

# So They're Off to University

## A Handbook for Parents and Guardians of First Year University Students



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Centre for Student Development and Counselling  
Ryerson University, 2008, 2009

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RYERSON  
UNIVERSITY

# BECAUSE . . . .

Because, to your amazement and surprise,  
They've been transformed before your eyes,  
Now here they are with changing lives.

Because, today they'll reach out for your hand,  
And then tomorrow take a stand,  
They'll want to know you understand.

Because, they're going to call you in a fright,  
You're going to ache to put things right,  
Hold out a flame, call forth the light,  
And chase the darkness from their night.

They've reached a new beginning place,  
Where they can dream, test, dare, explore.  
With your love, trust and encouragement,  
They'll do all that and maybe more.

Because, when they go crashing out the door,  
They're going to stumble, maybe fall,  
And even sometimes break your heart.

Because, you want to keep them from the storm,  
From disappointment, pain and harm,  
And hang a star to guide them home.

Because, the shaky times will help them grow,  
And find the selves they'll come to know,  
Though you may wish it wasn't so,  
You're going to have to let them go.

Because. Because.

- Rosemarie Volpe  
July, 2006



# WELCOME!

Congratulations on having reached this important milestone. Going to university is a passage marked by change, exploration, growth and self-discovery. Both you and your student will be faced with the challenge of “letting go” as they mature, assert their independence, and step out of the final stages of adolescence and into adulthood. At times, you may be the first to whom they turn with a problem; at others they may fiercely resist your efforts to intervene. Old expectations and patterns of interacting will give way to new roles, understandings, and ways of relating.

Over the coming months and years your student will be required to stretch themselves academically and personally. No doubt you will share in (at least some of) the laughter and tears, triumphs and setbacks, acts of courage and anxieties they are likely to experience along the way. They will want to know they can count on your wisdom, encouragement, advice and support.

## HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

As your student prepares to begin their studies, you may find that you are juggling many different feelings- pride, excitement, apprehension, “empty nest” blues, even perhaps a little relief. What follows are some common transitional issues typically faced by those in entering university for the first time, whether they are living at home, in residence, or off campus. These are presented in the context of common scenarios in relation to which you might receive a cry for help. Each section contains perspectives from Ryerson students “in their own words” based on a survey of what they thought caregivers most need to know.

As well, we have provided related tips on how you might assist your student in adjusting to a new environment, and in managing the increased freedom and responsibility that come with it. For those who prefer a linear view, we have added a calendar indicating significant dates and issues which tend to arise at particular junctures in the academic cycle. Included, too, are lists of Student Services and other key campus resources which are available to help and support students during their first year and throughout their academic career at Ryerson.

## PORTIONS OF THIS MATERIAL HAVE BEEN ADAPTED FROM:

- University of Windsor Parent/Family Handbook  
[www.uwindsor.ca/parents](http://www.uwindsor.ca/parents)
- St. Mary's University - Making the Transition:
- A Parent's Guide to the First Year of University -  
[www.smu.ca/orientation/parents](http://www.smu.ca/orientation/parents)
- Purdue University Parent Handbook  
[www.purdue.edu/parents/index.html](http://www.purdue.edu/parents/index.html)
- Northwestern University Advice for Parents  
[www.northwestern.edu/parent/advice.html](http://www.northwestern.edu/parent/advice.html)
- Hampden-Sydney College  
[www.hsc.edu/counseling/selfhelp/stress\\_periods.html](http://www.hsc.edu/counseling/selfhelp/stress_periods.html)
- University of Guelph  
[www.parents.uoguelph.ca/studentexperience.cfm](http://www.parents.uoguelph.ca/studentexperience.cfm)
- Southwestern University  
[www.southwestern.edu/parents/fy\\_monthly\\_guide.html](http://www.southwestern.edu/parents/fy_monthly_guide.html)

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# SCENARIO #1

“Help, I’m not doing as well as I expected!  
I think I might be in the wrong program.”

It’s October. Your student, who had an 80% average in high school, returns from classes one day and tells you that, for the first time ever, they failed an exam. They express that a number of their courses do not interest them and that they’re beginning to question whether they chose the right program of studies. They’re starting to lose their motivation and are feeling panicked. This is your first experience with a young person attending university, and you are not sure how best to help.

## TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

- Shifting gears from high school
- Concerns about academic success
- Learning appropriate study skills
- Establishing an educational direction



## IN STUDENTS’ OWN WORDS

“It’s very different from high school...It was very difficult to adjust to the huge increase in reading...”

“Don’t expect kids to do great first year because they’re still learning...[understand] that study habits acquired from high school like overnight crammers and last minute studying do not help”.

“Studying is like working two jobs because 1) you have to go to class to know what’s going on and 2) you have to keep up with your readings and homework at a different time - getting an average grade is not that easy.”

