

# Study alla bolognese

## Consequences for Psychological Counselling

Hans-Werner Rückert, Clinical Psychologist, Psychoanalyst  
Freie Universität Berlin Academic Advisory and Counselling Center



# The best time of our lives...





Still the best time of their lives, but...



## Everlasting topics to deal with as a student

Separation from parents/family

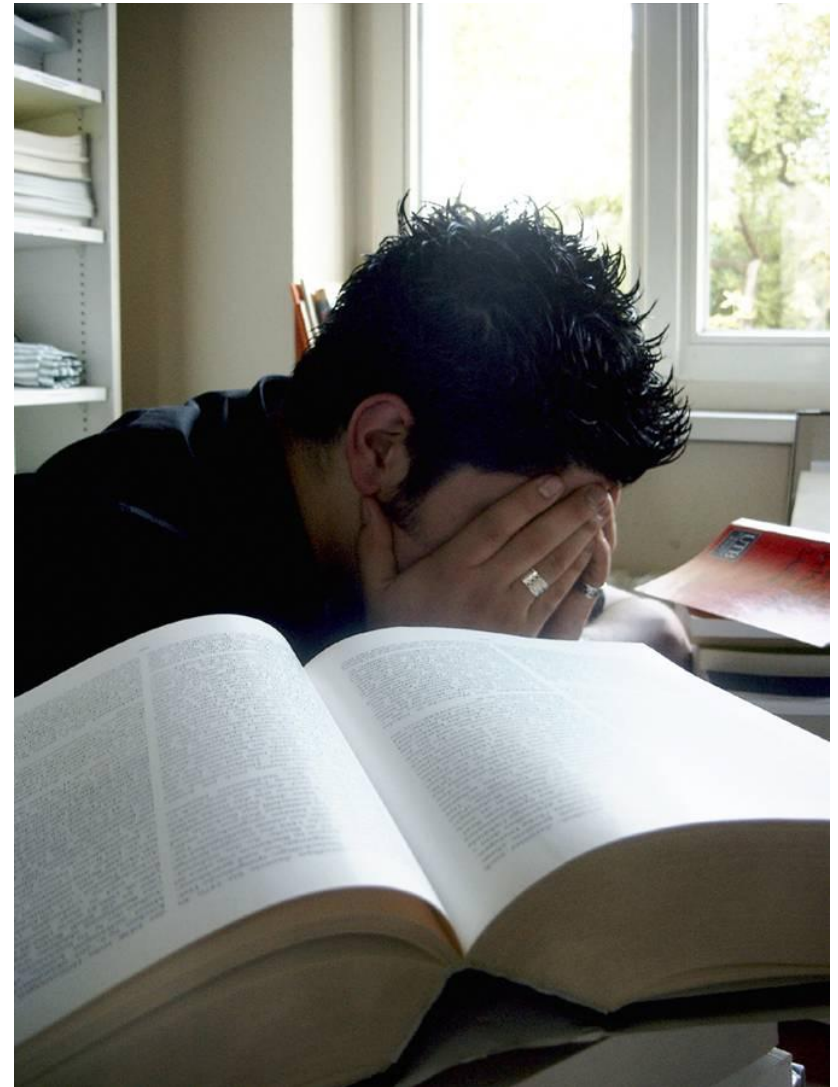
Questions of  
purpose/orientation

Relationships

work – study – private life

Finances

Identity developmentt



Flexibility

Developmental dynamics

Professional and social perspectives

Free time

Psychosocial moratorium



## Trends

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Growing prevalence of mental illness among young people

More stress due to BA/MA reform?

