From: Professor of Naval Science  
To: NROTC Midshipmen and Staff  

Subject: ACADEMIC RESOURCE GUIDE (FALL 2010) UPDATE

1. This is the 4th update of our NROTC Academic Resource Guide. This is by far our most comprehensive collection of academic resources at Texas A&M to date. Our new Ensigns and Second Lieutenants (former students) have done a great job with this edition.

2. The intent of this guide is to provide NROTC Midshipmen, Staff and Corps of Cadets leaders with a single resource to help mentor and direct students to the multitude of academic resources at Texas A&M.

3. Please NOTE that Chapter 5 contains all of the current tutoring and resources for the current semester!

4. If you find additional resources that should be included in this guide, please email the information to our NROTC staff Academic Officer, LT Greg Bertsch at gbertsch@navy.tamu.edu or call at 845-1775.

5. I expect ACADEMIC SUCCESS from every Naval ROTC student. Use this guide as one of your tools in raising the overall academic standard for the Midshipmen Battalion.

Semper Fi and Gig’em,

Gerald L. Smith  
Colonel  USMC
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Student Counseling Services
Study and Learning Techniques
Type and Learning Styles

Extraversion (E)

E's learn best in situations filled with movement, action, and talk. They prefer to learn theories or facts that connect with their experience, and they will usually come to a more thorough understanding of these theories or facts during group discussions or when working on cooperative projects. E's tend to leap into assignments with little "forethought," relying on trial-and-error rather than anticipation to solve problems.

Sensory Perception (S)

S's learn best when they move from the concrete to the abstract in a step-by-step progression. They are thus at home with programmed, modular, or computer-assisted learning. They value knowledge that is practical and want to be precise and accurate in their own work. They tend to excel at memorizing facts.

Thinking Judgment (T)

T's are most motivated when provided with a logical rationale for each project and when teachers acknowledge and respect their competence. They prefer topics that help them to understand systems or cause-and-effect relationships. Their thought is logical and analytical.

Judgment (J)

J's tend to gauge their learning by the completion of tasks: reading "x" number of books, writing "x" number of papers, or making "x" number of reports. They thus prefer more structured learning environments that establish goals for them to meet.

Introversion (I)

Since I's may be more quiet and less active in the classroom, teachers may feel the need to press them into taking part in group discussions. Such pressure, however, will often only increase their withdrawal. Teachers need to respect their need to think in relative solitude for that is how they think best. I's will be more willing to share their ideas when given advance notice. This will allow them time to think about how they will become active in the classroom.

Intuitive Perception (N)

N's tend to leap to a conceptual understanding of material and may daydream or act out during drill work or predominately factual lectures. They value quick flashes of insight but are often careless about details. They tend to excel at imaginative tasks and theoretical topics.

Feeling Judgment (F)

F's are most motivated when given personal encouragement and when shown the human angle of a topic. F's think to clarify their values and to establish networks of values. Even when their expressions seem logical, they usually evolve from some personally held (subjective) belief or value.

Perception (P)

P's tend to view learning as a free-wheeling, flexible quest. They are careless about deadlines and the completion of tasks. They prefer open and spontaneous learning environments and feel "imprisoned" in a highly structured classroom.

Taken from Henry E. Florey's Study Orientation Skills Workshop
LEARNING PREFERENCES ASSOCIATED WITH
DIMENSIONS OF MBTI TYPE

Extraversion

• talking, discussing
• psychomotor activity
• working with a group

Introversion

• reading/verbal reasoning
• time for internal processing
• working individually

Sensing

• tasks that call for carefulness, thoroughness and soundness of understanding
• going step-by-step
• tasks that call for observing specifics
• tasks that call for memory of facts
• practical interests

Intuition

• tasks that call for quickness of insight and seeing relationships
• finding own way in new material
• tasks that call for grasping general concepts
• tasks that call for verbal fluency
• intellectual interests (independent of intelligence)

Thinking

• logical organization of teacher and class
• objective material to study

Feeling

• personal rapport with teacher
• learning through personal relationships

Judging

• work in a steady, orderly way
• formalized instruction
• structured tasks

Perceiving

• work in a flexible way, follow impulses
• informal problem solving
• discovery tasks
BASIC STUDY SKILLS

Setting The Stage For Study
1. Set your goals and priorities for the semester and then develop a plan for achieving each goal. Some of your goals may relate to your education; others may concern such areas as personal growth, physical fitness, relationships, etc.
   A. Example goal: To give academics top priority this semester.
   B. Example Plan
      1. Attend all classes.
      2. Turn in all homework on time
2. Gain control of your study environment.
   A. Find a place to study that is free from distractions. Study only in that place and do nothing else there but study.
   B. Arrange to study regularly; allot some time each day for study.
3. Learn to manage your time effectively.
   A. Make a time schedule and stick to it.
   B. Make a daily list of things to do. Assign each item a priority rating, and assign each “A” priority a time slot.
      1. “A” priority is assigned to tasks that have high value to you. There are tasks that you want to do because they will help you meet your goals. Also included in this category are tasks that have immediate deadlines.
      2. “B” priority is assigned to tasks that have medium value.
      3. “C” priority is assigned to tasks that have low value; these tasks can be put off or left undone entirely.
   C. Recognize that priorities can change. What was a “C” task last week may become an “A” or “B” task because deadline is approaching.
   D. Ask yourself two questions.
      1. “Is what I’m doing now helping me achieve my goals?”
      2. “What will happen if I don’t do this?”
4. Encourage yourself to study through rational thinking.
   A. Recognize your irrational ideas about studying and replace them with more helpful ideas. For example, “There’s not time for both study and fun” can be changed to “There’s plenty of time for both study and fun when I use my time effectively.”
   B. Eliminate thinking that results in procrastination. For example, statements like “I have plenty of time to do my project” often result in putting off the project until the last minute.
   C. Develop a positive attitude toward schoolwork.
      1. View school work as helping you achieve your long range goals.
      2. Look for points of interest and practical application in each subject.
      3. Get to know each of your professors. Knowing your profs will help you become more positive about your courses, and it will make it easier to seek help from them if you need it.
Study Techniques

1. Read the assignment before class. Active involvement in reading the text is important for comprehending the material. One frequently suggested method for reading textbooks is the SQR$S$ method.

   **S=Survey**  Briefly survey the chapter, noting the divisions, headings, tables and figures. Read the chapter summary. This provides an overview of the chapter content and a framework for organizing the material.

   **Q=Question** Turn each section heading into a question that you want answered. Also, try to guess questions that might appear on the exam.

   **R=Read** Read the chapter, section by section, trying to answer your questions.

   **R=Recite** Answer the questions and state the main points verbally. You may also write down the answers and key points for later reference.

   **R=(W)Rite** First, write the question and then write the answer to the question using only key words, lists, etc.

   **R=Review** Briefly look back over the material to make sure that you have included all the main points. Reflect on the meaning and application of the major points.

2. Use 3" x 5" index cards. Write the questions on one side and the answers on the other side, and use them as flash cards. If you carry them with you, you can get through several cards while waiting for the shuttlebus, riding the elevator, walking to class, etc.

3. Work all assigned problems, and then work some more, even if the assignment will not be collected. In math and science courses where memorization is crucial, it is helpful to over learn the material. Small amounts of practice spread over several days is more efficient than one long memorization session.

4. Recognize the importance of regular review. Review class notes on a daily basis, and set aside review time for each course on a weekly basis.

5. Start studying the first day of the semester and keep up. It is easy to spend the first month of classes "adjusting" and "organizing," but often the result is falling very far behind in your work. That sets up the vicious cycle of dropping everything to prepare for an upcoming exam in one class, and following that routine for each class in turn. The best way to deal with such a cycle is to prevent it from happening
TAKing LECTURE NOTES

It is important to take lecture notes so that you will have a record of what the professor thinks is important. You should take down the main ideas and as much additional information as necessary in order for you to have a fully developed concept for later review.

Preparation for notetaking:
1. Read the assignment before class.
2. Review your notes from the previous class.
3. Sit where you can hear the professor and see the chalkboard.

Signals that indicate main ideas:
1. Enumerations (first, five steps, four causes)
2. Summations (therefore consequently)
3. Verbal cues such as pauses, voice inflections, repetitions
4. Everything written on the chalkboard and all handouts are important.

Mechanics of Notetaking:
1. Write your notes legibly the first time; do not plan to rewrite them because you probably will not have time.
2. Write on only the right ¾ of the page. Use the left ¼ of the page for your own questions, summaries, comments, notes from outside readings, etc. When reviewing the notes, cover the right portion of the page and try to recall the covered information using the cue words on the left.
3. Try to take notes in your own words rather than writing verbatim what the professor says. Use abbreviations where appropriate, but do not abbreviate so much that you are unable to “decode” your notes later.
4. If you miss a point, skip some space and continue taking notes. You can get the information later from the professor or a classmate.
5. Pay attention the entire class period.
6. Immediately after class review your notes; add or clarify information while the lecture is still fresh.
7. Review your notes on a daily basis.
Taking Lecture Notes

There are many reasons for taking lecture notes.

A. Making yourself take notes forces you to listen carefully and tests your understanding of the material.

B. When you are reviewing notes, provide a gauge of what is important in the text.

C. Personal notes are usually easier to remember than the text.

D. Writing down important points helps you to remember them even before you have studied the material formally.

II. The following steps will prepare you to take organized and effective notes.

A. Maintain notes in an 8-1/2 by 11” three-ring binder, using dividers to separate materials from different classes; this allows you to make changes in your notes as necessary and to include class handouts.

B. Use lined notebook paper with a 3” left margin. You can also use standard notebook paper and draw a line down the left side of the page to provide a 3” margin. Use the left 3” margin to make additional notes or questions about the notes you take in class.

C. Review your previous day’s notes before each class meeting. In addition to helping you learn the material, this allows a smooth transition in note taking from one class meeting to another.

III. Instructors usually give clues to what is important to take down. Some of the more common clues are:

A. Material written on the blackboard.

B. Repetition.

C. Emphasis.
   1. Emphasis can be judged by tone of voice and gesture.
   2. Emphasis can be judged by the amount of time the instructor spends on points and the number of examples he/she uses.

D. Word signals (e.g., “There are two points of view on...,” “The third reason is In conclusion”).
E. Summaries given at the end of class.

F. Review given at beginning of class.

IV. You should develop your own method of taking notes, but most students find the following suggestions helpful:

A. Make your notes brief.
   1. Never use a sentence where you can use a phrase. Never use a phrase where you can use a word.
   2. Use abbreviations and symbols.

B. Put most notes in your own words. However, the following should be noted exactly:
   1. Formulas.
   2. Definitions.
   3. Specific facts.

C. Use outline form and/or a numbering system. Indentation helps you distinguish major from minor points.

D. If you miss a statement, write key words, skip a few spaces, and get the information later.

F. Don’t try to use every space on the page. Leave room for coordinating your notes with the text after the lecture. (In the margin you may want to list key terms or make a summary of the contents of the page).

F. Date your notes. Perhaps number the pages.

**Working with Lecture Notes**

There are several good reasons for organizing and reviewing your notes as soon as possible after the lecture.

A. While the lecture is still fresh in your mind, you can fill in from memory examples and facts which you did not have time to write down during the lecture. Moreover, you can recall what parts of the lecture were unclear to you so that you can consult the lecturer, the graduate assistant, a classmate, your text, or additional reading for further information.

B. Immediate review results in better retention than review after a longer period of time. Unless a student reviews within 24 hours after the lecture or at least before the next lecture, his/her retention will drop; and he/she will be relearning rather than reviewing.

II. A method of annotation is usually preferable to recopying notes, and the following suggestions for annotating may be helpful:

A. Underline key statements or important concepts.

B. Use asterisks or other signal marks to indicate importance.
C. Use margins or blank pages for coordinating notes with the text. Perhaps indicate relevant pages of the text beside the corresponding information in the notes.

D. Use a key and a summary.
   1. Use one of the margins to keep a key to important names, formulas, dates, concepts, and the like. This forces you to anticipate questions of an objective nature and provides specific facts that you need to develop essays.
   2. Use the other margin to write a short summary of the topics on the page, relating the contents of the page to the whole lecture or to the lecture of the day before. Condensing the notes in this way not only helps you learn them but also prepares you for the kind of thinking required on essay exams and many so-called "objective" exams.

Source: Unknown
TEST PREPARATION CHECK LIST

DID YOU... | YES NO | Points for a Yes Answer
--- | --- | ---
1. Attend all classes | | 1
2. Review your notes daily | | 3
3. Read material prior to it being covered in class | | 1
4. Study daily | | 3
5. Have at least one conference with the professor | | 1
6. Develop and learn a word list for the course | | 2
7. Read materials to improve your background in the course (other than text) | | 1
8. Attend help session | | 1
9. Attend learning resource lab when available | | 1
10. Develop a list of possible questions | | 2
11. Ask questions in class | | 1
12. Study an old exam (when available) | | 1
13. Avoid a last minute cram session | | 1
14. Sleep at least 8 hours the night before | | 1
15. Add your total points plus one point for each hour you spent in preparation over 20 hours, in other words if you spent 25 hours, add 5 points | Good preparation
25-30 points | 2.5
20-24 points | Fair preparation
20 or less points | Poor preparation

WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER
STUDYING FOR EXAMS

1. Make a quick survey of notes and readings in order to get a general picture of what has been covered.
   *Jot down a few words about the purpose of the course (reread syllabus’ objectives).
   *Make a brief time-line or outline to get an overall picture of the material.
   *Note areas you are weak in.

2. Go over old tests, paying attention to the kinds of questions generally asked. Note examples of professor’s questions (both on old tests and ones asked).

3. Try to find out what the quiz/test/final will cover.

4. Rather than reread, it is often better to skim material and stop at material you don’t know well. (Highlight important parts the first time around so you can read these sections when reviewing/skimming but remember highlighting should not mean putting off learning the material the first time around).

5. It is best if finals are a time for review and integration, rather than new learning.

6. Study as you go by reviewing on a daily/weekly basis. Don’t put it off until the last minute, since cramming may confuse you.

7. Organize the subject material using charts, diagrams, or time lines whenever possible.

8. Know your professors and his/her biases.

9. Look at some questions and problems at the end of chapters for additional clues.

10. Try to predict questions, both general and specific. Prepare answers for these questions. Form study groups and ask other students what they think will be on the exam.

11. Concentrate on the areas emphasized in lecture and/or in your text.

12. Schedule activities allow enough time for sleep, eat nutritionally, and plan your leisure time to include some physical exercise.

General Suggestions for Taking Tests

1) Plan to arrive about five minutes ahead of the exam.

2) Make sure that you read the instructions carefully.

3) Budget your time survey the test to determine the type and number of questions to be answered. Check yourself at 15 or 20 minute intervals to see if you are on track.
4) Be aware that you may have problems remembering from time to time. If you find yourself blocking, move on to the next question.

5) Don’t answer too fast. Ponder each question, but don’t agonize over hem since it may keep you from getting to other questions.

6) Ask for help in interpreting test questions which you do not understand. Don’t waste time agonizing.

7) Be aware of any negative statements you are telling yourself about the test. Such statements as “I’m failing, I didn’t study for this, and the test is too hard for me” are sure ways of increasing anxiety.

8) Don’t be concerned with what other students are doing.

9) As a general rule answer the easier question first.

Preparing for Different Exam Questions

Multiple Choice

1) Pay attention to qualifying words (e.g., always, never)
2) Do not look for patterns.
3) Read through the questions with the answer.
4) Estimate the alternatives.
5) Look for clues (e.g., grammar, tenses)
6) Guess if you don’t know the answer.
7) Work backwards read the answers, then the question.
8) Choose the best alternative (more than one answer may be correct).

Matching:

Matching is an exercise in recalling memorized information. The tests are divided into two columns. Items on the left side are usually matched with responses on the right side.

1) Ask if you can use alternatives more than once.
2) Do not match if you are not sure.
3) Take each entry iii turn in the left column and try to think of the answer before reading the choices.
4) Choose the best answer and mark the answer sheet according to the directions
5) Narrow down the field, by completing those answers you know are correct.
6) Avoid changing answers.

Fill-in-the-Blank:

This test item also requires recalling specific types of information. Unlike the multiple choice and matching question, you must supply the appropriate word or number to complete the entry.

1) Look for clues (e.g., grammar, tenses)
2) Use common sense.
3) Choose the best word.
4) Pay attention to the length of line give or to the number of lines.
5) Read through after you answer to make sure it sounds right.

