What’s on the Minds of Our Soon-To-Be Graduates?

As graduation nears, undergraduate, graduate and professional students alike have many things on their mind. We put together a brief list of topics that are especially relevant in 2009.

- The current economy and the job search process
- Feelings of uncertainty and helplessness about the future
- Financial concern of graduating without a job
- Changes in parental finances as a result of the current economy
- Leaving college and “becoming an adult”
- Graduation may require students to make changes in their relationships (e.g. romantic relationship, friendship, family, etc.), adding to the stress of graduating.

WHEN ADVISING STUDENTS REGARDING THESE ISSUES, PLEASE KEEP THE FOLLOWING IN MIND:

- Many of these are normal, developmental milestones that students go through.
- Help them develop multiple options.
- Help them have realistic expectations of themselves and others.
- Focus on successes and accomplishments.
- Keep an eye on the over anxious student. They may need some extra help and support.

ANNOUNCING

Brown Bag Workshops for Faculty/Staff

All seminars: 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
Location: CAPS, Mezzanine Level

1. Wednesday, March 18, 2009
Your Role as Faculty/Staff in Supporting Students with Serious Mental Illness - Discussion will focus on treatment issues and ways in which you can help students.

2. Wednesday, April 1, 2009
Helping Students In Tough Economic Times - Discussion will focus on the impact the economy is having on our students and strategies to support them.

To register, please visit our website at www.vpul.upenn.edu/caps and
In a poll conducted in March 2008, prior to the unraveling economic crisis, the mtvU website and the Associated Press reported that 62% of surveyed college students identified financial concerns as a daily stressor, the second leading stressor behind academic performance. In light of this huge economic downturn, the American Psychological Association (APA) has found that the stress of money and the economy has risen 18% for the average American. What about our college students?

CAPS is endorsing the following tips published by the APA. These tips may be helpful in your daily interactions with students as they face economic uncertainty.

**TIPS FOR STUDENTS – DELIVERING HELPFUL MESSAGES**
- Pause but don’t panic; better decisions can be made if you stay calm and focused.
- Identify your financial stressors and make a plan; if you are proactive in identifying key stressors and develop targeted responses today, the future impact can be mitigated.
- Recognize how you deal with stress related to money; you may realize that you become irritable, withdrawn, or passive when stressed. Seek support from various campus resources as needed.
- Take time for yourself; there is very little that one individual can do to influence the availability of more jobs, scholarship funding, or budgets. Therefore, recognize where you have control and make an effort to undertake activities to relieve stress such as taking long walks, reading a good book or listening to music. By releasing stress, you can build up more energy to address other daily stressors.

**TIPS FOR FACULTY AND STAFF**
- Remember what’s important. For example, by helping our students to focus on an upcoming exam as opposed to the expected job outlook for 2011, we really are helping them prepare for a job search.
- Support our students by helping them turn these challenging times into opportunities for real growth and change. Have realistic expectations. Try to be flexible in addressing their conception of their abilities and interests and help them learn how to envision or create new and different opportunities.
- Seek support from several departments across Penn including CAPS, Career Services, Financial Services, VPUL and our College House. These departments can be a source of support as we help students cope with and manage the impact of tough economic times. Familiarize yourself with new initiatives in your department and other campus offices so that you can direct your students and staff to someone who is ready to help.
Undergraduate Women’s Group
The Undergraduate Women’s Group offers a supportive environment for exploring a range of concerns experienced by female undergraduates. Students do not need to be in individual counseling at CAPS in order to participate. Contact Leslie Hempling at Hempling@upenn.edu or Johanna Kulp at JohannaK@upenn.edu.

For a complete list of groups and workshops at CAPS, please visit our website at www.vpul.upenn.edu/caps/

Welcome to our new space!
CAPS is now located on two floors of the Mellon Building. We are pleased to announce that CAPS is located in one central location. In addition to the CAPS office on the second floor of 133 South 36th, we now have an office suite on the mezzanine level. Walk-ins continue to come to the second floor.

COMING SOON...AUDIO PODCASTS! Please check our website for relaxation techniques!

Grief and Loss - Helping Students Cope

It is estimated that 35-48% of college students have lost a close family member within the past two years. There are many others who are coping with a serious ill family member.

These life events can have a profound effect on a student’s ability to cope with academic work, social relationships, and the ability to meet the general demands of independent college living. Some students with a seriously ill family member or who have experienced the death of a loved one, are expected to be the emotional “support person” for the family; the need for a strong support system increases for the student experiencing grief and loss. Often times, students find it difficult to talk about these personal issues with friends, faculty, advisors, etc.

PLEASE CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES FOR PENN STUDENTS STRUGGLING WITH THESE ISSUES:

• Individual counseling at CAPS

• Grief and Loss Support Group facilitated by CAPS counselors. Contact Dr. Emily Weiss at weissem@upenn.edu or call the main CAPS office for more information.

• National Students of AMF Support Network (Ailing Mothers, Fathers, Loved Ones) has a group at Penn. www.studentsofamf.org. Penn Students of AMF meets twice a month for a peer-led support group, to talk about coping with the illness or death of a loved one. The Angels Program pairs faculty members with members of the support group to provide mentoring as needed. There is also a service component to this group that is open to any student that would like to get involved in service events throughout Philadelphia. (Such as walks or runs that support research or raise awareness of lung cancer, heart disease, etc.) These events raise awareness of particular illnesses, fund raise, and may help some students cope by paying tribute to a loved one. Some students may benefit from simply making a contribution to the community or to a particular cause. This group is recognized by SAC and GAPSA and works closely with CAPS. Please check out the website for more information www.studentsofamf.org, or contact David Fajgenbaum, founder of the group at davidfa@mail.med.upenn.edu
Meet Our New Staff 09-10

Liesa Finkbiner
Office Manager

Liesa Berg Finkbiner comes to us from the Mural Arts Program where she worked as a project manager and executive assistant. Prior to that, Liesa worked at Albert Einstein Healthcare Network in the Human Resources and the Practice Management Departments. Liesa lives in Center City Philadelphia with her daughter.

Dr. David Glassman
Staff Psychologist

David Glassman is a clinical psychologist trained at the Illinois School of Professional Psychology, University of Illinois, and the University of Pennsylvania. In addition to university counseling, he has worked as both a therapist and administrator in community mental health, hospital, and managed care settings. In his work as a therapist, he has a special interest in working with sexual minorities, the treatment of anxiety problems, and the development of healthier relationships.

Tammy Watson
Administrative Assistant

Tammy Watson comes to CAPS from Student Health Services. In addition to her administrative work, she attended an accredited school for medical assistant training and received her certification upon completion. She has been an employee at the University of Pennsylvania for 13 years.