Identity issues

## Trends

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# Growing prevalence of mental illness among young people

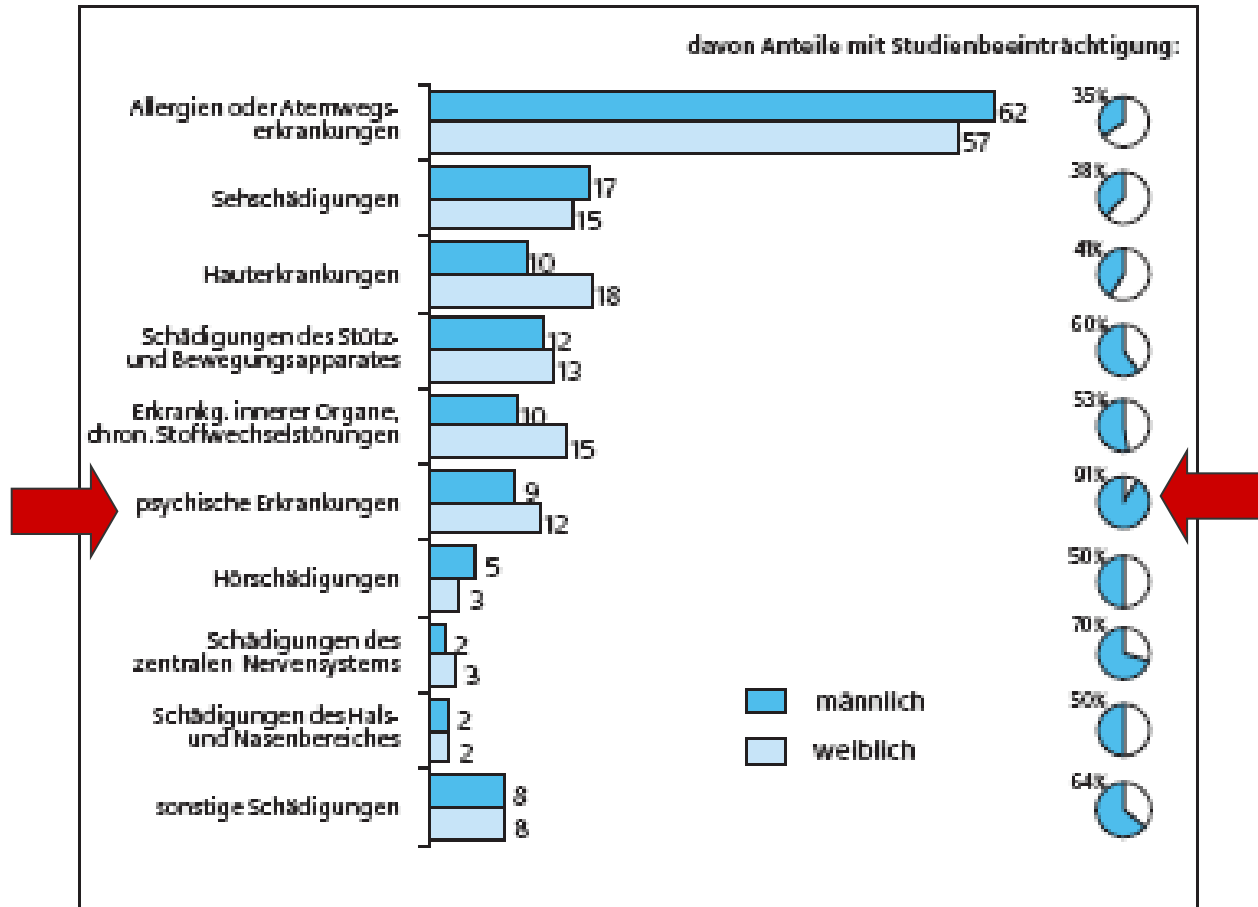
<b>Any disorder</b>	<b>%</b>
Population USA 2005	32,4
Population EU 2004	35,0
Adolescents EU	15-20%
Students USA 2008	15%
Students Germany 2006	11%

<b>Depression</b>	
Students USA 1938	1% in MMPI
Students USA 2007	6% in MMPI
Students USA 2002	10% diagnosed
Students USA 2002	38% feeling depressed
Students USA 2004	45% feeling depressed
Students Germany 2007	16 – 23 %
Students Poland 2008	34%
Students Bulgaria 2008	39%

