

Bocconi

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

CAMILLE ANNABELLE BERTRAND
KAREN RIGATTI



Università
Bocconi
MILANO

BOCCONI UNIVERSITY
CAMPUS LIFE: COUNSELING, SELF-EMPOWERMENT & WELL-BEING

New challenges: the transition from high school to university

Leaving home:
Changes and
Independence

Creating new
relationships

Study methods and
time management

Cultural
differences and
adaptation

Taking care of
yourself

Managing anxiety



From high school to university

The transition from high school to university represents a significant challenge for all students, who often find themselves for the first time experiencing a world completely different than any they've known, while experiencing full autonomy and independence.

While this newfound independence is welcome in many ways, along with it can come stress, challenges and a sense of isolation.



Life in high school:

- Same schedule on most days
- Expectations are very clear
- You knew how to succeed and were used to getting high marks
- Life was generally comfortable and predictable



Life in university:

- You are treated as a fully responsible adult
- You manage your own time, schedule, workload and responsibilities
- No one will to check which lessons you attend and which ones you skip
- You learn to balance academics, social activities and self-care
- Classes may be very large and you will no longer know all of your classmates



Confronting Change



Life is constantly presenting us with changes, asking us to adapt, because change is essential for growth.

- By definition, change is stressful, even when the change is considered positive.
- Sometimes, the anxiety caused by a lot of changes happening at once can lead to excessive stress and feelings of discomfort, but this isn't necessarily a reason to worry.
- The majority of the stresses experienced in the early stages of adapting to university life will subside fairly quickly, as you settle in and get more familiar with your new surroundings and what is expected of you.



Becoming Independent



- Each of us finds, in the course of growing up, that we have key experiences which then serve as benchmarks, taking us from one crucial stage of development to the next. One of these is the **separation** from our family of origin, both physically and emotionally, in order **to become fully independent adults**.
- This separation doesn't mean that we are no longer connected to our family, but rather that we now have the awareness and tools to be able to manage our day-to-day lives, without the constant involvement and oversight of our parents.



Leaving home and becoming independent



Creating new relationships



- You will quickly realize that you are not alone in the initial difficulties of adapting to a totally new environment. In talking with other students about what you're each going through, not only will you have plenty of common ground, but you are also likely to find that your stress and anxiety suddenly feel much less heavy.
- Most first-year university students are more or less in the same boat and are eager to make new friends, so don't hesitate to initiate conversation and introduce yourself !



Getting out there !



Some **tips** for starting off on the right foot:

1. Attend classes in person and make it a habit to sit next to someone.
2. Introduce yourself and take the initiative to share a bit about your own experience so far.
3. Suggest getting coffee or a bite to eat after class
4. Stay informed about extracurricular activities and student associations within the university
5. Propose a group activity once you've met a few people
6. Accept social invitations when you can, even if it cuts into your study time a bit
7. Get involved in a sport or activity

Study Methods and Time Management



— If during high school you had developed **effective study methods**, you're starting from a good place!

—

Most students find that the amount of studying required at the university level is much more demanding, so having good study habits and time management skills are essential.



Study Methods and Time Management



- You are moving from focusing on single chapters to absorbing entire textbooks, so in order not to find yourself overwhelmed and falling behind, it's important to stay on top of the readings. Since no one will be reminding you of this, it's easy to get into the trap of thinking "I can do it later." This is where discipline, organization and self-motivation are key!
- During university, professors are looking for the **development of critical thinking and critical analysis**, and not just a regurgitation of the material read.



Some effective strategies to get started:



- **Participate in the classroom:** participating in lessons is not only helpful in learning the material, in some courses it's obligatory. Remember that it's much easier to pay attention if you get involved in the discussion.
- Don't isolate yourself in the room – pick a seat near the front of the room and near other students.
- Take notes and don't hesitate to ask the professor if something isn't clear. There are here for you! The pace of university lessons is much faster than in high school and the volume of material much more intense.



