Strategies for Academic Success

**Show Up For Class!** Missing classes creates two problems: you always miss something and you send a message to your instructor that you don’t care. If you must miss a class, contact the instructor ahead of time if at all possible. When you return, meet with the instructor to get any missed handouts, assignments, etc. **NEVER** ask your instructor, “Did I miss anything important?” or “Did we do anything in class last time?”

**Have Work Done On Time!** Like missing class, not completing your assignments also sends a message to your instructors that you don’t care. Moreover, some instructors have policies against accepting late work. If you must turn in work after the due date, be sure to explain to your instructor why you are late.

**Set Up A Weekly Schedule!** A lack of time management skills is often one of the biggest contributing factors when students are unsuccessful in college. Keep a daily, weekly, and monthly schedule, noting all due dates and exam dates. Schedule a block of time for studying every day and stick to it.

**If stressed...consider reducing your course load instead of withdrawing!**

**Discover how you learn best!** Find out which learning style best describes you, play on your strengths, and find ways to compensate for your weaker learning preferences.

**Improve your study habits!** Master the most effective methods of reading college textbooks, taking notes, studying for exams, etc. If you find that you are weak in one or more of these areas, consider taking a course in academic success skills.

**Develop critical thinking skills!** Always question why, why, why. Analyze information, develop logical explanations to back up your opinions, and look for unusual solutions to problems. Think logically rather than memorizing facts and data.

**Participate in class!** Research indicates that students who involve themselves in class discussions usually remember more about the discussion topic than those who don’t participate.

**Learn from criticism!** When an instructor or other staff member offers constructive criticism, take it to heart. Criticism can be healthy and helpful.
Attend workshops on study skills and other college success strategies!

Study with a group! Research shows that students who collaborate in study groups often earn the highest grades and survive college with fewer academic problems.

Build a relationship with at least one person on campus who cares about your academic success! Select a teacher, counselor, advisor, or someone else whom you trust and can depend on to help you when you have questions, concerns, or problems.

Become engaged in campus activities and campus life! Join a club or activity, work on campus, attend functions, or otherwise get involved with your campus and make it "your" college.

Enlist the support of your family and friends! Often, family and friends make the difference between being a “success” or a “failure” in college.

Have realistic expectations! Don’t place unnecessary pressure on yourself. If you are disappointed in your grades, seek out ways to improve but don’t “beat yourself up.” Remember, college is a new experience and some adaptation is necessary. Also, it's better to graduate with a C- average than drop out with an A+ average!