

Connection and Balance at University – a National Student Forum

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00:00:01:05 - 00:00:22:04

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Welcome, everyone. We'll start in a minute once everyone's gone in. All right. I think it's kind of slowed down. So let's get started. And so registered with us tonight are 600 students from 76 different universities in Australia, New Zealand, the UK, and Canada, which is pretty cool because we're all in different time zones and different weather. It's winter here for me in Australia.

00:00:23:00 - 00:00:59:12

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So first of all, I'd like to acknowledge that I'm hosting this online conversation from the lands of the Wiradjuri people in central New South Wales. And I also acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands on which we all meet and we all from different places which is fantastic. So we'd also like to acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that are in this meeting today and pay our respects to their elders past and present, and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultural connections to the lands and waters of New South Wales and Australia and around the world for all other people.

00:01:00:03 - 00:01:30:18

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So the chat is open. Somebody is already putting something in there, which is fantastic. Please say hello and tell us where you're from, which land you are in, what you're studying, which university, anything you want to tell us, really! And while you do this, we'll introduce ourselves. So first I'm Jean-Baptiste, as you can hear from the lengthy accent, I may or may not be French, and I'm currently based in Bathurst, New South Wales and I'm a fourth year medical student. So we'll just

go around the room with our wonderful panelists - our extremely handsome panelists - so we'll go with Zee, Kavan, and Greta.

00:01:30:18 - 00:01:35:20

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Zee, do you want to tell us - where are you from, why you're here?

00:01:36:11 - 00:02:02:13

Zee

Okay. Hello, I'm Zee I'm a second year Swinburne Online student and I am from Melbourne. So a bit about me. I'm originally from Sri Lanka and moved to Australia ten years ago and somehow sort of missed university studies. So came back in my thirties, which is another ball game. I tell you, it's a complete opposite to what I thought it would be, but I'm grateful and why I'm here to just to open up that.

00:02:03:19 - 00:02:17:18

Zee

Like, to be really honest with you, if I can do it, anyone can do it. And Studiosity has been a huge part of it. So I think I'm here to share a bit of my understanding around Studiosity. So that's my side of the story.

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Kavan?

00:02:17:18 - 00:02:38:01

Kavan

Hello everybody. My name is Kavan. I am studying nursing here at ECU. I am based in Bunbury in WA, so - bit of a regional area for me and I am also on prac. So hey, having fun!

00:02:38:01 - 00:02:43:02

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I love Bunbury by the way. Amazing place. I've been there a couple of times. Greta.

00:02:44:04 - 00:03:07:08

Greta

Hello everyone. So my name is Greta. I am currently based in Warrnambool on my third and final placement in my sixth year of clinical psychology. I am originally from Ballarat and I've studied at a bunch of different universities, including I was at Deakin in Geelong and as part of that went to Simon Fraser in Canada on exchange. I then took a few years off and came back to study

00:03:07:08 - 00:03:23:05

Greta

my honours year at Southern Cross University in Coolangatta, Queensland, and now doing my Masters program with University of New England, which is based in Armidale. So travelled all over the place with uni and excited to get the last year done.

00:03:23:15 - 00:03:41:23

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Fantastic. Six years! I think you win out of this. I'm sure you're excited to get out of here very soon, as we're noting all of us on different degrees by we're all on placements at the moment. I'm currently on a GP placement, which is pretty full on but very exciting and everyone else is doing pracs with kids I think? Or no, Kavan was in surgery.

00:03:42:15 - 00:03:43:12

Kavan

Theater.

00:03:44:02 - 00:04:06:15

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Ah, theatre, you know, that's the real stuff now. That's why you've got the scrubs on. Love it. Awesome. So today we are not just here to talk about ourselves. I'm really good at that, but I'll try not to. We're here to talk about connection and balance at university, and this is the National Student Forum. And as we're seeing all those pop ups coming in and this wonderful chat, which is great, people are really from all over the place, which is super cool.

00:04:07:04 - 00:04:25:23

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So please keep it going. Ask any questions you have, we'll try to pick them up as well. But we've got a few questions that have been asked beforehand. But first of all, we'll start with a quick poll. So the favorite topic of any university student, which is procrastination. So just hit, how long does it usually take you to start?

00:04:26:22 - 00:04:38:05

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I think I'm probably a few days before. I'll just blame it on my busy degree and I think can you guys vote?

00:04:40:01 - 00:04:42:01

Greta

I don't think panelists we can, but.

00:04:42:10 - 00:04:42:21

Zee

Everybody.

00:04:45:21 - 00:04:46:11

Greta

Can try.

00:04:46:11 - 00:04:52:05

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Oh, I was trying to spam it.

00:04:52:05 - 00:04:58:08

Zee

I'm like a two weeks kind of a girl. I'll always be like two weeks, let's get it done.

00:04:58:08 - 00:04:59:03

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

And that's good.

00:05:00:03 - 00:05:02:15

Greta

I like to get it off my brain, get it done as soon as I can.

00:05:03:00 - 00:05:03:23

Zee

Same, I'm the same.

00:05:04:23 - 00:05:07:08

Kavan

I have to say I'm kind of the opposite.

00:05:07:17 - 00:05:10:02

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Good! I'm glad, you're saving me here Kavan.