**Essay:**

Essay questions are analytical in nature. Your instructor is interested in determining how well you relate course material and class discussion to the particular question under consideration.

1) Read directions carefully (i.e., Do you have to answer every question of just three out of five?).
2) Re-read questions.
   a) Pay attention and know the meaning of key words (e.g., explain, contrast, compare).
3) Outline your answer.
4) Include an introduction, middle, and conclusion to your essay.
5) Include details.
6) Be general when you aren’t sure of the exact detail (e.g., It is better to write “late fourteen hundreds” rather than 1493 if the true date is 1492.).

**Short Answer**

1) Pay attention to grammar.
2) Answer within the context of the course.
3) Use terms the instructor used.
4) If you are having a problem, answer by giving an example.
5) Beef up your answers if you have time.

**True/False**

1) Pay attention to qualifying words (e.g., always, never)
2) The answer is false if any part is false.
3) Do not look for patterns.
4) Guess if you don’t know.
5) Stick with your first answer unless you are sure you are wrong.

**Problem-Solving:**

1) Read the question.
2) Re—read getting important information.
3) If there is a multiple option, estimate your answer.
4) Work backwards (e.g., 2−3=5, 5-2=3)
5) Watch for careless errors.
IMPORTANT WORDS IN ESSAY QUESTIONS
The following terms appear frequently in the phrasing of essay questions. You should know their meaning and answer accordingly. (The list and the sense of the definitions, though not the exact words, are adapted from C. Bird and D. M. Bird, Learning More by Effective Study, Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1945, pp. 195-198.)

COMPARE: Look for qualities or characteristics that resemble each other. Emphasize similarities among them, but in some cases also mention differences.

CONTRAST: Stress the dissimilarities, differences, or unlikeness of things, qualities, events, or problems.

CRITICIZE: Express your judgment about the merit or truth of the factors or views mentioned. Give the results of your analysis of these factors by discussing their limitations and good points.

DEFINE: Give concise, clear, and authoritative meanings. Do not give details, but make sure to give the limits of the definition.

DESCRIBE: Recount, characterize, sketch, or relate in sequence or story form.

DIAGRAM: Give a drawing, chart, plan, or graphic answer. Usually you should label a diagram. In some cases, add a brief explanation or description.

DISCUSS: Examine, analyze carefully, and give reasons (pro and con). Be complete and give details.

ENUMERATE: Write in list or outline form, giving points concisely one by one.

EVALUATE: Carefully appraise the problem, citing both advantages and limitations. Emphasize the appraisal of authorities and, to a lesser extent, your personal evaluation.

EXPLAIN: Clarify, interpret, and spell out the material you present. Give reasons for differences of opinion or of results, and try to analyze causes.

ILLUSTRATE: Use a figure, picture, diagram, or concrete example to explain or clarify a problem.

INTERPRET: Translate, give examples of, solve, or comment on a subject, usually giving your judgment about it.

JUSTIFY: Prove or give reasons for decisions or conclusions, taking pains to be convincing.

LIST: As in "enumerate," write an itemized series of concise statements.

OUTLINE: Organize a description under main points and subordinate points, omitting minor details and stressing the arrangement or classification of things.
TIME MANAGEMENT

SELF-TALK

Ask yourself: “What is the best use of my time right now?”

Practice asking yourself that question until it becomes a habit!

YOUR JOB: Student

Being a student is a full-time job. In order to function effectively, you need to learn to manage your time effectively. Remember, part of your learning experience as a student consists of learning to manage your own time.

ALL TIME IS FREE TIME

Everyone has the same amount of time available to do whatever it is they need to do—168 hours per week. But, you say, how can all of my time be free time when I have classes, labs, work, and so on? True, but remember YOU have chosen to be a student, YOU have chosen to take whatever courses you are currently taking, YOU have chosen to participate in whatever extracurricular activities you are involved in, YOU decide when to eat, sleep, socialize, etc. So remember—YOU make the choices as to how you spend your own time.

WHERE DOES YOUR TIME GO?

REMEMBER—Time which is unplanned tends to be frittered away on nonessential or low priority tasks which could better be postponed or even completely ignored and forgotten.

HOW TO PLAN YOUR TIME

Self-Monitoring

1. Keep a diary of your daily study activities for one week. Record the date, place, the time you start and stop studying, the type of study activity engaged in, any thoughts and feelings which you may have had before and after studying.

2. After collecting data for one week, implement a program for gradual self-improvement. How much time did you spend in study? Was it good, quality time or were you daydreaming or distracted? Did you avoid certain subjects which you dislike? Were the places in which you studied conducive to good study? What were you telling yourself about studying? Did you associate any particular feelings with study, e.g., anxiety, depression, anger, joy, well-being?
MAKE A LIVING SCHEDULE, NOT JUST A STUDY SCHEDULE
1. Record all fixed time commitments throughout the week—classes, labs, working hours, etc.
2. Schedule other routine daily activities—eating, sleeping, dressing, etc.
3. Schedule your study times in twenty to fifty minute blocks followed by 5 to 10 minute breaks. Schedule specific subjects for specific times.
4. Schedule times for recreational and social activities following your periods of study.
5. Avoid too much detail and overplanning.
6. Allow adequate time for sleep, well balanced meals, and exercise.
7. Adjust your schedule when necessary—BE FLEXIBLE. Your schedule is meant to allow you to control your own time, not to let time control you.
8. Follow your schedule for several days or even weeks. If you deviate from your schedule, DON’T BE DISCOURAGED. Get back on your schedule or revise it if it is unrealistic.

HOW MUCH SHOULD YOU STUDY?
There is no hard rule. Experiment in order to find the amount of study time appropriate to meet your needs. As a rough guideline, try spending at least 30 to 35 hours per week in academic activities (classes, labs, and study).

TIME MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES
TO MANAGE YOUR TIME MORE EFFECTIVELY, YOU SHOULD:
1. Plan your time wisely. Those who fail to plan are planning to fail!
2. Establish “Goal Statements” and you will:
   a. know where you’re going and what you want to accomplish
   b. be motivated to accomplish your goals
   c. invest your time in a much more meaningful way
3. Update your “Goal Statements” continuously.
4. Prioritize your “Goal Statements”, using 1-2-3 ranking. 1= extremely important; 2= somewhat important; and 3= little importance.
5. Identify those activities you must accomplish to reach your goals.
6. Identify obstacles which will prevent you from accomplishing your goals.
7. Schedule your activities, allowing time for (1) essential activities, (2) routine tasks, (3) previous commitments, and (4) interruptions and crisis situations.
8. Allow yourself planning time. In the evening, schedule your activities for the next day.
9. Allocate at least one hour a day for uncommitted time to take advantage of targets of opportunity or unanticipated demands on your time.
10. Eliminate “must” activities quickly to allow time for more demanding activities. Eliminating “musts” will reduce tension and anxiety caused by interruptions and distractions.
11. Prepare a “daily activity list” in priority order.
12. Learn to say “NO”!
13. Establish a routine of when and where people can reach you. If people know when you’re available, they will contact you during that time and not interrupt or distract you throughout the day.
14. Learn to delegate!
15. Ask this question at all times: “What is the best use of my time at this moment in light of my goals?”
TIME MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

1. Never dwell on failures, as you can do nothing about them and it uses up valuable time.
2. Never feel guilty about those things that you did not do or accomplish.
3. Get satisfaction from every minute of the day, since all time is critical.
4. Keep your watch five minutes ahead to avoid late arrivals and get a head start on the day.
5. Place index cards in your pocket, purse, wallet, or planner to write down ideas or notes to remember.
6. Revise your Goal Statements monthly to eliminate outdated ones and add new ones.
7. Set appropriate levels of television and computer time each week.
8. Seek new techniques each day that can be used to gain time.
9. Get up early each day and get a head start on the day before other people begin.
10. Have a light lunch so you don’t get sleepy in the afternoon, lowering productivity.
11. Evaluate all habits and eliminate those you don’t need.
12. If you have to wait, use the time to relax, plan or do something that you would have had to use other time for.
13. Accomplish those activities prioritized as 1’s and possibly 2’s, but eliminate 3’s.
14. Eliminate nonproductive activities.
15. Allow yourself extra time to concentrate on high priority items.
16. Use your time in school wisely to avoid bringing work home.
17. Review your Goal Statements daily and identify those activities necessary to accomplish each. Add these activities to your daily activity list.
18. Plan in the evening so you can get a good start on the next day’s activities.

ANALYZING HOW I SPEND MY TIME

To help analyze how you spend your time, ask yourself the following questions.
- When do I waste time?
- When do others waste my time?
- What unnecessary task can I eliminate to gain time?
- What time of the day am I most productive?
- What time of the day am I least productive?
- What time(s) of day do I have long segments of time available or that I could make available?
- What time(s) of day do I have short segments of time available or that I could make available?
Listening Skills

Although we use listening skills more than any other communication skill, listening is rarely taught (John Parker and Janet Weathers report the following breakdown of a person’s communication activities in *The Student Success Workbook*: listening—45%; talking—30%; reading—16%; writing—9%). Since the human brain works about four times as fast as the mouth, to listen effectively requires that you maintain a considerable amount of self-control and concentration. It is little wonder that you may have found yourself nodding off in class or wondering why you seem to gain very little from attending lectures when we consider these facts. The good news is that you can improve your listening skills by practicing the following techniques and principles:

**IN THE CLASSROOM:**

1. Develop a consumer-wise and positive attitude. You are taking that class for some reason and therefore you have an investment at stake. You have the opportunity to make the most of your investment, to benefit from that class—it is your choice.

2. Sit near the front of the class where you can easily see and hear the teacher. If you are assigned a seat, and you cannot hear well, ask the teacher to move you right away. Sitting near the teacher allows you to focus more closely. It also gives the teacher the opportunity to more easily get feedback from you, and you’ll have incentive to stay awake.

3. Review previous class notes, assignments, and texts BEFORE you go to class. This will help you understand how the day’s lecture relates to previous material and assigned readings. You will also have a better understanding of the material, and this will enable you to ask thoughtful questions for clarification (Professors will certainly appreciate this!).

4. Be aware of what your mind is doing and be alert. If you practice observing your mental activity, you’ll be less likely to spend the entire class daydreaming about a burger at the Chicken. This takes practice, but you will benefit if you learn to bring your mind back to the classroom. Staying alert is not always easy, so avoid eating heavy meals before class, wear comfortable clothing, and constantly monitor your focus of attention.

5. Use an efficient note taking system. Not only will this help keep you awake and organized, but your efforts will pay off when you study for exams and quizzes later.

6. Ask questions to help you clarify concepts and to get you actively involved in the learning process.

7. Focus on the content of what the teacher says, not the delivery.

8. Listen for the main points of the lecture and try to determine future test questions.

9. Be responsive. Can you imagine how it feels to speak to a sea of blank faces? Put some energy into your listening, and your teachers may have more energy and enthusiasm as well.

10. Since you can think faster than the speaker can talk, take advantage of the speed of thought and mentally summarize main points, look for underlying assumptions, anticipate what is coming, evaluate the evidence that is being given, and compare and contrast the ideas with your knowledge. This is active, critical listening.
A FEW MORE TIPS (whether in the classroom or one-on-one):

1. Empathize with the person and try to put yourself in his or her place to help you see the point.
2. Don’t interrupt; give them time to say what they are trying to say.
3. Leave your emotions behind and control your anger. They will prevent you from listening well.
4. Get rid of distractions.
5. Don’t argue mentally.
6. Don’t antagonize the speaker. This could cause someone to conceal important ideas, emotions, and attitudes.
7. Avoid jumping to assumptions. They can get you into trouble. For example, don’t assume that the speaker is using the words in the same way that you are interpreting them. Ask for clarification if you are unsure.

Sources:
A&S 1111 Resource Book Fall 1989. The College of Arts and Sciences, Oklahoma State University.
Weathers, Janet L. and John R. Parker. The Student Success Workbook. La Crescenta, CA: Student Success, 1985
TAKING NOTES/READING TEXTBOOKS

Why Take Notes?

1. Keeps you attentive, forcing you to listen and concentrate.
2. As an aid to memory and for organizing ideas.
3. The lecture may contain information unavailable elsewhere.
4. Helps in studying for exams by letting you know what the Professor thinks is important.
5. Enables you to listen more carefully.
7. Notes are usually easier to remember than text.

Skills Needed

1. Active Listening

   Passive                           Active
   *Expect to be entertained         *Hear entire lecture before making final
   (Listen only when interested)     about whether you agree or not
   *Listen only for facts            *Listen for ideas or concepts
   *Faking attention                *Concentrating
   *Tune out when material gets     *Stay with tough material
difficult/hard to understand
   *Just kick back and listen—      *Develop a mind set geared toward listening
   Rely on memory
   *Get sidetracked by speaker’s    *Make a conscious effort to concentrate
   appearance or mannerisms or      on what the speaker is saying
   your emotional reaction to the   
   subject matter
   *Close notebook early and get    *Listen carefully to information given
   ready to leave                    toward the end of class (i.e. summary)

2. Talking (i.e. you may need to ask questions to really understand the material)
Prepare yourself to be able to hear the lecture:

Basic Preparation: Review previous day’s notes
Check syllabus for topics of the day

Advanced Preparation: Preview chapter(s) in text that relate to the day’s lecture

Preparation Before Class

1. Make a commitment to attend every class possible. Much of the information that will appear on the exam is discussed in class. Missing a class is like tearing out a chapter in a book.

2. Use a single notebook for each course. (If you use only one large notebook for all your classes, you are in big trouble if you lose it.)

3. Read assignment on lecture topic so you will be familiar with the subject matter.

4. Review previous lecture notes.

5. Be on time.

6. Sit in front or at least along the side aisles.
   * You will hear better, have fewer distractions, can see the lecturer, and the lecturer gets to know you.

7. Prepare materials for lecture.

8. Don’t expect to be entertained.

During Lecture

1. You can’t write down everything down
   * Be selective
   * Be brief
   * Record only important details

   What is important?

   1. Pay attention to lecture’s bias

   2. Clue words
      a. Supporting Material
         1) as an example...
         2) similarly...
         3) furthermore...
         4) as shown by...
b) **Conflicting Material**  
1) on the other hand...  
2) on the contrary...  
3) in contrast...  
4) however...

c) **Main Points**  
1) and most important...  
2) a major development...  
3) remember that...  
4) there are three reasons why...

d) **Conclusion or Summary**  
1) therefore...  
2) as a result...  
3) from this we see...  
4) in summary (conclusion)...  
5) clearly...

e) **Everything written on board and all handouts.**

* Use abbreviations  
  1) Develop your own system  
  2) Expand your collection of abbreviations (see page 8 of this handout)  
  3) Use abbreviations consistently  
  4) Develop abbreviations for often repeated words

* Use your own words... **except**  
  1) Formulas  
  2) Definitions  
  3) Specific facts

2. **If you miss something important, write down key words, skip a few spaces in your notebook and get the information after class.**

3. **Note key cues and clues from lecturer**  
   * Words that are spelled  
   * Words that are defined  
   * Repetition  
   * Extended comments  
   * Volume changes in voice  
   * Speed of talking  
   * Things written on board

4. **Avoid tape recording the lecture. It is time consuming to go through the entire tape after class. Also, if taping the class, you may have a tendency to pay less attention.**

5. **Reflect on the organization of the lecture**  
   * If lecture is **unorganized**, use sentence style consisting of a series of numbered statements.

* If lecture is **organized**, use outline style. This requires a high degree of thinking and organization of material. Outline style also discourages copying the lecture word-for-word and is conducive to active listening.
6. Use indentations: Rule of Thumb — the less important the idea, the more it is indented (this is not always the case, only a rule of thumb).

7. Develop own system for note-taking that is comfortable, useful, and efficient. * One method that has been found to be very useful can be found later in this handout.

8. Date and number each page. Don’t jump around in your notebook.

9. Leave blank spaces between ideas.

10. Label main points.

**After the Lecture**

1. On the same day, review/clarify/fill in gaps in notes.

2. Identify key words and main ideas.

3. Periodically review notes (every few days to encourage long term memory).

4. Review last lecture notes before each lecture.

5. Notice gaps in your understanding of key concepts. Fill in gaps by additional reading or questions in class.

6. Obtain any missed information as soon after class as possible.

7. Make notes of your ideas and reflections. Keep separate from those of the speakers. (The lecture note format on page 5 shows you how this can be done in your notebook.)

8. Make up and answer possible test questions.

9. Don’t waste time re-writing or typing notes. Write legibly the first time. Recopying is a waste of time.

**Lecture Note Format**

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[Diagram of lecture note format]

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Do not write on this page!  

