

In This Issue:

- Succeeding in College
- A Good Study Place
- Improving Your Listening & Note Taking Skills
- How Successful Students Prepare for Tests
- Managing Your Study Time
- Vocabulary: An Ongoing Process

Becoming A Successful Student

Succeeding in College

Just as in elementary school through high school, your success in college requires high motivation and effort, strong study skills, effective time management, and good test-taking strategies. But college success requires much more. Once you move from high school to college (or enter college from the work force), you will generally find that students are more motivated and competent than in high school; teachers are more demanding; the work is more difficult; and students are expected to be independent.

Here are some ideas that will help you succeed in college:

Have Clear Goals

College success requires commitment and a lot of hard work. You must be very certain about the importance of a college education.

- Be clear about why you are going to college.
- Establish specific goals you wish to accomplish.
- Know what it will take to reach these goals.
- Be certain your goals are consistent with your interests and abilities.
- Be flexible – change your goals if needed based on your experience as you progress through college.

Get Financial Aid if Needed

College is expensive. Even when you attend a public college or university and live at home, you still must pay for tuition, fees, and books. There are many sources of financial aid that can help you meet the high costs of college. Become aware of and pursue these sources.

- Consider all possible sources of financial aid in addition to your college's financial aid office.
- Meet all deadlines for submitting applications and documentation.
- Respond quickly and completely to all requests for additional information.
- Be persistent in following up your application.
- If you do receive financial aid, meet all requirements to keep and continue your aid.

Manage Your Money

There are many ways to spend money in the college setting for other than education purposes. Take steps to ensure that you do not waste the money set aside for your college education.

- Set a budget and keep to it.
- Be careful about your use of

credit cards. Don't overspend. Pay balances promptly to avoid high interest costs.

- Open a checking account and carefully monitor your balance.
- Keep your cell phone under control. Those minutes and fees can really add up.

Stay Physically and Emotionally Healthy

You will need to be at your best to succeed in college. This means taking care of your body and maintaining a good frame of mind.

- Get enough sleep.
- Don't rely on coffee and drinks that contain high doses of caffeine to provide you with energy. Foods such as pasta, peanut butter, non-sugar cereals, and fresh fruit are healthy alternatives to provide the energy you need.
- Avoid junk foods. Fast food is convenient but usually not good for you.

continued on page 4...

Preparing to Study: A Good Study Place

You need a good study place to be prepared to study. You should be able to answer **YES** to all of the following questions:

Is my Study Place available to me whenever I need it?

Your Study Place does you little good if you cannot use it when you need it. If you are using a Study

Place that you must share with others for any reason, work out a schedule so that you know when you can use it.

Is my Study Place free from interruptions?

It is important to have uninterrupted study time. You may have to hang a **DO NOT DISTURB** sign on the door or take the

phone off the hook.

Is my Study Place free from distractions?

Research shows that most students study best in a quiet environment. If you find that playing a stereo or TV improves your mood, keep the volume low.

continued on page 4...

Improve Your Listening and Note Taking Skills

1. Prepare to listen. Your enjoyment and understanding of an activity often depend on your background knowledge. Out-of-class preparation readies you for learning. Effective in-class performance maximizes your listening and note taking processes.

Out-of-class preparation:

- complete assignments
- review for next lecture's content
- read chapter
- construct a chapter map
- review last lecture's content

In-class performance:

- take course materials to class
- arrive on time
- sit near the front of the class
- have/get/create a purpose for listening

2. Develop a Note Taking system. No matter what system you use (see below), a system enables you to organize ideas effectively and efficiently. You may find that some systems work better for some types of courses than others. Experiment with different systems until you find the one (s) you want.

Optional systems to research:

- [The Cornell Method](#)
- [The Outline Method](#)
- [The Mapping Method](#)
- [The Charting Method](#)
- [The Sentence Method](#)

3. Identify the lecture's essence. A lecture is a bit like a jigsaw puzzle. Your professor gives you a piece of the puzzle at a time. Your role is to determine the overall picture or main idea of the lecture. You should, then, always ask yourself, "What point is the professor making? How do these ideas fit together?"

4. Communicate with your instructor. Many students think of a lecture as one-way communication: your instructor provides information and you receive it. However, professors gather much information from body language (yawns, news-

paper reading, sleeping, tapping vs. appreciative nodding, eye contact, alert posture). In addition, the questions you ask in class, as well as the comments you make during out-of-class appointments are ways to communicate your needs with your instructor and clarify your understanding.

5. Avoid distractions in yourself/others. Your ability to listen and take notes erodes if you can't concentrate. Many distractions result from your ability to listen faster than the speaker can speak. As a result, your mind looks for other things to occupy or entertain it. Internal distractions result from mind games in which you mentally think about other topics (e.g., things you need to do after class, personal concerns, or critique a speaker's delivery, negative self-talk). External distractions occur most often when you consciously or unconsciously put yourself in situations that sabotage your ability to concentrate. For example, if you sit by a window, you may find the views outside the window to be more interesting than the topic of the lecture. If you sit at the back of the class, you will be distracted by everything that happens between you and the lecturer.

