

CALENDAR PROGRAMMING

The calendar approach to programming will help you assess, target and meet the needs of your individual residents more effectively. It maps out some of the prominent needs students' face through each month of an academic year and will provide some insight and direction for you as you think about building your house community!

AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

POSSIBLE ISSUES/CONCERNS:

- Homesickness – especially freshmen (missing friends, family, boyfriend/girlfriend)
- Initial adjustment to academic environment (time management, learning new study habits, test anxiety)
- Living with a roommate, initial fears and conflicts
- New social life (friends, support system, roommate)
- Lower confidence level from being in a new environment, unfamiliar with campus
- Sexual Assault concerns (alcohol; assertiveness)
- Adjustment to increased freedom, absence of immediate parental influence/supervision
- Greater need for time management (high school 8-5, college schedules vary)
- Values Crisis; questions of conscience over such things as alcohol, drugs, race difference, morality, religion, social experience and expectations.
- Feelings of inadequacy and inferiority develop because of the discrepancy between high school status and grades and initial college performance.
- International students may sense confusion, vulnerability, culture shock, and lack of an advocate in power positions.
- 1st year students – Initial euphoria of being in college, high energy and excitement levels, lots of activity
- Small crises such as buying the right books, getting to class on time, worrying about who to eat meals with, how to get somewhere if you don't have a car
- Job Panic for mid-year graduates starts with onset of resume preparation and on/off campus interviewing
- Family problems seem amplified because students may be either caught in the middle, relied on for answers, or because they are so far away, feel helpless in helping reach a solution.

HAPPENINGS:

- Classes begin
- Formation of first impressions of college life will occur
- Quick judgements and friendships based on exterior similarities
- Acting out as a way to deal with stress, uncertainty of role in new place (vandalism, strong emotions, etc..)
- Initial group formation – cliques form, typically around rooms that are close together
- Staff members receive many questions regarding location of classes, resources, and services

PROGRAM IDEA STARTERS:

- How to separate from your family and friends and survive
- Campus tours and walks
- Get acquainted exercises
- House/Hall mixers
- Surviving as a poor college student
- Wing/House/Hall meetings
- Eating Disorders
- Interest Inventories/surveys
- Sub parties/Pizza parties
- Taking your first college exam
- Study skills workshop
- Time management seminar
- Loneliness seminar
- How to take notes in class
- Taking your first college exam
- How to survive in a University
- Values exploration
- Alcohol education programs
- Mural painting contest
- Listening and communication skills
- Assertiveness training program
- New student welcome program
- Camping
- Big buddy system
- Anything that brings people together
- "Confessions of an RA" or "Don't Do What I Did"
- Study buddies

- Campus tours

OCTOBER

POSSIBLE ISSUES/CONCERNS:

- Freshman begin to realize that life at college is not as perfect as they were led to believe by parents, teachers, counselors, etc... Old problems seem to continue, and new ones are added. An external reality they had put their hopes in has failed.
- Grief develops because of inadequate skills for finding a group or not being selected by one.
- Sexual conflicts and confusion result when confronting, for the first time, different heterosexual and homosexual standards and sexuality.
- Non-dating students may sense a loss of self-esteem because so much value is placed on dates. Feelings of rejection, loneliness, and guilt can lead to inappropriate decision making.
- Job search/panic begins for mid-year graduates
- Roommate problems that were put aside and not dealt with come up again and conflict arises
- Academic stress from mid-term begins and builds
- Values exploration continues
- Job panic for mid-year graduates continues
- Students may be thinking about withdrawing from school because of adjustment issues, stress, fear, anxiety, etc...
- Graduate school syndrome – signing up, taking entrance exams, getting accepted, etc...
- Homesickness may still be felt for some
- Homecoming blues develop
- Low reward level from classes may lead to disappointment and even depression
- Peer pressure to drink alcohol
- Time conflicts between academic and social expectations
- Mid-term pressures build and peak
- Students may notice differences in home life, such as life going on without them there – can lead to depression
- Money begins to run thin for some students
- Room reassignment planning – students are already planning on where they want to live the next year