Cue Words

Lecture notes/Notes from textbooks

25
Hints

1. Mark off notebook paper before going to class.
2. Use one notebook for each class or use loose leaf paper and a 3-ring binder.
3. Use right side of the paper only for class notes.
4. Use left side for textbook notes and supplemental material.
5. Use erasable ink pens (Ink is easier to read than pencil, and you can still erase your mistakes!).

Reading Textbooks

1. General Guidelines

a) Increase your reading speed by forcing yourself to read faster through reading material you find pleasurable (e.g. magazines, novels, newspapers). Your "comfortable" reading rate will gradually increase.

b) Survey and skim for HARD information (e.g. figure, date, quotes).

c) Beware of the YELLOW HIGHLIGHT SYNDROME — it is very easy to go through the motions by highlighting material and then not remember anything. Be highly selective when underlining or, better yet, try taking notes instead of highlighting.

d) Write a brief outline of the material you have read.

2. Method

a) SQ4R (survey, questions, read, recite, write, and review)

1. Survey

Determine the structure, organization, or plan of chapter. Details will be remembered because of their relationship to the total picture.

a) Think about the title. Guess what will be included in the chapter.

b) Read the introduction. Here the main ideas are presented: the "forest" which must be seen before the details & the "trees" which make organized sense.

c) Read the summary. Here is the relationship among the main
2. Question

Having in mind a question results in (1) a spontaneous attempt to answer it with information already at hand; (2) frustration until the question is answered; (3) a criterion against which the details can be inspected to determine relevance and importance; (4) a focal point for crystallizing a series of ideas (the answer).

a) Use the questions at the beginning or end of the chapter.

b) Formulate question by changing main heads or subheads into questions.

Example: Causes of Depression. What are the causes of depression? What conditions are usually present before depression occurs?

3. Read

Read to answer the question. Move quickly. Sort out ideas and evaluate them. If content does not relate to the question, give it only a passing glance. Read selectively.

4. Recite

Answer the question(s) in your own words, not the authors'.

5. (W)Rite

a) Write the question.

b) Write the answer using only key words, lists, etc.

6. Review

Increase retention and decrease cramming time by 90% by means of immediate and delayed review. To do this:

a) Read your written questions.

b) Try to recite the answer. Five to ten minutes will suffice for a chapter.

c) Review again in another week.

Hints: *Active involvement in reading the text is important for comprehending and remembering the material being studied.

*Use 3" x 5" index cards. Write the question on one side and the answer on the other (using key words, formulas, etc.). Use as flash cards — carry them with you and review when you have spare time.
SOME USEFUL EXTRA INFORMATION

Memory Improvement

1. General Guidelines
   a) In order to remember any new thing, it must be associated with something we already know or already remember.
   b) Research indicates the more the senses are involved, the more successful we are at remembering the item.
   c) The more bizarre the image, the better the recall.

2. Mnemonic Devices (pronounced "New Monic")
   a) Narrative Chaining (make-up a story using items to be remembered)
   b) Method of Loci (associate items to be remembered with a series of locations)
   c) Peg-word System
      1. Peg-words must be simple, concrete, and easy to visualize.
      2. Peg-word list must be well-learned so it can be recalled and recited easily.
      3. Peg-word List
          1) run
          2) shoe
          3) tree
          4) door
          5) hive
          6) sticks
          7) heaven
          8) gate
          9) wine
         10) den
Symbols and Abbreviations

connect thoughts and statements
change
+
  plus, positive
-
  minus, negative
increase, higher
decrease, lower
=
  equal
=ly
equally
>
greater than
<
less than
≠
not equal
e.g.
  for example
wrt
  with respect to
w/
  with
w/i
  within
w/o
  without
wh/
  which
4
  for
..  
  therefore
info
  information
approx
  approximate(ly)
re
  regarding, reference, referring to
etc
  etcetera, and so forth
b/c
  because
avg
  average
...
  infinity, infinite

Hint: You can shorten many words by leaving out any vowels.
Math Study Skills

Read what the instructor will be lecturing on before you go to class.

Read slowly. Reading mathematics is not like reading a novel or even history. Speed reading techniques are not appropriate. Every word and symbol is important to the meaning. Do not skip the symbolic part of the text. This is often the most important part for you do not understand a symbol look in the glossary or in the earlier part of the text. Symbols are often explained when they are first introduced. If you still can not find out what a symbol means,

Read with a pencil in hand. Every time the author does a problem, do it on your own—either before or after you read his or her explanation. This makes sure you know what steps have been shown and, more importantly, which ones were omitted.

If there is something you do not understand, try to formulate a question about it. Often if you can ask a specific question, you can answer it yourself. If you can't answer it, you know what part of the instructor’s lecture requires your complete attention. Your question is ready if the lecture does not clear up your misunderstanding.

2 **Understand the concepts.**

Don’t be satisfied with vague ideas about how to work problems. Do the examples yourself, understand the concept illustrated, then try making up your own examples. Keep in mind that the questions on the exam maybe very different from the example in the book.

3. **Practice.**

Be sure you understand the concepts before you practice. Then practice will help you remember and give you confidence in your mastery. Force yourself to remember the methods as you work problems; don’t look back in the book.

4 **Keep up with assignments** (whether they are graded or not).

The pace is much faster in college and keeping up to date with assignments helps you to better understand what is going on in class.

Mathematics is not a spectator sport. The only way you can learn mathematics is by doing it. Following are some suggestions for getting the most out of the time you spend on homework.

(a) **Understand the purpose of homework.** Homework in mathematics classes is assigned to help you understand certain concepts and to help you build certain skills. Homework is not assigned to you because it is important to get the tight answers. Your instructor already knows the answers.
(b) Try to understand the process, not the specific problem. Classify problems in the assignment by problem type. Although this is often done for you by the directions, it is not always. Do each assigned problem and then check it in the back of the book. Try to figure out why you missed the ones you did instead of just working toward the answer. A similar problem may be on a test or quiz.

(c) Mark homework problems you still do not understand and get help with them before the next class. The next lecture may build on a concept or skill you did not understand in the homework. When you do get help, make notes on what you learned, so that you can study them for the test.

(d) Before closing the book, look back over the assignment and by to explain to yourself what the assignment was about, what each kind of problem was asking, how you got the answers and what the answers tell you. This process will help you understand the material and will help you discover what you don’t understand.

(c) Keep your homework in a convenient and neat notebook so that you will be able to find questions or difficulties you have quickly and easily. This will also provide an invaluable study guide for tests.

5. **Ask questions.**

**Do not hesitate** to ask questions. Ask your instructor for help after you have tried to pull class notes and textbook explanations together for review and still don’t understand. Write down specific problems so you have them ready; don’t be vague and say you just don’t understand.

6. **Don’t hesitate.**

Get help right away. Tutoring and help sessions are available. The longer you wait before getting help, the harder it will be to get caught up. Most of the time when you feel lost, it is just one concept that you are missing, so get help quickly. One missed concept in a math class will make the rest of your math career a hardship. Don’t feel embarrassed to ask questions and get help; even the best mathematicians have felt completely lost at some point.

**Suggestions for Preparing for and Taking Math Tests**

1. Keep a list of things to remember - problems stressed by the instructor, definitions, terms, diagrams and graphs, formulas.

2. Keep up with the work - some courses can be passed by cramming, but math isn’t one of them. Skills in math, as in sports, must be practiced.

3. Study copies of old exams, chapter tests from the book, or make up your own. Then practice them with the same limits as the real exam.

4. Get a good night’s sleep before the test so that you are rested and alert; a quick review before the
test should be a summary only.

5. Arrive at the test early so that you can be relaxed when the exam begins.

6. Quickly look over the test and budget your time - don’t spend too much time on any single problem or section of the test.

7. Do some work on each problem - try to work at least part of each problem because partial credit is better than none.

8. Check your answers and look for careless mistakes during the last few minutes of your test time (budget this important time).

Suggestions for Word Problems

Solving problems is a practical art, like swimming or playing the piano; you can only learn it by imitation and practice. There is no magic key that opens all doors and solves all problems. The major goal in solving word problems is to translate the written words into a mathematical equation that we know how to solve.

1. Read the problem for a general sense of what it is about; sometimes putting it into your own words will help.

2. Then reread it to pick out specific information:
   (a) What you are asked to find”? Usually you choose a variable to represent one unknown and other unknowns will be represented in terms of the first.
   (b) What information is given”? Make a list, then organize it into a diagram, picture, or chart.
   (c) What are the relationships among the information given and the information to be found? Sometimes it helps to think of similar problems from arithmetic and the formulas needed there.

3. Translate the information into an equation - get into the habit of doing this for easy problems. The longer problems will not seem as difficult.

4. Solve the equation you have written and label your answer - then find any other quantities to be found.

5. Return to the original problem and check your answer(s). Do they make sense in the original problem and answer the question posed in the problem”?

Adapted from On Your Own in College by William C. Resnick and David H. Heller.
IMPROVING YOUR MEMORY

Myth: Most people remember fewer than 10% of the names of people that they meet.

Fact: We remember the face, but we have made no real connection between the face and name.

Myth: Most people forget 99% of the phone numbers given to them.

Fact: Most people don’t really choose to remember most phone numbers.

Myth: Memory is supposed to decline rapidly with age.

Fact: Memory declines with age only if it is not used. It can improve throughout your lifetime.

Myth: Most people confess to having a bad memory.

Fact: Most people use the excuse of “only being human,” because they don’t know how to improve their memory.

Our memories are far better than we give them credit !!

1. Most people have dreams of family, friends, places, and situations that they may have not experienced in 10 to 30 years. Most of these images are perfectly clear with color and in great detail.

2. Everyone has had the experience of turning a corner and suddenly recalling events from the past. A single smell, touch, or sound might at any time bring back a flood of memory.

3. A Russian journalist named Shereshevsky never took or made notes. He could, however, listen to long speeches and recall line for line, word for word, what he had just heard. Scientists concluded that he was not a freak and did not have anything more than an average intelligence. Shereshevsky did use basic memory principles in his everyday life.

4. Professor Rosenweig’s studies in the 1970’s concluded that if our brains were fed 10 new items of information every second for the rest of our life, that we would never half fill our memory potential.
5. While working on a side project, the noted Professor Penfield found that by electrically stimulating certain brain cells, his patients were vividly recalling happenings from their past. The memories included the smells, tastes, colors, noises, and movements associated with the happening.

6. Professor Anokhin proved that memory is formed in small electrical patterns among the interconnecting cells of the brain. We know that the brain contains over a million million (1,000,000,000,000) cells. The possibility of different combinations or connections of memories between these cells is limitless.

7. In near-death type happenings, most people confess to having “my whole life flash before my eyes.” We laugh and tell them they probably just sorted through a few highlights. Studies show that most of these people are serious and that they even recalled events totally forgotten for many years.

8. Studies show that if you are shown 1000 pictures at the rate of one picture per second, that you could, with 99 percent accuracy, pick those pictures out even if someone mixed in 100 new pictures that you had not seen. We all border on the limits of having a photographic memory.

9. Memory techniques are not new and have been used since the time of the ancient Greeks. Recent studies show, however, that if you can master any one technique and score 9 out of 10 on a standard test, that you will proportionally score 900 out of 1000 and so on. Memory techniques work across the board with different cultures studying different type subjects.

Why don’t we use our memory to its fullest potential?

For some odd reason, we tag certain information and remember it well. On the other hand, we poorly tag information that must be remembered and are never able to recall it. The “GIGO” syndrome does not work well for students at Texas A&M. Students who poorly tag or attempt to put “Garbage In” will most certainly not be able to remember and will get “Garbage Out” at test time.

If you have habits of losing things like eye glasses and car keys, or forget everything you study for tests, you probably are passively tagging these mental images. Things that are done and remembered as everyday ordinary occurrences have not been tagged in your memory as important. Memory that has not been tagged as important will in most cases be stored as FYI and your mind does not see the need to remember it with any authority.

Tagging input information in different way to make it memorable is not a new concept. “Mnemonics,” or memory enhancement techniques have been studied since the time of ancient Greeks and Romans. In the following pages, we will discuss several simple techniques that scholars and memory tricksters use to improve their memory abilities.
The Link System

The link system is the quickest and most simple to learn. It creates a memory foundation that makes learning advanced systems easier. The link system is best used to positively tag information like shopping lists or class test lists. By using principles like imagination, symbolism, sight and touch we incorporate both left and right brain memory strengths. The key to connecting any series in a list is to tag each entry with as much information as possible. Making any list something unusual or bizarre keeps it from being routinely stored and easily forgotten.

Example: Pick any list of items you wish to remember. It could be a shopping list or a listing of answers for a particular test. For my example, we will use a short shopping list. In most cases we forget to make or bring our shopping list. We then get home and remember exactly what we forgot to buy. Here's our list.

- Hair comb
- 2 Glass tea pitchers
- Grapes
- 1 Bar of hand-soap
- Eggs
- Clothes detergent
- Dental floss
- Bread

The Link System: Now imagine yourself walking out the front door with a large metal comb in your mouth. Feel the smoothness of the metal and then the point of each tooth on the comb. Balanced on that comb are two large tea pitchers that glimmer in the afternoon sun. Hear the tinkling of the glass as each of your steps makes the pitchers bump together. You now hear a smushing sound and you stop. From under your shoe you see a river of grape juice and seeds flowing. The cuff of your jeans is now stained deep red. This alarms you and your first reaction is to step back. As you step back, you find yourself on a foaming bar of soap in the shape of a surfboard. Now see yourself surfing on a sea of grape juice leaving a trail of suds from your soap surf-board. Feel the soap as it squishes up from between your toes. Smell the contrast of grape mist and clean soap aromas. Suddenly you take a big spill and now your clothes are all stained with grape juice. You're now so nasty that you have to return home.

Now you're really tired. It took you 8 hours and 12 boxes of detergent to get that grape stain out of your favorite jeans. Tired, hungry, and out of detergent, you forge out to go shopping again. You're really getting good at balancing the tea pitchers on that comb. So good that you will jump rope and balance the pitchers all the way to the mall. Can you guess what the jump rope is made of? If you guessed it was made of thousands of strands of dental floss, you were correct. See and feel the rope in your own mind.
The Number-Shape System

Most of us are fairly familiar with the numbers 1 through 10. For each number, all of us can come up with an image or shape that (maps) reminds us of that number. For example, I can see a curved swan’s head and neck matching the curved top section of the number 2. Some people use a boat or sailboat for the number 4 because it looks like a boat’s sail. The key point is to associate a word that represents a specific number for you and only you.

Examples:  1. = Paintbrush  
            2. = Swan         
            3. = Heart       
            4. = Boat        
            5. = Hook        
            6. = Elephant’s Trunk 
            7. = Cliff       
            8. = Hourglass/Time  
            9. = Stick & Balloon 
           10. = Bat & Ball

The Number-Shape System: Let's say you wanted to memorize this short list of items. This might be a grocery list or a list of possible answers for a major test.

1. Symphony   
2. Prayer      
3. Watermelon  
4. Volcano     
5. Motorcycle  
6. Sunshine    
7. Apple Pie   
8. Blossoms    
9. Spaceship   
10. Field of Wheat

We would then construct this Number-Shape System:

1. (Paintbrush) The “Symphony” painted a good melody. 
2. (Swan) He bowed his head in “prayer” like a swan.  
3. (Heart) He loved “Watermelon.”       
4. (Sailboat) We sailed away from the harbor as the “Volcano” erupted.        
5. (Hook) He became hooked on “Motorcycles.”       
6. (Elephant’s Trunk) Dumbo lifted his trunk towards the “Sunshine.”       
7. (Cliff) I’d jump off a cliff for Mom’s “Apple Pie.”       
8. (Hourglass) It took time for the “Blossoms” to bloom.       
9. (Stick & Balloon) The “Spaceship” floated like a child’s balloon.         
10. (Ball & Bat) Our old baseball field has been converted into a “Field Of Wheat.”

These are, of course, the examples I would use. You must personalize your Number-Shape System to fit your own style. Your own system and images will tag the information you wish to remember in a much more efficient manner.
The Number-Rhyme System

The Number-Rhyme System works much like the Number-Shape System except we substitute sounds for images associated with the numbers 1 through 10.

Examples: 1. = sounds like bun or sun.  
2. = sounds like shoe or pew.  
3. = sounds like tree or flea.  
4. = sounds like door or poor.  
5. = sounds like dive or drive.  
6. = sounds like sticks or bricks.  
7. = sounds like heaven or eleven (7-Eleven).  
8. = sounds like skate or gate.  
9. = sounds like line or wine.  
10. = sounds like pen or men.

