CHANGES IN PERCEIVED AND EXPERIENCED CHALLENGES AND LEARNING STRATEGIES THROUGHOUT THE SECOND YEAR TRANSITION

Judit Kibedi

Presenting Author: Judit Kibedi (j.kibedi@uq.edu.au)
School of Biomedical Sciences, University of Queensland, St Lucia Qld 4072, Australia

KEYWORDS: second year slump; learning challenges; learning strategies; engagement.

BACKGROUND
The second year slump is a well-recognised phenomenon affecting students’ engagement, performance and transition through university (Wilder, 1993; McBurnie, Campbell & West, 2012). Although Australian studies have identified common causes (Loughlin, Gregory, Harrison & Lodge, 2013; Ainscough, Stewart, Colthorpe & Zimbardi, 2018), relatively less is known about students’ perceived and actual challenges, and the dynamic use of strategies whilst transitioning through their 2nd year.

METHODS
Undergraduate 2nd year biomedical science students (n=511) were asked about their goals, anticipated challenges and strategies at the start of 1st semester, then the challenges they experienced and strategies used at the end of semester.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION
Almost all students identified academic goals, most frequently being desired performance (45% of responses) and progressive study to stay on top of content (38%). Students perceived time management (67%), increased content complexity/volume (38%) and balancing work-social-study commitments (20%) as the greatest challenges, which they aimed to overcome largely through planning and organisation strategies. Most experienced perceived challenges, however, often to a greater degree than anticipated. Unexpected challenges were frequently reported, managed by dedicating more time or adopting 1-3 new strategies. Academic resilience through the 2nd year transition may therefore require students to be highly adaptable in their learning approaches.

REFERENCES

Proceedings of the Australian Conference on Science and Mathematics Education, The University of Sydney and University of Technology Sydney, 2 - 4 October 2019, page 53, ISBN Number 978-0-9871834-8-4