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# The Balancing Act: Academic and Personal Life

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# Topic: Balancing Between Academic and Personal Life

For this presentation, I taught about how students should manage their time and stressed the importance of keeping mental health afloat along with getting schoolwork done. I also gave my own experiences from my freshman year to help them out!



# Purpose of the Lesson

Freshman year I struggled to balance a social life, my academic work, physical health, and mental health. A few of my students expressed to me how they wanted to visit home often but would be cutting out studying time to do so. I knew I had to make a lesson on this topic! Freshman can feel like they want to go home often but this can easily get in the way of schoolwork. This is a big stressor for Freshman so I felt a big call to present this lesson. I did interactive activities and gave tips to help them balance their lives.



# Lesson Preparation

To prepare for my lesson, I gave a quick anonymous survey to my class stating the following questions:

- “On a scale of 1-10 how stressed do you feel with schoolwork?”
- “How do you spend your free time?”
- “If you have been feeling homesick, do you think it has affected your schoolwork?”

I then put in specific slides catered to how my students answered, so I can help them in the areas they are struggling with

Rampton, J. (2018, May 1). *Manipulate time with these powerful 20 time management tips*. Forbes. Retrieved December 1, 2021, from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnrampton/2018/05/01/manipulate-time-with-these-powerful-20-time-management-tips/?sh=104b62d157ab>.

Butler, J. (2021, September 3). *10 ways to deal with homesickness*. Save the Student. Retrieved December 1, 2021, from <https://www.savethestudent.org/international-students/tips-to-deal-with-home-sickness.html>.

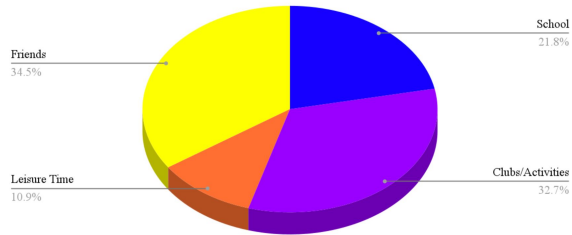
*25 quick ways to reduce stress*. Colorado Law. (2018, October 10). Retrieved December 1, 2021, from <https://www.colorado.edu/law/25-quick-ways-reduce-stress>.

## Why is this lesson important for First Year students to know?

Being a first year college student can be tough as is, and trying to figure out how to balance it all can be even tougher. Students can feel very lost at college and I wanted to ensure my students had tips I wish I knew my own freshman year. Being in a new environment, it is comforting knowing everyone is having similar issues and it is a big topic to discuss. If first year students are not given tips on how to handle school work while trying to make new friends all while being homesick, it can become very overwhelming and they may resort to visiting home too often.

# Presentation Materials

Time Spent Freshman Year



## Home

- Strong support system
- Personal space
- Wellness/ comfort
- Friends



## Cortland

- Freedom
- New atmosphere
- Responsibility
- Money



## Tips for mental health

- Meditation- Headspace App
- Making personal time
- Make time for the gym and working out
- Making checklists for the day will help you stay on track
- Get homework done as it is assigned will help keep your head clear

For the top slide I created a pie chart to show how I split up my time Freshman year, and discussed how it was the incorrect way.

In the bottom slides, I wanted to get my students to start to think about the pros and cons to school and home life and give them my own advice.

# Methods

Which category would these fall into?

- An assignment due in 2 weeks
- Phone calls, busywork
- Studying for tomorrow's test
- Excessive TV watching

	Urgent	Not urgent
Important	<b>DO</b> Important and urgent	<b>SCHEDULE</b> Important but not urgent
Not important	<b>DELEGATE</b> Not important but urgent	<b>ELIMINATE</b> Not important and not urgent

Please take a piece of paper out and write down your answers to these questions:

- What is one thing you love about home? Why?
- What is one thing you love about college? Why?



Home

What are some pros and cons to home?

- 
- 
- 
- 

Cortland

What are some pros and cons to Cortland?

- 
- 
- 

I found these methods to be very effective, the students were able to connect with each other and work together on the open ended questions

I tried to make my presentation interactive and get the students involved, since my class is usually shy I saw a different side of them during this class! Getting the students involved in ways they know they can contribute really helped them. The students were also able to learn from each other!

# Learning Outcomes/Objectives

For this lesson, I wanted to stress the importance of keeping a healthy balance between school and personal life, and learning how to split up free time. Since my students have come to me with their own concerns with time management and feeling stressed, a lesson on this topic was very needed. I wanted to stress the mental health factor into this lesson, and make sure the students had all the resources they need. A goal of mine during this lesson was to get my class more talkative and to connect with each other, and each student was very engaged with the topic.



# Assessment/Feedback

After this presentation, I told my students I will stay after class if they needed to talk to me one on one about being stressed, or had any questions. I was very happy when I had two students stay back to talk to me and said how much they appreciated the tips I had given and confided in me about how stressed they felt. I was able to help them and gave them my phone number if they ever needed someone to talk to when they felt stressed or couldn't balance their school work.

# Reflection

This lesson made me reflect on how I spend my own free time, and I was able to find new ways to destress such as meditating when I feel overwhelmed. After my research for this lesson, I had found new ways to organize my own time as well. I was grateful I got to share these tips with my students, along with ways I originally dealt with stress. Sometimes, even the people giving the lesson need the tips too!