The Number-Rhyme System: Let's say you wanted to memorize this short list of items. Again, this could be anything from a shopping list to a list of possible answers for a test.

1. Atom  
2. Tree  
3. Stethoscope  
4. Sofa  
5. Alley  
6. Tile  
7. Windscreen  
8. Honey  
9. Brush  
10. Toothpaste

We would then construct this Number-Rhyme System:

1. (Sun) The “Atom” blast glared brighter than the sun.  
2. (Shoe) Not everyone owns a shoe “Tree.”  
3. (Tree) The tree-doctor put a “Stethoscope” around the trunk.  
4. (Door) We moved the “Sofa” near the door.  
5. (Drive) We had to drive in the “Alley.”  
6. (Bricks) The western house had bricks arranged like “Tile” on the floor.  
7. (Eleven) The car drove through the “Windscreen” at the 7-Eleven.  
8. (Bait) We used “Honey” as bait for the flies.  
9. (Line) The artist used a fine “Brush” to paint the line.  
10. (Men) The shipwrecked men had not used “Toothpaste” in 2 years.

This is again, an example I would use. The more vivid and/or ridiculous the rhymes are made will have a greater impact on how well your memory attempts to tag this information. Remember to personalize this system so that it fits your imagination and learning style.
The Major System: How to Remember Phone Numbers and Dates in History

The Major System is the ultimate memory enhancement tool. It has been used, studied, and improved upon for nearly 400 years. This versatile system will allow you to memorize limitless lists of facts, dates and series of numbers. It also enables you to organize lists in a variety of orders, so that memorization is customized to best fit your learning style. The basic structure of the Major System is to designate consonant letter codes for the numbers 0 through 9.

Example:
0 = s,z = s & z are the first sounds of the word “zero.”
1 = d,t = d & t have one pen downstroke.
2 = n = n has two pen downstrokes.
3 = m = m has three pen downstrokes.
4 = r = r is the last letter in the word “four.”
5 = l = the top of the number 5 is an “L.”
6 = j,sh = j is the mirror image of the number “6.”
7 = k, ch = k is shaped like two “7”s.
8 = f,v = f, when handwritten, has two loops like an “8.”
9 = b,p = b & p are mirror images of the number “9.”

Examples: The Major System for Phone Numbers

Your Tennis Partner 640-7336 = (7336/c,m,m,sh)
= Can Make Masterful SHots

Local Theatre 869-9521 = (9521/p,l,n,t)
= Produce Laughter - N- Tears

Favorite Restaurant 354-6350 = (m,l,r, - ch,m,l,s)
= My Local Restaurant CHarges Moderate
Lunch Specials

Examples: The Major System for Appointments

10:00 a.m. - Dentist fill cavity. = (10:00/d,s,s,s) = Dental Surgeon Saves Smile
9:20 p.m. - Movie with friend. = (9:20/p,n,c) = Preview New Cinema

Examples: The Major System for Historical Dates.

1666 = Great fire of London = (666/sh,sh,sh)
= aSHes,aSHes,aSHes

1454 = First Printing Press = (454/r,l,r)
= RoLoR

1789 = French Revolution = (789,k,f,p)
= King Fights People

The more you practice the Major System, the more powerful your memory will become. This system will strengthen both the short and long term memory. Increasing any memory will help you recall more data for tests.
Other Tips for Memory

The best system is one you customize and create yourself.

When reading to remember, scan graphs, side-notes, margins, intro, and summary paragraphs.

When Highlighting: Highlight areas you are not comfortable with.

- Single words or sentences that “define” headings.
- Skip explanations and extra examples.
- Also highlight your notes when possible.

Understanding what the concept is saying or explaining helps increase long-term memory.

When trying to remember words, it’s always helpful to see the parts or construction of the word rather than the whole word.

Memorization is as easy as teaching yourself to “cue” and “review.”

The Roman Room System

The Romans were great advocates of mnemonic systems. In their time, they created a system popularly called the Roman Room. Each Roman would detail a permanent vision of their own home within their mind. The home is a familiar place that each person generally visits several times a day. To this permanent vision they would attach items they wished to remember.

Try to picture your present home’s front door in your mind. See the trim and fixtures like a Roman would see the stone entry-way and marble pillars of the olden Roman home. If you can’t visualize your own home, create a vision of what you might imagine as any Romans doorway might look like. Remember to always see your door and trim like the Romans’ pillars and stone archway.

The Roman might, for example, have constructed his mental image of the entrance and front room with two gigantic pillars at either side of the front door, a carved lion’s head as the doorknob, and an exquisite Greek statue on the immediate left as he walked in. Next to the statue might be a large sofa with the fur of one of the animals the Roman had hunted.

The Roman would then start a typical day by arranging a shortened list of things he/she wished to do and remember for that day. Let’s say that the Roman wanted to remember to buy a new pair of sandals, to get his sword sharpened, to buy a new house maid, and to finish the weeding in his grape vineyard. He would simply imagine the first pillar outside his doorway arranged with thousands of sandals, the leather polished and glistening in the sun, with the smell of fresh leather filling the air. He would imagine sharpening the sword on the second pillar, hearing the scraping with each stroke, feeling the edge as it gets sharper and sharper. The Roman would then pull on the ornate doorknob, revealing the front room, and looking to see if the new house maid had arrived yet. She would be there, sitting on the lion skin sofa, which would materialize into a raging lion that gave the servant a galloping ride over to the only statue in the room. The servant would then pluck a withered, discolored grape from the dense matting of vines that encrypt the statue. The servant would then say, “Sorry I cannot offer you better fruit, but the weeds have been so bad this year the grapes will not grow any better than this!
around that room a second time to familiarize yourself with the sequence, placing and positioning of all the items you place in that room.

The Roman Room System eliminates all boundaries on your imagination and allows you to remember as many items as you wish. Many people find this to be their favorite memory system, and will make lists hundreds of items long to put in their gigantic Roman Room.

Remembering People’s Names

One of the most important things we use our memory for is to recall people’s names. Although it’s important, most of us put ourselves in embarrassing situations where we can and do remember the face, but cannot remember the name. Our recent ancestors were lucky enough not to have this problem. It was common knowledge that people who baked bread were named “Baker.” The same is true for “Blacksmiths,” “Carpenters” and “Tailor’s.”

Today the name game is a little more complicated. In college, we meet people in large group settings and it is extremely difficult to remember just a few of the names for any real length of time. Thankfully, there are two systems that can help us remember and connect the face to the name. Used correctly, each system builds and strengthens the other. The first system derives from the early colonial rules of social etiquette, and the second is taken from the Mnemonic Methods we have learned about earlier in this handout.

The first or Social Etiquette System follows a series of steps that progress to the goal of remembering names for social interaction purposes. Whether for social or professional purposes, the steps will set an easily learned pattern that can help you start associating a particular name with the corresponding face.

1. Don’t “know” that your memory is terrible and not attempt to really “hear” how each person’s name is pronounced.

2. Greet people by looking them straight in the face. Look for one distinguishing feature such as hair, eyes, lips, nose, forehead, wrinkles or facial hair. Find something that makes this person unique.

3. Listen to “how” this person’s name is pronounced.

4. Always ask to repeat the name. “Did you say Joe Smith?”

5. If the name still puzzles you, ask for the correct spelling. If you were panicked by introducing yourself, this is a good way to hear the name again without being totally obvious.

6. Find closure with steps #4 and #5. Make sure that you can spell or say their name.

7. Exchange business cards if you can. You then have a hard copy for review.

8. Repeat that person’s name in conversation as much as possible. “John, do you know Joe Smith? Joe is a business major from Houston.”

9. During any pauses in the conversation, internally repeat that person’s name to yourself.

10. During longer breaks, step back and recite each person’s name along with the facial characteristic that helps you to remember them.

11. When the group breaks up or you leave, use that person’s name in your farewell. “Well Mr. Smith, it was a pleasure to meet you.” During any pauses in the conversation, internally repeat that person’s name to yourself.

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12. After you leave the scene, write down people’s names and the facial characteristics that set them apart from others.

13. Set your goals slowly. If you have not tried to remember names in the past, you won’t be an expert right away. Make a goal of remembering 5 people’s names each time you get into a group setting. When this becomes easy, push your goal up to 6 or 7. You will find that once you get the 5 goal down that increasing the limit is extremely easy.

The second system in “remembering people’s names,” is the Mnemonic System we have learned about in the earlier sections off this handout. By using simple association and imagination, we can mentally flag information that we choose to make interesting enough to remember. A combination of this and the Etiquette System works best for long term retention of memory.

1. Make sure you are clear about the correct way of spelling and pronouncing that person’s name.

2. Make sure you mentally repeat the person’s name at least twice in your mind.

3. Look for that one obvious head or facial characteristic.

4. Mentally reconstruct that person’s face. Use your wildest creativity to exaggerate the head or facial characteristic much like a cartoonist would.

5. Repeat that person’s name while imagining the intensified feature you made up. It sometimes helps to rhyme or spoof the person’s name. You might remember John Pane by thinking “John Wayne” Pane.
SQ4R METHOD

1. **Survey**
   Determine the structure, organization, or plan of chapter. Details will be remembered because of their relationship to the total picture.
   a) Think about the title. Guess what will be included in the chapter.
   b) Read the introduction. Here the main ideas are presented: the “forest” which must be seen before the details & the “trees” which make organized sense.
   c) Read the summary. Here is the relationship among the main ideas.
   d) Read the main heads (boldface type). Here are the main ideas. Determine where in the sequences of ideas each the headings is located.

2. **Question**
   Having in mind a question results in (1) a spontaneous attempt to answer it with information already at hand; (2) frustration until the question is answered; (3) a criterion against which the details can be inspected to determine relevance and importance; (4) a focal point for crystallizing a series of ideas (the answer).
   a) Use the questions at the beginning or end of the chapter.
   b) Formulate question by changing main heads or subheads into questions.

   Example: *Causes of Depression*. What are the causes of depression? What conditions are usually present before depression occurs?

3. **Read**
   Read to answer the question. Move quickly. Sort out ideas and evaluate them. If content does not relate to the question, give it only a passing glance. Read selectively.

4. **Recite**
   Answer the question(s) in your own words, not the authors’.

5. **(W)Rite**
   a) Write the question.
   b) Write the answer using only key words, lists, etc.

6. **Review**
   Increase retention and decrease cramming time by 90% by means of immediate and delayed review. To do this:
   a) Read your written questions.
   b) Try to recite the answer. Five to ten minutes will suffice for a chapter.
   c) Review again in another week.

**Hints:**
*Active involvement in reading the text is important for comprehending and remembering the material being studied.*
*Use 3” x 5” index cards. Write the question on one side and the answer on the other (using key words, formulas, etc.). Use as flash cards — carry them with you and review when you have spare time.*
Study Motivation

What is it?
Positive or negative force that propels us to study on a regular basis.

Where does it come from?
Extrinsic: Influenced by other people and events.
Intrinsic: Internalized ownership of accomplishing a task.

So what does influence have to do with it?
Intrinsic positive motivation = Enjoy or tolerate a study task.
Intrinsic negative motivation = Worried about not measuring up in your own eyes to a study task.
Extrinsic positive motivation = Others help you enjoy or tolerate a study task.
Extrinsic negative motivation = Worried about not measuring up in others eyes to a study task.

More about Intrinsic Negative Motivation:
Weiner's "Attribution Theory" states that we lack internalized motivation due to our own doubts about our own ability.

What are examples of Weiner's theory?
Do you view success with a certain test/class as luck, who you know, or out of your control?
Have you had minimal success with certain classes, but still don't see this as rewarding?
Do you often stop study tasks because they seem to get too hard, boring, meaningless?
Do you tackle only simple or extremely hard study tasks?
Do you catch yourself with little drive or enthusiasm because the effort just isn't going to pay off?
Answering "yes" to any of these questions means that you are struggling with intrinsic negative motivation.

Motivation equation:
Motivational Force = Expectancy + Instrumentality + Valance

Expectancy = Belief that EFFORT will result in the intended outcome.
Instrumentality = Belief that OUTCOME results in a greater reward.
Valance = How much VALUE you place on the reward.

In simpler terms, motivation:
Strength of need + expectation of result + how badly we want the payoff

How to get started with improving motivation?
Recognize what tasks you must accomplish on a weekly basis.
If you can't set up tasks or a schedule, seek help in doing so.
Set goals for these weekly tasks. (See handout on goal setting activities.)
If you can't recognize or implement goals, seek help in doing so.
Recognize what distracts you from accomplishing these tasks.
If you can't recognize or eliminate these distractions, seek help in doing so.
(Remember that distractions can be created by you as well as others.)
Monitor your motivational levels in all study tasks, goals, and distractions.
It helps to keep a written record of study plans. What motivational tendencies do you see in your records?
When working with various study motivational levels, complete this exercise for different study tasks, goals, distractions. I am responsible and in control, but sometimes I deceive myself by thinking negative motivational thoughts 

_________________________________________ (for individual study tasks, goals, distractions).

I have ability and can find some value in studying this subject, but I deceive myself by studying it poorly because 

_________________________________________ (negative motivational thought).

Above all else, recognize when your attitudes and motivations are affecting daily study. Seek help from academic advisors and counselors quickly. Rest assured that you are not the only one struggling with motivational study issues.
Study Concentration

What is study concentration?

Concentration is the ability to work without letting people, emotions, or activities interfere.

People: Conversations, interruptions, co-procrastination, relationships.

Emotions: Motivation, academic performance anxieties, procrastination, homesickness, interpersonal relationships.

Activities: Hobbies, sleep, diversionary sports/exercise, extracurricular activities, cleaning, etc...

Can concentration actually be improved?

Yes, and like any other behavior, it can be trained, promoted, or diminished.

Steps for improving concentration:

1. Establish a place and routine time to study.
   Do nothing in this place but study; this establishes a behavior that is easy to trigger when starting future study sessions.
   Don’t confuse this place with sleep, entertainment, deep relaxation, or socialization.
   Students disagree on where and what types of places are best to study. Look for the places that best fit your learning style.
   Choose the background noise level that distracts you the least.
   Find consistent times each week to establish the least discretionary environment.
   Eliminate distractions from this environment – unplug phones, don’t answer your door, etc...
   Set daily study goals in day planners or some type of personal scheduler.
   Be realistic! Impose deadlines to be critiqued once a week.

2. Divide study tasks into manageable parts (daily/weekly).
   Easier to memorize/complete tasks.
   Makes a connection between your level of concentration and your student time management.

3. Limit length of study time. Remember by the inch, it’s a cinch; by the yard, it’s hard.

4. If your mind wanders, stand up and face away from your work.
   Don’t learn to daydream with a book in your hands.
   Don’t walk away frequently from your studies and learn procrastination due to daydreaming.
   Standing up while stretching is a positive physical activity and it also gives the mind a break.
   For recurring concerns, make a worry list and set aside worry time after study sessions.

5. At the end of each page or problem, stop and count to 10 while thinking about nothing but 1 10. Avoid making tasks mundane!

6. Don’t start unfinished business, cleaning and/or maintenance tasks to avoid studying.

7. Set time frames for reading paragraphs and doing single math problems.

8. Keep a reminder pad nearby for stray thoughts and tasks needing attention.

9. Relax for a few minutes before starting study sessions. Don’t start any sessions while extremely tense. Avoid learned boring/difficult book anxiety.

10. Keep track of your thoughts. Put a X in the text or notes when your mind wanders.
    When your thoughts and attention are better, review the material directly before the ‘X’ first.
    Which subjects and settings provide you with the most “X’s?” Make improvements with these areas.

11. Use pencils and highlighters to do something active while studying, but don’t mark everything you read! Condense major thoughts and themes into major points to review.
11. Use pencils and highlighters to do something active while studying, but don’t mark everything you read! Condense major thoughts and themes into major points to review.

12. Rotate multiple subject materials (classes) when studying for long periods of time. Boredom, excessive repetition leads to loss of concentration.

13. Plan breaks according to your natural concentration spans.

14. When a task seems insurmountable:
   Break it into smaller pieces
   Consult with friends,
   Consult with study partners.
   Consult with Instructors.
   Consult with Tutors.
   Consult with Academic Counselors.

15. Concentration exercise to practice when you can’t focus on studying or tests.
   Relax yourself the best you can (Seek help for learning how to relax).
   Time yourself for 3 minutes.
   Focus on an object doorknob, back of someone’s head.
   Push all incoming thoughts away.
   Focus on the object.
   Watch out for rebellion of the mind.
   You may get restless or develop unusual itches push them away.
   Practice this exercise several times a week or possibly use this as a break between studies.