6. Take notes. Research indicates that information recorded in notes is remembered on tests more frequently than information left to auditory memory. The following suggestions help you take effective notes.

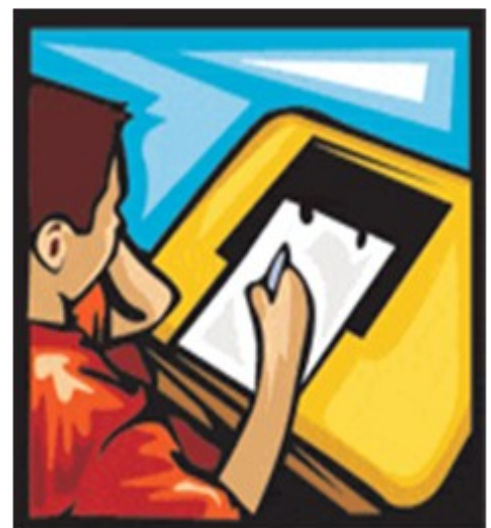
- Date each day's notes
- Use a consistent format
- Dvlp (develop) a key for symbols & abbreviations
- Group and label info (information) to aid recall
- Record what is written on the board
- Use white space
- Write legibly on only the front side of the page
- Condense--shorthand, not dictation
- Write down specific page #'s to which the instructor refers
- Use binder paper instead of a spiral notebook
- Don't doodle or cram space
- Keep other class notes separate
- Keep your own thoughts separate
- Don't fall asleep

7. Review. If you ever took great notes only to find they didn't make sense a month later, you were a victim of the curve of forgetting. According to the curve, you forget about half of what you hear within an hour of hearing it. You forget about 80% of the information within a month. Reviewing notes helps you keep ideas in memory through repetition. Reviewing as soon as possible after class or at least within 24 hours gives you opportunities to fill any gaps in your notes before you forget what the notes were about!

8. Transform raw notes into a finished product. Your notes are raw materials, not a finished product. Rewriting helps you integrate text or other materials into lecture content. The [Cornell](#) note taking systems provides a recall column that helps you summarize main ideas. Mapping or charting also helps you synthesize information.

9. Take responsibility for your success. No matter what note taking system you use, how effectively your professors deliver course content, or the way in which you listen in class, you remain responsible for the learning you acquire. Whatever it takes--tutoring, extra study, appointments with faculty, and so on--only you profit from your learning. The success you achieve is up to you.

www.cas.lsu.edu



How Successful Students Prepare for Tests

Are you really doing everything you can to prepare for tests? Re-reading the chapter and looking over your notes is *not* enough. Below is a list of tips for test preparation from successful students.

- Keep up to date with assignments.
- Take notes in *every* class *every* day. This includes asking questions when you don't understand.
- Process information as you come to it. Learning information is much different than "becoming acquainted" with it.
- Process information systematically. Labeling in the margin works well for most people.
- Adapt information to suit your learning styles. Capitalize on the discipline label in the margin and make it a habit to process information from texts and lectures, not just go over it.
- Have a study place that is free of distractions.
- Have a specific time for initial study of each subject. You may need more than this time, but having a set time will save you time.
- Make summary sheets, flash cards, and practice tests.
- Always carry some kind of pocket work and make use of wasted spare minutes by reciting and thinking about what you are learning.
- Learn something new or difficult in your strongest intelligence, sense or in your dominant hemisphere. Reinforce it with as many different ways as possible.
- Find a study partner or two in each class and routinely take turns teaching each other the material.
- Prepare for each class as if there will be a pop quiz.

Tips from *Practicing College Learning Strategies*, 3rd ed. Houghton Mifflin by Dr. Carolyn Hopper

Managing Your Study Time

There are only so many hours in a day, a week, and a term. You cannot change the number of hours, but you can decide how to best use them. To be successful in school, you must carefully manage your study time. Here is a strategy for doing this.

At the beginning of a **quarter**, prepare a **Quarterly Calendar**. Update it as the term goes on. Here is what to do to prepare a Quarterly Calendar.

- Record your school assignments with their due dates and your scheduled tests.
- Record your planned school activities.
- Record your out-of-school activities.

Each Sunday before a school **week**, prepare a **Weekly Schedule**. Update it as the week goes on. Here is what to do to prepare a Weekly Schedule.

- Record your daily classes.
- Enter things to be done for the coming week from your Quarterly Calendar.
- Review your class notes from the previous week to see if you need to add any school activities.
- Add any out-of-school activities in which you will be involved during the week.
- Be sure to include times for completing

assignments, working on projects, and studying for tests. These times may be during the school day, right after school, evenings, and weekends.