“Minimize pressure to go into a specific program. I’ve noticed that if there’s no interest, students won’t succeed.”

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Realize that the demands of university academic life are very different from those of high school. Have realistic expectations. A significant drop in grades compared to high school is common, and an “F” in one exam or even a course does not, in itself, signal an inappropriate program choice. It is, nevertheless, a call to determine what went wrong and how to do better in the future. Performance usually improves with time and Ryerson provides many resources to help students develop their study skills.
- Encourage your student to access the various academic supports on campus such as the Learning Success Centre, to take part in study groups with other students, and to visit professors and instructors during their office hours if they need assistance or clarification.
- Show interest but don’t put too much emphasis on grades. Support your student even if their academic performance is less than hoped for or anticipated.
- If your student lives at home, help them set up a suitable study space.
- Encourage your student to take advantage of opportunities in the classroom, on-campus and in the larger community to explore their interests, skills and values. These activities will help them to focus their career direction while gaining valuable resume building experiences. If in doubt about their program of studies, suggest that they attend a career planning workshop or seek individual career counselling.
- Sometimes students decide to pursue a program of study for which they are ill-suited due to mistaken assumptions, lack of direction, limited self-knowledge, or the desire to conform to others’ expectations. As a result, their motivation and academic performance are likely to suffer. Switching programs is not uncommon. Offer your student support in making informed educational choices that are consistent with their interests, skills and values, even if different from your aspirations for them.
- At times, it is in the best interest of students who are struggling with certain courses to reduce their course load, provided they do so by the final deadline (see “Significant Dates” at the end of this handbook or on the Ryerson website). Before taking this step, students should consult with their program department as there may be academic implications involved. As well, they should speak with Student Financial Assistance to determine whether dropping a course or courses will affect their financial aid and/or scholarship. Course drops will be considered after the final deadline based on medical or compassionate grounds, and must be supported by verifying documentation.
- While it is natural to be concerned, be aware that students’ academic records are private and confidential. Therefore, Ryerson cannot release specific information about a student (e.g. application status, grades, academic standing) to anyone, including family members, without written permission. If your student is unable to personally discuss any of these matters and wishes that you do so on their behalf, they must first submit a “Letter of Authorization” to the relevant Ryerson office (i.e. Admissions, Enrollment Services and Student Records).

# CAMPUS SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES

## Office of Undergraduate Admissions

Includes a comprehensive guide on making the transition from secondary school to university.

[www.ryerson.ca/undergraduate/admission/parents](http://www.ryerson.ca/undergraduate/admission/parents)

## Learning Success Centre

Helps students make the transition to university learning, develop sound learning strategies, and achieve their academic potential. Seminars, learning groups, individual consultations, and tutoring as well as a range of print and on-line resources are among the services offered.

[www.ryerson.ca/learningsuccess](http://www.ryerson.ca/learningsuccess)

## English Language Support

Provides services and non-credit programs to students whose first language is not English.

[www.ryerson.ca/els](http://www.ryerson.ca/els)

## Writing Centre

Provides one-on-one help with any problems students may have with writing at Ryerson.

[www.ryerson.ca/writingcentre](http://www.ryerson.ca/writingcentre)

## Library Research Skills Workshops

Demonstrate how to find and use information effectively and how to evaluate the quality of that information.

[www.ryerson.ca/library/info/workshops](http://www.ryerson.ca/library/info/workshops)

## Career Services

The Centre for Student Development and Counselling and the Career Development and Employment Centre jointly offer a range of services, programs and resources to assist students in their career decision-making and development.

[www.ryerson.ca/counselling](http://www.ryerson.ca/counselling)

[www.ryerson.ca/career](http://www.ryerson.ca/career)

## Access Centre

Provides services and supports to students with disabilities to facilitate their academic success and access to the university.

[www.ryerson.ca/accesscentre](http://www.ryerson.ca/accesscentre)