My concentration issues:

   When are they the worst?

   Where am I studying when they are the worst?

   Why do I think my concentration issues happen at the above time and places?

   If I can identify the above, what are my plans for changing these concerns?

1.

2.

3.

4.

If I cannot identify the times, places and causes for my lack of study concentration, where might I find help for these issues?

1. The learning Skills Center @ www.scs.tamu.edu, (979) 845-4427 x 108

2.
Study Distractions

What are study distractions?

 Distractions are the external and internal events and/or thoughts that disrupt various levels of concentration.

Study Distractions:

 Study location
 Noise, roommates, romantic relationships, uncomfortable environments, computers, TV, etc...

 Physical distractions
 Irregular sleep, eating patterns, energy levels, too much/little exercise.
 Health and Circadian clock (morning or late night type of a person) issues.

 Self talk
 Rational thoughts about self and grade expectations.
 Unrealistic expectations for self and/or grades.
 Unusual expectations for self and/or grades.

 Motivation
 Know that you want to be here (college) or find out why not.
 Know why you are here and in a certain major or find out why not.
 Explore your uneasiness about certain classes, profs, or transition to this institution and/or institutional environment.

 Personal issues
 If you can’t study without thinking about a personal concern, seek help for that concern.
 Study well without distractions and then deal well with the personal issues (without the study distractions) give both the full attention that they need.

 External Environment: TV, computers, uncomfortable chairs, noises, people, etc...
 Help: Leave, alter, or rearrange environment.

 Internal Environment: Hunger, drowsiness, illness, etc...
 Help: Plan to study when you’re most alert. High protein snacks help. Occasional breaks with a 5-minute physical exercise are great mental boosters.

 Internal Environment: Boredom, dislike, disinterest, etc...
 Help: Find a reason that satisfies you for taking classes; talk with other students, professors, academic and personal counselors. Look for something interesting; figure out how it applies to ‘life.”
Internal Environment: Anxiety about studies, testing, grades, graduation, etc...
Help: Make sure you know how best to study. Put the course in perspective. Learn how to manually make yourself relax.

Internal Environment: Intimidating study tasks
Help: Break up study tasks into smaller tasks. Work the hardest tasks first. Note accomplishments by rewarding yourself appropriately. Plan your attack of study tasks with a calendar.

Internal Environment: Daydreaming, etc...
Help: Studying must be separated from daydreams/frustrations. Write down distracting thoughts and attend to them after studying. Do a short review of what you've just learned and then spend a few minutes of quality time daydreaming in another place. Avoid at all costs daydreaming and reading; make a physical or mental change in your study environment immediately.

Internal Environment: Personal worries, frustrations, etc...
Help: Find help for identifying concerns if you cannot sort them out on your own. Work on constructive solutions specifically designed for your personal concerns. Consult with friends, family, counselors, and academic advising professionals. Spend quality time on your studies and then spend quality time working with solutions for your personal issues.

Internal & External: Lapses into old negative concentration or distraction habits
Help: Insist that you can achieve higher levels of concentration and that you will continue to practice preferable habits for specified amounts of time each day. Reduce the amounts of time using any new technique, at first, until you can see recurring successes.

General Suggestions: If worried about something, allow a specific amount of time (use egg timer) to worry to your hearts content. When timer goes off, take a short break and then start studying. Variation: write it down and physically put it away.

General Suggestions: When distracted, purge your brain for 5 minutes. Write everything down on a piece of paper, then fold it up and put it away until you're done studying.

When a task seems insurmountable:
Consult with friends.
Consult with study partners.
Consult with Instructors.
Consult with Tutors.
Consult with Academic Counselors.
My study distraction issues:

When are they the worst?

Where am I studying when they are the worst?

Why do I think my study distraction issues happen at the above time and places?

If I can identify the above, what are my plans for changing these concerns?

1.

2.

3.

4.

If I cannot identify the times, places, and causes for my study distractions, where might I find help for these issues?

1. The Learning Skills Center @ scs.tamu.edu, (979) 845-4427

2.

3.
PROCRASTINATION

1. What is “Procrastination”?

“To defer action, delay; to put off till another day or time.”

“The Behavior of postponing.”

“Positive vs Negative procrastination.”

2. Differences between “comfortable” and “problem” Procrastination:

How troublesome or costly the delay effects you.

3. The 5 different faces of procrastination.
   a. The type 1 person is always too busy.
      Delay is inevitable.
      Lives from one deadline to the next.
      Thrives under pressure.
      Low priority things get lost and forgotten.
      These people are “O.K.” with certain things not being done.

   b. The type 2 person takes life easy.
      Takes a long time to get anything done.
      Intentionally puts things off and doesn’t mind doing so.

   c. The type 3 person deliberately chooses to procrastinate.
      Gives them time to reflect, clarify, focus and prioritize.

   d. The type 4 person is successful but miserable.
      They stay frustrated and angry with themselves.
      Procrastination prevents them from doing what they think they are capable of.

   e. The type 5 person has external and internal suffering.
      They endure major setbacks and lose much of what is important to them.
HOW ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION STARTS

For most people, the earliest symptoms of procrastination occurs "In school."

1. Children experiment with different strategies for coping with difficulties at home or school.
   ex: Studying all the time, drugs/alcohol, or procrastination.

2. Putting things off in school because you learned there were no grave consequences.

3. In an environment where teachers have all the control, putting off studying or assignments gives you the control to break the rules.

4. Distracting yourself from unpleasant tasks that made you nervous.
   ex: Tests, class discussions or social activities.

5. Bored with class or school work in general. Procrastination creates a last minute challenge to get ready.

6. Protection from being labeled stupid. "I wish you would try harder," vs "You just don’t have what it takes."

7. Protection from being labeled smart. The fear of success or not being thought of as normal.

Many people who regularly got away with procrastination in high school learn that this strategy does not work in college. The demands and responsibility are at a much higher level and the procrastination game turns into a prison.
HOW DO I PROCRASTINATE

    I raid the frig.
    I go out to eat.
I read mystery novels or science fiction.

    I phone call my friends.
    I call home or hometown.
I go see friends or significant others.

    I go home or to my hometown.
    I work on anything less important. (Personal or Academic.)
I become obsessed with cleaning my house, yard, car or pick-up.

    I work or play with my hobbies.
    I play any sport or game.
    I just sit and stare.
    I listen to music.
    I watch a VCR tape or television.
    I play video games.
    I read magazines or newspapers.
    I nap or sleep.

    I fix anything that seems broken.
    I go shopping.
    I go to parties or clubs.
    I play with pets.
    I find the missing penny in my checkbook balance.
    I re-organize my sock drawer.
    I sharpen pencils.
    I doodle great works of art on scratch-pads.

    I talk other people into procrastinating with me.
    I let other people talk me into procrastinating with them.
MY EXCUSES FOR ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION

I don’t have the equipment, notes or old tests to get started.  
I deserve a break.  
I’m not good at this assignment or subject.

I can’t write essays or research papers.  
If I wait for a better time, I can do a first class job.  
I’ll wait until I’m inspired.

I’ll wait until I can think of an opening paragraph.  
It’s too late in the week to start.  
It’s too early in the week to start.

I can’t do anything about it until Monday morning.  
Why bother to ask? The answer will be “no.”  
Why bother to try”? The professor has it in for me.

I’ve done the worst part of it, the rest can be done later.  
1 or 10 or 100 years from now, will this really matter.  
I can always do it later.

It’s a tradition for me to “cram” and pull “all nighters” before tests.  
I’m not worried about the small tests and grades, it’s the final that counts.  
I can always go cry on the professor’s shoulder for a better grade.

I can always re-take the class later on.  
I can always pull my GPR or average up later on.  
I can always “2.0 and Go.”

I think people and friendship outweighs GPR statistics.
CYCLE OF PROCRASTINATION

1. “I'll start early this time.”
2. I've got to start soon.
3. “What if I don’t do this?”
4. “There’s still time.”
5. “Is there something wrong with me?”
6. The Final Choice: “To do or Not to do.”

“Not to Do”

1. “I can’t do this.”
2. “Why bother.”

“To Do”

1. “I can’t wait any longer”
2. “This isn’t bad, why not start sooner.”
3. “Just get it finished.”
4. “I’ll never procrastinate again.”

PROCRASTINATION CODE

I must be perfect.
Everything I do should go easy.
It's safer to do nothing than risk failure.

If it's not done right, don't do it.
I must avoid being challenged.
If I succeed, someone will get hurt.

If I do well this time, I must always do well.
If I expose my real self, people want like me.

There is a right answer, and I'll wait until finding it.
Following the rules means I'm giving in and not in control.
EXTERNAL CONSEQUENCES OF PROCRASTINATION

- Loss of $, grants and loans
- Loss of friendships or significant others
- Lowered grades
- Incomplete academic programs
- Tension with parents
- Tension with friends or significant others
- Fees, fines and warrants
- Conflict with Academic Department, professors and administrators

INTERNAL CONSEQUENCES OF PROCRASTINATION

- Self criticism
- Embarrassment
- Anxiety
- Lack of concentration
- Guilt
- Sense of fraudulence
- Physical exhaustion
- Physical illness
- Inability to enjoy other classes or activities

DEFINE YOUR AREAS OF ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION

- Preparing materials for class. (Books, notebooks, pens and scantrons.)
- Attending class.
- Doing homework assignments.
- Keeping up with reading assignments.
- Studying lecture notes.
- Studying for tests, exams or finals.
- Preparing materials/information for essay or research papers
- Writing research or essay papers.
- Talking with a teacher or professor.
- Talking with an academic advisor.
- Doing bureaucratic tasks. (Paying fees, getting passes and permits.)
- Knowing about your degree requirements.
- Completing paperwork towards your degree requirements.
- Returning library or class books and material.
- Attending study groups.
- Attending group project meetings.
- Attending labs or help sessions.
- Preparing for or participating in class speeches or discussions.
THINGS TO REMEMBER WHILE OVERCOMING PROCRASTINATION

* There are no quick fixes or miracle cures.

* You have at least 8 - 10 years of learned academic behavior to re-train.

* There are many self help techniques. Don’t mix, try one at a time.

* Go slowly, going “cold Turkey” usually doesn’t work.
  
  • Get help from friends, support groups or counseling.
  
  • Make a public commitment by making public statements.
  
  • You will feel resistance. This can help you figure out what you’re afraid of.
  
  • Expect setbacks. Give your new technique a chance.
  
  • This is your procrastination, only you can change it.
OVERCOMING PROCRASTINATION

A. Self Contracting
   1. Work for specific reward.
   2. Make something you normally enjoy contingent upon doing avoided tasks.
   3. Establish penalties for avoiding or not doing tasks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-goal:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penalty:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Only one goal at a time.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Steps to achieve this goal. Start to finish or finish to start.

Start with one goal for one specific task. Follow this through until the job is completed. Slowly advance to point where you’re making several goal contracts to plan your day and then week.

13. Physical Reminders
    1. Signs, slogans
    2. Post-It-Notes
    3. Lists
    4. Daily, Weekly, Monthly or Semester Calendars
    5. Place all of these reminders in strategic places.

C. Bits and Pieces Approach

I. Do little bits of numerous delayed tasks rather than the standard all or nothing approach.

   ex: Research paper due in three days.

Reading assignment for one complete chapter due in two days (Professor starts new lecture then.)
Weekly quiz in calculus tomorrow
You have 3, maybe 4, hours today to study.
How will you prioritize your study time?
D. Half Hour Plan

1. Contract (with yourself) for 1/2 hours worth of effort.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-goal:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penalty:</td>
</tr>
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</table>

(Only one goal at a time.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-goal:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penalty:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Only one goal at a time.)

E. Time Budget Sheets

1. Use first sheet to investigate your weekly schedule. Use breaks and free time to record what you do and when you do it. Always record the time from when you first get up in the morning until you officially go to sleep at night.

2. Evaluate where your time is going and where you have open slots to study.

2. Use second sheet to plan schedule. Record all fixed times such as class, labs, work, social and personal time. Then adjust in study time so that total academic time .30 to 40 hours a week.
Stress Management Guides
PASS: Programs for Academic Success Skills
Student Counseling Service
A Department in the Division of Student Affairs

Texas A&M University

Presents

A Self-Help Guide for
STRESS MANAGEMENT

Developed by:
Nick Dobrovolsky, Keith McKee, and Bradford Brunson

Texas A&M University
STRESS MANAGEMENT GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

This manual was prepared to give you a basic understanding of stress, its consequences, and techniques to manage your stress more effectively.

Prevention of health (mental and physical) problems is clearly possible when physical symptoms are known to follow from stress and tension. Preventive approaches to health problems are possible when individuals take time to educate themselves as to what they can do to ward off and to resolve circumstances leading to the occurrence of various maladies. Education, along with self-discipline and appreciation for our own well-being, prepare individuals to take good care of themselves.

The stress reduction-techniques outlined in this guide are useful approaches to the effective handling of stress and tension. If you are willing to take some time out to care for yourself, it is likely you can make significant and constructive changes in your daily life. Awareness of environmental and personal factors and the restful effects of "natural" stimulation are considered in relation to the bodily states of tension and relaxation. Inner balance and interpersonal harmony are more possible when individuals take an active role in directing their life toward a path of self-help.

A basic premise of this guide is that the benefits of relaxation and stress reduction techniques can only be fully realized after they have been practiced regularly over a period of time. Intellectual understanding of most techniques is of little value unless accompanied by firsthand experience.

The purpose of regular practice is twofold. First, it will insure that you are able to consciously carry out the exercises anytime you need to, without having to refer to written materials. Secondly, regular practice will develop the habit of relaxing at an unconscious level.

Some elements of this guide can be used effectively without the assistance of a professional therapist or teacher. The Student Counseling Service offers a variety of services that you may be interested in becoming involved with. Examples are as follows: Biofeedback Training, Assertiveness Groups, Eating Behavior Groups, Personal Growth and Development Groups, and individual counseling. Please feel free to call or stop by the Student Counseling Service to make inquiries into what we may be able to offer you in terms of services.
STRESS MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

1. Stress is a fact of life that has both positive and negative consequences.

2. Stress reactions are unique to each individual. What is stressful to you may not be stressful to someone else.

3. The first step in effective stress management is to understand that nature of stress and how it effects you.

4. Managing stress effectively is a skill that you learn. Like all skills it takes time and active participation for it to work effectively.

5. To a large degree your perceptions determine what is stressful to you.

6. Identify activities both physical and mental that you find enjoyable and helpful in dealing with stress.

7. Any chronic condition would be evaluated by a competent medical professional to exclude any physical cause. Even though it may be stress induced it may have caused physical damage as in the case of ulcers. When in doubt check it out.
WHAT IS STRESS MANAGEMENT?

The management of stress is dependent on individual perception and the situation in which the person is involved. These conditions prevent a universal coping prescription applicable to everyone. There are however general resources to facilitate coping with stress. First of these resources is understanding the nature of stress and how the mind and body react to both external and internal stressful stimuli. The next necessary condition is that each individual understand their own unique reactions to stress. After the individual is aware of stress and his/her response to stress it is then necessary to learn effective ways or techniques to deal with stress and most importantly to implement these skills in daily living.

WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress pervades our society and has a profound effect on our daily living. Ours is an age of change, uncertainty, technocracy, and ever-increasing demands. These demands which are placed on us are often deleterious to our well-being, productivity, and to our feelings of fulfillment.

Stress is conceptualized as a universal phenomenon in which the individual perceives environmental stimuli so as to tax physiological, psychological, or sociological systems, whereby responses can be adaptive or maladaptive. Simply defined, stress is "pressure or strain on a system". In physiological terms, stress is defined as "the non-specific response of the body to any demands made upon it" (Selye, 1974).

Stress is an everyday fact of life. You can't avoid it. Stress is any change that you must adjust to. Stressful events can be negative, such as the injury, illness or death of a loved one or they can also be positive. For instance, getting a new home or a job promotion brings with it the stress of a change of status and new responsibilities. Falling in love can, for some people, be as stressful as falling out of love.

WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF STRESS?

