

Succeeding in College

Top Tips

- 1. GO TO CLASS! (Whether or not the professor requires it, you will do better!)**
 - a. Read the syllabus carefully. Know attendance policies, grading policies, when assignments are due, etc.
 - b. *Participate* in class activity.
 - c. Get to know your instructor.
 - d. “Don’t be afraid to talk with professors when you have questions.”
 - e. “Make friends in your class—study in groups.”
- 2. Check your Wartburg e-mail account regularly**—this is a primary means of communicating on this campus.
- 3. Study**—College really is harder than high school. Remember, the bottom half of the high school is not here, but not everyone here can be in the top half of your college class.
 - a. Consider studying in the library or somewhere other than your room
 - b. “It takes effort. Don’t give up!” Allow ENOUGH time to study; follow the rule: two hours outside of class for every hour in. Treat studying and classes as your FULL-time job! REVIEW!
 - c. “It doesn’t take long to get behind, but may take a long time to catch up!”
- 4. Manage your time wisely**
 - a. **Use your Wartburg Planner (or a planner of your own choosing) to organize your time.**
 - b. Prioritize tasks! Schedule a regular work (study) day. Schedule in breaks, but keep them SHORT.
 - c. “Use your time between classes to study.”
 - d. Keep naps SHORT—no more than 30 minutes!
- 5. Ask for help when you need it.** You’ve paid for services; use them! Sooner is better than later!

Examine Your Goals

Motivation is an important factor in learning. At the outset of your career, you need to examine your goals (both short and long term). How concretely can you answer the following questions? If you’re having trouble, Pathways staff can help you clarify your goals. This helps you stay **MOTIVATED!**

1. Why are you going to college?
2. What immediate return do you expect to get? Long term?
3. How will this school help you to achieve your goals?
4. How prepared are you to fulfill the requirements of your chosen program?
5. What is your reason for choosing your intended program?

Orientation to Courses

You need to have a sense of the organization and goals of each class which you are taking. This understanding will help you in your own plans to manage your time. You need to be able to answer the following questions.

1. What is the professor's role in the class?
2. What is your role, as student, in the class?
3. In assigning responsibility for the success of the course, what percent do you assign to the professor? To yourself?
4. What type of exams will be given?
5. How often will tests be given?
6. What effect will the type and frequency of tests have on your success?
7. What help is provided in the event that you have difficulty in the class?
8. What is the attendance policy for each class? Does attendance have an impact on grades?
9. What do you do if you miss a test?
10. What are the professor's office hours?
11. Can you contact the professor via E-mail?

Assessing Your Understanding of the Learning Process

Learning is not simply what happens in the classroom. Learning is essential for survival. It is a lifelong pursuit that enriches an individual's life and provides skills that can enhance performance. Successful learners have the ability to understand what happens to them in the learning process (metacognition). Metacognition can be viewed as the learner's ability to be aware of and understand his or her own individual style. As a step toward such awareness, answer the following questions.

1. What fundamental differences do you expect to find between your high school and your college experience?
2. What is the difference between studying and learning?
3. What is the difference between learning (knowing the material) and performance (passing the test?)
4. What is the difference between rule-governed skills (learning to type, learning the multiplication tables, driving a car) and more complex skills (writing, playing chess)?
5. Do you tend to be impulsive?
6. Do you tend to be conservative and perhaps constricted in your thinking?
7. When studying, do you have flashes of insight that lead to new and original conclusions?
8. Do you have a good sense of your own learning paradigms (models, maps)?

Study Assistance Available at Pathways

One-on one assistance is available to all students in the following areas:

- time management
- test preparation and test-taking
- note-taking

- reading (comprehension and retention of information),
- writing and speaking

Getting Started Right

Students often equate success in college with getting passing grades. Although passing grades are important, other factors need to be considered. Students need to understand that the time spent at a college or university is time which is connected not only to academic development but also to emotional and psychological development as well as a time to focus attention on both short term and long term goals. The time spent in college should be viewed, in some sense, as a voyage of exploration. It is a time to strike out into "the undiscovered country." The students who gain most from their education are those who are willing to open themselves to new ideas and let go of a dependence on a need to know the "right" answers to problems. College provides an opportunity to stretch the mind and develop an intellectual life that will continue to develop even after graduation. The successful student is the one who at the outset of this journey does so with a willingness to actively participate in all that is offered and to open your mind to new ways of looking at "old" ideas. In the words of Marcel Proust: "The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes." The following suggestions will provide a good starting point for building a successful college career.