## NOTES

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# HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Always be available and willing to listen.
- Be prepared for mixed emotions, especially during the first few weeks. Pay attention to your student's feelings and try not to trivialize their concerns, e.g., "But, these are the best years of your life!"
- Rather than giving direct advice, inquire about what steps they have taken or could take to feel better. Demonstrate trust and confidence in their ability to handle this very big change in their lives.
- Ryerson offers a vast array of opportunities outside the classroom to get connected with other students and the community. These include interest and cultural groups, a tri-mentoring program, leadership development, athletic and recreational programs, and academic program-based initiatives. Encourage your student to get involved.
- If your student is living away from home, avoid asking whether they're homesick. If they are (even just a little) being reminded of it can make things worse. Use phone calls, e-mails, text messages, and letters (in moderation) to stay in touch (even if they don't respond). Visit (but not too often). Send pictures and "care packages" of some of their favourite things. The majority of students, even the most fiercely independent, need the security of family ties.
- Try not to worry too much or to over-emphasize what may be a temporary problem. Understand that it takes time to adjust to new surroundings. Try to reassure your student that they will soon make new friends and that others are probably feeling the same way. If, on the other hand, there is an extreme change in their mood, behaviour or appearance, it may indicate a need for more intervention or counselling.
- With the development of new social systems and interests, romantic relationships formed in high school and long-standing friendships may be challenged or even end. Be aware that, should this occur, it can be a very tumultuous time emotionally for your student.
- If you are concerned about your student's adjustment and/or well-being you may wish to refer them to the Centre for Student Development and Counselling, Medical Services or other relevant support service (see below). Except in cases of significant risk of bodily harm, information related to your student's physical and/or mental health is held in the strictest confidence unless they provide express written consent permitting the release of information.

# CAMPUS SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES

## Office of Student Community Life

This Student Services office offers programs aimed at facilitating first-year transition, creating community and developing leadership skills.

[www.ryerson.ca/stuprog](http://www.ryerson.ca/stuprog)

## Ryerson Student Union (RSU)

Check out the “Campus Groups” section for a list of student groups and course unions. RSU also organizes events and social activities throughout the year.

[www.rsuonline.ca](http://www.rsuonline.ca)

## Tri-mentoring Program

Provides support in adjusting to university to Ryerson’s culturally and linguistically diverse student body by linking first year students with upper year student mentors.

[www.ryerson.ca/trimentoring](http://www.ryerson.ca/trimentoring)

## Athletics and Recreation

Has dozens of programs and facilities which provide opportunities for students to connect with one another while pursuing a favourite or new sport or recreational activity.

<http://firefly.ryerson.ca/sportsandrec/>

## Centre for Student Development and Counselling

Offers students free and confidential individual counselling and group programs on a range of personal, career and academic issues including the transition to university life.

[www.ryerson.ca/counselling](http://www.ryerson.ca/counselling)

## Medical Services

Doctors are available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, to provide students with medical services they would otherwise receive from their family physician.

[www.ryerson.ca/studentervices/healthcentre](http://www.ryerson.ca/studentervices/healthcentre)

## International Services for Students

Lends guidance and assistance to international students including linking those new to Ryerson to upper year peer supporters.

[www.ryerson.ca/internationalservices](http://www.ryerson.ca/internationalservices)

## Ryerson Aboriginal Student Services

Offers support and specialized services to Aboriginal, Metis and Inuit students on campus.

[www.ryerson.ca/aboriginal](http://www.ryerson.ca/aboriginal)

## NOTES

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# HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Encourage your student to familiarize themselves with the university's academic policies and procedures. Become aware of them yourself. They are outlined in Ryerson's on-line undergraduate calendar, Student Guide and program handbooks. Having this knowledge ahead of time can prevent poor decision-making later on.
- Resist the urge to "rescue" or "fix it" as doing this will deprive your student of the opportunity to develop their own problem-solving skills and resources. Rather, offer suggestions or direction to campus services such as the Learning Success Centre, and the Centre for Student Development and Counselling for help with stress, performance anxiety, and time management.
- Recognize that, unlike high school, the university lifestyle often requires students to be on campus beyond the "9 to 5" routine. They may have classes or labs that start as early as 8 a.m. and end after 9 p.m. As well, group and, particularly, studio work often take place in the evening, with the latter some times extending into the early morning hours.
- Be empathic and non-judgmental. Accept and understand the high's and low's associated with university studies. Acknowledge your student's strengths and successes. Let them know that it's OK to make mistakes and that your support is there even when the results are not ideal.
- Decrease responsibilities and pressures at home, especially at high stress times during the academic cycle such as mid-term and final exams.
- Be aware that, when overwhelmed by multiple demands, students can sometimes be tempted to take what seems to be the easy way out by cheating or plagiarizing. These are forms of academic misconduct which the university treats very seriously. Familiarize yourself with the information on Ryerson's academic integrity website. Talk to your student about the importance of honesty in all their academic pursuits.
- Remind your student of the role of "the three R's" when it comes to self-care and stress management; Relaxation, Recreation, and Relationships. All of these help to create a balanced lifestyle and to recharge one's mental, emotional and physical batteries.



# CAMPUS SUPPORTS AND RESOURCES

## Student Guide

Contains everything undergraduate students need to know about policies, procedures and resources at Ryerson.

[www.ryerson.ca/studentguide](http://www.ryerson.ca/studentguide)

## Learning Success Centre

Helps students make the transition to university learning, develop sound learning strategies, including how to effectively manage time and cope with exam anxiety. Seminars, learning groups, individual consultations, tutoring as well as a range of print and on-line resources are available.