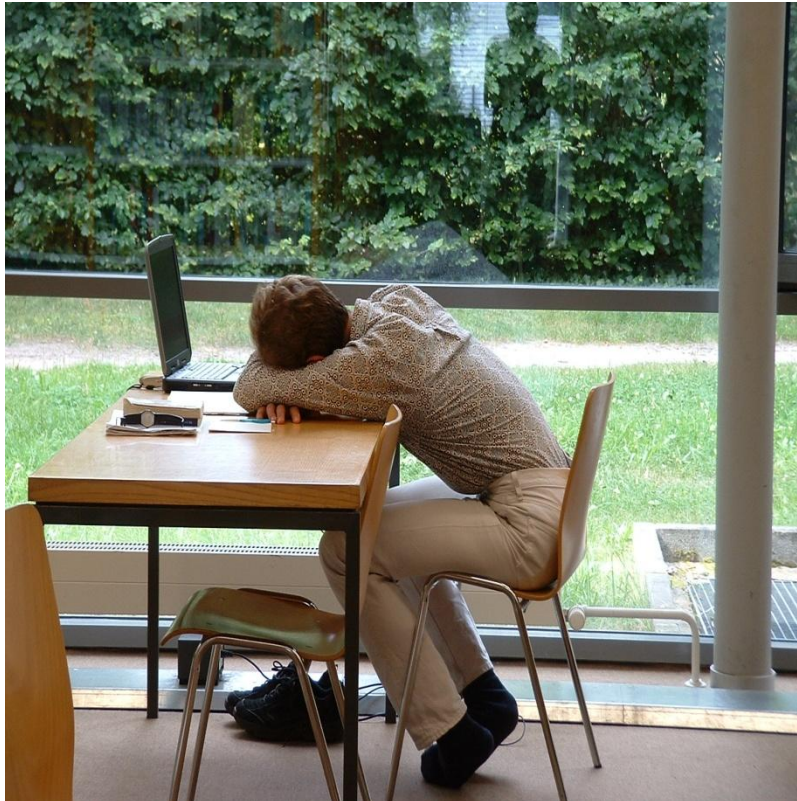


**Bild 13.3** Art gesundheitlicher Schädigung nach Geschlecht und Anteile mit Studienbeeinträchtigung

Studierende mit gesundheitlicher Schädigung, in %



DSW/HIS 18. Sozialerhebung



## STRESS

Students Sweden  
2007 52% stressed

Students Sweden  
2010 70% stressed

Students Austria  
2009 61% stressed

Students USA  
2008 85% stressed

## **Rector U Copenhagen/Denmark, Linda Nielsen 2006:**

- "Vi står med en zapper-generation, der er vant til fritvalg på alle hylder. Er der ikke noget af interesse, zappe de videre til næste tilbud. De vil gerne have alle muligheder stående åbne."



## GB – 2005 Psychological Counselling

- Increase 2000-2004: 20% (survey of 18 universities)  
Bristol 29%, Leeds 59%, Southampton 69%
- More severe problems: U Cambridge 2004  
43 suicidal, 56 bulimia/anorexia, 70 self-harm
- Misery of debt and poverty (rising fees)
- *„...one of four students will experience some form of mental distress during their time at university...mental health is no longer a minority issue..“*

A screenshot of a Times Online article. The page features the 'TIMES ONLINE' logo in the top left, a 'PRINT THIS ARTICLE' link in the top right, and a 'CLICK HERE TO PRINT' link with a printer icon on the left. The article is dated 'September 16, 2005' and is titled 'Student depression is costing £30m' by Patrick Foster. The text states that British universities spend £30 million a year on counselling for students with mental health problems. A large, light blue rectangular area on the right side of the page is mostly blank, possibly representing a missing image or a large graphic.

**TIMES ONLINE** [PRINT THIS ARTICLE](#)

[CLICK HERE TO PRINT](#) [CLOSE WINDOW](#)

The Times September 16, 2005

### Student depression is costing £30m

BY PATRICK FOSTER

BRITISH universities spend £30 million a year to provide counselling for students with mental health problems.

## USA

## National Survey of Counseling Center Directors 2008-2009

- Stabilization 2006-2009: 10,4% of the student population seek help
  - Depression
  - Stress/anxiety disorders
  - Relationship issues
  - Alcohol and drug use
  - Eating disorders
  - ADS/ADHS
- More severe problems: „The number of students with severe psychological problems is a growing concern on the campuses“  
(6 suicides at Cornell in 6 months 2009/2010; **2008 WHO report: 50% of the students contemplated suicide vs. 15% in general population**; massacre at Virginia Tech., Alabama 2007)
- Not to mention China...