00:05:10:11 - 00:05:21:21

Kavan

Oh it gets to me, not gonna lie. It's like, Oh, it's due tomorrow. Let's start.

00:05:21:21 - 00:05:28:02

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

There you go. Two aspects of the spectrum here to represent. All right, so have we got our...

00:05:28:02 - 00:05:28:12

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

00:05:30:15 - 00:05:34:05

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Are we seeing the answers... ending the poll, excellent. Look at that.

00:05:34:22 - 00:05:35:23

Greta

Hey!

00:05:36:05 - 00:05:42:04

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Bit of a split, isn't it? Same day/ night before, I think people are not being very honest here. Surely there's a few more.

00:05:43:24 - 00:05:45:15

Greta

That three percent stresses me out.

00:05:48:07 - 00:06:06:00

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

No that's really cool. I love that we all have diverse ways of getting through it and we're obviously all doing really well because we're here on a Wednesday night. So when, you know Wednesday morning if you're in Canada. Awesome. All right. So should we get started with our first question. So we talked about, we're going to talk about balance. So this is really the title of it.

00:06:06:19 - 00:06:27:12

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

And balance is a bit of a funny thing, right? Everyone throws it around, work/life balance, those kind of things. But when we study, we've really got to balance quite a few things. I mean, all of us were talking about all the different things we do on top of studying. So the majority of students, 78% according to recent research, are employed in some capacity while studying, and many are even employed full time while studying full time.

00:06:27:12 - 00:06:50:15

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

And some of us have other commitments like kids and all of that. So not surprising really that there number one question that you all asked us was about time management, so how to juggle, balance study workloads with other competing things in life and particularly work and family. So what has been your experience with finding time for studying and how to best manage your time among all your commitments?

00:06:50:15 - 00:06:51:16

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So I'll start with Greta.

00:06:52:12 - 00:07:13:10

Greta

Yeah. So for me, obviously over the six years I've developed some different strategies and things to put in place and I've learned from my mistakes along the way too. And that includes like I have always kind of worked while I've studied and there have been times more so in my undergrad where I had multiple jobs because I mean, somebody's got to pay the rent.

00:07:14:10 - 00:07:39:12

Greta

And as part of that, you know, some people can get caught in the trap where they'll bite off more than they can chew. And that's a pretty common experience. But as I've kind of gotten along in my professional university student career, I've found that you need to put in some really solid boundaries. And whether that's a conversation with your employer that, look, you know, university is my priority and I am sort of dedicated to that, but I do need work as well.

00:07:39:21 - 00:07:53:23

Greta

And unfortunately, because university is my priority, that is what is going to come first. But I will try and pick up shifts along the way if I can. But at the same time I know that. I know that I can't spread myself too thin because I need to dedicate myself to this to be able to pass the course.

00:07:54:12 - 00:08:23:19**Greta**

So that's one kind of thing that I've really stuck with throughout my degree. And the second thing is scheduling what I actually have due because I feel like there's there's the ideal sort of situation where you'll be able to sit through your lectures, you'll get your readings done, everything will be great. But for me, putting out a schedule of the specific assignments that I have due all throughout the semester and having that from the very beginning really helped set up the time that I was kind of dedicating toward different activities throughout the week.

00:08:23:24 - 00:08:28:07**Greta**

So that would be my like my real go to is having a schedule.

00:08:28:07 - 00:08:29:05**Jean-Baptiste (JB)**

That's awesome.

00:08:29:22 - 00:08:38:07**Jean-Baptiste (JB)**

And I can really feel the six years of trial and error coming through the process, it's good. And we'll move on to another super organised person. So what about you Zee?

00:08:39:06 - 00:09:05:05**Zee**

Woah, you called me organised. I'm really humbled. Thank you. Now I am I'm going to talk from a very mum perspective because I do have children, so my struggle is very real. So what I realised and I also came to the study sector in my sort of mid thirties, so I have like in my head I didn't know what I was doing to be really honest.

00:09:05:05 - 00:09:29:21**Zee**

I like I signed up, I'm like, okay, this is out there, I'm going to sign up. Then my baby was really young. I'm like, okay, now we join. What are we going to do? So I have made every mistake possibly I can. It's like things like not asking for help and not exactly saying my workplace, what my expectations are and not prioritizing what goals I have to achieve throughout those semesters.

00:09:29:22 - 00:09:50:05**Zee**

What I learned, is just open communication with my own family, saying like, this weekend I have this assignment, so I'm going to be there for the assignment and

asking for help being the biggest thing for me. I wish I can show you guys, but I have a very long to do list, which I divided into two parts.

00:09:50:05 - 00:10:12:12

Zee

So it's priorities and things I can manage. So my priority list is like, for example, it could be for if it's a day that is assignment and the bottom list, the things I can navigate. So I believe how I succeeded this far. It's just having those open communication with my families and just setting my priorities clear for everyone.

00:10:12:12 - 00:10:15:09

Zee

And that's what it saved me. So yeah, that from my side.

00:10:16:05 - 00:10:35:24

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I love that I've got a big problem saying no to things. I do way too many extracurriculars. This is good advice and certainly I relate to being in your thirties and studying, but I wouldn't say my age because, you know. All right, so let's go on to Kavan who I'm sure, has very different strategies and advice for us.