You experience stress from three basic sources: your environment, your body and your thoughts. All bombard you with demands to adjust. From your environment you must endure weather, noise, crowding, interpersonal demands, time pressures, performance standards and various threats to your security and self esteem. The second source of stress is physiological. This source would include such things as illness, accidents, poor diet, sleep disturbances, and the effects of aging. All tax the body and demand adjustment to keep the body healthy. The third source of stress is mental and is the most difficult source of stress to quantify. This includes the thoughts and imagination processes of the individual. These processes are a compilation of all previous experiences. They form the person's belief system or perceptual network. A situation that is similar to a previously rewarding or pleasant experience is most likely to be less stressful. Whereas, if the situation is associated with an experience that was frightful or threatening it can result in a more intense stress response. We therefore conclude that it is not the activity alone that initiates a stress reaction, but it is the person's belief system that determines a reaction to specific situations. For some a birthday or dating experience can be a rewarding and enjoyable experience, while for others it can be terrifying or depressing. Reactions to situations constantly occur as the mind and body attempt to maintain a balance.
IS ALL STRESS BAD?

NO!!! Stress is a necessary and important ingredient of life. Indeed, the only time we will not experience stress in life is when we die. It is necessary for the operation of both the mind and body and without stress the body would not function. What is important to remember is that too much stress over an extended period is what can be harmful as well as too little stress over an extended period. What the body strives for is a balance between what has been called eustress and distress. Figure 1 graphically points out the importance of an optimal amount of stress to an individual’s performance in daily life. Optimal performance occurs when there is a balance between lack of stress and over stress.

![Diagram of eustress and distress]

Performance

Eustress

Distress

Stressors

Optimal Stress

Figure 1

HOW DOES THE MIND AND BODY REACT TO STRESS?

To see the answer most plainly, consider what happens when we face an extreme form of stress such as unexpected physical threat. Immediately you feel a tightness or churning in your stomach, and a surge of energy flows through you. Unconsciously, your brain reacts to the stress by triggering the hypothalamus, to control involuntary muscles and organs through nerve signals and the glandular secretions that are called hormones. The hypothalamus activates the autonomic nervous system. Sympathetic nerves, which organize activity, pass from the spinal cord to specific organs through large ganglia, or nerve clusters. Directed by the hypothalamus, sympathetic nerves contort facial muscles and widen the eye pupils, nostrils and throat. Within the torso, they adjust the blood supply and relax the stomach, intestines and bladder. Meanwhile, the hypothalamus activates the pituitary gland to send hormones to thyroid and adrenal glands, which release their own secretions. Thyroid hormone steps up energy production, while adrenal hormones increase the supply of fuel by regulating liver, pancreas, spleen and large blood vessels. (See Figure 2).
THE STRESS RESPONSE PATHWAY*

![Diagram of the stress response pathway]

THE STRESS RESPONSE

- Increased neural excitability
- Increased cardiovascular activity
  - Heart rate, stroke volume,
  - cardiac output, blood pressure
- Increased metabolic activity
  - Gluconeogenesis
  - Protein mobilization
    - Decreased antibody production
    - Muscle wasting
- Fat mobilization
- Increased sodium retention
- Increase in neurological sweating
- Change in salivation
- Change in GI system tonus and motility

Figure 2

In simpler terms, your body undergoes what is referred to as the "fight or flight" response. When the stimuli coming in are interpreted as threatening, the regulating centers give the body information to speed up in preparation to confront or escape the threat. Your pupils become larger so you can see better, and your hearing becomes acute. Your muscles tense to deal with the challenge. Blood pulsates through your head so that more oxygen reaches your brain cells, stimulating your thought processes. Your heart and respiratory rates increase. Blood drains from your extremities and is pooled in your trunk and head, while your hands and feet feel cold and sweaty. Stress activates the body's entire mental and physiological systems, precipitating more than 1400 physiological changes. the speed with which this transformation occurs is awesome. In a matter of seconds the body is fully mobilized and ready for action.

The fight or flight response has been developed over millions of years of vertebrate evolution. It was well-established part of our makeup when our human ancestors still lived in caves and had to deal with saber-toothed tigers and other life threatening situations on a daily basis. It is still an appropriate and important response today when we are physically threatened.

Today, however, most of the stress situations we face are not physically life-threatening. Many of the dangers, the daily physical fight-for-survival situations, have been eliminated. Yet we often react to these modern stress situations as if they were physical threats. Our fight-or-flight response may be triggered even when in is inappropriate. Because there are more perceived stressful situations other than physical in our modern world, we react more frequently that our ancestors did - with negative consequences quite often. Our body reacts physiologically to the mental and emotional concerns in our mind.

SO WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Although common stresses do not generally overwhelm us, they do elevate our systems frequently, from the first piece of burnt toast in the morning to the minute our exhausted head is lain on the pillow at night. This elevation is what we are working against. Or to be more accurate, it is what is working against us. There would be no long-term problem if we had plenty of time to let our systems return to normal after experiencing an elevation due to stress. Even in the days when our ancestors had to cope with saber-toothed tigers, life-threatening stress situations were not a constant occurrence. There was time to recover from one situation to the next. Today, however, we often go from one small stress situation to another, throughout the day.

After years of this, our bodily responses begin to take longer and longer to return to normal levels. We lose our ability to recover rapidly. This often results in the elevated state becoming our "normal" state - our blood pressure is chronically high as more than normal acid is regularly poured into our stomach and causes an ulcer.

The experience of stress symptoms leads us to a very important point: Our perception of events causes the physiological changes within our body. When we interpret a situation as stressful, our body reacts as if the stress were a physical threat and the body systems become stressed too. Under an overload of continual stress, some of the systems begin to eat down or even break. When the breakdown occurs, we become ill. We have in fact made ourselves sick!

If we can learn to make ourselves ill, can we reverse the process and learn to make ourselves well? The answer suggested by Stress Management and Wellness approaches is,
"Yes, the process can be reversed." To a great extent we can learn to regulate our minds and our bodies voluntarily so that we respond appropriately to the stressors in our environment. We can learn to cope effectively with stress once we identify what stressors we encounter in our daily living, our typical responses to them, and effective techniques to reduce their effect on us.
IDENTIFICATION OF PERSONAL STRESSORS

The first step in reducing stress is to become aware of the major sources of stress in your life. Although you are probably aware of the major ongoing environmental stresses in your life, you are likely to underestimate how many stressful changes occur every day to which you are forced to adjust. In order to become aware of the amount of stress you have had in the last year, please fill out and then score the following "Schedule of Recent Experience." This schedule was prepared by Thomas Holmes, M.D. at the University of Washington School of Medicine, Seattle, Washington.

Schedule of Recent Experience

Instruction: Think back on each possible life event listed below, and decide if it happened to you within the last year. If the event did happen, check the box next to it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(check here)</th>
<th>(score points)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Death of a spouse</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Death of a close family member</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Death of a close friend</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Jail term</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Final year or first year in college</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Pregnancy (to you or caused by you)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Severe personal illness or injury</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Any interpersonal problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Financial difficulties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Arguments with your roommate</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Major disagreements with your family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Major change in personal habits</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Change in living environment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Beginning or ending a job</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Problems with your boss or professor</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Outstanding personal achievement</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Failure in some course</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Final exams</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Increased or decreased dating</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Change in working conditions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Change in your major</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Change in your sleeping habits</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Several day vacation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Change in eating habits</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Family reunion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Change in recreational activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Minor illness or injury</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Minor violations of the law</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Major change in church activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Sexual difficulties</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>In-law troubles</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Gaining a new family member</td>
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<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Divorce</td>
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<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Marital separation from spouse</td>
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<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>Being fired from work</td>
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<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Marital or relationship reconciliation</td>
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<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Mortgage or loan over $10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Mortgage or loan less than $10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>Major change in health of family member</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Your total score___
Schedule of Recent Experience

Scoring

The "score points" for each life event are listed below. Write in the score points for those events that happened to you. Add up the score points to get your total.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Event</th>
<th>Score Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2</td>
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The more change you have, the more likely you are to get sick. Of those people with a score of over 300 for the past year, almost 80 percent get sick in the near future; with a score of 150 to 299, about 50 percent get sick in the near future; and with a score of less than 150, only about 30 percent get sick in the near future. So, the higher your score, the harder you should work to stay well.

Copyright 1976 by Thomas H. Holmes
Preventive Measures

The following suggestions can help you use the Schedule of Recent Experience for the maintenance of your health and prevention of illness:

1. Become familiar with the life events and the amount of change they require.
2. Put the Schedule where you, your family, or your roommates can see it several times a day.
3. With practice you can recognize when a life event happens.
4. Think about the meaning of the event for you and try to identify some of the feelings you experience.
5. Think about the different ways you might best adjust to the event.
6. Take your time in arriving at decisions.
7. If possible, anticipate life changes and plan for them well in advance.
8. Pace yourself. It can be done even if you are in a hurry.
9. Look at the accomplishment of a task as a part of daily living and avoid looking at such accomplishments as a "stopping point" or a time for letting down.
10. Utilize the "Individual Reactions to Stress" checklist to ascertain how you, personally, react to stressors in your environment and everyday life.
11. Consider which or what kind of lifestyle changes you may be able to make in order to reduce the negative or maladaptive reactions you have to stressors.
CHECKLIST FOR INDIVIDUAL REACTIONS TO STRESS*

An important aspect of effective stress management is the ability to identify one's own reactions to stress. Stress reactions/symptoms are very individualized and how one person reacts to stress in their life may be totally different from someone else. Listed below are common stress reactions. To help you begin understanding your ability to deal with stress effectively put a check by those symptoms you commonly experience in reaction to stress in your life.

**BEHAVIORAL REACTIONS**

- Decreased productivity
- Increased mistakes
- Poor Judgment
- Forgetfulness & Blocking
- Excessive daydreaming
- Poor Concentration
- Reduced Creativity
- Increased use of Alcohol and/or Drugs
- Increased Smoking
- Increased Illness
- Lethargy
- Loss of Interest
- Accident Proneness
- Increased Clumsiness

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**COGNITIVE/EMOTIONAL REACTIONS**

- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Jaw Tension (Bruxism)
- Muscle Spasms
- Muscle Tics, Tremors
- Back Pain
- Heart Pounding

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**PHYSICAL REACTIONS**

- Elevated Blood Pressure
- Increased Muscle Tension
  (Neck, Shoulders, Back)
- Elevated Pulse & Respiration
- Moist or Sweaty Palms
- Cold Hands or Feet
- Headaches
- Upset Stomach
- Ulcers
- Digestive Problems
- Change in Appetite
- Increased Frequency of Urination
- Restlessness, Inability to sit still
- Insomnia, Difficulty in Falling Asleep or Frequent Awakening
- Fatigue
- Irritable Bowels

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**Specific to Situations (Tests, Deadlines, Interviews, etc.)**

- Anxiety
- Specific to Interpersonal Situations (dating, friends, boss, spouse, etc.)
- Constantly Forgetting
- Confusion

*IMPORTANT: Physical symptoms may have physiological causes and should always be checked by a medical doctor. This is especially true for any type of chronic condition.

Adapted from Claus and Bailey Living with stress and promoting well-being: A handbook for nurses 1980
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMPTOMS</th>
<th>Exercise</th>
<th>Rest</th>
<th>Nutrition</th>
<th>Progressive Relaxation</th>
<th>Breathing</th>
<th>Biofeedback</th>
<th>Communication Skills</th>
<th>Conflict Resolution</th>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
<th>Coping Skills Training</th>
<th>Assertiveness Training</th>
<th>Time Management</th>
<th>Cognitive Reappraisal</th>
<th>Thought Stopping</th>
<th>Group Involvement</th>
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<td>Insecurity, low esteem</td>
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This chart and the one on the next page gives you a general guide for different techniques that are useful for stress reduction. Remember that each individual reacts to stress differently and to stress reduction techniques differently. Use this chart to find commonly used techniques for the stress symptoms listed. Remember, all physical conditions should be evaluated by a medical doctor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMPTOMS</th>
<th>EXERCISE</th>
<th>REST</th>
<th>NUTRITION</th>
<th>PROGRESSIVE RELAXATION</th>
<th>BREATHING</th>
<th>AUTGENICS</th>
<th>IMAGERY</th>
<th>MEDITATION</th>
<th>SELF HYPNOSIS</th>
<th>MASSAGE</th>
<th>BIOFEEDBACK</th>
<th>COMM. SKILLS</th>
<th>CONFLICT RESOLUTION</th>
<th>PROB. SOLVING</th>
<th>COPING SKILLS TRAINING</th>
<th>ASSERTIVE TRAINING</th>
<th>AFFIRMATIVE MGT.</th>
<th>COGNITIVE REAPPRAISAL</th>
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<td>SYMPTOMS</td>
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<td>TECHNIQUES THAT FOCUS ON THE MIND AND COGNITIVE PROCESSES</td>
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<td>Exercise</td>
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<td>Progressive Relaxation</td>
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<td>Autogenic</td>
<td>Imagery</td>
<td>Meditation</td>
<td>Self Hypnosis</td>
<td>Massage</td>
<td>Biofeedback</td>
<td>Com m. Skills</td>
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</table>

* - Most effective techniques for a particular symptom.

* - Helpful techniques for a particular symptom.

* Portions for this chart were adapted from Davis, Eshelman, & McKay *The Relaxation & Stress Reduction Workbook*, 1980.
EXPLANATIONS OF STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

Exercise

Not only will exercise help you to be more physically fit, and so better able to cope with stress, but a psychological stance is taken as well when you deliberately put aside time in your life to exercise and demonstrate self-care.

Some exercises can be done at work with the advantage that their effect will be felt immediately. Stretching is one of the simplest ways to relax the muscles that contract during stress. You should be careful, however, not to stretch more than is comfortable. Concentrate on the particular muscles being stretched until you feel them begin to pull and then hold that position for a few seconds. Remember, though, that they are not to hurt. It may be that from one session to another you stretch no more than a fraction of an inch. Whatever stretching you do, whether it is toe touching, side bends, or neck circling, do it slowly and deliberately.

Rest

PCS offers some suggestions for a restful nights sleep, which usually means 7 or 8 hours. Suggestions for getting to sleep more quickly, sleeping more soundly, and waking more refreshed are as follows:

* Don’t go to bed unless you are sleepy, and when you are sleepy, go to bed.
* If you eat before bedtime, let it be a light snack, and avoid stimulants such as coffee, tea, and cola drinks (even smoking).
* Exercises should be stretching or isometrics, since they cause the muscles to relax totally afterward.
* If there is any unresolved business or conflicts, try to resolve it before going to bed.

Nutrition

The role of nutrition in health and disease has attracted much interest during the past several decades. Not only have scientists expanded their research efforts to relevant studies of human subjects, but the public has become much more "fitness conscious" and simultaneously concerned about the quality of the diet. With progress and expanded technology has come concern about the "refinement" of natural foods. With reduction in jobs requiring physical exertion has come increased worry about controlling body weight. Nutrition supplements have become quite popular, with magical properties being assigned to some. Dietary manipulation is the key therapeutic approach to many disease states: it compliments and often even replaces drug therapy. The number of therapeutic diet modifications is almost unlimited. It is important to consult with a medical professional prior to starting a diet.

Progressive Relaxation

You cannot have the feeling of warm well-being in your body and at the same time experience psychological stress. Progressive relaxation of your muscles reduces pulse rate and blood pressure as well as decreasing perspiration and respiration rates. Deep muscle relaxation, when successfully mastered, can be used as an anti-anxiety pill.

The technique is based on the premise that the body responds to anxiety provoking thoughts and events with muscle tension. This physiological tension, in turn, increases the subjective experience of anxiety. Deep muscle relaxation reduces physiological tension and is incompatible with anxiety: the habit of responding with one blocks the habit of responding with the other.
Breathing

Breathing is essential for life. Proper breathing is an antidote to stress. Although we all breathe, few of us retain the habit of natural full breathing experienced by an infant or by primitive man.

When you inhale, air is drawn in through your nose and warmed by the mucous membranes of your nasal passages. The bristly hairs of your nostrils filter out impurities, which are expelled on the next exhalation.

Diaphragmatic breathing is the preferred method of breathing for optimum operation of the respiratory system. Although you can voluntarily expand and contract your diaphragm, it operates largely on an automatic basis. When the diaphragm laxes, the lungs contract and air is forced out.

When an insufficient amount of fresh air reaches your lungs, your blood is not properly purified or oxygenated. Poorly oxygenated blood contributes to anxiety states, depression and fatigue, and makes each stressful situation many times harder to cope with. Proper breathing habits are essential for good mental and physical health.

Autogenics

Autogenics training is a systematic program that will teach your body and mind to respond quickly and effectively to your verbal commands to relax and return to a balanced, normal state. It is one of the most effective and comprehensive reducers of chronic stress. The goal of autogenics training is to normalize your physical, mental and emotional processes which get out of balance due to stress. Essentially, all you have to do is relax, undisturbed, in a comfortable position and concentrate passively on verbal formulas suggesting warmth and heaviness in your limbs.