Increase in students coming into college with pre-existing mental health issues

More students seeking help in Counseling Centers are socially isolated

Neuroenhancement: Common in extremely competitive colleges

More stress due to BA/MA reform?

## Germany before BA/MA

16% feared already in the 1st semester to have chosen the wrong field of study

42% afraid of not being up to the demands of studying

55% fear of failure in examinations

20% drop outs; UAS 22%, (USA 20%)

27% temporarily massively impaired by stresses and strains

13% in need of counselling over a longer time

11% mentally ill

5% in therapy

## Changes after BA/MA implementation

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Loss of freedom, especially in the first semesters

Structured study plans reveal lack of study skills from the outset

Permanent pressure for good study results as a permanent burden

Bulimic learning instead of deep-structure learning

Workload experienced subjectively as too high

Financial pressure

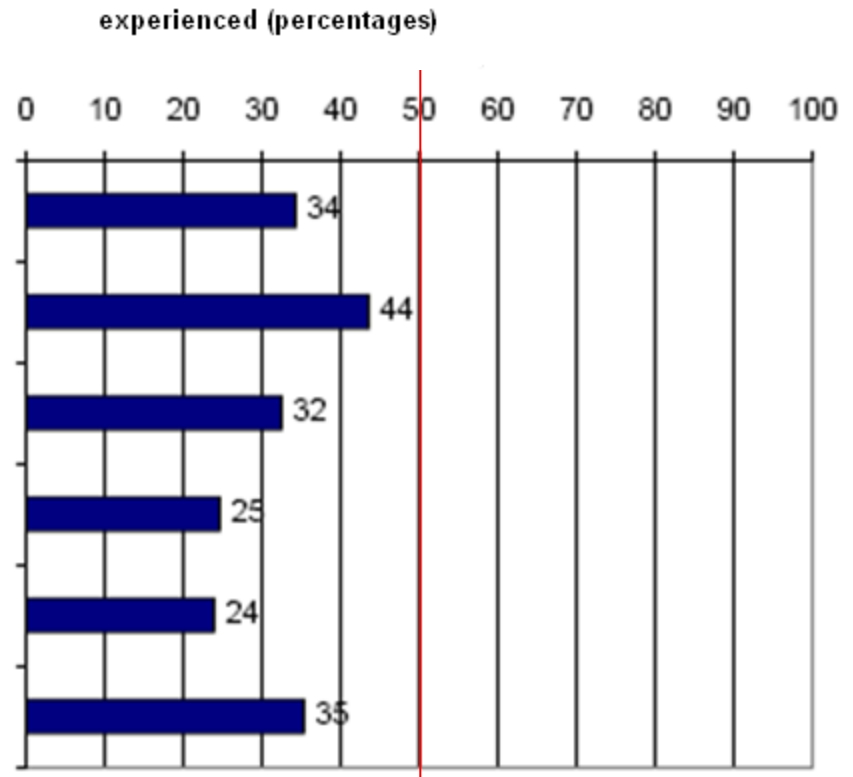
Difficulties combining studying with job/childcare

Pressure for success out of admission barriers for MA studies (85% want to pursue a master degree, so far 75% did)

