

# FIRST-YEAR CHALLENGES

The following is a timeline of typical issues that a new student may experience during the first year of attendance at a four-year school.

## September-October

Homesickness	Loneliness
Not understanding boundaries	Fear about dating relationship
Concerns about fitting in	Roommate conflicts
Monetary concerns	Feeling academically inadequate
Coping with large classes	Fear about major exam or paper
Culture shock	Too much partying (new freedoms)
Becoming over-extended	Weight gain or loss
Questioning major selection	Pressure to use alcohol or drugs

## November-December

Fear about midterms & final exams	Exhaustion
Burn-out	Fear about going home
Monetary concerns	Missing being home for pre-holiday
Illness (cold season)	Questioning returning for next semester
Concern about final grades	Pre-registration concerns

## January-February

Stress getting back into routine	Missing family and friends again
Valentine depression	Pressure from home for better grades
Possibility of academic probation	Desire to get involved in campus life

## March-April

Anxiety about spring break plan	Summer job search
Deciding whether to return next year	Midterm anxiety (again)
Monetary concerns	Greek activities & rush
Selecting housing for next year	

## May

Deciding on summer plans	Possible stress of moving home
Final exam anxiety (again)	Too much partying
"Senioritis" (even freshmen tend to skip class)	

## RECOMMENDED READING

Coburn, Karen L. and Treeger, Madge L. *Letting Go: A Parent's Guide to Today's College Experience*. Bethesda, MD: Adler & Adler, 1992.

Disbro, William. *100 Things Every College Freshman Ought to Know*. Williamsville, NY: Cambridge Stratford, Ltd., 1995.

MacKay, Jacqueline Kiernan and Ingram, Wanda Johnson. *Let the Journey Begin: A Parent's Monthly Guide to the College Experience*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2002.

Newman, Barbara and Newman, Phillip R. *When Kids Go to College: A Parents' Guide to the Changing Relationships*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1992.