[www.ryerson.ca/learningsuccess](http://www.ryerson.ca/learningsuccess)

## Ryerson On-line Undergraduate Calendar

Is the definitive guide to Ryerson's programs, policies and procedures.

[www.ryerson.ca/undergraduate/calendars](http://www.ryerson.ca/undergraduate/calendars)

## Centre for Student Development and Counselling

Students needing help managing stress can seek one-on-one assistance or participate in a workshop or group program.

[www.ryerson.ca/counselling](http://www.ryerson.ca/counselling)

## Access Centre

Provides services and supports to students with disabilities to facilitate their academic success and access to the university.

[www.ryerson.ca/accesscentre](http://www.ryerson.ca/accesscentre)

## Health Promotion

Provides workshops, displays and resources to help students de-stress.

[www.ryerson.ca/studentervices/healthpromotion](http://www.ryerson.ca/studentervices/healthpromotion)

## Athletics and Recreation

Offers opportunities for students to stay fit and get a break from study pressures through activities such as intramural sports, fitness and instructional programs, and sports clubs.

<http://firefly.ryerson.ca/sportsandrec/>

## Academic Integrity

This website shows students what they must do to maintain their academic integrity and links them to relevant campus resources.

[www.ryerson.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.ryerson.ca/academicintegrity)

## NOTES

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# SCENARIO #4

## “Help- I’m running out of money!”

Your student is living off campus in a shared apartment. While they received some government financial assistance, it was a lower amount than anticipated. You agreed to pay tuition fees with the understanding your student would be responsible for other expenses. They saved some money from summer employment but are not currently working in order to focus on their studies. It is now November, and you receive an e-mail indicating they are low on cash and asking for a cheque to pay next month’s rent.

### TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

- Learning to manage financial resources
- If living away from home, adjusting to a more restrictive budget and greater financial independence.



### IN STUDENTS’ OWN WORDS

“Money is a big issue.”

“The financial strain makes studying and succeeding in classes very difficult.”

“Parents should encourage [their] child not to have a part-time job first year, if possible, because it’s a lot to handle and the student could concentrate better if they don’t need to work as well as go to school.”

“Adding on work to 20+ hours of school is very stressful. Although students may not ask for it, they always need and want help.”

# Scenario #4

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Talk about money matters before school starts. Help your student draw up a realistic budget and discuss with them a financial plan that will ensure sufficient resources to cover expenses. Address the responsibilities and consequences associated with using credit cards.
- Work with your student to develop strategies for resisting overspending and for ensuring that they have savings should an emergency arise.
- Discuss the impact of working part-time on their studies. It is generally not advisable for students carrying a full course load (five to six courses), particularly those just beginning university, to work more than 12 - 15 hours a week.
- Be clear and open about the amount of financial support you are able to offer and for what purposes.
- Ensure that your student has accurate information about the payment of fees and any consequences associated with having an outstanding debt to the university. Details can be located on the Student Fees website.
- Become aware of the sources of financial aid and awards on and off campus and encourage your student to do so as well. Make certain that they are aware of application deadlines for scholarships and bursaries as they may be earlier than expected.
- Ryerson's "OneCard" (the university's official ID card) can be pre-loaded with money for meals at any of Ryerson's eateries which can sometimes be preferable to giving your student a food allowance. The OneCard can also be used for other services such as photocopying, duplicating and printing.





# SCENARIO #5

# #5

Scenario #5  
Scenario #5

“My student is living on their own for the first time and I’m worried about their safety and well-being.”

You are from a small community outside of Ontario. Although you had hoped that your student would get into residence, they applied too late and are now living with a friend from high school in an apartment close to campus in downtown Toronto. As they have never before been away from home, you are concerned about their adjustment to big city life, their overall safety, and whether they have the discipline needed to manage the many challenges and responsibilities associated with their new-found independence.

## TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

- Managing increased personal responsibilities
- Adjusting to living independently
- Adapting to an unfamiliar environment
- Letting go



## IN STUDENTS’ OWN WORDS

“Going from the structured routines of high school is difficult enough; having to do that and adjust to a new city and taking care of yourself (cooking, laundry, etc.) makes this a much bigger challenge.”

“University is a time for young adults to spread their wings and discover who they really are.”

“Share [your] wisdom. Share [your] experiences. Tell the truth about these things.”

“Parents need to know that it’s important to have a social life, and that having a social life doesn’t mean that we are irresponsible and don’t care about school.”

