

The Think Tank

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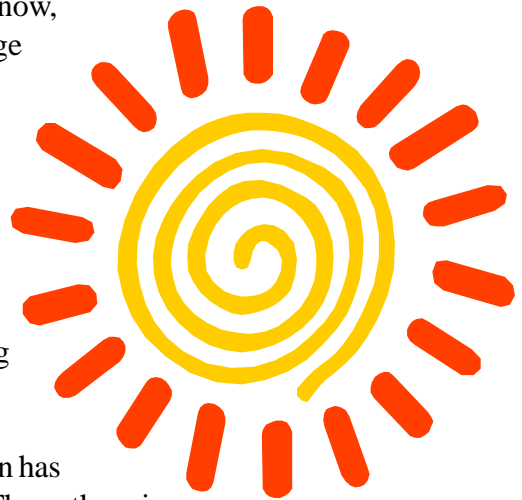


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A Note From the Editor

It's been an usually cold and damp winter in Rhode Island. Now that it's April, however, snow, freezing rain, and below-average temperatures are--hopefully--over. As soon as the thermometer hit fifty degrees last week, many students dug out their shorts and t-shirts and welcomed the smells, sights, and sounds of spring: grass clippings, later sunsets, and honking geese.



This annual phenomenon has caused many a GPA to suffer. The authors in this issue of the *Think Tank* want you to be able to enjoy the outdoors *without* having to suffer academically, so grab a bench in front of the Bryant Center, take a deep breath of cool, clean, spring air, and see what they have to say. ❖

Stay Motivated: The Semester Isn't Over Yet!

by Jennifer Hanson, ACE Learning Specialist

It looks as though our winter hibernation may finally be over. The clocks have been turned ahead, the snow has melted, and our friends--the geese--have returned. I'm longing for the great outdoors, fresh air, and longer, warmer days—and I'm sure you are too. The risk of spring fever is upon us.

But amidst my thoughts of being at one with nature, a little voice in my head reminds me that there are only a few weeks left to wrap up this semester, finish those projects, write those papers, and

take those finals. So what can we do to stay motivated and make it through the final count-down of the spring semester?

- **Continue to attend all of your classes.**
Use your time in the classroom wisely; learn as much from your professor as possible. This will help you to understand and remember the information better when it comes to studying for and taking your finals.
- **Think Zen.**
Don't make matters worse by staring out the window, dreaming of desirable destinations. Live in the moment. For the 50 – 75 minutes that you are in the classroom, stay focused on your instructor and the material presented.
- **Keep your academic goals in mind.**
Remember why you are here. Isn't it your goal to graduate from Bryant on time with a strong G.P.A.? If so, you need to hang in there for a few more weeks!
- **Reward yourself.**
As you complete your remaining assignments, build some "reward" time into your schedule. Once you have handed in quality work on time, spend some time walking, playing frisbee, or just hanging out with friends.

Remember, a few weeks of remaining class time and homework equals ONLY a few weeks left until summer vacation! ❖

Sandals and Similar Signs of Spring

by Courtney Zullo, Writing Consultant

I don't know about you, but it doesn't take much to remind me that spring is in the air. The first sight of sandals puts me in spring fever mode at full throttle. If you have trouble remembering the real reason you're at college at this time of year (um, to learn), you are probably experienc-

ing spring fever. What follows are some of the possible warning signs.

1. Suddenly, the walk to class does not seem so bad. Instead of speed walking to the Unistructure, trying to avoid the ice pellets hitting your eyes, you find yourself strolling to class at a much more leisurely pace, counting the number of brave souls wearing shorts.

2. You find yourself calling work before your shift to explain how your Aunt Sue from Nebraska has taken a turn for the worse and that you'll be taking the next flight out. You justify the lie by thinking, "Why should I miss out on the first ultimate frisbee tournament of the year in such beautiful weather?"

3. You sit at your desk to read the four hundred page book that was assigned weeks ago. You aren't comfortable there, so you move to your bed, conveniently located next to the window. After opening the shade, you notice a home run derby game going on outside. You open the window to get some "fresh air" when you hear your favorite song blasting from a stereo across campus. Suddenly, you say to yourself, "I can read 400 pages the night before it's due. I'll just pull an all-nighter." Right. You throw on your sneakers and you're out the door faster than your professor can say "failure."

4. The construction worker right outside the window of your 9 AM class suddenly has the greatest job in the world. You find yourself staring at him in envy while the professor mumbles something about debits and credits. You vaguely hear the words "final" and "exam," but nothing could shake you out of your trance.