Professional standing of BA degree unclear



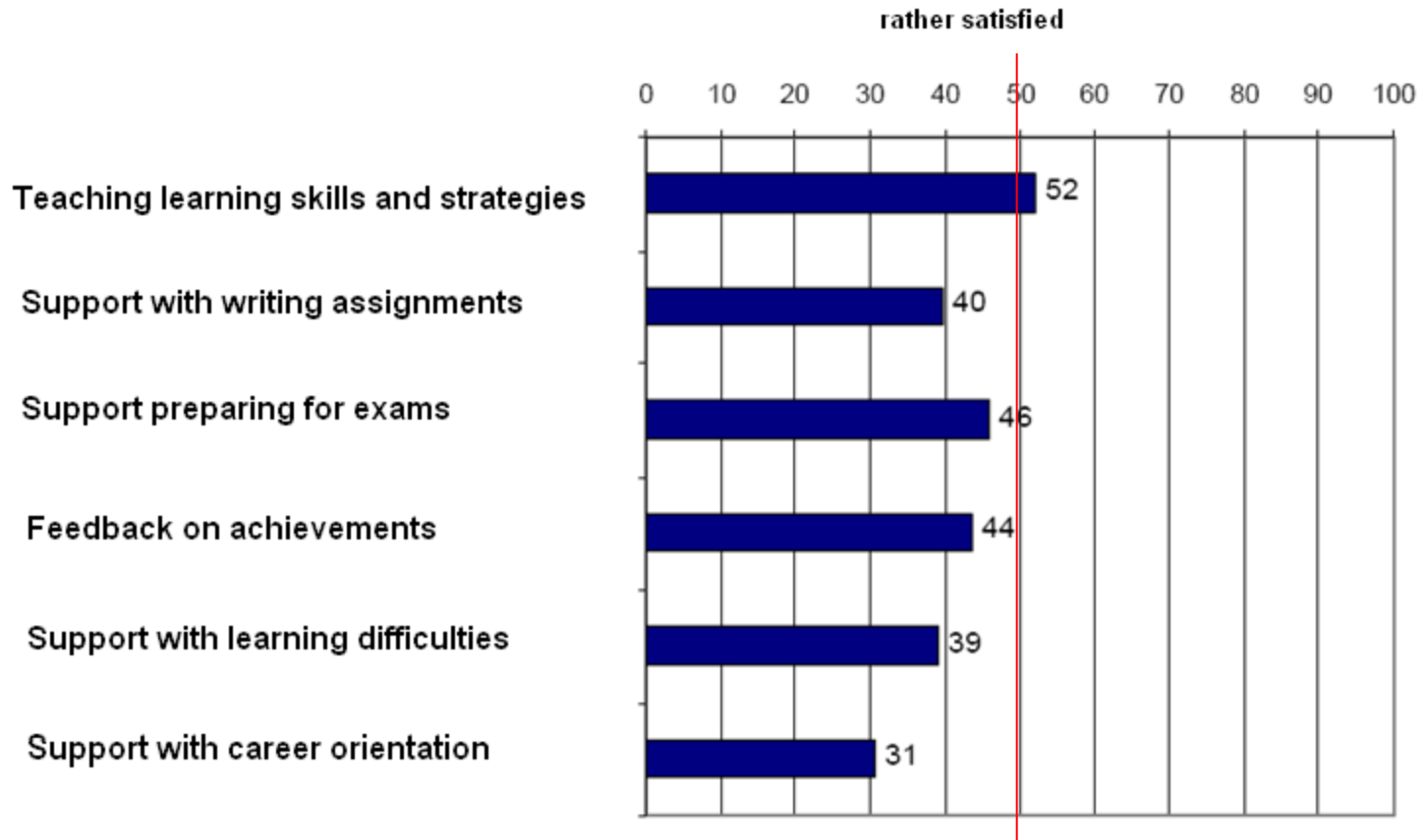
## Learning experiences



Thiel, F., Blüthmann, I, Lepa, S, Ficzko, M. (2007) Ergebnisse der Befragung der exmatrikulierten Bachelorstudierenden an der Freien Universität Berlin Sommersemester 2007



### Evaluation of support by academic staff



Thiel, F., Blüthmann, I, Lepa, S, Ficzko, M. (2007) Ergebnisse der Befragung der exmatrikulierten Bachelorstudierenden an der Freien Universität Berlin Sommersemester 2007

# Changes in Psychological Counselling

More stress and anxiety (partly deliberately fostered by academic staff)

More passive attitudes (time management courses)

More hope for straight tips (instead of self-reflexion)

High compliance

Decrease in political/social activities

# EUA Trend report 2010

91% HE institutions offer academic orientation services

83% offer career guidance

66% offer psychological counseling

since 2007 11% growth in Psychological Counseling

## 1946

### PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING OF COLLEGE STUDENTS\*

PETER BLOS, Ph.D.