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Ask your student whether they would like to learn more about the basics; nutrition, meal planning and preparation, doing laundry, cleaning, money management, paying bills etc. before they leave home. Be responsive to their needs even if it means providing a “crash course” in independent living.
- If your student has never been to Toronto, a family visit, if possible, can help to ease the transition. Plan to do some site-seeing and to experience the city’s transit system. Check out local amenities and shopping facilities, particularly those that offer goods at a discount.
- Many caregivers, particularly of students living on campus, are concerned about under age drinking. Be open to discussing this issue with your student. In accordance with Ontario provincial law, Ryerson’s Student Code of Non-Academic Conduct specifically prohibits students under the age of 19 from possessing or consuming alcohol anywhere on the university premises. Additionally, the university’s Residence Contract stipulates that underage residents cannot consume alcohol in or near the residence building. Those violating these conditions are subject to penalty. Alcohol awareness is a common focus of the university’s Health Promotion unit.
- Help your student to view this as a time of self-discovery and personal growth. Let them know that change is almost always difficult, that you believe in them, and that they can count on your support. Share your own experiences with becoming independent and how you coped.
- Encourage your student to familiarize themselves with and avail themselves of the variety of supports available through Ryerson’s Security and Emergency Services. These include safety planning, a “Walk Safe” program in which Security Officers will walk with students to locations on campus or to the Dundas subway station, self-defense training, and emergency telephones. The main security operations centre is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week so someone is always there to answer a security inquiry.
- Encourage your student to be open with you about what they are experiencing. If they indicate that they are overwhelmed by their new responsibilities, let them know that this is not a sign of weakness, failure or immaturity. Assure them that, with time, they’ll begin to feel more adept and comfortable. Even then, expect that they will call from time to time with a new question or concern.
- Recognize that your student’s new-found personal independence is likely to be demonstrated in their behaviour and attitudes while at home. Rules and regulations that were once accepted without question may be challenged. Your well-intended questions may be considered intrusions. Consider this as an opportunity to openly dialogue about your changing relationship.





# INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Since parents and guardians of international students often have unique inquiries, staff in our International Services for Students (ISS) office have compiled the following list of questions and answers regarding concerns commonly presented to them. This office facilitates the transition of international students registered at Ryerson to Canadian university life. First year students are assigned an upper year peer supporter to provide guidance during the first semester.

**Q.** Who can my student contact to get assistance in applying for or renewing their immigration documents?

**A.** International students can contact the International Services for Students office to get advice and support in applying for or renewing their immigration documents. An International Student Advisor is available to provide assistance. Application packages are also available at the ISS office.

**Q.** How would confirmation of my student's enrolment at Ryerson or a statement of educational expenses (loan, employer, scholarship, etc.) be obtained?

**A.** Students can also contact International Services for Students to obtain letters of a non-academic nature such as confirmation of enrolment and statement of annual educational expenses. If in doubt, someone is always there to help.

**Q.** How can my student obtain the University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) card and information about how to use this service?

**A.** International students must submit their UHIP enrolment form to the International Services for Students office and will be able to pick up their cards in mid-November. The enrolment form provides temporary proof of coverage until they receive their cards. ISS also offers UHIP advising and information support.

**Q.** Where can my student go if they need help developing their English language skills?

**A.** English Language Support serves students whose first language of academic study is not English, ensuring that they have opportunities to make successful transitions to the university setting. Students who might find this program helpful include those who have never studied in Canada before, are seeking language improvement, and/or need practice writing university essays.

International Student Services Office  
Located in POD 61  
416-979-5000 x6655  
[www.ryerson.ca/internationalservices](http://www.ryerson.ca/internationalservices)

English Language Support Office  
Located in VIC 17  
416-979-5000 x4064  
[www.ryerson.ca/studentsservices/els](http://www.ryerson.ca/studentsservices/els)

# A MONTH TO MONTH GUIDE TO HELP YOUR STUDENT ACHIEVE SUCCESS

There is a particular rhythm to the academic year for all university students. Certain events that emerge during the year will generate student stress and transitional concerns. As a parent/guardian, understanding when these events occur can help prepare you to support your student throughout each semester. What follows is a month-by-month guide on the transitional issues that might arise as the academic year unfolds.

Some significant dates for the 2009-2010 academic year are included. Please refer to the current full-time undergraduate calendar - [www.ryerson.ca/undergraduate/calendars](http://www.ryerson.ca/undergraduate/calendars) - for up-to-date and additional details.

# SEPTEMBER

A week-long, campus-wide orientation takes place at the end of August. Many academic departments conduct mandatory orientation activities for their own students during that time. Orientation typically involves a number of organized events that are designed to help students meet others on campus while providing an opportunity to get acclimated to the city and to campus life.

Not all students will have the same experience during orientation. Some may focus on making friends and attending social events, while others may look for particular activities that appeal to their interests. Classes begin on Tuesday, September 8th – the day after Labour Day. As classes progress, first year students often realize that they need to learn how to handle new academic responsibilities (e.g., meeting deadline dates, reading several chapters in one week). At the same time, many will understandably want to participate in social activities such as campus clubs and organizations. In some case, misgivings about program suitability might arise as early as the first few weeks of classes.

## TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

- Homesickness
- Meeting new people
- Adjusting to a new environment
- Financial adjustment

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

- 7** Labour Day (University closed).
- 8** Classes commence for full and part-time undergraduate programs.
- 18** Final date to drop an undergraduate class and be eligible for a full refund (if this results in a lower fee range).
- 18** Final date to withdraw from an undergraduate program and be eligible for the majority of fees to be funded.

# OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

- 9** Final date for full- and part-time undergraduate students to drop a Fall term class and be eligible for a 50% fee refund, if applicable.
- 9** Final date to withdraw from an undergraduate program and be eligible for a 50% refund of Fall, 2009 fees.
- 12** Thanksgiving (University closed). Classes missed will be made up on an individual class basis.

Students heading into this month face two major issues. The first is the challenge of meeting the requirements of their coursework. Term papers, mid-terms, presentations, labs, and group projects are typically due by the middle to the end of the month. Quite naturally, your student will feel rather stressed. They will be tested not only on course content, but also on their learning skills (e.g., note-taking abilities, study habits, and time management).

The second challenge that students face is the recognition that their lifestyle has changed within a short period of time. This is especially evident around the Thanksgiving long weekend. Students who go home may be unable to partake in all holiday activities. They may have to study or have a lot of reading to do. Some may come home and discover that they cannot wait to get back to university, while others may find it hard to return. Relationships initiated in high school may be challenged or renegotiated.

## TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

- Test anxiety
- Time management
- Academic adjustments
- Homecoming blues

# NOVEMBER

Results of papers, mid-terms, reports, labs and presentations start to come in at this time. Students' grades can decrease as much as 10%, if not more. The fear of disappointing important people in their lives may develop for some students. Final deadlines for dropping Fall term courses in good academic standing typically occur at this time. Your student might be assessing their progress or contemplating dropping courses in which they are not doing well.

Students begin to gear up for final exams and may be evaluating their social lives at university. Some may be rooting themselves in campus life and taking on the university student role with pride. However, others may be wondering if they fit in. Financial concerns may arise as students find that their summer earnings or first-semester loans are starting to run out. Your student may also face challenges regarding their roommate or living situation.

## TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

- Academic pressures
- Pre-final exam anxiety
- Social life re-evaluation
- Economic stress
- Relationships with roommates

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**13** Final date for full or part-time undergraduate students to drop a Fall term class in good academic standing (no fee refund). A failing grade will be assigned if students simply stop attending classes after this deadline.

**13** Final date to withdraw from an undergraduate program for the Fall term in good academic standing (no refund of Fall, 2009 fees).

# DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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- 4** Classes end for full- and part-time undergraduate programs.
- 7** Fall term undergraduate examination period begins and includes Saturdays, December 12th and 19th.
- 24** Mid-Year Break begins with the University closing at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 23rd and re-opening at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, January 4th (classes begin).

Fall semester classes will end on December 4th. Students may study all night and become nocturnal as they prepare to write their final exams, some of them with hundreds of other student in gymnasiums or at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. It is not uncommon for students to stay late on campus and informally join or create study groups, while trying to balance any seasonal parties and gatherings that they are invited to attend. Students living in residence typically have 24 hours after their last exam to vacate their rooms.

Some out-of-town students may eagerly await the return home for the holidays. Others may find it difficult to adjust to changing dynamics in relationships with old friends and family members. During the holiday break, they may continue to keep to their atypical schedules and may resist attempts to enforce sleeping habits and curfews. Final grades will be posted on-line during the latter part of the month and this is likely to be an issue for those who have performed below their expectations.

## TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

- Exam stress
- Financial worries
- Time management
- Seasonal obligations
- Family obligations
- Anxiety about fall-term performance

# JANUARY

Students who have mastered and acclimated to the university system are likely to return to class feeling confident. For others, questions may come up as to whether they can handle the responsibilities of being a university student or whether, indeed, they are in the right program. Some students may also experience the post-holiday blues after leaving home again.

Reconnecting with friends on campus and accessing the appropriate student service can help your student ease back into the academic routine. As positions in campus organizations become available, they may be recruited to join the executive of clubs or to apply to be residence life or orientation week staff.

## TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

- Post-holiday blues
- Questioning the university student identity
- Campus organization recruitment

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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31						

**6** Classes commence for full- and part-time undergraduate programs.

**19** Final date to drop an undergraduate class and be eligible for a full refund (if this results in a lower fee range).