00:10:36:22 - 00:11:11:10

Kavan

Um well, I am kind of weird in that sense. I have trouble with having too much on my plate. I like to be active, you know, I do like four different sports, I have the gym, study, catch up on lectures. So what kind of set me for my first year to my third year apart was I cut down on things that kind of maybe, I guess, have a sense of freedom from the studying component of my life.

00:11:11:10 - 00:11:44:00

Kavan

So it was like taking out two sporting commitments which I was doing just for the sake of doing - so that my teammates were happy rather than me being, enjoying the sport - and kind of having a bit of refreshing time. So I was like, Go away, I'm going to study. So that's kind of like my my commitment to study was kind of dictated through prioritizing what made me satisfied, which I have, y'know, which made me sleep well as well.

00:11:44:02 - 00:11:53:16

Kavan

In a sense. So that was kind of like my thing for me, just cutting out all the fat around the main things and focusing on that bit, which was me.

00:11:54:12 - 00:12:12:08

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

That's really awesome. That's some really good prioritizing and I'm seeing some awesome activity in the chat. I think we're going to send out Greta's planner, which has been pretty hyped up now, so I'm looking forward to that. And we've got some people relating to each of us, which is really, really cool as well, and different calendars and schedules.

00:12:12:08 - 00:12:34:20

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So please keep putting in there. If you've got other time management strategies even that might help us. We'd love to. And then we shall move on to our next question. So in the recent survey, 19% of students said that they feel stressed daily, I feel like that should be a more higher number, and 74% said they feel stressed at least once a month or more, which is, I think, very realistic.

00:12:34:20 - 00:12:39:21

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So any advice on managing stress and avoiding burnout?

00:12:39:21 - 00:13:08:24

Greta

Yeah, absolutely. I think what I was talking about earlier with setting those really solid boundaries with work, for me, that was really key because I was noticing it was like, how am I going to manage sport and work and study and exams and assignments? It starts to get to a point where everything just feels really overwhelming. So having those conversations early is really important, but also recognising that majority of the majority of universities will have like counseling, support services or GPs that you can access at a subsidised rate.

00:13:09:09 - 00:13:31:02

Greta

So in the same way that you might utilise Studiosity for your assignments, utilise the health services that are available too because they're there for you. And university isn't cheap most of the time. So you might as well make the most of kind of what is on offer. And third and final tip schedule in self care, like you are entitled to be able to look after yourself.

00:13:31:16 - 00:13:44:03

Greta

So take yourself out for dinner or go and get a massage. Or if it's possible, like take some time away from study. But yeah, try and be aware of kind of how you can support yourself in those situations.

00:13:45:10 - 00:14:02:05

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

That's really awesome advice. I'm currently on a GP placement or family doctor, if that's what's called in your country, and they're always super keen to talk to people about things that I guess not, you know, strictly medical, like you don't have to go see a GP just because you've got this disease or this broken arm or whatever like.

00:14:02:05 - 00:14:19:03

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

You can go talk to them about anything. Mental health, any problem you have and they'll be able to refer you and help you connect with services that will help you.

So absolutely engage with it. I mean if it's free? Definitely do it because nothing's free in life. So the free things are great. And what about you, Kavan?

00:14:20:05 - 00:14:49:20

Kavan

Well, yeah, you know, me being on prac, I agree with the self-care bit, definitely this - my weeks are intense, especially when I'm on prac. So working full time and studying and getting assignments done in on time, I, I try to do this but like half of Sunday for me is scheduled to be my free day where I just go to the beach or go to the gym, go hard.

00:14:50:03 - 00:15:24:24

Kavan

I also do martial arts, so that's kind of like my way of stress relieving as well because I kind of feel focused when I'm in that environment and you know, breaking the sweat helps. And if you do, if you do, you know, workouts and things, you will agree. Like, you know, it releases those endorphins and it's really fun and along with the self-care bit I, I've realised trying to trying not to take everything to mind.

00:15:24:24 - 00:15:45:12

Kavan

There are things that are important that's understandable. Write them down, put them aside. They're there, but not in here, you know, kind of like how I've kind of built my stress management. Write it down. Forget. Well, don't forget it. Keep in mind. But don't don't live in it. So yeah.

00:15:46:06 - 00:16:12:03

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

That is definitely that idea of, you know, mental workload and stuff where you can kind of free yourself for a little bit, helping a lot. And obviously all of us at different stages of our studies in our lives, which is why we're trying to make, you know, the advice as relatable as possible. And so we'll probably jump on to Zee if you have any strategies because obviously people that are full time parents, full time working, full time studying, I mean, you know, the idea of scheduling self-care time is probably not possible.

00:16:12:03 - 00:16:14:08

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So like what? What do you do?

00:16:15:02 - 00:16:35:09

Zee

I need to like I have to really understand myself why self-care was important because I was like, oh, "self-care", like, it almost become a buzzword. And then I ask myself, what is self-care for me? Because having children like it is so hard to have time for me, then I have learned this tip. It's actually from Jay Shetty.

00:16:35:09 - 00:17:00:10

Zee

I'm a bit of a Jay Shetty girl, I really like him. And if you don't know about Jay Shetty, he's like one of those online people who shares wellness. So I listen to his podcast, so this is what I learn and this is only going to take 5 minutes. So he talks - a minute! - So what you do is like you take your brain outside, that means you look out from the window, you take a deep breath, you have a sip of water and you count five.