Imagery

You can significantly reduce stress with something enormously powerful: your imagination. The power of the imagination far exceeds that of the will. It is hard to will yourself into a relaxed state, but you can imagine relaxation spreading through your body, and you can imagine yourself in a safe and beautiful retreat. Because the mind responds almost as well to symbolic stimuli as it does to actual stimuli, this technique can be effective means of reducing stress. By visualizing, for example, a quiet scene, it is possible for you to become more tranquil yourself, almost as if it were actually being experienced.

Meditation

For thousands of years members of almost all cultures have sought inner peace and harmony through one form or another of meditation. Generally, meditation has been associated with religious doctrines and disciplines as a means of becoming one with God or the universe, finding enlightenment, achieving selflessness, and other virtues. It is, however, a well documented fact that meditation can be practiced independently of any religious or philosophical orientation, purely as a means of reducing inner discord and increasing self-knowledge.

Self-hypnosis

Self-hypnosis is a powerful weapon to counteract stress and stress-related illness. It is one of the fastest, easiest methods of inducing relaxation. In some ways, hypnosis is very similar to sleep: There is a narrowing of consciousness, accompanies by inertia an passivity. But unlike sleep, there is never a complete loss of awareness. With self-hypnosis you can enter a trance and enjoy its therapeutic properties without trauma or injury. You can gain increased control of your emotions and improve concentration on tasks. Relaxation and calm can exist side-by-side clearheaded focus and intense mental activity.
Massage

One of the most direct and pleasant ways of lessening muscle tension is by massage. Although it is nicer to be massaged by another person, you can do it yourself just as easily. Often there is considerable muscle tension in the neck and shoulders, and massage of these areas is especially helpful in reducing tension.

Biofeedback

Biofeedback is a scientifically-based, self-therapeutic technique that has proved successful when used by people suffering from a variety of illnesses and disorders. The simplest definition is this: it is information about an individual’s biological functions. With biofeedback, the person takes an active role in their treatment by training and learning how to voluntarily regulate the bodily function that is causing the problem. Biofeedback training is using instrument feedback to learn how to make changes voluntarily in whatever process is being monitored. By watching an instrument give continuous measurements of a body function a person can experiment with different thoughts, feelings, and sensations and get immediate feedback on their physical effects. Voluntary self-regulation - the goal of biofeedback training - is the ability to achieve the bodily changes without the feedback instrument.

Communication Skills

"Do you mean what you say or do you say what you mean?" This quote from Lewis Carroll’s Alice in Wonderland sums up the difficulty of effective communication. Yet no other aspect of interpersonal relationships is so important. Although communication can be by virtually any means that conveys information to another, whether or not it is effective depends on those data being understood. Speaking precisely on listening carefully is not easy. Often, in formulating a response, one does not always listen to what has been said or listens to details instead of the essential message. Such selective perception, misunderstanding, and this can lead to stressful reactions. it can be reduced, however, if you are an unambiguous and specific in your statements as possible. Depending on the response of the listener, you should be able to determine how well you are communicating.

Conflict Resolution

An obvious first step in conflict resolution is the assumption that those involved be willing to change. Because the issues presumably are important enough to disagree over attaining even this first step may be difficult. Conflict can be conducive to growth and, in that sense, is healthy. In attempting to alleviate the tension of frustration that arises from individual differences over matters of importance, you are obliged to take some form of action. That action is what causes you to grow; it forces change and increases the rate at which it occurs. Assuming that change is possible and there is a mutual desire to resolve the conflict, several other things can be done as well. Open dialogue should be encouraged. You should not only explain and clarify your own position but thoughtfully listen to the explanation of the other person, which will have the effect of clarifying the area of disagreement (and agreement).

Problem Solving

Most obviously, a problem must actually be one if a solution is to be found for it. Pseudoproblems, or problems that are vaguely stated or imagined goals that are impractical and unreachable, can only compound the issue. It should be remembered, too, that some problems may have no solution and cannot, themselves, be changed. Solutions also may be misdirected and so rendered ineffectual. Commonsense and logical attempts to solve a problem
Problem Solving (Con’t)

may fail. For this reason, often it is helpful to use a process of "reframing" as a means of problem resolution, in which the meaning attributed to the situation is changed. In addition, goals should be sufficiently specific so that they can be used later to determine the effectiveness of the solution, and the problem should be perceived accurately enough to permit an appropriate response to it.

Coping Skills Training

Coping skills training teaches you to relax away anxiety and stress reactions. It provides a greater ability for self-control in the particular situation which you find anxiety provoking. Coping skills training provides rehearsal in imagination for the real life events you find distressing. You learn to relax in the imagined scenes, and are thereafter prepared to relax away tension when under fire, when facing deadlines, when problem solving, etc. Eventually, self-relaxation procedures and stress coping thoughts become automatic in any stressful situation.

Assertiveness Training

How you interact with others can be a source of considerable stress in your life. Assertiveness training can reduce that stress by teaching you to stand up for your legitimate rights, without bullying others or letting them bully you. You are assertive when you stand up for your rights in such a way that the rights of others are not violated. Beyond just demanding your rights, you can express your personal likes and interests spontaneously. You can talk about yourself without being self-conscious. You can disagree with someone openly, you can ask for clarification, and you can say no. In short, when you are an assertive person, you can be more relaxed in interpersonal situations.

Time Management

Time can be thought of as an endless series of decisions - small and large - that gradually change the shape of your life. Inappropriate decisions produce frustration, lowered self-esteem and stress. All methods of time management can be reduced to three steps: 1) You can establish priorities that highlight your most important goals, and that allow you to base your decisions on what is important and what is not. 2) You can create time by realistic scheduling and the elimination of low priority tasks. 3) You can learn to make basic decisions.

Cognitive Reappraisal

Almost every minute of your conscious life you are engaging in self-talk, your internal thought language. These are the sentences with which you describe and interpret the world. If the self-talk is accurate and in touch with reality, you function well. If it is irrational and untrue, then you experience stress and emotional disturbance. One well founded thesis is that emotions have nothing to do with actual events. In between the event and emotion is realistic or unrealistic self-talk. It is the self-talk that produces the emotions. Your own thoughts, directed and controlled by you, are what create anxiety, anger, and depression. By utilizing techniques of cognitive reappraisal, changing one’s self-talk, through reframing and restructuring your belief systems, we can help alleviate much of the stress we experience.
Thought Stopping

Thought stopping can help you overcome the nagging worrying and doubt which stands in the way of relaxation. It was adapted for the treatment of obsessive-and phobic-thoughts. Thought stopping involves concentrating on the unwanted thoughts and, after a short time, suddenly stopping and emptying your mind. The comment "stop" or aloud noise is generally used to interrupt the unpleasant thoughts. It has been well documented that negative and frightening emotions. If the thoughts can be controlled, overall stress levels can be significantly reduced.

Group Involvement and Process

The functions within a group have been characterized and usually are regarded as one of two types, although neither alone is sufficient in itself to meet all the needs of the group. "Task functions" are those which help the group achieve its goals and include giving and asking members for, suggestions and information as well as clarifying and summarizing information that already has been given. "Maintenance functions" are those which facilitate the working relationship of the group so that those tasks can be accomplished, such as encouraging members to contribute to the group and being responsive to their comments. It is often difficult to perform both functions at the same time, however, they are necessary for the group to work constructively. For you to keep both in mind and take them on when necessary will help ensure that the group does so also. It is important for you to be able to be aware of how groups operate in order to understand how you, yourself interact with groups.
SOME BRIEF RELAXATION EXERCISES

Below are listed some brief relaxation exercises that you may wish to employ anytime during your day—in between classes, before exams, while studying, before a presentation or speech, prior to a big date or an appointment.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS: For all of these exercises, it is best to be seated, eyes closed, feet flat on the floor or crossed at the ankles, and hands resting comfortably in the lap. Begin each exercise with a deep breathe that you let out gently. As you let it out, feel yourself beginning to relax already. Gentle Arousal: After the exercise, slowly and gently activate by breathing a little more deeply, wiggling your fingers and toes, and opening your eyes at your own rate.

EXERCISE I:

Tense-Relax (General directions first) Clench your fists. While keeping them clenched, pull your forearms tightly up against your upper arms. While keeping those muscles tense, tense all the muscles in your legs. While keeping all those tense, clench your jaws and shut your eyes fairly tight...not too tightly. Now while holding all those tense, take a deep breath and hold it for 5 seconds.....Then, let everything go all at once. Feel yourself letting go of all your tensions. Just enjoy that feeling for a minute as your muscles let go more and more.

Actually, if we had a finely-tuned electromyograph hooked up to you measuring the level of tension in your muscles, it would show that you relax more and more and more for up to 20 minutes. Just enjoy focusing, gently, on letting go (Arouse gently).

EXERCISE II:

Heaviness and Warmth (General directions first) Just imagine that your feet and legs are getting heavier and heavier and warmer and warmer. It's almost as if you are wearing some lead boots. Feet and legs heavy and warm, heavy and warm. Now, imagine your stomach and the whole central portion of your body getting warm...warm and relaxed. My forehead is cool...cool...relaxed and cool. And my breathing is regular...easy and regular. Just feel the warm and heaviness spread all over the body. (Arouse gently).

EXERCISE III:

Breathing Your Body Away (General directions first) Gently focus your attention on your feet and legs. Be aware of all the sensations from your feet and legs. Now, inhale a long, slow breath, and as you do, breathe in all the sensations from your feet and legs. In your mind’ eye, imagine that you are erasing this part of your body. Now, as you exhale, breathe out all those sensations. Once again, breathe in your feet and legs, and exhale if from your body, so that, in your mind you can see only from your hips up. Now, with another long breath, breathe in all the parts of your body to your neck, and, as you exhale, breathe it away....Now, beginning with your fingers, breathe in your fingers, hands,wrists and arms, and exhale them away....Now, your neck and head....as you breathe in, imagine your neck and head being erased and, now, breathe them away. Let's go back over the whole body in one breath, beginning with the feet. A long slow breath in, and as you do, erase any little parts that still remain. Now, a long slow breath out, as you exhale all the remaining parts. Just sit quietly for a minute and enjoy feeling yourself relax deeper and deeper. (Gently arouse)
EXERCISE IV:

A Favorite Scene, Place or Person (General directions first) As you’re sitting quietly, recall, in your mind, the most relaxing thought you can. Perhaps it’s a favorite place, a vacation spot or favorite retreat of some sort; or it might be a person with whom you feel at peace, or some scene—a meadow, or whatever works for you. Take a few seconds to get that in mind.....Now, see or imagine that in your mind. Be sure to feel those good feelings you have when you are in that place. Just let them take over your whole awareness....If your thoughts wander, just take them gently back to that peaceful, relaxing place. (Arouse gently)

EXERCISE V:

Ideal Relaxation (General directions first) With your eyes closed, take a moment to create, in your mind’s eye, an ideal spot for relaxation. You can make it any place real or imagined and furnish it any way you want. Wear the clothes you are most comfortable in. Enjoy, now, in your own mind, going there. You’ll want to feel at ease and mellow as you lounge in your ideal place for relaxation. Just enjoy it for a minute...(Gentle arousal)

EXERCISE VI:

Cool Air In, Warm Air Out (General directions first) With your eyes closed, and while relaxing quietly, gently focus on the end of your nose. As you breathe in, feel the air coming in the tip of your nose. As you breathe out, feel the air coming out the tip of your nose...Notice that the air coming in is cooler than the air going out...Gently focus on the cool air coming in, and the warm air going out. As your attention wanders, just gently bring it back to the tip of your nose...(Gentle arousal)

EXERCISE VII:

Focus on a Word (General directions first) Pick some word which has "good" vibrations associated with it for you—a word which you associate with relaxation, comfort, peace. It could be a word such as "serenity" or "cool, peaceful, joy, free," etc...Now, just let that word hold the center of your thoughts. As your mind wanders to more stressful thoughts, gently bring it back to that word...After a while, perhaps your mind will drift to other gentling, restful thoughts. If so, just let it wander...When it does drift to stressful thoughts, move back to your original word. (Gentle arousal)

EXERCISE VIII:

Something for Use Anywhere (General directions first) With practice, you will become more adept at relaxing, while awake, anywhere. As you do, here’s a way to let yourself relax while going about your day. You can do it while walking, sitting in class, taking a test, on a date, etc. First, smile. Yes, smile to remind yourself that you don’t actually have all the care of the world on your shoulder—Only a few of them. Then, take a long deep breath, and let it out. Now, take a second long deep breath, and as you let it out, feel yourself releasing the tensions in your mind and in your body. Just let yourself relax more and more, as you continue whatever you were doing. (Gentle arousal)
SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO DEAL WITH TENSION*

TALK IT OUT
Find a confidant, whether clergy, relative, friend, or doctor, and release those worries instead of keeping them bottled up. This talking it out often provides a solution.

ESCAPE
Lose yourself in a good book, or movie, or game, or take in a change of scenery with a brief trip. You won’t solve problems by standing there and suffering. But be prepared to return and lead with the problem when you are in a better frame of mind.

WORK OFF ANGER
Don’t lash out at a provoker; let the impulse pass. Instead, use your energy doing something constructive, like cleaning the house, or taking a walk, or playing tennis.

GIVE IN OCCASIONALLY
Even if right, it is sometimes easier on the system to yield a little; others may yield in response.

TAKE ONE THING AT A TIME
An ordinary workload can sometimes seem unbearable if you are under tension. Remember is will pass; it is temporary. Take the more urgent tasks, do them, then go to the next.

SHUN THE SUPERMAN URGE
Don’t expect too much from yourself. A constant state of worry will be the result. No one is perfect. Put your energy into those things you do well and will give the most satisfaction.

GO EASY WITH YOUR CRITICISM
Some persons expect too much of others, and feel let down when the other person does not measure up. Instead of criticizing, search out the other person’s good points and help him to develop them.

GIVE THE OTHER FELLOW A BREAK
When people are under emotional tension, they often feel that they have to "get there first" to edge out the other person, no matter if the goal is as trivial as getting ahead on the highway.

MAKE YOURSELF AVAILABLE
Many persons feel they are left out, slighted, neglected and rejected. The fact is others may be eager for us to make the first move. It is possible we are deprecating ourselves. It would be healthier to make some of the overtures instead of always waiting to be asked.

SCHEDULE YOUR RECREATION
Many persons drive themselves so hard they leave too little time for fun. They find it difficult to take the time. A set routine and schedule would help them. It generally is desirable for almost everybody to have a hobby that takes in their off-hours time; one in which they can throw themselves totally, forgetting work.

* The National Association for Mental Health
INSTRUCTIONS FOR DAILY STRESS LOG

The first step in effectively understanding yourself and your reactions to stress is to establish your typical stressors and your reactions to them. To aid in this, keep a daily log or diary of stressful reactions you encounter during the week. This will help you identify potential stressors and also give you a reference point for evaluating your progress in reducing stress in your life. Remember, behavior usually changes slowly but your reactions to stressful situations can change with time and practice.

Keep a log of your stress behaviors over the next few weeks on the "Daily Stress Log." It consists of four parts.

1. **The Category of Stress:** Most stressors can be classified under the following:
   - **Fear** - Whatever you perceive fear to be
   - **Ambiguity** - Unfamiliar situation such as meeting new people or going to new places
   - **Overload** - Too much stimulus (noise, bills, deadlines, etc)
   - **Underload** - Not enough stimulus (boredom, depression)
   - **Life Changes** - Major happenings of life both positive and negative (marriage, death in family, new semester, new job, etc)

2. **Time of Day the Stressor is Experienced**

3. **Your Reaction to the Stressor:** Ask yourself, "How am I reacting to this situation, thought, etc?" Possible reactions might be:
   - **Tension** - headaches, tightness in different body parts, soreness
   - **Aggression** - Physical, verbal (ridicule, sarcasm) or displacement (taking it out on someone else or yourself.
   - **Withdrawal** - Either physically or mentally
   - **Cognitive Reappraisal** - Redefining the situation, taking another viewpoint
   - **Relaxation** - Recognizing tension and deliberately relaxing (practicing a relaxation technique)

4. **Comments** - Writing any comments about your feelings or thoughts that may help you understand your behavior.

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<th>Category of Stressor</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Your Reaction to Stressor</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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## DAILY STRESS LOG

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RELAXATION TRAINING

REFERENCES and SUGGESTED READING


Friedman, Meyer and Rosenman, Ray H., Type A Behavior Pattern and Your Heart.  Greenwich, Conn.: lawcett Publication, 1974.


