

STUDENT SUCCESS CHECKLIST

Like most things in life, academic success doesn't just happen without some preparation and the skills necessary to stay on top of your studies. Here are a few tips from students and educators that can help you get ahead and keep ahead when it comes to making the most of your college courses.

IN CLASS

Download or print your course syllabi

Your class syllabus will outline the course schedule and expectations, so you know what to expect throughout the term.

Attend class

This will help you stay on track and keep a routine. Faculty may have attendance policies, too, but you can also miss out on important learning from missing even one class! And remember you are paying for these classes. Don't waste your money by not attending.

Participate

Whether your class is online or in person, you'll get out of it what you put into it. Take notes, ask questions, sit in the front if in-person, participate in group discussions, and share your voice and experiences with others.

Put in the work

Complete the assigned readings and assignments prior to class. It will allow you to fully participate in the learning.

Use faculty office hours

Did you know that faculty keep office hours specifically for meeting with students? Take advantage of your faculty's availability to ask questions or review assignments.

MANAGE YOUR TIME

Use a planner or calendar

Fill in important dates like tests, quizzes, and reading assignments to stay on track and motivated. You may also find it useful to track other commitments, like work, kids/family, appointments, etc.

Maximize your down time

Instead of scrolling through your phone, use those free minutes or hours between classes to complete bite-sized tasks. Read a chapter, write a quick outline, gather online research – every little task adds up.

Know when to say no

Socializing is a healthy and beneficial part of college – drowning academically because you spend too much time socializing is not. Be honest with yourself about what a healthy balance means to you and don't be afraid to say no or cut your socializing short so you can focus on academics.

Summarize your classes

Write a weekly one-page summary of class discussions and readings (these become exam study guides).

STUDY SKILLS AND FINDING HELP

Build good study habits

This can be different for everyone. Try setting goals for yourself, prioritize assignments, and find where you work best. This may take some experimenting before you find what works just for you. Good study habits will help you be efficient and do your best.

Ask for help

Besides faculty, there are many campus staff and offices that are dedicated to your success: the library, tutoring services, testing center, writing labs, academic advisors, etc. Take the time to learn about all the services available to you and utilize those resources whenever needed.

Join study groups

Learning with and from peers can deepen your understanding of the material, and can help the material to “stick”. TIP: creating flashcards is a great way to absorb material (while writing them) and provides a fun and effective way to study as a group. Break into teams and make it a game!

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Find your support network

We get by with a little help from our friends and that is especially true in college. Unlike high school or work, college provides a great opportunity to choose the people you want to spend time with. So join a club, a student group, attend campus events, or if you don't find one you like, start one yourself! Soon enough, you'll find your group and these will be the folks who will help you get through and enjoy your college experience.

Remember your finances

After the first few weeks of the term, it can be easy to forget about additional school expenses that don't include tuition. Don't push aside budgeting for expenses such as laundry, travel, textbooks, and supplies.

Maintain healthy habits

To be successful in anything, especially school, your body and mind need to be healthy. Set aside time to practice self-care, rest, or exercise. And try to make healthy food choices when you can and stay hydrated with plenty of water. Your school may have a food pantry or can connect you with one if you are facing food insecurity.

Don't ignore emotional and mental health

Let's be honest: college (and life!) can be stressful and many students may struggle throughout their academic career. If you find that you need support with emotional or mental health, speak up! Tell a trusted faculty member, advisor, or other college staff member. They can help you connect with the campus or community