00:17:00:24 - 00:17:26:22

Zee

And it really helped me when I had those like really full-on days and having those really tiny moments just to have this mindfulness and restore myself. And that's what being like. If you do it for like every day, for a week, it's like little moments. Those little moments actually really count. I didn't understand how important this was until I had my very bad panic attack couple of weeks ago.

00:17:27:04 - 00:17:57:20

Zee

And I was like and then realised I actually didn't have time for myself. I was so involved in other people's lives. Then I realised, and that one minute is what to be really honest, that's what saved me from having those panic attacks. So I think, like, it's prioritising what self-care to you and if you just open up Instagram and just say self-care tips there's hundreds and hundreds of things out there it just personalising what works for you, what's productive and figuring out a way how to do it every day.

00:17:57:20 - 00:17:58:23

Zee

So that's worked for me.

00:18:00:05 - 00:18:15:17

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

That's like incredible advice. I love it and I love how you condense, you know, us saying you take a whole afternoon, a half a day off into like 30 seconds and you just yeah, this is and it's what matters is the thought, right? The idea that you're taking that time for yourself, even if it's a short time, I think that's incredible.

00:18:15:22 - 00:18:30:12

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I love it. And if you want to link us to that person, you're telling us about that? Yeah. Cool. So we'll move on to our next question. And I think that's one I relate to a lot because I came to university later in life and I think I tried to make the most of it as much as I could.

00:18:30:12 - 00:18:50:20

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

And here I am, it's 7 p.m. on a Wednesday night. So clearly it worked. And so universities are complex systems, with lots of options, right? So all of us studying different things in different modes, different stages of our lives. What is the best way to maximize your university experience? What are unis doing to help students like us in 2022 have the best experience? And we'll start with Greta.

00:18:52:00 - 00:19:15:14

Greta

So this has kind of changed for me over time and I think for a lot of people, like for a fresh 18 year old going into an undergrad versus someone doing a post-grad or a Masters program, it can be entirely different. Or you can be going into an undergrad as a mature student and have a different mindset. So I think when I was going into my undergrad: socialising, fun, I wanted to go and exchange, play uni games, make the most of it in that sense.

00:19:15:14 - 00:19:33:06

Greta

And I did and I had a great time. I highly recommend if that's what you want to do. But then on the other side of it, it's kind of okay, I want to study, I want to get this done. I don't want to think about assignments ever again. And I think it depends entirely on what your expectations are and what you want out of your degree.

00:19:33:16 - 00:20:03:18

Greta

Because as I said earlier, there are like counseling and support services available through most unis and there's also consideration. So if you are really struggling with your time and you've got valid reasons for it, then speak to the student services or support teams and you can get extensions on assignments. They were quite generous throughout the COVID period of time and a lot of student, a lot of universities sorry also have emergency funds available if you're going through difficult financial disadvantage.

00:20:03:18 - 00:20:19:04

Greta

So again, over the course of my degrees, it's at a point now where I'm like, yeah, I will be making the most of whatever university has to offer because someone's got to do it. So it might as well be if it makes your university any easier, go for it.

00:20:20:07 - 00:20:36:24

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Yeah, absolutely. And in terms of connection, so I came in a bit later and I'm doing an undergrad degree. So, you know, it's sort of a big age gap between me and everyone else in class. So a way to connect for me was kind of joining student clubs, student unions, you know, joining up and kind of like doing that.

00:20:36:24 - 00:21:05:06

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

And I went from, you know, being like a first-year rep on a small student club to now being the Chair of a national like student organisation with 12,000 members. And I found that was something that really connected me because I connected with people like from across Australia in different universities that had same interests as me. So mine is rural health, but it could be anything and I think that's a really cool way if you're feeling maybe a bit like lost or not connected to your class or your uni or whatever, that you can kind of reach out and still maintain that.

00:21:06:13 - 00:21:27:01

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

It does take time, it is a commitment, but I think I think it's worth it and that really helps with that maintaining that connection. So that's for some of us going in person. But let's talk about online experience because more and more of us are doing online and I'm seeing that in chat as well. So what about you Zee? What do you think the benefits and negatives are of studying online and what has your experience been?

00:21:27:01 - 00:21:44:18

Zee

Okay, I'm going to be really, really honest. You can study from your couch. You can just take your laptop and you can sit there and you do it. I have done it. I breastfed, like breastfed my son throughout doing my uni work, so I don't know if I can ever be able to do that in a different place. So that's the highest point.

00:21:45:03 - 00:22:10:02

Zee

The other thing I like about online study, so I'm talking from Swinburne Online perspective, the student counselors, they are on the go, they're there to help you. So that's been a very big plus side for me studying from Swinburne Online. And the other thing I really like about online study is how flexible the subject choices are at the moment so you can actually choose the subject that you really want to do.

00:22:10:12 - 00:22:16:17

Zee

So I think that those are my three top priorities. What I enjoy from studying online.

00:22:16:17 - 00:22:26:24

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

That's really awesome. And I'm obviously doing medicine, a lot of us are in placement all the time. But during that short lockdown period, I got to say, you know, not having pants on and doing lectures was pretty great.

00:22:26:24 - 00:22:27:24

Zee

I agree.

