Managing Stress for Success

Physical Activity
Pick aerobic activities of your choice. Schedule in four to six times per week, and treat these like a class. Go with others, or join an exercise class, and make use of the Weinstein Center.

Sleep
Sleep is important for energy level, ability to concentrate, feeling well, and working at your optimal levels. Each person needs 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night.

We function best on a consistent sleep-wake schedule that is reasonably the same across all seven days of the week. Changing this by more than a few hours either direction is like jet-lagging yourself without going anywhere. Your body needs four to seven days to adjust to a new sleep-wake schedule.

Nutrition
Practice balanced eating and avoid extremes in diet.

Relaxation and Mindfulness
Learn and practice a form of relaxation or mindfulness meditation.

Get Involved, But Don’t Overextend
Join at least one group, club, or organization.

Two or three groups might be doable; six or seven is probably too much. It’s better to have one or two activities you really get involved in rather than a half dozen you dabble in. Think about what you want to get involved in this semester, and choose your commitments accordingly. Consider what other interests you can say "not yet" to.

Managing Time
This is one of the biggest challenges in college. In secondary school, most of your time was scheduled for you. In college, most of your time is unscheduled. You need to make choices, and set priorities. Use an appointment book or planner of your choice, whether it’s electronic or hardcopy. Aim to study at least 20 hours per week, not including class time.

One useful exercise is to track how you spend your time for seven consecutive days. Then evaluate what are you spending too much time on, and what you spend too little time on.

Unplug Yourself
Carve out at least several hours per day — at least when you plan to sleep — when you turn off your phone, email, texts, Twitter, Facebook, etc.

It’s also a good idea to unplug during times when you need to concentrate to get academic work done.

Relationships
Keep in touch with family, friends, and significant others. Take the initiative to get to know people at UR.

Spirituality
Explore and develop your faith and spirituality.

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