

# Keys to COLLEGE SUCCESS



## IN CLASSROOM

### Taking Notes

#### BASICS

- Clear, concise notes are more effective than long, complicated notes
- Instead of using a spiral, use a loose-leaf notebook divided into class sections
- Make all notes on loose-leaf paper; in an upper corner, title and date each sheet as it is used
- Rewrite and combine your old study and lecture notes into a new single set of notes or outline; use them as a replacement for your old notes in the loose-leaf binder

#### LECTURE NOTES

- Sit near the front of the class to avoid distractions
- **Be a good listener** - focus and concentrate on the main points of the lecture; get them down on paper; you'll put them into your

own words later along with your study notes; pay attention to the instructors' clues to what they consider important

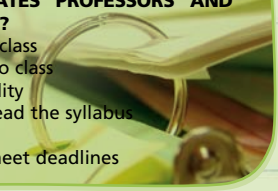
- If there is something you don't understand, **ASK!**
- For fast classroom access to key information on major topics, use **QuickStudy®** products, if available
- Immediately after a lecture, without looking at your notes, try to recall on a separate paper as much as you can about what you have heard and learned; then, review your actual lecture notes to confirm and/or supplement your memory
- During your next study session, quickly recall again on paper what you learned; then, review and reorganize your lecture notes in your own words
- **Repeat the recall process** several times over several days to commit the new information to memory!

*Your listening skills, note taking and ability to manage your sessions will help determine your success in college!*

## Dealing with Professors & Tough Classes

- **MEET WITH YOUR** professors during their posted office hours
- **TALK TO OTHER STUDENTS** to find out the real scoop—which professors to avoid, etc.
- **DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK** other students and professors for copies of old exams; the questions may change, but the style usually remains the same
- **MAKE SURE YOUR PROFESSOR KNOWS YOUR NAME:** Putting a face with a name will be a big help, especially if your grade is borderline
- **PROBLEMS WITH FACULTY** should be handled honestly and calmly; always try to remedy conflicts directly with faculty members first; if the problem remains unresolved, seek advice from your academic advisor, a student

- support services staff member, or your student handbook for the next step
- **STUDENT INTERVENTION RESOURCES**
  - Department Chair
  - Dean of the College
  - Chancellor or Vice President of Academic Affairs
  - Ombudsman
  - Student Government Attorney
- **WHAT IRRITATES PROFESSORS AND INSTRUCTORS?**
  - Sleeping in class
  - Not going to class
  - Irresponsibility
  - Failure to read the syllabus
  - Excuses
  - Failure to meet deadlines



## STUDY STRATEGIES

### Time Management

- **LEARN TO SAY NO!** Balance social time and study time
- **DO NOT STUDY FOR MORE THAN TWO HOURS AT A TIME**
- **TRY TO STUDY DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS**
- **USE TWO SCHEDULES**
  - Using your class schedules as a guide, block out specific times each day for study and all other activities
  - Create a semester schedule showing midterms, finals, due dates, and other important events: Weekly, review both schedules and allow more study time as needed; a good schedule keeps you from wandering off course
- **PRIORITIZE:** List what you need to study each day; prioritize and set times for each item and stick to it
- **USE THE 30-3-2 SCHEDULE**
  - Study for 30 minutes
  - Take a three-minute break; let the break be a time to think about other things
  - Upon returning, take an extra two minutes to mentally review what you have just read and do a quick preview of what is coming up next