00:22:27:24 - 00:22:37:07

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

There was no breastfeeding on my side of the equation, but that sounds even more epic. So now we'll have a quick poll and that's a very topical subject.

00:22:38:00 - 00:22:53:22

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

What what do you think is best? So it doesn't have to be what you're doing now, but what do you think is the best thing? Is it studying online? Is it studying on campus or is it hybrid? And has COVID changed your mind? Chuck it in the chat, let us know. I've read so many news articles on that. Now, you know, some people don't want to go back.

00:22:53:22 - 00:23:05:03

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Some people want to go back. It's very interesting and I think - we can't vote again. I think I would vote for hybrid. I like the flexibility. Yeah.

00:23:05:16 - 00:23:33:09

Kavan

Definitely nursing also being a lot of hands on experience hybrid works out so well because you can also actually manage work more, I work much, much better as well with just one class a week on campus and studying, attending tutorials online so yeah plus that and now uni lectures are recorded so it's like, hey, 24/7, let's go.

00:23:33:09 - 00:23:43:14

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

And like properly recorded as well, like beforehand for us it was just, you know, a far, far away microphone in a lecture theatre, and you were just like what's happening? Well, now it's actually like done for you. It's cool.

00:23:43:23 - 00:23:48:08

Kavan

Yeah, a good thing.

00:23:49:14 - 00:23:59:12

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Oh, we've got a pretty split opinion and studying on campus is the lowest. I'm surprised. What do you guys think about it?

00:23:59:13 - 00:24:16:05

Greta

Wow. I mean, I guess I've had both experiences. So pre COVID times, I was on campus and I mean, it was great. But yeah, as you said JB like you didn't have the recordings to just be you couldn't check out when you're in class and just kind of stare off into the distance and forget what's going on.

00:24:16:05 - 00:24:30:14

Greta

Because if you're not writing notes, you're not going to be able to go back and remember anything. Whereas yeah now I can kind of schedule in my time and watch lectures when I'm sitting on the couch or in my van by the beach. Like there's so many different options. So I would vote hybrid now too.

00:24:31:24 - 00:24:51:14

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Yeah, I completely agree. And I think it's it's changed a bit as well. And this poll is showing it, which is awesome. Loving the engagement, guys. Keep at it in chat. All right. So now we're going to talk about a slightly different topic, but that's again, very topical. So there's a lot of talk in the media within universities about cheating and plagiarism.

00:24:51:14 - 00:25:09:21

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So it's kind of like, you know, a bad word. You join the uni and the first thing you hear in orientation week is like "don't plagiarise!" and you're like, wait what's that? And there's even laws now in Australia about how to manage plagiarism and things. So it's a pretty big deal. So universities are doing more talk about academic integrity. I think that's how they like to talk about it.

00:25:10:11 - 00:25:23:24

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Even my university is done on it. We've done a project on it and done some videos. It's been pretty cool. So what's happening around you? What do you think about it? What do you see and hear from your personal or peripheral experience? So we'll start with Kavan.

00:25:25:06 - 00:25:59:16

Kavan

Well coming to that. Well, plagiarism is pretty much like, you know, copying from someone else's work without giving them any credit. You don't want to do that. Reference your work, people, reference your work. But in as far as it's concerned with me and my university, there hasn't been many cases of academic misconduct because what they always promote like, you know, it's okay to take someone else's work and reword it, but you should be able to give them credit for the work they've put into it.

00:26:00:09 - 00:26:32:05

Kavan

It's it's pretty much like, Oh, you're eating that cake, but you're not telling the chef it's a nice cake. You know, it's like, oh, that's not right. Compliment the chef, ma, you know. It's a nice cake! But, you know, it's our assignments are run through a program called Turnitin as well. So that feeds into, you know, all the articles and assignments handed in from all over Australia and also I think some other international countries as well.

00:26:32:24 - 00:27:08:13

Kavan

So it picks up if you have, you know, breached academic integrity guidelines and copied straight up copy pasted stuff from articles or from even your colleagues assignments and the lecturers will pick up on that. And for us we have quite a big penalty. You could you could be, you know, given academic penalty for just even going over ten, 20% of the assignment, which is quite a lot if you do it to that.

00:27:09:02 - 00:27:44:15

Kavan

But in, in reality wouldn't we have a lot of ...majority of the percentage comes from reference list which lecturers aren't worried about which is cool, like thanks guys, not my fault if, if, if the main body of your assignment is just highlighted highlighted highlighted, without different colours and they are colour-coded, it's like that's not good and it just goes to show you need to be able to own up to you

know giving credit to the person that deserves it while taking the piece for yourself, you know.

00:27:44:22 - 00:27:45:22

Kavan

So yeah.

00:27:46:13 - 00:28:02:20

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I love it. Thank you, Kavan. That's probably the best explanation of plagiarism I've seen. Do you want to like go around the unis and give that talk on complimenting the chef? I loved it. People loved it in the chat. It's so good. Awesome. So now we'll get Zee's perspective on it. So what is your experience been around it?

00:28:03:12 - 00:28:25:20

Zee

Like with Swinburne Online, they're very much like, appreciate the chef, tell the chef you did it and like make put your chef name and the year and the date and the comma. So they're very clear about the expectations. So what happened to me? I'm going to be really honest with you. I come from an education system where the teacher tells you you take notes and you repeat yourself, right?