*Department of Student Personnel, Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, N.Y.*

OUR increasing insight into personality disturbances and the increasing recognition of the need for services equipped to deal with these problems have both brought to the fore a new field of therapeutic endeavor which I will call "psychological counseling." In this paper, attempt is made to differentiate its scope, function, and technique from other well established counseling services, such as vocational, educational, and others.

Psychological counseling deals with individual problem situations which are largely due to irrational factors, where rational solutions (talking it over) or cathartic expression (talking it out) prove inconsequential and of little help. Of this group, only those individuals will gain from psychological counseling who have not yet established a rigid, repetitive, neurotic pattern, but are rather acutely overwhelmed by inner or outer pressures. Unprepared or inadequate to cope with such pressures, the individual resorts to protective reactions. Such reactive conditions are most frequent when maturational strains, instinctual as well as environmental, are the rule rather than the exception; namely, during early childhood and puberty. Obviously, maturational conflicts and crises are crucial periods for the onset of neurotic difficulties, especially during adolescence.

Among the older adolescent, the college student is in a position peculiarly his own. He has postponed, either willingly or under moral or social pressures, the attainment of adulthood for the sake of educational advantages or social prestige. This protracted adolescence, with its unavoidable effects on the psychic economy of the individual, is still a stepchild of psychiatry and mental hygiene. The problems created by the artificial prolongation of a maturational period affect almost every student at one point of his college career. Most students can cope with this situation, but an appreciable number undergo personality disturbances, some of which are at this time amenable to correction. As described in the foregoing, this group represents a strategic area where preventive psychiatry might well concentrate its efforts.

With such considerations in mind, five years ago Brooklyn College undertook to organize a counseling service for this specialized task. It had become evident that the student body—like any student body—presents personality disturbances which interfere with college work. This became of particular concern when the student of promising intellectual ability was unable to function adequately and was doomed to academic mediocrity or failure. To

\* Presented at the 1946 Annual Meeting.

## Identity development issues

## Developmental task of postadolescence

Generating/maintaining a congruent identity feeling  
by:

- „Preliminary irreversible“ choices (profession, relationship)

Connected with

- Crises (anxiety and self-doubt)
- Coping positively with crises =

builds self-efficacy and self esteem

temporarily a challenge for achievement

## Developmental task of postadolescence

### Positive development

- Goal attendance
- Personal Growth
- Flexible identity conceptions with adequate ego-strength and frustration tolerance