### Study, Study, Study!

- **STUDY - BREAK - REVIEW - PREVIEW - STUDY**
- **ATTEND** as many academic support activities and workshops as possible
- **STUDY!** This may be a case of stating the obvious, but you would be surprised how many students don't bother
- **STUDYING WITH SOOTHING MUSIC** in the background (contrary to popular opinion) can enhance your concentration
- Studying in a soft chair or on a cushy bed may not be the best strategy
  - Active learning may require walking around the room or sitting on the edge of the chair
- **STUDY SPACE:** Your regular study space should be as quiet and comfortable as possible, and large enough to have easy access to everything you need for studying (text and **QuickStudy®**, paper, pencils, rulers, etc.)
  - Libraries, study lounges, or private rooms are ideal
  - Get rid of clutter; clear the desk or table of all materials not related to the current project
- **TUTORING IS NOT A BAD THING!** Get help early, before the academic damage is irreversible; many schools offer free tutoring in a variety of subjects
- Study groups are great, but in general, studying alone is more effective

### Goal Setting

- Set realistic goals within a specific time-frame (in writing)
- Goals should be specific and clear
- Determine the purpose of your goals and their achievement benefits; write them down next to your goal
- Set specific strategies for accomplishing each goal (in writing)
- Set target dates for self-evaluation
- Periodically visualize your goal, as well as your strategies for accomplishing the goal
- List potential obstacles to attaining the goal
- List strategies for overcoming obstacles
- Follow through on all strategies

## Get BETTER GRADES

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Road map for the course

Covers some of the toughest courses taught today!

**Full-color** illustrations & diagrams



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# THEMES & REPORTS

## Reducing Writing Anxiety

- **GET A CALENDAR OR ACADEMIC PLANNER**
  - Follow tips in Time Management on page 1
  - First, write down the due date of the paper; next, count backwards: How many days will you need to write, edit, re-write, revise, take notes, research, read, select, and narrow the topic?
  - Now you know what day you will need to begin the paper
- **BE SURE YOU KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOUR INSTRUCTOR EXPECTS**
- **DON'T BE AFRAID TO EXPRESS A UNIQUE OPINION:** The key is to document and support your ideas in an organized and cogent manner
- **WHEN PROOFREADING TEXT,** start at the end of your paper; read one sentence at a time and work your way to the beginning; by reading from end to beginning, the pattern is broken and you will find more errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling
- **DO NOT RELY ON SPELLCHECK:** Remember "principle" and "principal" are both correct spellings; other biggies—"to" and "too," "it's" and "its"
- **PLAGIARISM MEANS TAKING ANOTHER PERSON'S WORDS OR IDEAS AS YOUR OWN:** Be careful to always cite your source whether you quote directly or paraphrase; remember, if it's not common knowledge or your original idea, you must cite the source

## Library Tips

- **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL YOUR FIRST RESEARCH PAPER/PROJECT TO SCOPE OUT THE CAMPUS LIBRARY**
  - Many libraries offer tours for freshmen
  - Determine the library's resources, as well as its limitations, as early as possible
  - Learn how to use library computers and card catalogs to find books by subject or author
  - Practice using every machine in the library (i.e., microfiche, CD Roms, etc.)
  - Use the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* for magazine articles; encyclopedias for general information on most known topics; almanacs for facts, lists, charts and tables; atlases for maps, etc.; ask the librarian for instructions
  - If you use the Internet, be sure to cite your research properly
- **KNOW COPIER RULES AND PROCEDURES IN ADVANCE**
  - Where are copiers located?
  - Does the copier require cash or some sort of copy card?
- **CHECK OUT THE LOCAL COMMUNITY LIBRARIES**
  - They may house the one obscure article or book you need to earn that "A"

## Writing the Paper

- Make/use index cards (put the topic at the top of each card), notes, bibliographies, summaries, reports and reviews as part of your preparation process to organize your materials
- **PREPARE A WRITTEN OUTLINE**
  - Don't make the mistake of trying to keep everything in your head
  - Make your outline in the form of main headings or ideas with sub-headings fleshing out the flow of the paper; this will establish the paper's content and conclusion
- **WRITE THE PAPER**
  - Use the outline as a guide and stick to it
  - Write in your own natural style
  - Reread, rewrite, revise and edit until the paper says exactly what you want to say, the way you want to say it
  - Use correct punctuation and grammar, and run spellcheck
  - Cite all sources, including Internet searches