00:28:26:03 - 00:28:45:10

Zee

So I have to train myself how to take someone else's work and to reword it in my own way. So that was the struggle for me. Not giving credits is just like understanding. Okay, you told that to me. Now, but how am I going to do it? But in that way Swinburne been a really high end support.

00:28:45:10 - 00:29:04:10

Zee

There was like all these references list, you can go and there's seminars you can be a part of. And the first thing I swear to God the EAL tell you is check your reference list. It's almost like 20% of your score. So if you're going to get a H.D., you have to give credit to the people. I think that's been my experience.

00:29:05:21 - 00:29:25:08

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

That's awesome. And I've got like, you know, my experience of it is make use of the university resources. As you said, if university uses Endnote, learn to use Endnote, it's totally worth it, because I'm extremely lazy, I call it efficiency, but, you know, same, same and Endnote just saves you so much time when you have to like reorganise references and things like that.

00:29:25:08 - 00:29:48:21

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

And if it's a different program, just, just use it, it's great and also talk to the librarians. The librarians are like epic, the one for med on my uni's like awesome. She knows all the programs so absolutely get in touch with the library would be my

advice. Cool. Thank you for that. So we've got that little chat and now we'll go on to our second most asked question by our panelists, which is very exciting.

00:29:48:21 - 00:30:05:17

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So I think I must ask questions from everyone here today. And so I'm going to open it to all our panelists, including myself. So what is your number one piece of advice for getting started on an assignment or an assessment and then how to improve your academic writing? Because obviously that's a big concern for a lot of us.

00:30:05:22 - 00:30:12:19

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

People that are English as second language like I am. So what about you, Greta?

00:30:12:19 - 00:30:34:23

Greta

I would recommend start with the title page. Just start. It is - it feels like I think a huge mountain to climb. But every mountain is climbed by taking a step. So even if you just dedicate 5 minutes, I'm going to put the title of it, the subject, my name. The date - start it. Because once you've sort of started, the momentum can kind of follow on from there.

00:30:34:23 - 00:30:57:18

Greta

And even if you don't get anything done for the next couple of days, you know that it started in the background and that can kind of get the ball rolling. That would be kind of my first step. And then also you're reflecting back on that schedule that you've got to try and try and tick things off. I find that really motivating with checklist is like, Yep, I'm seeing things progress, which I find really, really beneficial as well.

00:30:58:11 - 00:30:59:20

Greta

The second question, what was that JB?

00:31:00:21 - 00:31:03:21

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So it was how to get started and how to improve your academic writing as well?

00:31:04:12 - 00:31:16:02

Greta

Ah, well, Studiosity, of course. But also practice. And I think if you're not in a really competitive degree...

00:31:17:00 - 00:31:41:07

Greta

The whole statement of Ps get degrees, like, yeah, it's true, but if you're in a really competitive kind of degree, then obviously it's a different scenario and using support services will help you improve your academic writing and you can kind of use those support services along the way to gauge how you've gone, like see what

your sort of scores were at the start of your academic journey to where you're progressing along the way.

00:31:41:07 - 00:31:54:21

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

That's awesome. Really good advice and yeah using, using the services that the uni provides, which for all of us probably Studiosity is one of them. I've used it myself. And what about you, Kavan?

00:31:54:21 - 00:32:23:01

Kavan

Well how I start my assignments? That's a great question. I start them the night before. Actually I've improved like largely like you know how as Greta said, I view the assignment as like a big big big wall and take a chisel and hammer and start chipping away at it. I take the title page. I like to read the assessment outlines and just highlight and underline the main things that I have to discuss.

00:32:23:16 - 00:32:54:07

Kavan

Go to the rubric, what are they looking for and start finding articles because references are just not gonna lie a pain to find because you need to have good quality references so that your work is legible, first of all, and understandable in the sense that it's addressing the assessment outline pretty much, what they are looking for and the rubric. How do I improve my academic writing?

00:32:54:07 - 00:33:22:02

Kavan

Well good question. Studiosity. I'm going to go back to that. With - how I've done it, we have learning advisors in our uni and it's like a quick drop in session here and there or you can book a big appointment too. I always, you know, I have good friends here at uni who we like to just read, to give a bit of shout, peer reviewed and they give us feedback.

00:33:22:05 - 00:33:45:00

Kavan

Your grammar's not too good. Work it out. Or you can use better sentencing on here. Plus the learning advisors are like really - really really smart because they all know they've come across these assignments before and they know what the lecturers would want as well in the sense. So they kind of just point you to like, Oh, you should word this this way and that way.

00:33:45:00 - 00:33:59:04

Kavan

So really yeah. It's good to utilise the services that the university provides, but also use some of your connections to, you know, have your friends, you help them, they help you back kind of works out. Yeah.

00:34:00:12 - 00:34:09:07

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I love that. Thank you Kavan. And I think you're building a bit of a fan club with your analogies, you know compliment the chef, hammer and chisel.

00:34:09:11 - 00:34:21:05

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

People are loving it. You can start like a whole, a whole cult on it. This is great. And what about you Zee? What's your tip for starting an assignment and improving your writing?

