacks nearby.** Nourishing your brain and staying hydrated is critical for being able to study for hours.
- 2. Listen to the right music.** Create a study playlist with music you enjoy. Check out our Spring 2021 Finals study playlist on YouTube! If you don't like music, ambient noise is also a good option.
- 3. Take breaks.** In order to be able to study for an extended period, it's important to take breaks. Your breaks can involve grabbing a snack, taking a walk, watching a fun video, or meditating.
- 4. Use timers.** Try "deep focus" by setting a 10-20 minute timer and not breaking focus at all until the timer goes off. If your brain starts to wander just remember you only have to hold out until the timer goes off.
- 5. Stay accountable.** Try setting goals with others from your classes to keep accountable. You could invite others to an online WebEx or Zoom call and study in silence. Another option is turning on a "Study With Me" video on YouTube for the length of time you plan to study.



Staying Organized During Finals

by JD

Figure out what time your finals are and start studying well in advance! You can usually find the date and time of your finals through Student Admin or by using the Exam Schedule. If you cannot find the time of a final exam or the due date of a final project, try emailing your professor or checking your syllabus.

Take out a calendar and mark down the dates and times.

Select a date at least one week before your *first* final exam, ideally 10-14 days in advance.

Make a calendar that encompasses the days from your selected date until the date of your last final. Put all of your unavoidable obligations on the calendar.



Make an organized list of what you expect to see on each final. List the topics you need to study according to the classes you take. If your class has a final project or paper instead of an exam, break it down into smaller tasks, such as "outline paper" or "read research document." Protip: Unsure of what subjects an exam will cover? Try using your class syllabus as a guideline for cumulative exams! Of course, you can always ask your professor!

Plan what time you expect to study each topic, and make sure you cover all necessary subjects before the exam time or due date. Ideally, select times where your energy and focus are relatively good: night owls, for example, may find it difficult to study from 5AM to 8AM! The day before your exam, remember to schedule some time to perform a summary review—that is, to look over *everything* an exam will cover.

Avoid burnout. One easy way to do this is to schedule your breaks ahead of time. Not only does this ensure you have something to look forward to, it can also help reduce the temptation of distractions: remind yourself that you can look at social media later, during your break!

Important: Block out several hours to sleep every single day.

Do not let anything short of an emergency get in the way of your sleeping hours: studies have shown that sleep has a positive impact on memory and cognition. You'll feel better and have more energy to do other things, too!

Stick to your schedule! A schedule can only help you stay organized if you follow it. As tempting as it may be to pull an all-nighter to ease your exam anxiety, it could affect your ability to keep up with the rest of your schedule.

What should I study?

by Laura

Studying is only as effective as you make it! I always struggled to decide what I should study in preparation for a test. In turn, I created a helpful guide:

If you need to study everything and you feel like you need to cram:

Go over your notes and on a separate sheet of paper, write out the most important takeaways from that topic. You can always use your computer too, but it is scientifically proven that writing helps humans remember! Additionally, going through all your notes will jog your memory.

If you have to memorize people, places, or things:

Use flashcards or Quizlet! Both are helpful tools to allow for repetition. If you have to memorize geography or anatomy, print out a blank copy and try to fill it in based off your memory.

Additionally, you could get with a couple friends and quiz each other on the material.

If you are studying for a STEM subject:

Practice quizzes & tests! The more problems that you practice, the less likely you are to be blindsided on the quiz. Definitely look over the problems that your professor emphasized in class as those are more likely to show up on the final. Additionally, look through your homework from the semester & make sure you understand how you got to the end of each problem.

Are you still feeling stuck? No problem! Make an appointment with the tutors at the APAC. We are here and happy to help!

Study Tips

by Trinity

Hi Huskies! My name is Trinity, I'm an APAC tutor, and I struggle with procrastination. My biggest motivator used to be stress—waiting until the last minute to get things done pushed me into high gear, but this is obviously not the best strategy. I had to find a different way to motivate myself, which is how I ultimately came up a reward system. This may sound pretty self-intuitive, but it requires discipline to use effectively. I first had to think about things I really enjoy—hanging with friends, eating bomb food, playing video games, etc. Then, I picked out ones that could be reasonably “divided up,” or done in small portions. These became my rewards. When I am faced with a daunting amount of homework or studying, I always use my rewards to get me through, and I change up the rewards every time to keep things exciting and motivating.

Here's what my study night looks like: I review my notes, watch a Youtube video, do 5 practice problems, eat 10 m&m's, finish the rest of the problems, then play a round in a video game. Repeat with new rewards. The key to this working is not allowing more than the allotted award. Just set aside that specific amount of reward you think you deserve (i.e., take out the 10 m&m's before you start working and put the rest of the bag somewhere far away), or let others know your plans so they can help keep you on track. This system makes my work fun, because I know there will always be something great waiting for me during and after the grind.

Bonus tips:

- Sign up with any tutor for an **accountability session** to have them be the ones to keep you on track during your study session—we're happy to help!
- **Play some music** while you study- everyone has their own taste, but I find that rain sounds and jazz music always keep my mind from wandering. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IAiItxM9yIE&t=2446s>
- **Don't study in your room** (especially your bed). You associate these places with rest and relaxed entertainment, and you're likely to get distracted.
- **Connect with classmates.** I am not a very outgoing person and connecting with people in online classes makes it even harder. Email your professor and ask them to randomly assign groups of classmates to be “study buddies.”
- **Put all of your assignments into a tracking app** (I highly recommend myhomeworkapp). This will list your assignments chronologically so you can be sure to never miss an assignment. It feels great to check things off!
- **Don't be afraid of your professor.** I email my professors whenever I have questions or concerns about timelines, grading, the material, etc, and not only does this help me in the course, but it means I have a strong connection with them.