Now that we’re a month into the new academic year, I can feel my course load piling onto my back. I’ve had to stop myself many times from dipping into my savings to hit up Elements Massage down on Main Street (although self-care is important, and if you find yourself stressing, along with the time and resources to indulge, have at it).

Have you ever felt like you just can’t get through a day of classes at UMass without feeling run down, sweaty, and tired? And let’s not forget the weather! It’s muggy in the morning, blazing hot in the afternoon, and below freezing at night.

If you have an intensely busy schedule like me, you rarely ever have time to go home and freshen up. I live in the North Apartments this year, and it feels like a century to get there from the Fine Arts Center. We all know UMass holds a great reputation for having a huge campus. Once Black Friday hits, I’m investing in a bicycle.

I’ve decided that in order to have a successful school day, I’ve got to bring all that I need with me. But don’t fret! There’s a way to pack smart and comfortable.

I like to start out with my wardrobe. I always check the weather every morning to prepare for rain or shine, and I make sure I bring a sweater or jacket with me if the temperature falls later in the day.

Then I check out my school supplies. I always bring my laptop everywhere I go, so I don’t need to wait in line for computers at the W.E.B. Du Bois Library (but they also rent out laptops for 24 hours, so check that out). I bring my planner, which has my whole life schedule inside, along with my notebooks and folders.

Then, after I’ve got the school essentials, I move onto toiletries. Travel-size bottles are
a lifesaver in my book. I’ve got travel-sized lotion, deodorant, and medicine in my bag at all times. It all depends on what you need and what works for you. Maybe you need to carry around sunscreen or mouthwash. Discover what will help you throughout the day.

Let’s not forget SNACKS! So important! I rarely have time to wait in long food lines or even go to a dining area on campus, so I always try to bring food with me to satisfy my cravings. I love to carry goldfish crackers, bags of chips, granola bars, and fruit. And always remember to stay hydrated.

Use these tips to help you make it through the long days, especially if you’re a frequent person on the go!

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Commonwealth Honors College or University of Massachusetts Amherst.

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