**19** Final date to withdraw from an undergraduate program and be eligible for a full fee refund.

# FEBRUARY

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**9** Final date for full- and part-time undergraduate students to drop a Winter term class

OR withdraw from their program and be eligible for a 50% refund of Winter, 2010, fees if applicable.

**9** Final date to officially drop a multi-term (A and B combination) undergraduate class in good academic standing (no refund of Winter, 2010 fees). Non-attendance in the Winter (B portion) of the course after this date will result in a failing grade.

**15** Study Week begins for undergraduate students. Classes start Feb.22 Note that the University will be closed on February 15th, Family Day.

The search for summer employment often begins now. As well, students living away from their family home may start to consider living accommodations for next year. For some, these may be sources of anxiety. Reading week occurs this month. This time may be used to catch up on readings, do term papers, prepare presentations, work on group projects, or study for mid-term examinations scheduled for after their return to classes. Other students may choose go on vacation while contending with their academic responsibilities.

## TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

- Uncertainty about and planning for housing arrangements for the next year
- Determining how to spend Reading Week
- Summer employment hunting

# MARCH

As the winter term comes to a close, the stress will most likely increase for your student. Based on the results of their assignments and mid-term examinations, some students may contemplate dropping winter semester courses. Typically final drop deadlines for winter courses occur during the middle of this month.

Additionally, students may face uncertainties related to upcoming course intention for the next academic year. Your student will likely be preparing for their final exams, but may feel more comfortable because they have experienced this before. The search continues for summer employment and accommodation for next year.

## TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

- Handling academic stress
- Summer employment hunting
- Planning for fall housing
- Course selection

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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- 15** Course intention for Fall, 2010 and Winter, 2011 occurs during this week.
- 16** Final date for full- or part-time undergraduate students to drop a Winter term class good academic standing (no fee refund). A failing grade will be assigned if students simply stop attending classes after this deadline.
- 16** Final date to withdraw from an undergraduate program for the Winter term in good academic standing (no refund of Winter, 2010 fees).

# APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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- 2** Good Friday (University closed).
- 13** Classes end for full- and part-time undergraduate programs.
- 16** Winter term undergraduate examination period begins and includes Saturdays, April 17th and 24th.