HAPPENINGS:

- Presidents begin leading House meetings
- Homecoming
- Registration Programs

PROGRAM IDEA STARTERS:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-term preparation seminars • How to study effectively • Academic advising sessions • Roommate relationship building • Wing and Hall Homecoming activities • Goal setting • Eating disorders • Stress reduction programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independence programs • Get-acquainted programs • Values clarification programs • Money budgeting programs • Long distance relationship programs • Keeping Your Body in Tune for Exams • All-hall Activity Day • Academic Advising Sessions |
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NOVEMBER

POSSIBLE ISSUES/CONCERNS:

- Academic pressure is beginning to mount because of procrastination, difficulty of work and lack of ability.
- Pre-finals stress starts to emerge as preparation begins for taking exams.
- Time management conflicts continue
- Depression and anxiety increase because of feelings that one should have adjusted to the college environment by now; students start questioning about returning for the second semester

- Economic anxieties increase as funds from parents and summer earnings run low
- Increased alcohol consumption becomes an acceptable way to relieve stress; many students do not know how to handle alcohol responsibly
- Social apathy due to academic pressures
- Students may have given up attempts to make new friends
- Roommate problems emerge again as the semester presses on
- Increased tension within the house as residents tend to get on each others' nerves with increased academic pressures.
- Restlessness for vacation; some students confident and high spirited and others not wanting to face parents due to grades.
- Summer pregnancies begin to show
- Changing weather causes colds; poor health – perceptions of health center may impact students' willingness to go there
- Students get used to the food in the dining center and may have developed poor eating habits
- Suicidal thoughts may arise from inability to cope with pressure
- Nearing the semester's end, some students begin to panic with little time left to bring grades up, and many stop making an effort to study or attend classes because it seems too late to do well in the class
- House dissension – groups within the house begin to shift and new groups / sub-groups are formed
- Room reassignment tensions increase – where shall I live and with whom? Should I move out, what do I say to my roommate?

HAPPENINGS:

- Finals Preparation
- Thanksgiving break

PROGRAM IDEA STARTERS:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to study for finals • Making good use of your time • Money budgeting • Survival skills • Alcohol/drug awareness information • Health information programs • Stress programs • Tutoring programs • Study breaks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaxation programs • Community strengthening programs • Preparation for holiday break activities • Warm fuzzy of the month • Thanksgiving dinners • The new adult living at home • Healthy eating programs • Fun house activity |
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DECEMBER

POSSIBLE ISSUES/CONCERNS:

- Extracurricular time strain; seasonal parties and end-of-the-semester get together, religious activities
- Anxiety, fear and guilt increase as final exams approach and papers are due.
- Pre-holiday blues for some, especially for those who have concerns with family. Some won't be able to go home (due to distance, no one to visit, and those who choose not to go home because of family conflicts).
- Financial strain because of holiday gifts, and for some, travel costs
- Realization that they've made it through their first semester (joy, jubilation, relief)
- Anxiety/internal pressure for those who want to go home to see family and friends
- Roommate changes for second semester
- Final realization that some may not be able to return for a second semester due to grades
- Some people reach graduation time – both celebration about graduating and anxiety about not having a job.
- Friendship tensions due to finals and just living together for an extended period.
- Loss of some friends due to graduation, dropping out of school
- Pressure increases to perform sexually because of the approach of vacation and extended separation
- Continued thoughts/deliberations suicide due to poor grades
- Many may wonder if their major is right for them

- Increasing thought/deliberations about suicide occur from inability to cope with academic and social expectations
- Friendship tensions become high with finals stress

HAPPENINGS:

- December Celebrations
- Finals quiet hours
- Closing Information

PROGRAM IDEA STARTERS:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue Final Exam Preparations • Study breaks • Movies/cartoons • Secret snowflake or pal exchange • Snack breaks • Tutoring programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holiday Concert • Test swap • Relaxation programs • Nutrition programs • Career exploration • Warm fuzzy/staff appreciation |
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JANUARY

POSSIBLE ISSUES/CONCERNS:

- Post holiday depression about being back again and being away from home security and positive strokes
- If the winter is particularly cold, residents will be spending a lot of time indoors in the hall. This may cause high levels of frustration and “cabin fever”
- People begin talking about how good it would be to be back home with their friends
- Some students experience unwanted weight gains
- Reincorporating social and academic aspects of school
- Possibility of new students moving in and changing house dynamics
- Students may struggle with who they are at home and who they are at school, and having to adjust to both after being home for the break
- New students may feel like outsiders and experience difficulty “fitting in” in the house
- Some students experience unwanted weight gains over the break with home cooking and holiday meals
- Getting back into the swing of things can be difficult due to longer time away from school
- Anxiety about academic performance in the second semester following poor grades in the fall
- Money problems may continue or be created for those unable to find jobs over break

HAPPENINGS:

- Spring Semester classes begin
- Welcome social for new students
- Welcome Back Socials

PROGRAM IDEA STARTERS:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition and exercise • Starting out on the right foot • House and hall mixers • Relaxation techniques • Career programs • Sledding parties • Ski trips (downhill or cross country) • Indoor games/Wacky Olympics/contests/tournaments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic preparation programs • Aerobics • House outing • Welcome party for new students • Snowman making contest • Hibernating parties • Ice skating • Goal setting/new years resolutions • How to survive away from friends and family |
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FEBRUARY

POSSIBLE ISSUES/CONCERNS:

- Many students experience optimism because second semester is perceived as going “down-hill” or “coasting” to the finish.
- Vocational choice causes anxiety as students select majors or change them
- Fall housing planning continues
- Some couples begin to establish “Long-term” relationships, some even talk of engagement, others weaken.
- Depression continues and increases for those students who have failed to establish social relationships or achieve a moderate amount of recognition.
- Damage and vandalism may increase at this time as people show signs of frustration and being inside so much.
- Anxiety builds for May graduates as the job search begins.
- Students worry about finding summer jobs
- mid-winter “blahs” and general apathy may become apparent
- individuals become depressed if they don’t have a “valentine”
- colds, flu
- concern with weight

HAPPENINGS:

- Alcohol Education programs
- Slump between holiday break and spring break – nothing exciting going on, too cold to be outside

PROGRAM IDEA STARTERS:

- “Cabin Fever” Breaks
- Special movie presentations
- Indoor/Outdoor Olympics
- Parties/Socials
- Relationship workshops
- Keeping healthy
- Exercise programs
- Eating disorder programs
- Fundraisers
- Outside programs (Football, volleyball, sledding, etc..)
- “Choosing a major” seminar
- Interviewing skills workshop
- Resume writing
- Cover letter writing
- Job search strategies
- “Dress for success” programs
- Island parties
- Theme nights
- Tips for summer job workshops
- Attitude programs
- Post classifieds from school paper
- Apartment hunting program

MARCH

POSSIBLE ISSUES/CONCERNS:

- Mid-semester slouch (academically dangerous)
- Mid-winter sickness (especially with long, cold winters) accompanied by restlessness toward the upcoming spring break.
- Roommate conflicts may resurface due to cabin fever, academic pressure and just living together for an extended period.
- Seniors are anticipating graduation, but worry about jobs
- Existential crisis for seniors – “Do I have to leave school?” “Is my education worth anything?” “Was my major a mistake?” “What am I really qualified to do?”
- Finding money for spring break becomes a challenge
- Increasing thoughts/deliberations about suicide from academic and social expectations
- Trying to find money for spring break becomes a paramount issue
- Continued and increased anxiety over search for summer job
- Students begin worrying about living arrangements for the following year
- Apartment hunting and roommate selection becomes a concern
- Mid-terms bring about increased academic anxiety
- Anxiety following spring break sexual encounters
- Increased alcohol use with pressure of the end of the school year approaching

- Summer job hunting starts up soon after spring break
- Different experiences at spring break can change community dynamics – who can afford to go where, how the trip went, etc..