### Negative development

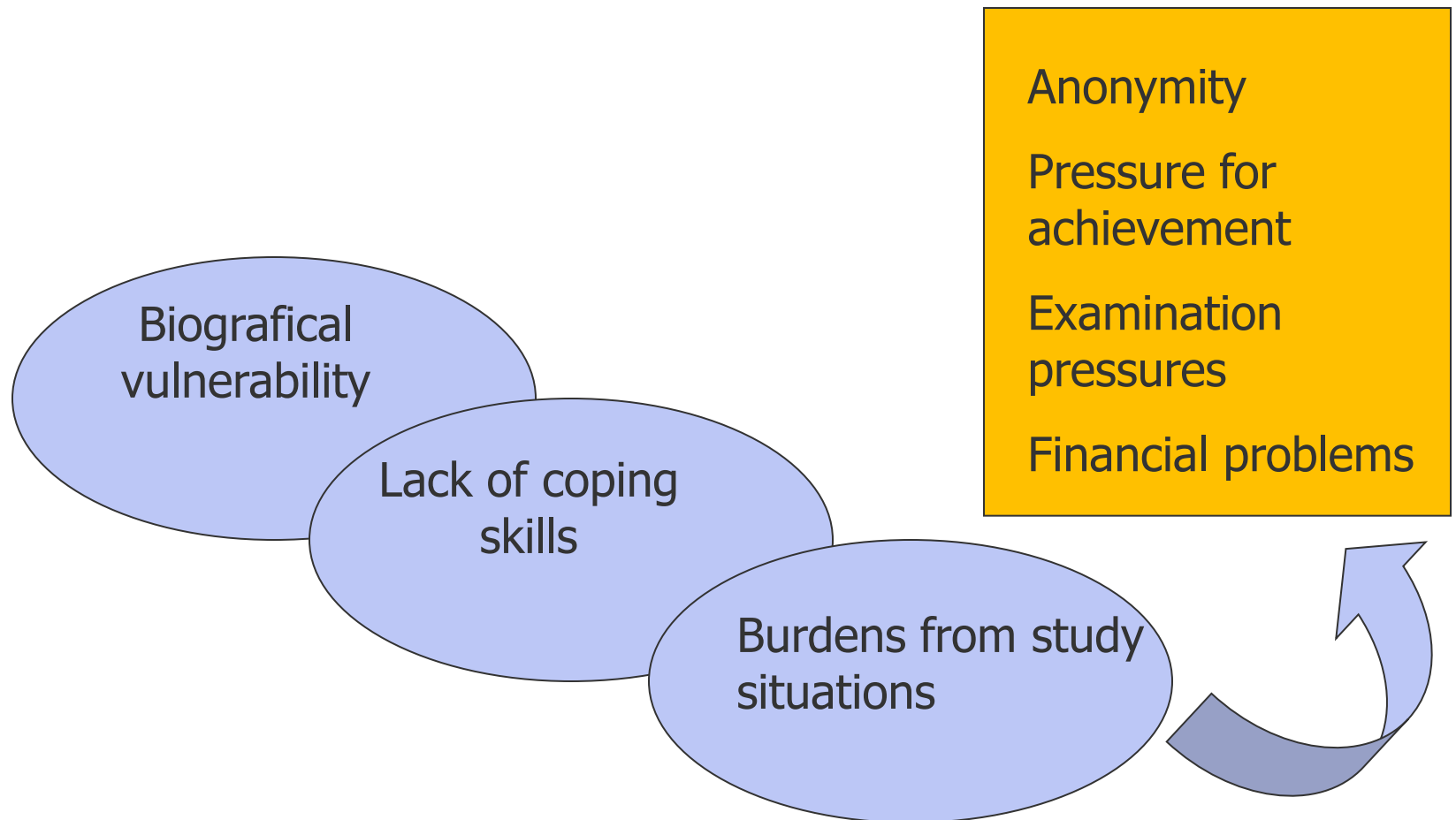
- Shortened identity development
- Pseudo- identity
- Identity diffusion

e.g. MMPI factor hypomania – measure of anxiety and unrealistic optimism, increase among students in the US from 5% 1938 to 31% 2007)



## Developmental task of postadolescence

### Negative development



## Open questions

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- Have European universities supported the introduction of the Bologna Process and the concept of lifelong learning through student-centred support services?
- Has Bologna changed the provision of student services in the past decade?

### **Or is the Trends V definition of key issue still valid:**

“The value of student support services needs to be better recognised, supported and developed in the interests of all students. In particular guidance and counselling services play a key role in widening access, improving completion rates and in preparing students for the labour market”



**STRONG UNIVERSITIES FOR EUROPE**

## Key issue 7: Student services

Services are difficult to define and compare, because responsibility lies with different agencies in different countries.

Career guidance is the fastest growing area, followed by growth in psychological counselling services.

Clear evidence in Trends & through FEDORA network that guidance and counselling are inadequate for the challenges of greater and more diversified student profiles

It is a necessity... but often overlooked.

Slide taken from Smid, H. 2009, European universities and lifelong learning; European Universities' Charter on Lifelong learning. Presentation given at the X Fedora Congress, Berlin Oct. 5, 2009

What to do?

## Developing a mental health and learning support policy

training and awareness raising strategies

promoting student mental health issues

supporting students with mental health difficulties

supporting staff

## What to do?

# Expanding beyond traditional Counseling and Psychological Services

Networking with other Student Service/Support agencies, university administration, program and curricula developers etc.

implement stress-management/stress reduction courses

credit-points for participating students

engage in team-teaching with faculty

integrate counseling aspects in teaching

integrate counseling aspects into training of faculty

What to do?

## Expanding Counseling and Psychological Services

to international students (the challenge of time management courses ...)

to low achieving students (more prone to depression)

to students in risk groups (age 30-34: 3% , 6% female in Germany on antidepressants)

to non-traditional learners



Thank you for your time and attention!

Questions? Comments?  
**SEND EMAIL**

Hans-Werner.Rueckert@fu-berlin.de