Each evening before a school **day**, prepare a **Daily Organizer** for the next day. Place a \checkmark next to each thing to do as you accomplish it. Here is what to do to prepare a Daily Organizer.

- Enter the things to do for the coming day from your Weekly Schedule.
- Enter the things that still need to be accomplished from your Daily Organizer from the previous day.
- Review your class notes for the day just completed to see if you need to add any school activities.
- Add any out-of-school activities in which you will be involved the next day.

Your Weekly Schedule should have more detail than your Quarterly Calendar. Your Daily Organizer should have more detail than your Weekly Schedule. Using a Quarterly Calendar, a Weekly Schedule, and a Daily Organizer will help you make the best use of your time.

www.how-to-study.com

Vocabulary: An Ongoing Process

Vocabulary is an ongoing process. It continues throughout your life. What you have done is to slow your effective method of learning vocabulary down to a snail's pace. When you were younger you learned something day in and day out. You kept squeezing every moment of the day into a new and different learning situation. You continually asked questions and drove yourself to learn more. Look at the following examples:

- at the age of 4 you probably knew 5,600 words
- at the age of 6 you probably knew 14,700 words
- at the age of 8 you probably knew 26,300 words
- at the age of 10 you probably knew 34,300 words
- at the age of 20 you probably knew 120,000 words

What this tells you is the more you learn, the more vocabulary you will know. No matter what your age, you must continue to learn. Words are "symbols" for ideas. These ideas formulate knowledge and knowledge is gained largely through words. Some suggestions which may help you:

- Read. The more you read, the more words you will come in contact with.
- Use new found vocabulary in your everyday communication (writing, speaking).
- Become familiar with the glossary of your textbooks.
- Become familiar with the dictionary. Understand the pronunciation keys as well as why there are multiple meanings for words.
- Try to learn 5 new words a day. If you know these words - use them in your communication process. Without using these new words, it is a waste of your time.

Read. Read books from fields other than your major. Read books which interest you and concentrate while you read.

Adapted from [Virginia Tech Counseling Center](http://Virginia.Tech.Counseling.Center)

A Good Study Place continued... (page 1)

Does my Study Place contain all the study materials I need?

Be sure your Study Place includes reference sources and supplies such as pens and pencils, paper, ruler, calculator, and whatever else you might need. If you use a computer for your schoolwork, it should be in your Study Place.

Does my Study Space contain a large enough desk or table?

While working on an assignment or studying for a test, use a desk or table that is large enough to hold everything you need. Allow enough room for writing and try to avoid clutter.

Does my Study Place have enough storage space?

You need enough room to store your study materials. Be sure you have enough storage space to allow you to keep your desktop or other work surface clear of unnecessary materials that can get in the way.

Does my Study Place have a comfortable chair?

A chair that is not comfortable can cause discomfort or pain that will interfere with your studying. A chair that is too comfortable might make you sleepy. Select a chair in which you can sit for long periods while maintaining your attention.

Does my Study Place have enough light?

The amount of light you need depends on what you are doing. The important thing is that you can clearly see what you need to see without any strain or discomfort.

Does my Study Place have a comfortable temperature?

If your Study Place is too warm, you might become sleepy. If it is too cold, your thinking may slow down and become unclear. Select a temperature at which your mind and body function best.

Having a good Study Place is important for good studying.

www.how-to-study.com

Succeeding in College continued... (page 1)

- Use the services of the counseling office. The professionals there can help you overcome feelings of loneliness, depression, and anxiety. Counselors will refer you to community programs and agencies if additional assistance is needed.

Work With Your Advisor

As a student you will be assigned a faculty advisor to help you with both academic and career issues. It is up to you to get the most out of this guidance.

- Know your advisor's office location, schedule of office hours, and contact information.
- Schedule an appointment with your advisor at any time you have problems that affect your academic performance.
- Consider your advisor's ideas when selecting your major or at any time

you are considering changing your major or career goals.

- Have specific questions in mind whenever meeting with your advisor.

Make Good Use of the Library

You are going to spend a lot of your time in college at the library. Take full advantage of this major resource.

- Get to know the resources of the library as soon as you get to college.
- Learn to use its computer resources and card catalogs.
- Make good use of its equipment such as copy machines, microfiche readers, computer lab, etc.
- Check out its quiet study areas. Sign up for their use if required.

Get Involved in Campus Life

There is a lot more to college than just classes. A college campus is an exciting, dynamic envi-

ronment that can provide you with many opportunities for enhancing your college experience and building your resume.

- Join a student organization that is consistent with your interests.
- Join a club in your major. This cannot only help you in your studies but can provide contacts that may be very useful in your future career.
- Attend social events. Your college experience should not be all work and no play.

Yes – success in college takes effort. But this effort will provide benefits to you throughout your life. The ideas presented above can help you to make your college experience a successful one.

www.how-to-study.com

Visit the Counseling Center
Building 1300
706-771-4068 or 4067
www.augustatech.edu