HAPPENINGS:

- Spring Break
- Finals Preparation Programs

PROGRAM IDEA STARTERS:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring break parties • Tan contests • Spring break photo display • Job hunting seminars • Exercise program • Post job bulletins • T-shirt collection contest • Positive attitude seminars • Safe sex, STD's | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol/rohypnol (date rape drug) awareness programs relating to spring break • Landlord/tenant rights programs • Contracts/legal documents program • Apartment hunting seminars • Skin care programs • Travel arrangement seminars • Extend the spring break parties • CD swap program |
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APRIL

POSSIBLE ISSUES/CONCERNS:

- Academic pressures continue as the semester is coming closer to the end; procrastination starts to catch up with them.
- Students start worrying about summer job pressures and opportunities
- Frustration and confusion develop because of decisions necessary for fall registration
- Financial strains increase due to spring break and time of semester
- Weight loss or gain becomes a concern with spring break and warm weather approaching – some go on crash diets
- Changing weather causes fatigue and colds – lingering colds cause frustration
- Papers and exams continue to pile up
- The mounting pressure forces some students to temporarily give up
- Social life pressure increases – formal dances, parties and concerts
- Spring is here, I want a relationship – stress over not having found a relationship when others have
- Students become disenchanted with normal services (dining center, programming) and go elsewhere
- Students begin to realize the end of the year is approaching and will have different reactions

HAPPENINGS:

- Closing Information
- Senate Elections
- Home Stretch for summer break

PROGRAM IDEA STARTERS:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time management workshops • Registration/scheduling workshops • Tapes/movies • Campaigning for elections for house and Senate positions • Brother and/or sister weekends • Family weekends • Camping • Banquets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health/nutrition information workshops • Relationships/sex roles programs and workshops • Goal setting programs • Theme meal nights • House dinner outings • Cooking program • Money management workshops • Sexual assault/rape awareness programs |
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MAY

POSSIBLE ISSUES/CONCERNS:

- Anxiety develops because of the realization that the year is ending and that a deficiency exists in a number of academic areas.
- Seniors panic about graduation and not having a job or a lack of job openings in their field
- Stress and pressure increase because there is a lot of work to be done and students want to see their friends before they leave for summer vacation
- Students are anxious to get home (both positively and negatively)
- Students who are staying in town for the summer may be wondering what they will do when everyone else is gone.
- Students are anxious to get set for the next year, picking a house, signing a housing contract, choosing a roommate, etc...
- Anxiety for those couples who are parting for the summer
- Final exam pressures – trying to learn everything in a very short amount of time
- Anxiety centering around whether a students' major is the correct one for them
- Discipline and vandalism increases with a "I'm not returning" attitude

HAPPENINGS:

- Finals Week
- Check-Outs
- Closure Activities

PROGRAM IDEA STARTERS:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final exam preparation materials • Study breaks • Movies/cartoons • Summer address list parties • End-of-the-year get-togethers • Recognition awards • Stress reduction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End-of-the-year slide show • Coping with going home for three months and giving up some independence • Planning mid-summer gatherings • Cookouts • Sports tournaments • Last fling before studying program |
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Now that you have a calendar of possible issues and ideas to build off of, create a calendar of your own and plan programs throughout the year that you will implement, keeping in mind the need to be flexible with the changing needs and interests of your residents. Good luck!!

Looking over the information above, some ideas for activities and house and hall programs are:

August / September

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

October

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

November

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December

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January

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February

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March

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April

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May

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