

TIPS FOR NEW COLLEGE STUDENTS

- 1. Your college catalog is your ultimate guidebook.** Read it carefully. Pay attention to the academic standards, withdrawal/refund policy and the students' rights and responsibilities policy.
- 2. Register early and plan an alternate class schedule prior to registration.** Your first choice of classes may be filled by the time you register.
- 3. Select classes based on your own academic capabilities.** For example, if science is not your strength, don't take biology and chemistry in the same semester.
- 4. Class attendance does affect your grade. Attend all classes (you've paid for it!) Read the syllabus.** Instructors work hard to prepare for class. Show your instructors by your attendance and preparation that you value them and the knowledge they possess.
- 5. Be on time to class.** Walking in late distracts the professor and the students.
- 6. Make sure the instructor knows you.** No matter how large the class, find a way to introduce yourself and let the instructor know why this course is important to you.
- 7. Reward your instructors for good teaching.** When your instructors do something effective, let them know you appreciate it. After a good lecture or demonstration, tell your instructor what you liked about it. Don't hold back compliments.
- 8. Participate actively in class.** When instructors are doing things that you consider good teaching, be attentive; respond positively. Join discussions; nod; even smile. Instructors' actions and motivation are determined to a large extent by the attention they receive from students. Your body language is important.
- 9. Provide your instructors with feedback.** If your instructors encourage periodic evaluations of their classroom performance, be sure to fill them out. Let your instructors know what you like! Give an example of what you would like to see more or less of, for example, clearer instructions.
- 10. Don't be afraid to ask for help.** Help your instructor be clear and precise. If he or she is unclear about an assignment or a question posed to the class, pleasantly ask him or her to restate it. Don't hesitate to ask for clarification. Don't make a big deal out of how confused you may be.
- 11. Sit near the front of the class to avoid distractions.**
- 12. Always try to answer your instructors' questions.** Instructors prepare lectures hoping to stimulate students' minds. If you turn your face to the floor every time an instructor poses a question, you lose the opportunity to demonstrate your intelligence.
- 13. Turn in assignments on time.** Don't say it with flowers, say it with papers.

- 14. Present differences of opinion assertively but without anger.** Turn your differing opinions into a learning experience for both of you. Don't be afraid to express a unique opinion.
- 15. Communication is the key.** Be sure to know exactly what your instructor expects.
- 16. Treat other students as valuable people.** Assume that everyone has something of value to say. Be grateful for students' contributions. If you always try to prove that your instructors and fellow students know less than you, you are wasting time.
- 17. Don't expect your instructors to be outstanding every day or to be personal counselors.**
- 18. Be careful about asking instructors for special favors and reasonable consideration.**
Avoid making excuses.
- 19. Be diplomatic, pleasant, and willing to go the extra mile.** This is to your benefit always, but especially valuable if you're trying to salvage a bad grade. Offer to make up exams, write an extra paper or redo a project.
- 20. College is not a contest.** You don't have to compete with anyone else for your grade. Learn at your own pace and don't feel inferior if you don't understand something the first time around.
- 21. Read what you are given!** The course syllabus (outline), in particular, is to be taken seriously.
- 22. Don't take policy advice from other students.** Check with the school officials.
- 23. Don't be intimidated by the faculty and staff.** Your tuition dollars pay the salaries of university and college personnel. You are the customer; they work for you; ask questions.
- 24. Pay attention to deadlines!** If you miss one, it could cost you not just money, but grades as well (ex: drop/add deadline, fee payment deadline, course withdrawal deadline.) Be sure to have a university or college representative sign every form dealing with course selection, dropping classes, etc.
- 25. Be a good listener.** Focus and concentrate on the main points of the lecture. Get them down on paper. Your listening skills, note taking and study skills will determine your success in college!
- 26. Do not study for more than 2 hours at a time.** Your brain really does shut down; any studying you do past that time may not be of benefit.
- 27. Try to study during daylight hours.** Natural light is more conducive to learning.

28. Use the 30-3-2 schedule. Study for 30 minutes. Take a 3-minute break to think of other things. Upon returning, take 2 minutes to mentally review what you've just read and do a quick preview of what's coming up next. STUDY-BREAK-REVIEW-PREVIEW-STUDY.

29. Academic counseling is critical! See your advisor on a regular basis to make sure you're on track with your academic program, courses, etc.

30. Actively try to make friends. Support systems are essential. Look for common ground. Talk to other students to find out the real scoop.

31. Make clear, concise notes during lectures. Immediately after a lecture, without looking at your notes, try to recall on a separate sheet of paper as much as you can about what you have heard and learned. Then review your lecture notes to confirm your memory.

32. Save every grade report. Computers have been known to lose grades, courses, credits, etc.

33. Maintain a positive attitude. Strive toward your dreams, read as much as you can, and work hard to derive the maximum benefit of the time and dollars you've invested in your education.