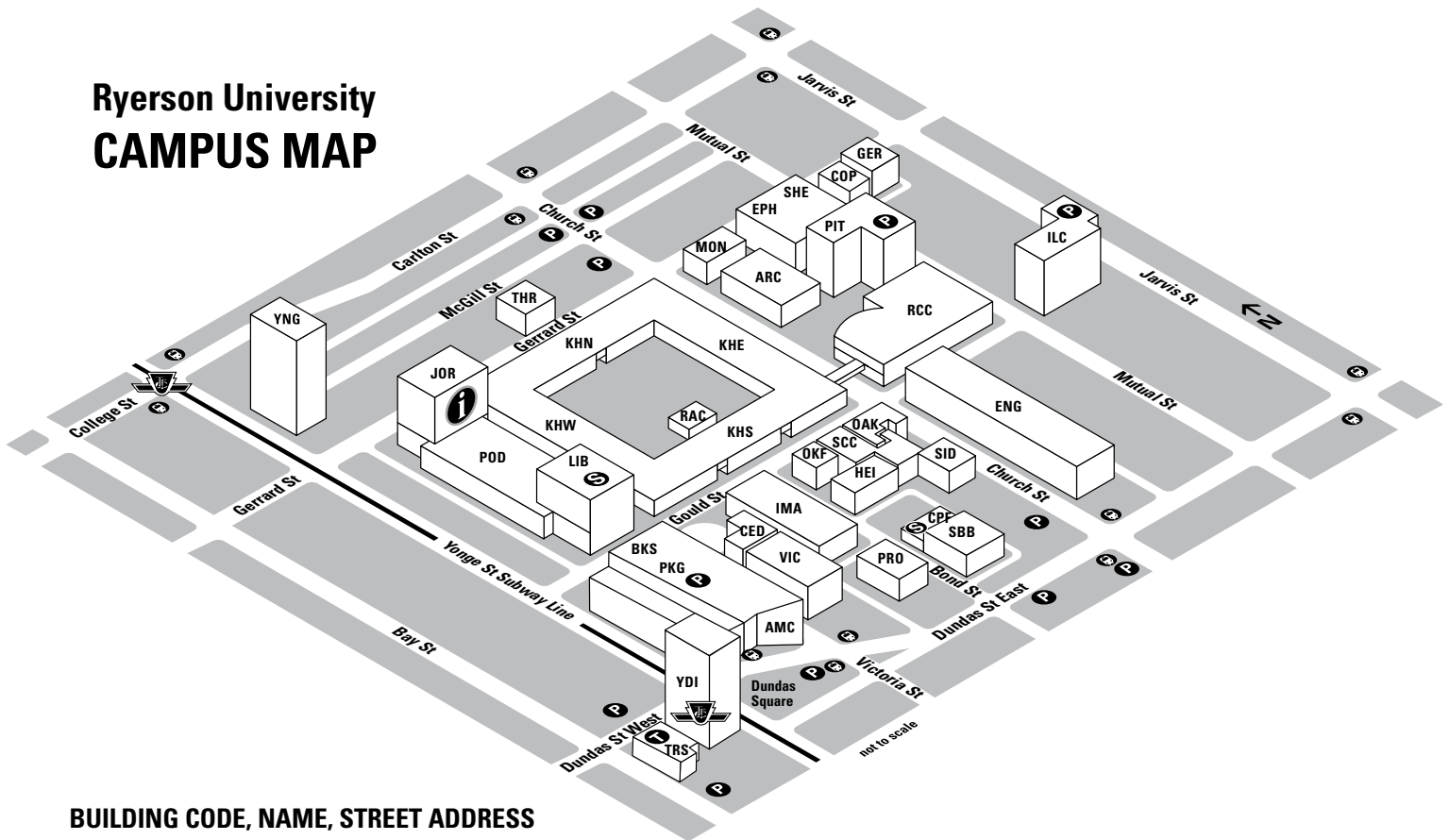
## TRANSITIONAL ISSUES

- Move back home
- Anxiety over final exams
- Summer planning
- Financial pressures
- Summer employment hunting

Classes will end during the second week of the month. Final assignments will be due. Final exams are written in the last two weeks. Some students who have lived away from their families during the academic year will be excited to return home. Others may feel anxious about separating from new friends that they made at Ryerson. Students may attempt to orchestrate their move back home for the summer while simultaneously preparing for and writing final exams.

Students may also be registering for summer courses at the Chang School for Continuing Education in order to catch up on courses that they dropped or to get a jump start on second year. Some individuals may be facing financial strain because of unexpected expenses. Those who have not already done so may face pressures to find summer employment. The stress students experience at this time of year can be reflected in cramming, not sleeping well, and having poor eating habits.


# Ryerson University CAMPUS MAP




## BUILDING CODE, NAME, STREET ADDRESS


AMC	Toronto Life Square, 10 Dundas Street East	RCC	Rogers Communications Centre, 80 Gould Street
ARC	Architecture Building, 325 Church Street	SBB	South Bond Building, 105 Bond Street
BKS	Bookstore, 17 Gould Street	SCC	Student Campus Centre, 55 Gould Street
CED	Heaslip House, The G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, 297 Victoria Street	SHE	Sally Horsfall Eaton Centre for Studies in Community Health, 99 Gerrard Street East
COP	Co-operative Education and Internship, 101 Gerrard Street East	SID	School of Interior Design, 302 Church Street
CPF	Campus Planning and Facilities, 111 Bond Street	THR	Theatre School, 44/46 Gerrard Street East
ENG	George Vari Engineering and Computing Centre, 245 Church Street	TRS	Ted Rogers School of Management – 575 Bay Street (entrance at 55 Dundas Street West)
EPH	Eric Palin Hall, 87 Gerrard Street East	VIC	Victoria Building, 285 Victoria Street
GER	Research/Graduate Studies, 111 Gerrard Street East	YDI	Yonge-Dundas I, 1 Dundas Street West
HEI	HEIDELBERG Centre – School of Graphic Communications Management, 125 Bond Street	YNG	415 Yonge Street
ILC	International Living/Learning Centre, entrances at 133 Mutual Street and 240 Jarvis Street		
IMA	School of Image Arts, 122 Bond Street		
JOR	Jorgenson Hall, 380 Victoria Street		
KHE	Kerr Hall East, 340 Church Street/60 Gould Street		
KHN	Kerr Hall North, 31/43 Gerrard Street East		
KHS	Kerr Hall South, 40/50 Gould Street		
KHW	Kerr Hall West, 379 Victoria Street		
LIB	Library Building, 350 Victoria Street		
MON	Civil Engineering Building, 341 Church Street		
OAK	Oakham House, 63 Gould Street		
OKF	O’Keefe House, 137 Bond Street		
PIT	Pitman Hall, 160 Mutual Street		
PKG	Parking Garage, 300 Victoria Street		
POD	Podium, 350 Victoria Street (area connecting Jorgenson Hall to the Library Building)		
PRO	Projects Office, 112 Bond Street		
RAC	Recreation and Athletics Centre, entrance through archway at 40 and 50 Gould Street		


 TTC Streetcar stop

 TTC Subway stop

 Parking

 Security

 Student Information and Advising Centre

 Direct underground access from the Ted Rogers School of Management to the Dundas Subway

**RYERSON UNIVERSITY**