# EXAM STRATEGIES

## Preparation

- Learn the exam format: e.g. objective (true/false or multiple choice) or subjective (essay)
- Review course outline, notes and **QuickStudy®** products
- Review previous tests; check at departmental office
- Summarize highlights on single sheet

### MEMORY DUMP

At the beginning of the test, write down on a piece of paper everything you remember—formulas, facts, names, etc.; scan the test questions; then do a second memory dump and begin the test



## Objective Exams

- Scan the exam to determine types of questions
- Always read and follow directions!
- Determine the exam's scoring rules and use them to your advantage; if wrong answers are penalized, don't guess unless you can reduce the choices to two
- Answer easy questions first
- Mark difficult questions and return to them later
- **True/False Questions:**
  - Pick out key words or those on which the meaning of a statement hinges
  - If any clause in a statement is false, the statement is false
- **Multiple-choice questions** are essentially true/false questions arranged in groups
  - Usually only one alternative is totally correct
  - Eliminate obvious false choices
  - Of the remainder, pick the alternative that answers most fully all aspects of the question

## Essay Exams

- **Planning your time when answering essay questions is more important than in objective type tests!**
- **Read through the entire examination first**
  - Get a feel for the questions you are expected to answer
  - If the exam allows you to choose from a number of questions, be sure to number your answers exactly to match the questions
- **Follow directions carefully:**
  - Pay attention to the key words in the question: Words such as "list," "describe," "compare and contrast," and "outline" require different types of answers
  - Don't "write around" the question, but answer it directly and concisely
- **Outlining**
  - After scanning the list of questions, choose those about which you know most
  - On scrap paper, quickly prepare an outline of important ideas and facts to be included in your response
  - Your opening statement summarizes what you are going to write; the following sentence should support your opening statement
  - Your conclusion should show how your body text supported your opening statement
- **It is absolutely essential that your ideas can be read and understood:** Print neatly and use correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling

## When to use QuickStudy

- As a road map for the course
- At the start of a semester as an overview to visualize how all the elements of the class will fit together
- All semester to refresh & reinforce the content
- During homework to understand and find answers quickly
- During class to find facts fast
- To prepare for a test, midterm, or final exam
- When on the go



## Equation for Academic Success!

QuickStudy



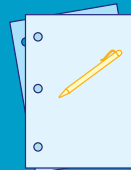
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Textbook



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Class Notes



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Boosted  
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# READING SKILLS

## Skimming & Scanning

- **WHEN TO USE**
  - To determine main idea
  - To locate facts quickly
  - To answer test items
  - To answer chapter questions
- **HOW TO SKIM & SCAN:**
  - Fix intent for reading (or facts sought) clearly in your mind
  - Scan table of contents, chapter headings and subheadings
  - Quickly move eyes over reading material, focusing upon page headings and subheadings, discarding information that is obviously not related to reading intent
  - Skimming should be twice as fast as average reading speed
  - Selectively omit portions of reading material
  - Locate as quickly as possible the key or topic sentence of each paragraph (usually, but not always, the first sentence)
  - Practice skimming and scanning to locate information; repeated practice will increase speed
  - Read the last paragraph carefully for summary information
  - Carefully review tables, charts and side boxes

## The SQ3R+Reading Method

- **SURVEY**
  - Preview the assignment/material to be studied by scanning the text quickly to discover the central concept
  - From your preview, formulate an **overall picture** and the purpose of what you're going to study
- **QUESTION**
  - What you need to learn in terms of **what, why, how, when, who and/or where, to support the central concept**
  - Write these questions in the margins of your textbook or at the top of your lecture or study notes
- **READ**
  - Read specifically to answer the questions
  - Most paragraphs contain one or more main ideas in support of a concept; locate and highlight them with a marker; make notes in the margins, summarizing key points; pay special attention to **bolded or italicized type** and to tables, **graphs and illustrations** which may explain an idea more thoroughly than text
- **RECALL**
  - **Pause** periodically (every 15 minutes or so) to **recall** in your own words a summary of the **important ideas you have read**; write on notepaper as much as you can recall about what you have read and learned!
  - Each mini-review is a knowledge builder and memory reinforcer
- **REVIEW**
  - Did you answer your questions, understand the new material and accomplish your goal?
  - **Reread** difficult parts; work a few more problems



# COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- **MAKE YOURSELF AWARE OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES, ESPECIALLY** if you are in a new town; be aware of support services
  - Religious institutions
  - Support groups
  - Counseling centers
- **REALIZE THAT YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE TOTAL COMMUNITY**
  - Do some volunteer work each semester: It's a great way to build your resume and gain practical experience, plus it feels good!

# BRAIN POWER

## Can you remember?

- **MEMORIZE FROM GENERAL TO SPECIFIC:** Study the big picture, then learn the details
  - **CRAMMING DOES NOT WORK!** Cramming for an exam only commits the information to your short-term memory
  - **FOUR BASIC REASONS WE FORGET PIECES OF INFORMATION:**
    - Don't use the information
    - Confuse it with other information
    - Decide the information does not match what you already believe
    - Never really learned the information in the first place
  - **KEYS TO REMEMBERING:**
    - **Be interested:** Pay attention; consciously choose to remember; establish a **need** to remember.
    - **Visualize:** Picture in your mind what you wish to remember
    - **Relate:** Relate and form associations between the new ideas and information you wish to
- remember and information, ideas, persons, things, etc., **that you already know**
- **Repeat:** Even though something is initially learned, it will more than likely be forgotten if not **over learned**; be sure to repeat information in your own words
  - **KEY IDEAS:**
    - **Highlight** them in your textbooks and outlines
    - Give extra attention to **bolded words or phrases**
    - Make up acronyms or mnemonics to recall (i.e. **GIGO = Garbage In; Garbage Out**) or (**Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally = Parentheses first, then Exponents, then Multiplication, Division, Addition and Subtraction**)
  - **MAPPING**
    - Make a mental image of your notes, outlines, **color-coded QuickStudy®** guides, etc. and where facts are located on them in relation to other topics; these images (fact maps) and their data can often be recalled during tests

## Critical Thinking Skills

- **Learn to evaluate everything you see, read, or hear; decide for yourself what to believe**
- **Critical thinking is important in order to:**
  - Enhance common sense
  - Filter emotion
  - Categorize experiences
  - Select references
  - Understand the "experts"
  - Sort fact from opinion
  - Learn to express yourself in a cogent and interesting manner
- **Critical thinkers are:**
  - Able to resist manipulation
  - Able to overcome confusion
  - Able to perceive connections between subjects and events
  - Able to base judgments on evidence and facts
  - Able to realize that the "truth" is never simple; grey or foggy areas always exist



# MONEY MATTERS

## Financial Aid

- **START EARLY AND BE PERSISTENT:** The money will not just come to you
- **CONSIDER EVERY POSSIBLE SOURCE of educational funding and money leads**
  - Your school's financial aid office
  - The Admissions office and recruiters
  - Your academic college
  - Your church
  - Clubs and groups your parents belong to
  - Local civic and special interest organizations
  - Professionals already working in your major field
  - Scholarship resource books
  - Other students
  - Honor societies, sororities, fraternities, etc.
- **FILL OUT ALL FORMS COMPLETELY AND NEATLY:** Include all required documentation
- **PAY ATTENTION TO PAYMENT DEADLINES:** Sometimes only a few days can cost you big dollars
- **RESPOND QUICKLY** to all requests for additional information and documentation
- **STICK WITH IT!** Sometimes the process is slow and frustrating
- **MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TO SEE A FINANCIAL AID OFFICER AT YOUR INSTITUTION:** Discuss the difference between grants, scholarships, subsidized loans, unsubsidized loans, etc.; find out what type of aid you are eligible for and what type of aid you can live with later; **remember**, all loans must be repaid
- **IF YOU ARE AWARDED FINANCIAL AID,** be sure you know the requirements that must be met in order to keep your award (i.e. GPA, work status, etc.)

