WELCOME TO NTU
Study Challenges in Higher Learning

Student’s responsibility

Intensive

Competitive

Respect Intellectual property

Higher order thinking skills

Evaluated on more aspects/skills: coursework, IA, FYP
Other Challenges Of University Life

Accommodation

So hard to sit still and study!

From NS/Work

Finances

Social - Friendship/ Relationship
The Process of Adjustment

Your DREAM COME TRUE
• Honeymoon phase

ADJUSTMENT
• Lonely
• Overwhelmed with studies

FEELING VERY UNHAPPY
“Was I right to come to NTU?”
“Will I achieve my goals?”

ADAPTATION
• Study OK
• New friends & activities
What Factors Facilitate Adjustment to University Life & Study?
Attitude

- Are you willing and ready to change the way you see things: Openness vs Rigidity
Positive thinking: positive self-talk, learn to reassure yourself

- I am not as smart as my friends, I will never be able to do this!
  - I can break it down and do one part at a time.
Action

- Know the system: people, procedure
- Learn new skills: IT skills, communication, presentation, thinking...
- ...

...
Action: Time Management

• (Scale of 1 – 7). 1 - not at all true of me, 7 - very true of me
  a. I make good use of my study time for this course
  b. I find it easy to stick to a schedule
  c. I make sure I keep up with the weekly readings and concepts from the lectures
  d. I attend class regularly
  e. I spend sufficient time on this course even though I have other activities
  f. I find time to review my notes or readings before an exam.
Action: Time Management

- What is your score?
  - <24 (need to develop time management skills)
  - 24 – 29 (average, room for improvement)
  - 30 – 35 (good)
  - 36 and above (excellent)

Studies show that one of the strong predictors of academic achievement is good time management strategies.
### Time Management Matrix - Activities

- **References:** 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey.
- [http://www.gbrefigroup.co.uk/acrobat/quadrnts.pdf](http://www.gbrefigroup.co.uk/acrobat/quadrnts.pdf)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Urgent Activities</th>
<th>Not Urgent Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>ACTIVITIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Crisis</td>
<td>• Priorities directed work/study: prevention</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pressing problems/matters: eg. Exams/quizzes</td>
<td>• Career planning: capability building</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Deadline-driven projects/assignments</td>
<td>• Relationship building</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Healthy activities: hobbies, exercise, recreation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Important</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>ACTIVITIES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interruptions: calls, etc.</td>
<td>• Some e-mails, smses</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• E-mails, smses</td>
<td>• Some phone calls</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Some meetings</td>
<td>• Time wasters (MSN chat, computer games, spacing out, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Popular activities (sports events, etc.)</td>
<td>• Pleasant activities (TV, games, etc.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Action: Stress Management

Relationship Between Stress and Performance
Action: Stress Management

Relationship Between Stress and Performance

Stress level

Area of Optimum Performance
Relationship Between Stress and Well-being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance &amp; Well-Being</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Too little stress</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lethargic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fidgety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifferent</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Optimum stress</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoys Challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Too much stress</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stomachache</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temper tantrums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worried/anxious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procrastinates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmotivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failing relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Possible adverse effects</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhausted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislikes studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger / Blaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strained relationships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Action: Stress Management

- Sources of stress:
  - Internal
  - External
External Sources of Stress

**Academic**
- Selection of subjects
- Keeping up with studies
- Meeting deadlines
- Quizzes / exams
- CGPA

**Group Situation**
- Presentation
- Group projects
- Socialising

**Other Sources of Stress**
- Conflicts
- Break-Ups
- Maintaining relationships
- Lack of / too many relationships

**Relationships**
- (family, friends, etc)

**Other Sources of Stress**
- Adjusting to hall life
- Managing finances
- Commuting
- Part-time work
- Other life stress
External Sources of Stress

Academic
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Internal Sources of Stress

- Personal Expectations
- Beliefs/Rules
- Attitude
- Fear/Worry
Internal Sources of Stress

- Personal Expectations
- Attitude
- Beliefs/Rules
- Fear/Worry
Coping with Stress

• Recognise and acknowledge your own signs of stress
• Identify stressors and take stock/review
Coping with Stress

- Eat healthily
- Physical exercise
- Find ways to relax
Coping with Stress

- Improving self-management skills
  - Setting goals
  - Setting priorities
  - Managing time
  - Take short breaks daily
  - Face and deal with problems
Coping with Stress

• Improve relationship
  – Reach out to others
  – Listen
  – Communication styles: passive, assertive, aggressive
  – Resolve interpersonal conflicts
Your resources & skills

STRESS

**Action: Expand Your Resources & Seek Help**

- Resources: Hall fellows, academic mentor, NTU medical centre, peers...
Action: Coping with Independent Learning