Some effective strategies to get started:



- **Use the resources available to you:** The university is full of resources for students. The important thing is to learn what they are and then use them to your advantage. For example, professors have office hours to meet with students who are having difficulty. You can also contact the tutor for the course with any questions, and there are computer labs and language labs available as well.
- Have a **study strategy:** or at least don't look at your textbooks for the first time a week before the exam! Be disciplined in studying and reviewing your notes regularly.



Time management and scheduling:



WEEKLY PLANNER

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
8:00 am							
9:00 am							
10:00 am							
11:00 am							
12:00 pm							
1:00 pm							
2:00 pm							
3:00 pm							
4:00 pm							
5:00 pm							
6:00 pm							
7:00 pm							
8:00 pm							



Take care of yourself



Develop healthy habits:

1. good nutrition
2. adequate rest and
3. regular exercise are critical components to being successful in your studies.

If you take good care of yourself, you'll feel better and will therefore be more motivated. Being fully independent for the first time means it might take some time and trial and error, but the sooner and more consistently you develop good habits, the better you will feel and



Take care of yourself



Managing your relationships with friends and roommates:

Living with others who are going through the same experience be helpful and reassuring. You can vent together, lean on each other for support, share doubts and concerns and help one another figure things out.

However, living with others can also be challenging at times, especially when you don't feel you have much in common with your roommates. **Good communication** and giving each other the benefit of the doubt can go a long way toward keeping things running

Managing Anxiety



Cultural differences and adaptation

- **Learn the language!** Living abroad means integrating into a new culture and knowing the language is a key component.
- Local customs may be quite different (store times for shops, access to services, etc.) **Mixing with the locals** is the best way to learn about these differences sooner rather than later.
- **Getting to know people:** Italians are less likely to say hi and start up a conversation with a stranger. They are more accustomed to meeting new people through friends or others they already know.



Cultural differences and adaptation

- **Different social and academic norms:**

Classes tend to be more lecture format with little interactive discussion. Students will often talk to each other – even somewhat loudly – during the professor's instruction.

- Exams are heavily weighted – only one (general) or two (partial) exams in the whole semester.
- The way you study might need to adapt to match the different teaching style.



Change can be hard, but help is available!



- **Don't isolate yourself** - talk to your fellow students, most of whom may be experiencing similar challenges.
- Reach out to professors and teaching assistants – if you're struggling with a course or just need more help, take advantage of office hours or send an email explaining your issue.



Change can be hard, but help is available!



- Utilize the resources within **Campus Life** – we have seminars on topics such as study methods, managing anxiety and practicing Mindfulness.
- **Recognize the warning signs** - if you are withdrawing from academics or social activities, or if you are having trouble taking care of your day-to-day self-care and responsibilities, ask for help.
- **Seek counseling** – schedule an individual session, utilize our walk-in services (no appointment necessary) or attend one of our periodically scheduled group sessions on various topics.



From high school to university



This year we welcome approximately 800 first-year students with international high school diplomas.

These students graduated with A Levels, the American diploma, the French Bac, International Baccalaureate and high school diplomas from international schools all around the world!

Learning techniques and study methods may need to be adjusted to start your journey in University in the best way. Our ambassadors will share their experience with you today.



From high school to university



All throughout the year, you will have the opportunity to enhance your skills by attending Self-Empowerment Courses.

For example, this semester we offer courses on:

- Managing ourselves: using Mindfulness to unlock our human potential
- How to manage anxiety & stress
- Study skills



From high school to university



- If you have special needs, the **Learning Needs Help Desk service** is designed to offer each student with learning needs the chance to receive specialized counseling customized to their own situation.
- And finally, you can refer to the **International Student Desk**, the office dedicated to incoming exchange students. The ISD team offers a series of tailor-made services throughout the semester to ensure students make the most of their time at Bocconi.