00:34:21:05 - 00:34:45:19

Zee

So my tip is I actually read the assignment back to me. So I become the teacher, the assignment become the student. So I read the assignment back to me. It's always been my way of learning. So I read the assignment back to me. So I have used Studiosity from day dot. It's crazy how much I use Studiosity, to a point I can't actually submit any more work because I overused it and I'm going to put it out there.

00:34:45:19 - 00:35:10:08

Zee

I started in a very 60 sort of a girl, so my first assignment that only got 60. Then I started using Studiosity. What I did is like with every feedback, I highlight the most important part of the feedback and I screenshot them and like of course I print out them and I have like this whiteboard I stick things and that's how I built my own self up because I'm in an online platform and I can't talk to people.

00:35:10:08 - 00:35:35:23

Zee

I can't share most of my work around. So having and like really listening to what Studiosity feedback actually improved me and I got 87 for my last assignment. So it's a huge improvement. It's only happened because - thank you - it only happened because I took the very little comments they give you, which is quite long sometimes, but I actually read and figured out a pathway out of that.

00:35:36:05 - 00:35:36:12

Zee

Yeah.

00:35:37:16 - 00:35:42:20

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

87%. That's amazing! What are you going to do next year - there's not much more room for improvement. Right.

00:35:44:03 - 00:35:46:15

Zee

I'll get a 97 and then I text you, hey, I got a 97!

00:35:47:22 - 00:36:11:03

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I can't wait. But I'm also impressed that you've like taken all that advice because the advice they give us is amazing. But again, lazy slash efficient. So sometimes I don't always read it but this is really good example that you should probably read it. And for me, I mean, you guys have covered a lot of it. I think it's definitely in step in terms of like starting an assignment.

00:36:11:03 - 00:36:35:11

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I think it's probably like scheduling that time to start it. So being, you know, on that Friday at 5 p.m. or whatever, probably not on Friday at five, but at the time that you want to start your assignment, just like start it and make that time for it, because otherwise it's so easy to just like I call it like useful procrastination where you're kind of like, Oh, well, I'll just make notes on something so you don't feel bad about procrastinating, but you're still procrastinating

00:36:35:11 - 00:36:47:19

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

And improving your academic writing I think the more you do it, the probably the better it gets, really. I mean, that's what I hope anyway. So it's kind of like, don't despair right, like your first piece of work is probably not going to be amazing because it's, it's a different language, right?

00:36:49:05 - 00:37:01:24

Kavan

I must say, like I was reflecting on some assignments I did my first year and the way I wrote, I was like, ew. I was like that's not me!

00:37:03:03 - 00:37:20:05

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

That's awesome. And that's the scary thing about shared drive, right, right. But like, yeah, like I save everything I do, so I don't really want to look at it again. Awesome. Well, that's really, really insightful and hopefully we've got people in chat sharing those tips as well. And I've seen some questions pop up as well, which is really cool.

00:37:20:05 - 00:37:38:19

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

But first we'll do a quick poll. So this is probably a really good question. What do you guys think is the hardest part of academic writing? I mean, if I could vote, I'd probably say all of them. But that's probably a copout. What do you guys think? Which one would you vote for

00:37:38:19 - 00:37:57:06

Greta

Now I would say structure. Like early days in the degree, you'd be doing a lot of like essay kind of work, but now it's all reports and clinical case notes and that kind of stuff. So if an essay gets thrown into the mix I'm like, Whoa, Studiosity, help a sister out, because I have no idea what's going on anymore.

00:37:58:06 - 00:38:01:05

Greta

But yeah, they sort me out with that, which is handy.

00:38:01:05 - 00:38:06:24

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

That's awesome. What about you guys?

00:38:06:24 - 00:38:33:22

Kavan

Yeah. So for me personally, I really, really hate researching, but like, it's fun but it's not fun. Like, I'm just there sipping on my coffee doing my thing, but like, no, it's boring because you have to read through so many things. My eyes start to strain and I'm like, I'm not finding the right articles, man. C'mon, I need this. I need a good chef.

00:38:33:22 - 00:38:56:12

Kavan

But like, they're not coming along. But definitely research and structure. As Greta said, I have a lot of essays, but in the third year I'm starting to have a lot of scientific reports to write as well. And weird timing for them to introduce reports in a third year because like, hey, I'm supposed to be graduating, but and then it's like, Oh no, what is this.

00:38:57:04 - 00:39:21:12

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So a little surprise for you? Yeah. Oh, we've got a split opinion again. I love that. You definitely have some support on the research, but slight winning for structure. So I think Greta wins on that one. Yeah. For me was probably just make sense of it, like a little clarity. Sometimes you're like, you know, you paraphrase, paraphrase, and then you're like, what am I actually trying to say?

00:39:21:20 - 00:39:43:11

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

Yeah, because it's not always your words. So thank you guys for participating, again love loving the engagement and we are talking a little too much. We're almost out of time. This is really great. But that was probably expected with all of us, right? So in the last few minutes and probably have a few questions from the audience. I've seen so many pop up it's hard to keep track of.

00:39:44:03 - 00:40:00:23

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

But I've got one from Jessica which says "How do you guys manage doing all the required work for the course and any additional stuff you want to research?" So like, you know, probably going back to time management, maybe something different. Anyone wants to jump on that question.

