

Burnout

Being a dedicated student leader can be overwhelming, stressful, and draining at times. It is easy to burn out!

What is “Burnout?”

Burnout is a feeling of emptiness, including a lack of motivation and care for anything or anyone. There is little to no hope that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

For student leaders, burnout can occur if you are constantly feeling bombarded with interpersonal conflicts, feel a lack of challenge in your work, or are not feeling like you are making a difference in your leadership position.

What Causes Student Leader Burnout?

- Unrealistic expectations and goals
- Being too many things to too many people
- Working in unethical and unwelcoming environments
- Giving 75% to all things, rather than 100% to a few things
- Being part of an organization that is incongruent with your values
- Feeling trapped in an organization or leadership role
- Responsibilities and tasks that are boring and do not challenge you

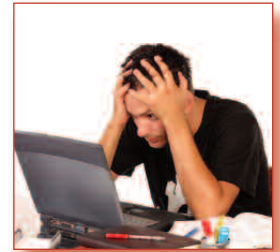
How to Battle Burnout

- Look for new challenges that will be meaningful to you.
- Offer to rotate or trade responsibilities with your peer leaders who might be looking for similar changes to their job descriptions.

Stress vs. Burnout

Although they sound the same, burnout and stress are different. One specific difference is your own awareness. People typically know when they are feeling stressed, but burnout can sneak up on you...sometimes taking weeks and months to surface.

- Take time away from your leadership work to build relationships, socialize, and spend time outside of the organization.
- Prioritize and allocate your time and energy to things that are most meaningful to you.
- Seek help if necessary.



Staying Balanced

Juggling responsibilities can leave you feeling more like a sideshow act than a student leader. And, if you don't learn to manage your life, you could find yourself in a major burnout phase. You can “tame the carnival” that is your college career, but you must commit yourself to finding balance.

- Start by getting enough sleep. Whether you are a night owl or an early bird, make sure you are giving your body enough time to recharge.
- Eat balanced meals. Get creative in the cafeteria and make sure you are refueling with proper nutrition. Replace at least some carbonated beverages with water.
- Get physical! Go to the gym a few days a week or get a group together for aerobics or a basketball game. You'll burn off calories and reduce stress while having some fun.
- Create a personal calendar. Time management is a life skill. Make sure you are blocking off time for study, for meetings, and for YOU!

Take some time
to keep in Mind ...

...that procrastination can be a sign of burnout. If you find yourself consistently providing excuses

for not completing tasks, showing up on time or living up to your own personal standards—it may be time to assess if you are in the midst of burnout!