- Motivation
- Concentration
- Learning strategies
MOTIVATION

• Self-doubt vs belief towards your ability to do the task
• When you do not do well in a particular exam/quiz (how do you see it)
• Performance vs learning goals

Strategies:
1. Self-awareness of negative self-talk (sub-vocal)
2. Use accurate and positive self-talk:
   Eg. I am stupid → This subject is new to me, I need more time to study.
3. Establish learning goals: At the end of study session, I will be able to explain …, give examples, apply …
4. Plan for reward: eg. at the end of the week, go for a movie.
Strategy to Motivate Yourself to Do Difficult Topic/Subject/Task/Project

• Break up study periods/task into parts (45 minutes to an hour)
• Study by units of information
CONCENTRATION

• The ability to think carefully about something you are doing and nothing else

*Definition from Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*
Reflection: Rate Your Concentration

• On a scale of 0 – 10, rate your concentration level
  – 0 – can’t concentrate at all
  – 10 – can fully concentrate

• What do you do that makes your concentration level goes up or down
Self-Management Strategies for Distractions

• When I am distracted by a conversation in the library, I will move to another area.
• When I worry about something, I will tell myself that I will think about this for 15 min at (time) at (where, eg. the sofa in the living room).
• When I feel anxious, I will take deep breathing exercise for 5 – 10 min to calm down, then tell myself to re-focus on my work.
• When I start worrying about a quiz, I immediately remind myself that I can do better when chunk my study materials and focus one at a time.
• When I start doubting about my ability to achieve, I remind myself that doing my work will increase my chance of success.
SBP TECHNIQUE (When you realise your mind is drifting)

- S – STOP

- B - Breathe

- P - Positive Self-talk

I can focus on the main points I am studying now to help with my exams.
What To Do When You Feel Anxious: Relaxation Techniques

• Breathing technique

• Muscle relaxation
  – Exercise, stretching

• Visualization exercises

http://www.ntu.edu.sg/scc/selfhelpresources/Pages/briefrelaxationtechniques.aspx
DEVELOP THINKING SKILLS

- **Knowledge**: label, list, identify
- **Comprehension**: define, explain, etc
- **Application**: solve, apply, etc
- **Analysis**: compare & contrast, differentiate, etc
- **Synthesis**: create, combine, invent, etc
- **Evaluation**: assess, recommend, value, etc.

**Strategy:**
Look at your tutorial questions/questions in your book, determine what thinking skills are required. Do more of those you are weak in. (eg, do what sports men do)
Use Your Thinking Skills

• Questions

• Look for
  – Links among main points
  – Links between new learning and old knowledge (*Synthesis*)
University Life & Study - New Environment

Rigid

Open / Flexible
Student Counselling Centre (SCC)

- Free professional and confidential counselling
- Self-help resources (resource racks and online)
  - Workshops for students and staff
  - Lunch-time talks
Self-help resources (handouts) on Website:

www.ntu.edu.sg/scc/home

- Personal Effectiveness
  - Adjusting to university life, adjusting to new culture, money management
- Mental Health
  - Anxiety, depression, stress & brief relaxation techniques
- Study Technique
  - Concentration, good study environment, etc
- Relationship
  - Living with a roommate, friendships, etc
What Do Students Talk About?

- **Study Related Issues**
  - adjustment to university study
  - motivation and concentration
  - procrastination
  - study stress
  - exam anxiety

- **Social/Relationship Issues**
  - lack of confidence
  - shyness
  - loneliness
  - family-related matters
  - relationship difficulties
What Do Students Talk About?

- **Emotional Issues**
  - anxiety
  - depression
  - anger
  - grief
  - low self-esteem

- **Others**
  - computer addiction
  - personal identity issues
  - adjusting to new culture
  - homesickness
  - eating disorders
SCC TEAM

- Officer in charge/Student Counsellor
  - Ms Mariam Hamid

- Student Counsellors
  - Mr Frank Chan
  - Ms Majorie Koh
  - Ms Tah Lih Chin
  - Ms Yap Lee Jong
MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH US

📞 Telephone: 6790 4462

✉️ Email: scc@ntu.edu.sg

📍 Location: #05-07 Student Services Centre

🌐 Website: http://www.ntu.edu.sg/scc/
LEARNtuLEARN

CELT
(Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching)

LEARNtuLEARN Activities:

1. Orientation talks (40min. or more)
2. Workshops throughout the term
• Possible topics for workshops or talks include:
  – Academic skills, identifying learning styles, motivation, problem solving skills, social-emotional learning, understanding and managing conflicts etc.

• **Contact** - E-mail: LearntuLearn@ntu.edu.sg
BEST WISHES ON YOUR JOURNEY IN NTU