## Survival Tips

- Realize from the onset that tuition does not include any other expenses
- **SHOP EARLY IN ORDER TO HAVE THE BEST SELECTION OF USED BOOKS**
- You will be bombarded with credit card offers; be careful: using plastic now may cost you a car or mortgage later
- **GET A CHECKING ACCOUNT** and learn how to **keep your account in balance**; most banks have customer service representatives who can assist you
- **SET A REALISTIC BUDGET AND STICK WITH IT:** Remember to include allowances for variable expenses such as clothing (new purchases and cleaning), transportation, personal care items, leisure activities and an emergency fund

## Finding a Job

- It's never too early to contact your school's Career Development Center
- **STUDENT EMPLOYMENT OFFICES** usually list more than one thousand part-time jobs for students; employers who contact the school know that students will answer their ad; these employers usually do not squabble about your class schedule
- **ALWAYS GO TO AN INTERVIEW DRESSED PROFESSIONALLY**
- **DON'T CHEW GUM AT AN INTERVIEW**
- **DO NOT BE DISCOURAGED** if your first job is not in your major field
- **ALWAYS BE ON TIME FOR APPOINTMENTS:** Be sure to call well in advance if you need to cancel
- **BE SURE TO FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS** (i.e., Don't call a potential employer if the ad says fax a resume)
- **ALWAYS PRESENT A RESUME**—no matter how brief

# TIPS FOR FRESHMEN

## I wish someone had told me...

- **GO TO CLASS:** Class attendance really does correlate with your grade
- **COMMUNICATION IS KEY**—especially when dealing with roommates and professors
- **BE ON TIME TO CLASS:** Walking in late distracts both the professor and other students
- **DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP**
- **COLLEGE IS NOT A CONTEST:** You don't have to compete with anyone for your grade; *learn at your own pace and don't feel inferior if you don't understand something the first time around*
- **DON'T BE INTIMIDATED BY FACULTY AND STAFF:** The bureaucracy of higher education is overwhelming; stay calm, ask questions, and be sure you know the name of the person you are talking to
- **SUPPORT SYSTEMS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR SURVIVAL:** Make friends; talk to everyone
- **EXPECT TO FEEL LONELY, FRIGHTENED, AND ISOLATED:** But also remember—you are not the only person experiencing these emotions, and it all gets better with time
- **READ EVERYTHING!** Read your mail!
- Don't take policy advice from other students; check with offices on campus
- **JOIN IN ALL THE ACTIVITIES YOU CAN**
- **USE YOUR COLLEGE CATALOG:** You have to open it in order to reap the benefits of what is inside
- Get a copy of your school's code of ethics (honor code); a simple mistake could cost your degree
- **MAINTAIN A POSITIVE ATTITUDE,** be a good listener, stick to your own convictions, and follow your dreams

## Registration & Advisement

- **ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT IS CRITICAL!** Visit your advisor on a regular basis to make sure you are on track with your academic program, courses, etc.
- **PAY ATTENTION TO DEADLINES!** If you miss one, it could cost you— not just money but grades as well (ex. drop/add, fee payment, course withdrawal)
- Avoid long lines and high frustration levels; use telephone or computer registration whenever possible
- Be sure to have university or college representatives sign every form dealing with selecting courses, dropping classes, etc.; you may need it to defend a course selection when you apply for graduation or to prove you dropped a class
- **SAVE EVERY GRADE REPORT:** Computers have been known to lose grades, courses, credits, etc.
- Periodically ask for an unofficial copy of your transcript; **BE SURE YOUR RECORDS MATCH THE REGISTRAR'S**
- Select classes based on your own academic capabilities; for example, if science is not your forte, don't take biology and chemistry in the same semester
- Be very careful about taking writing classes during shorter summer semesters; the same holds true for classes requiring large amounts of reading
- **READ THE COURSE CATALOG CAREFULLY**
- Typically, freshmen are the last students to register so **PLAN AN ALTERNATE SCHEDULE PRIOR TO REGISTRATION;** your first choice classes may be filled