5. While eating lunch, your roommate announces that he is not going to his 2 PM class. Instead, he is going to host a barbecue, complete with burgers and baseball. You really *try* to go to class, but the music lures you back. You vow to

attend class *tomorrow*, even if it means missing a mid-afternoon bash.

These are all indications that you are slowly (if not quickly) sliding into spring fever mode. While the justification that “Hey, I am only in college once, so I should live it up” might sound good at the moment, you (and your parents) might not think that was the proper mindset come finals week. Unfortunately, you’ll soon seriously regret putting off class and your assignments all because of a change in seasons. ❖

In the End . . .

by Shannon Naujock, Writing Consultant

“Last one, make it your best one!” Even now I can envision my high school swim coach shouting these words across the lengths of the pool, as the last few minutes of what were daily, three and a half hour swim sessions finally arrived. As the last few seconds ticked away, my teammates and I welcomed the relief of our cool down with flushed faces and burning lungs, proud of ourselves for enduring that which was aimed at making us better swimmers.

As warm temperatures and sunshine invite me outside to start my summer vacation early, I find myself chanting my coach’s words, “Last one, make it your best one!” in order to remain focused on my studies. The last few weeks of classes have finally arrived, and, for most of us, a significant portion of our class work has already been completed. Unfortunately, a good amount still needs to be done, including final examinations.

From my perspective, all I need to do is hang in there for a short while longer, and the end will come. Granted, time will run out and the semester will draw to a close regardless of what I do or don’t do over the course of this next month. Personally, though, I would rather take

refuge in the knowledge that I continued to put time and effort into my classes, instead of experiencing regret over having allowed my previous work to go to waste. The assignments, papers, projects, presentations, exams, and every other component of the academic workload serves to help us learn about who we are and what we are capable of accomplishing.

With outbreaks of spring fever popping up everywhere, remind yourself of what you want out of life. Do you want to settle early and follow the path of least resistance, or do you want to persevere and find out what you are made of? I choose the latter because, if there is one thing that I have found to be true both in and out of the pool, it is that pain is temporary while pride lasts forever. ❖

Diagnosing and Treating Spring Fever

by Dayna German, Tutor

If you find yourself sitting in class, staring out the window and daydreaming about being out in the sunshine, chilling with your friends, you may be spiraling towards spring fever. I know you may be thinking that you can do your work later and play in the sunshine now, but you’re going to end up falling behind. Your grades may start to slide downhill as you struggle to keep up with your workload. You will probably do worse on your finals than you would have if you had kept in the studying frame of mind.

Spring fever can also lead to a lack of sleep, which may mean sleeping through your alarm clock in the morning and missing class, or, worse yet, falling asleep in class. Either of these scenarios will cause your grades to drop.

How can you avoid this problem? In order to enjoy the sunshine and get your work done, you may want to rearrange your schedule. If you need to be outside during the day, use your

free time wisely. You may find studying in the morning before class, or in between classes, will allow you to get your work done. The library is a great place to go to study at night. What I'm trying to say is you need to control your spring fever, giving into it on your own terms. ❖

Tempting Fate

by Melissa Kendall, Writing Consultant

March 20, the official first day of spring, is the day when the birds start chirping, the green grass starts growing and the grades start dropping. For those of us who are seniors, the count down edges closer towards graduation. For all of us, it is a little under two months before we'll be able to enjoy the freedom of summer.

Surviving spring fever is one of the hardest things for students to do. As the joys of spring inch closer, students go through their own tug of war. We are torn between our homework and having fun in the sun. It is so hard to sit in the library and study for a test while our friends are outside in the warm air, playing wiffle ball or frisbee. Is there a way to deal with such distractions? Is it possible to balance the excitement of spring with the tediousness of homework?

One of the best solutions is time management. Studies have shown that you are only able

to process so much information in a limited period of time. What many suggest is sitting down and studying for a given interval, taking a break, and then going back to studying. Well, why can't we use this solution to counteract spring fever? If you are stuck doing homework and really want to spend some time outside, then study for a specific time period, get up, and head outside for a little bit. Just make sure that you return to studying.

This study break can also help you get your adrenaline pumping.

Physical activity such as playing wiffle ball, playing frisbee, or running, can help you return to your work with renewed energy. Such a jump-start will help you focus more on your studies. It turns out that "controlled" spring fever can be good for you, as long as you are able to balance it with your studies.

For those who feel that tug of war between schoolwork and spring fever, it might help to think of this weather as a form of

temptation. Temptation is the desire to have or do something that you know you should avoid; as some would say, "Don't tempt fate." As you begin debating whether or not you want to give into spring fever, really think about whether or not you want to give in to temptation; think about whether or not the repercussions of spring fever are really worth it. ❖