00:40:00:23 - 00:40:30:14

Greta

I would definitely be like looking at what you need to prioritise. Yeah, obviously like if you're looking at research that you're really interested in, that's going to be improving your academic writing specifically, if you like, researching different

journal articles and whatnot. But if there is an assignment looming in the background that's impacting your ability to even look at the research, then yeah, I would be putting that on the backburner maybe for something that you can do in the break, if that's what you like doing in breaks, and yeah trying to get the assignment off your brain first or the coursework.

00:40:32:04 - 00:40:34:16

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

That's really cool. Yeah. Anyone else?

00:40:35:04 - 00:41:05:19

Kavan

Yeah, definitely. Like with hey look when - in my unit you have like, you know, your main unit outlines and the unit objectives, the additional readings are really, really good because they, they are well in a sense they're easy to relate to the learning objectives of that specific module. I like to skim over the PowerPoints of lectures and go straight to the additional reading because they have the resources for the assignment that I'm doing for that unit, which is kind of useful.

00:41:06:03 - 00:41:09:03

Kavan

So thanks to the lecturers for that. But yeah, definitely.

00:41:09:20 - 00:41:34:20

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

That's awesome. And Zee, I might, I might throw you a different question. So we keep asking them. So Debbie-Ann's given us a really good one, which is "so our assessments require academic language, but a lot of us, you know, don't speak academic language and especially I guess, the future is video-based assignments. So if you have a video-based presentation how do you improve your academic language, which is literary spoken in that case.

00:41:35:03 - 00:41:59:04

Zee

Yes, my academic language improved because I start watching the news. This is crazy. This is crazy because as I told you, I am not from Melbourne. So English is not my first language. I come from a very non-English speaking background. This is was one advice that was actually given to me by my citizenship person. When I tried for the citizenship, she said, Just watch the news.

00:41:59:04 - 00:42:20:00

Zee

I'm like, okay, but I really don't want any negativity in my head. This is like, what other type of news like this? All, all other kind of news you just don't have to do even into the mainstream news. Then I'm like, All right, let's do that. And I think that's what helped me, that I learned how different word, how we pronounce different words, because with the accent it could be really hard.

00:42:20:14 - 00:42:34:20

Zee

And more than anything, I know this is crazy. But just talk to everyone at a cafe, just talk. Just go and say hi. And that's how I improved my language. Just putting myself out there and listening to the news, which is kind of strange.

00:42:35:22 - 00:43:02:09

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I love that. ABC represent. But and I think, I mean, it's probably didn't improve my German language per se, but when I first moved here long time ago, my English was terrible. And I watched a lot of like Neighbours. And I think that really helps. That's not academic again. But you know, whatever you gotta do. All right. Well, we're like unfortunately running out of time, which is, again, an amazing thing because we're getting so much engagement.

00:43:03:06 - 00:43:23:11

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So I think there's been really, really good engagement from everyone and lots of questions on time management. I think that's always a question and you guys have great advice on it, study skills as well, but as well as, you know, connecting with peers and finding ways to do things, do you guys have one final thing to say to kind of wrap it up?

00:43:23:11 - 00:43:25:19

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I'll give you like 20 seconds each. So Greta?

00:43:28:03 - 00:43:47:16

Greta

Okay. Put on the spot. I would say look after yourself. University is not always an easy thing to be doing and you're going to get feedback from the markers and the assessors. So the least you can do is be kind to yourself along the journey. Because as I said, it's not easy and you're trying to better yourself through education.

00:43:47:16 - 00:43:51:24

Greta

So you're already doing something amazing for yourself in that sense. So good luck. Keep at it.

00:43:52:17 - 00:43:56:23

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I love that Greta, pretty good for being on the spot. What about you, Kavan?

00:43:56:23 - 00:44:18:23

Kavan

Definitely self care. It's okay to fail. I've failed once. It's okay. I've been given, you know, things to work on and and I've been working on it. So that's, it's fine to fail, but definitely keep your mental health, which is a big component of, of how well you do in your degree. So keep it up today.

00:44:19:07 - 00:44:22:03

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I agree with that, Kavan. Ps get Degrees. And Zee, what have you got?

00:44:22:12 - 00:44:37:05

Zee

Just ask for help. Just ask for help because not every day is going to be the same. I ask for so much help, maybe some days you're just going to think this is a very silly question, but no question is a silly question. Just put yourself out there and ask for help.

00:44:37:05 - 00:44:57:01

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

I love that. This is so awesome. And remember asking for help. The best place to find it is, you know, your Blackboard, your Moodle, whatever your platform is. There's a whole lot of resources. Sometimes it's hard to navigate, but, you know, get get to it. You'll get there. This is where you find Studiosity, your PASS program. I'm a PASS facilitator so I had to quote it, library database, other things like that.

00:44:57:06 - 00:45:12:15

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

So keep an eye out for your survey from from this to let us know what you want to see next time. We'd love to put this on again for you, because I think we all had a lot of fun actually, and we got to know each other which is even better and got to know you. And thank you for attending. Thank you to our beautiful panelists.

00:45:12:19 - 00:45:17:09

Jean-Baptiste (JB)

They're even handsomer than they were 45 minutes ago. And yeah, good luck for everyone with your studies.

00:45:18:12 - 00:45:19:02

Zee

Yay.

00:45:20:18 - 00:45:23:06

Kavan

Okay, guys, have fun.