## Dorm Do's & Don'ts

- **RESIDENT ASSISTANTS ARE A VALUABLE RESOURCE;** be sure to maintain open communication with your RA
- **YOU MUST LEAVE THE BUILDING** when the fire alarm rings
- **CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF:** Avoid roommate problems and bug infestation
- **MANY SCHOOLS OFFER "SPECIALTY FLOORS";** reserve your room early and be honest about special requests; some options are:
  - Quiet study floors
  - Upperclassmen floors
  - Health and wellness floors
  - Chemically sensitive floors
  - Multicultural floors
  - Single-sex or co-ed floors
- **GET INVOLVED IN RESIDENCE LIFE:** Almost every school sponsors some type of residence hall government and community activities
- **LOCK YOUR DOORS**—even when you are in your room! Better safe than sorry
- **PAY ATTENTION TO FEE DEADLINES:** Non-payment of housing fees can result in having to live in your car
- **IF YOUR SCHOOL ALLOWS COOKING IN THE ROOM:**
  - Check to see which appliances are permitted for dorm use:
    - Dorm size refrigerator
    - Microwave
    - Toaster Oven
  - **HOT PLATES ARE RARELY ALLOWED!** All appliances must have enclosed coils
  - Never leave your food unattended
  - Store leftovers quickly and properly
  - Take out the trash every day!
  - Remember, some schools do provide community cooking facilities, but you may need to clean the area before and after you cook

## Staying Healthy

- BEWARE OF FAST FOOD AND CANDY BARS:** Most freshmen gain weight in the first semester
- Gallons of coffee and cola are not the way to survive finals
    - Sleep and study in small shifts
    - Exercise often during exam weeks
    - Pasta, peanut butter, non-sugar cereals, yogurt, and fresh fruit will provide natural and sustained energy
  - Check with your school's health services office; it may offer:
    - Free emergency treatment
    - Low cost Ob/Gyn exams
    - Free condoms
    - Low cost dental cleaning and x-rays
    - Low cost or free medications
    - Free AIDS testing
    - Low cost lab work
  - **APPRECIATE MUSIC**—it helps everyone to relax

## Adjusting to College Life

- **THERE ARE FIVE PHASES OF COLLEGE ADJUSTMENT:** As a freshman, you may experience some or all of the following phases; in any order, some phases may repeat or overlap:
  - Phase 1—Fascination with the new environment
  - Phase 2—Severe homesickness
  - Phase 3—Finding fault with new surroundings; building stereotypes
  - Phase 4—Finding humor in your adjustment
  - Phase 5—Embracing the new culture; it becomes your "normal" environment



# Success Stories

Hear what professors and students are saying about **QuickStudy!!!**

## Professors

*"We've never seen anything like your guides. They have all the basics right in front of the student."*

- M. Henderson

*"As a math professor of 25 years, I've never seen anything so complete and totally useful to our students."*

- P. Shock

*"Your Biology guide is very comprehensive, with detailed illustrations. It's a great course supplement."*

- B. Riser



## Students

*"I love the thorough, concise facts QuickStudy® guides provide; it seems that a book's worth of information is jam-packed into a handy, easy-to-use format."*

- T. Ahlgren

*"I purchased your Spanish guide and love it! It's complete, yet concise and easy to use. Your guides help me grasp the grammar and 'little things' of Spanish."*

- G. Royce

*"Your study guides are great! I use them as a course review and/or quick reference. I used to have to make them myself."*

- N. Shadshel

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