SLEEPING THROUGH COLLEGE

You rush out of Orgo lab, tearing your gloves off as you go because your friends left you a message: We are going to Chipotle NOW. After a quick dinner, you go back to your room and study for that French test tomorrow, and then rush off to a JHUnions programming board meeting. After that, you have a study date with your friends to finish up your Calc problem set together. When that's done, you head home, still trying to remember how to conjugate verbs for your French test. You get in bed with your Econ book and fall asleep before finishing the first page, let alone the entire reading for lecture tomorrow. It's 2:30 am.

The Problem:
College students, especially students at an academically challenging and competitive school, do not get enough sleep. Many can relate to the above scenario. Sleep is considered unnecessary, even a luxury, by some. Students think they can catch up on sleep on the weekends, but then that conflicts with the desire to have a semi-normal social life or the need to play catch up on work still undone. However, the problem is not always the quantity of sleep, but the quality as well. Dorm life makes it difficult to get a peaceful, quiet night's rest and extended napping, though relaxing at the time, will disrupt the natural circadian rhythm in your body.

The Solution:
It is not as simple as going to bed earlier. For many students at Hopkins, late in the evening is considered valuable study time; however this may have adverse effects on the learning process. So what is the answer? Below are a few suggestions to help you get better sleep:

- Manage your time wisely; budget time in your schedule for a good night's sleep - it will make you more alert and productive!
- Limit the amount of caffeine you have after 3pm. Caffeine will affect the quality of sleep you get.
- Exercise can boost your attentiveness during the day and enhance your quality of sleep at night.
- Give yourself an hour to relax before you go to bed. This will give your brain time to wind down - you will sleep better and feel more rested in the morning.
- Drink alcohol wisely. Alcohol consumption, though it might cause you to pass out, will not cause you to have a restful night's sleep; you will wake up still tired and groggy.
- Most experts agree that a good night’s sleep is somewhere between six and nine continuous hours of sleep; in other words, if you took a three hour nap at 2pm and then got four hours of sleep that night, it does not add up to a good night's sleep.
- College is swarming with germs. Sleep is your body’s natural way to refresh itself and combat illness.

Helpful Links:
National Sleep Foundation: www.sleepfoundation.org