Anxiety Management
PASS: Programs for Academic Success Skills
Student Counseling Service
A Department in the Division of Student Affairs

Texas A&M University

Presents

A Self-Help Guide for
TEST ANXIETY
DO YOU REALLY HAVE TEST ANXIETY?

Test anxiety is different than simply being nervous about the testing situation. Everyone gets nervous when taking a test and many get anxious even thinking about a test. However, for some people, the testing situation is so anxiety provoking they may completely "blank out" or perform significantly below their level of knowledge. Three factors are necessary in order to do well in a testing situation:

1. **Preparation.** Your knowledge and preparation by studying are basic to doing well. You may panic in a test due to incomplete knowledge or from not having studied enough. This panic is not true test anxiety. If you need help managing your time and developing effective study habits, consider attending one of the academic workshops provided by the Student Counseling Service (SCS) or come by the SCS library and read the books in the academic section (purple section).

2. **Test-Taking Skills.** The second factor in effective test performance is your test-taking skill. Familiarity with testing formats and good test-taking strategies are essential to your academic success. The SCS library contains materials on developing test-taking skills. The SCS also offers a one-hour workshop on test-taking strategies. Also, A&M offers a two-credit hour course, Educational Psychology 101, to assist you in developing better study, test-taking, and reading skills.

3. **Emotional State.** The third component to effective test-taking is your emotional state. It takes a calm and controlled emotional state for your memory and judgement to work most effectively. This hand-out will help you to learn how to reduce your anxiety in testing situations.

OVERCOMING TEST ANXIETY

Two major factors are involved in test anxiety:
1) your mental reaction (i.e., what you tell yourself about the situation) and
2) your physical response to an anxiety-producing situation.

This self-help guide will provide you with specific suggestions and exercises designed to help you overcome both aspects of test anxiety.

**Negative Thinking**

Many students with test anxiety make a tense situation (e.g., an exam) worse by making negative self-statements. You tell yourself you are not prepared. You fantasize about terrible outcomes. You worry about getting nervous (which, of course, makes you even more nervous). Instead of concentration on the task at hand (i.e., the exam), you begin to doubt your own self-worth, your intelligence, and your goals. You begin to think about your whole career being doomed because of this one test.

These are "self-fulfilling prophesies" and are self-defeating. You need a feeling of calm competence and confidence to do your best. If you tell yourself you are an incompetent person, it is very likely a part of you will begin to believe that you are incompetent. You will begin to act on your believe and begin to behave incompetently.
Listed below are some examples of self-defeating statements:

I can't concentrate on this test.
I'll never be able to succeed. What will become of me?
My parents will be so disappointed if I fail, and they won't love me as much.
If I blow this exam, it's my whole career, my whole life down the tubes.
If I don't know the answers to these first three questions, I'm probably going to flunk the entire exam.

On the lines below list some of your own self-defeating statements. Some will be general (e.g., "I'm stupid.") while others will be very specific (e.g., "I'll never get the hang of differential equations.").

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

Awareness.
Identify your own negative statements. You may have been doing this so long you are almost unaware of what your statements to yourself are. Formulate these fears into concrete statements and write them down.

Consequences.
Take the statement, "If I blow this whole test, it will be my whole life, my whole career down the tubes." Note the consequences of concentrating on this statements (i.e., "If I continue to think about my whole life right now, I won't have time to concentrate on this test!").

Rebuttal.
Now challenge your original statement. You need to actively debate these statements, because, almost without exception, these statements are not absolute and predictable truths. Often by reformulating these statements during your debate, solutions or other possibilities will come to you. For instance, one rebuttal of the original statement that "If I blow this test, it will be my whole career down the tubes" is to state that "No one event determines the rest of my life. I'll concentrate on this test now and worry about the rest of my life at a later time."
Write your self-defeating statements below. Work on identifying the self-defeating consequences of that statement. Now rebut each of your statements with a more realistic, less "catastrophizing," more confidence-producing statement.

Self-Defeating Statement 1:__________________________________________________________

Consequences of Statement 1:_______________________________________________________

Rebuttal of Statement 1:____________________________________________________________

Self-Defeating Statement 2:________________________________________________________

Consequences of Statement 2:_______________________________________________________

Rebuttal of Statement 2:____________________________________________________________

Self-Defeating Statement 3:________________________________________________________

Consequences of Statement 3:_______________________________________________________

Rebuttal of Statement 3:____________________________________________________________

Self-Defeating Statement 4:________________________________________________________

Consequences of Statement 4:_______________________________________________________

Rebuttal of Statement 4:____________________________________________________________

Self-Defeating Statement 5:________________________________________________________

Consequences of Statement 5:_______________________________________________________

Rebuttal of Statement 5:____________________________________________________________
Positive Self-Talk as a Way to Reverse Negative Thinking

Begin to develop positive self-statements. Athletes know it is essential to "psyche yourself up" for a big game. Academic situations are no different. Some of the statements will be more general, such as "I know that with practice I'll learn to manage my test anxiety." Preferably, many will be quite specific, such as "If the person next to me starts popping his/her gum, I'll repeat to myself 'relax,' 'calm,' and take a deep breath to calm myself." List some positive self-statements below. Make some general ones, but make most of them specific to your trouble areas.

1. __________________________________________

2. __________________________________________

3. __________________________________________

4. __________________________________________

5. __________________________________________

6. __________________________________________

7. __________________________________________

8. __________________________________________

9. __________________________________________

10. __________________________________________

Negative Thought Stopping Technique

Another technique for changing your negative self-talk habit is to wear a rubber band around your wrist. When you catch yourself making a negative self-statement, snap the rubber band hard enough to smart (but not hard enough to cause a bruise!) and immediately make three positive self-statements.

Since you have been making negative self-statements for a long time, it is necessary to practice these techniques on a consistent basis in order to change this old behavior. Make a commitment to repeat positive self-statements to yourself several times a day. Be sure to read these positive statements before you study and before taking an exam.
YOUR PHYSICAL RESPONSE

Whenever you perceive a situation as threatening (which is why your thoughts are so important), your body immediately goes into a state of alert. You become ready for battle. This state may be characterized by any of the following symptoms:

- Sweaty palms or cold, clammy hands and feet
- Feeling your heart beating hard and/or rapidly
- Tense, acid stomach or feeling “butterflies”
- Shallow, rapid breathing
- Tenseness in neck, arms, face
- Feeling shaky or faint
- Blurred vision
- Squeaky voice

Check your symptoms above and list any other physical symptoms in the “other” space.

RELAXATION TRAINING

When you are under stress and anxious, your body prepares for a physical threat and gets ready for a “fight or flight” response. Engaging in physical activity often alleviates this arousal situation, but you can’t jog in the classroom during a test!

Relaxation training serves three purposes: 1) Even with minimal skills, you can reverse many of the above physical symptoms, if they are due to anxiety; 2) If you practice regularly, your overall level of tenseness will be less (i.e., your starting point before an anxiety-producing event will be at a much calmer and controlled level); and 3) Being skilled at relaxation is the first step in treating true test anxiety. Below are several ways to learn and practice relaxation.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS: For all of these exercises, it is best to be seated, eyes closed, feet flat on the floor or crossed at the ankles, and hands resting comfortably in your lap. Begin each exercise with a deep breath that you let out gently. As you let it out, feel yourself beginning to relax.

GENTLE AROUSAL: After the exercise, slowly and gently activate by breathing a little more deeply, wiggling your fingers and toes, and finally opening your eyes at your own rate.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation.
(Do General Directions first). Clench your fists. While keeping them clenched, pull your forearms tightly against your upper arms. While keeping those muscles tense, tense all the muscles in your legs. While keeping all those tense, clench your jaws and shut your eyes fairly tight... but not too tight. Then, let everything go all at once. Feel yourself letting go of all your tensions. Just enjoy that feeling for a minute as your muscles let go more and more. (Do Gentle Arousal).

Breathing Exercise.
(Do General Directions first). With your eyes closed, and while relaxing quietly, gently focus on the end of your nose. As you breath in, feel the air coming in the tip of your nose. As you breath out, feel the air coming out the tip of your nose. Notice that the air coming in is cooler than the air going out. Gently focus on the cool air coming in and the warm air going out. As your attention wanders, just gently bring it back to the tip of your nose. (Do Gentle Arousal).
Focusing on a Word.

(Do General Directions first). Pick some word which you associate with relaxation, comfort, and peace (e.g., serenity, free, calm, joy, etc.). Now, just let that word hold the center of your thoughts. As you mind wanders to more stressful thoughts, gently bring it back to that word. After a while, perhaps your mind will drift to other gentle, restful thoughts. If so, just let it wander. When is does drift to stressful thoughts, move back to your original word. (Do Gentle Arousal).

Mental Imagery.

The use of mental imagery is a powerful relaxation tool. Develop for yourself a scene in your mind that is calming and soothing (e.g., a mountain meadow, lying on the beach, or whatever works for you). Make this scene as vivid as possible -- What do you see...smell...hear...or feel? Practice relaxing with this mental picture. Here are the steps:

1. Do the General Directions first. Calm your breathing pattern.
2. Take several very slow, very deep breaths. As you exhale, image that you are exhaling tension.
4. Bring into mind you mental picture as vividly as you can. Imagine you are really there. Allow this image to stay in your mind while you continue to relax even more (If you are training yourself to use imagery, stay with this step for 5-10 minutes. If you are using this exercise to relax before or during a test, stay on this step from 30 seconds to 3 minutes.
5. Do Gentle Arousal.

Each time you practice the above exercise, you will relax more quickly. Ideally, your mental image will become so powerful that just bringing this picture to mind will cause an automatic relaxation response in your body and mind.

Systematic Desensitization.

It is impossible to be both relaxed and anxious at the same time. Once you have learned the relaxation response, you can begin to desensitize yourself to anxiety producing thoughts or events (e.g., thinking about tests, taking a test, getting anxious during a test, etc.). Anxiety is a "conditioned" response--things that occur together become linked. You have learned that tests are associated with anxiety. Luckily, you can unlearn this connection.

Write down 10 specific experiences or situations that create anxious feelings about exams. List some mildly anxiety-producing events (e.g., getting the syllabus with the dates for the tests) and some strong anxiety producing events (e.g., inability to answer the first 3 questions on the test).

The next step is to make a "hierarchy"--a list from the least anxiety-producing to the most anxiety-producing item. You may need to rewrite your original list to put them in the correct order. Make the events as detailed as possible. You want the item to create an almost real experience for you when you think of it.
Now you are ready to begin working your way through your hierarchy. You will desensitize yourself to feeling anxious in these situations.

1. Get very relaxed using whatever technique you have found that works best for you.

2. Vividly imagine the situation that is least anxiety producing on your list.

3. The instant you feel yourself tense up, do you relaxation until you feel calm (use muscle tensing/relaxing, calming words, breathing, mental image... whatever works for you).

4. Once you feel relaxed, repeat steps 2 and 3 until you no longer get anxious when imagining that situation on your hierarchy.

5. Repeat steps 1 through 4 until you have desensitized yourself to each item on your hierarchy.

It may take only a couple of times to desensitize each item or it may take 15-20 times, but continue working your way through your hierarchy until you can vividly imagine all of the scenes without experiencing anxiety. Work for about an hour at a time. The more sessions you spend with this, the faster you will get over your text anxiety.
TEST ANXIETY CHECKLIST

___ I have made a list of relaxing and confidence building statements and have practiced them regularly.
___ I have practice relaxation regularly, as well as right before the test.
___ I have my materials organized for the test (e.g., watch, pencils/pen, paper, scantron, calculator, other:
___ I ate a light meal before the test.
___ I slept the night before the test. (If you must cram, do so a couple of nights before the exam, not the night before).
___ I have avoided entering the classroom until the professor arrives to give the test (so I don't have to hear others' last-minute panicking!).
___ I have imagined I am doing my best on the exam. I can see myself looking over the test, writing correct answers, and feeling calm.
___ I have avoided nervous people prior to the test.
___ If I start to feel nervous, I will put my pencil down, make calming and positive
Test Anxiety Checklist

_____ I have made a list of relaxing and confidence building statements and have practiced them regularly.

_____ I have practiced relaxation regularly, as well as right before the test.

_____ I have my materials organized for the test. (watch, pen/pencils, paper, scantron, blue book, calculator, other _____________)

_____ I ate a light meal before the test.

_____ I slept the night before the test. (If you must cram, do so 2 nights before the test)

_____ I have avoided entering the classroom until just as the professor walks in. (So I don’t have to hear others’ last minute panic!)

_____ I have imagined I am doing my best on the exam. I can see myself looking over the test, writing answers, and feeling calm.

_____ I have avoided nervous people prior to the test.

_____ If I start to feel nervous, I will put my pencil down and make calming, positive statements while practicing my relaxation for a minute or so.
Managing Your Anxiety

(Adapted from LASSI Instructional Module)

Anxiety: The perception of threat or expectation of future discomfort, suffering, or negative consequences that worries, alerts, or otherwise activates us.

Notice that anxiety is a perception or expectation. It is not an event or situation. It is your perception, which is based on a belief or expectation that leads to anxiety. The event or situation does not create the anxiety. It is not an upcoming exam that creates anxiety; it is our perception that "we are not prepared" or that "we will not be prepared" that can lead to high anxiety.

The good news is that because anxiety comes from our beliefs and because we can change our beliefs, anxiety is something that we can manage. Managing school-related anxiety often leads to a more positive attitude toward college and improved academic performance.

Anxiety is an emotion that everyone feels at one time or another. But just because anxiety happens to everyone does not mean that you cannot find ways to manage it. Each of us has the ability to:

- become aware of how we feel,
- reflect on our experiences, beliefs, and expectations, and
- change our negative emotions by changing some of these beliefs and expectations.

The ABC Model Of Anxiety

To give you a better idea of what anxiety is and how it functions in causing academic problems, we have adapted a model to demonstrate the relationship between its three components, A, B, and C. The diagram summarizes the ABC Model of Anxiety.

Example: A Student With Low Anxiety
Exercise: 1

Step 1: Identify an event (A) that may trigger anxiety:

Step 2: Identify some of the negative beliefs (B) that you have about (A):

Step 3: Identify how you feel (C) based on those beliefs (B):

Learning to reduce anxious feelings and beliefs is critical for managing anxiety and its negative consequences. Here are some of the specific ways that you can reduce your anxiety.

Using Positive Self-Talk
Here are some examples of more realistic or positive self-talk:

- "When I do one thing at a time, before I know it, it is all done."
- "I'm a good student." "I am smart." "I am confident about my ability."
- "I am well-prepared." "I always have enough time to complete everything I need to do."
- "I usually do well on tests." "I am becoming more and more relaxed about taking tests."
- "Making an A on the test would be nice, but a B is a realistic expectation."
- "Math may not be my best subject, but I am prepared for this test."

Exercise 2: Based on the previous exercise, what are some positive self-statements you could use to challenge your original negative belief?

Thought Stopping

Thought stopping is an excellent and usually very effective method for cutting back on negative thinking that occurs when you experience anxiety. As soon as negative self-talk comes to mind, you mentally yell, "Stop!" to yourself. Next, relax for a few moments and either switch to more positive or realistic self-talk or
get back to work, whichever is more appropriate. By doing this, you are more likely to stop negative thoughts before they put you in a panic state.

**Give Yourself Permission To Worry Later**

If you find yourself feeling anxious, tell yourself, "It won't do me any good to worry about it now. I promise that I will give myself permission to worry after I'm finished with what I'm doing." By allowing ourselves the opportunity to think about it later, we can free ourselves temporarily of the anxiety. In fact, often what will happen is that we then forget whatever we were originally anxious over.

Giving ourselves permission to worry later when something has to get done gives a "voice" to our concerns and fears but not in a way that is debilitating. It lets us get our work done and gives us a chance later to think about what is bothering us. Then we might change our beliefs or change the situation to reduce our anxiety.

**Other Anxiety Reducing Ideas**

- Start a regular exercise program or join a recreational sports team. You will be more likely to stay with the activity if you choose one you really enjoy rather than one that seems like drudgery.
- Develop your own personal style of getting things done in a calm, orderly way. Whenever possible, take on projects one at a time and work on them until completed.
- Find a friend, counselor, or family member with whom you can talk. It's extremely helpful to get negative feelings off your chest.
- Write in a journal. If you don't really like talking about your feelings with someone, this is extremely helpful for expressing your negative emotions. Often, by getting them down on paper, you will reduce their effects on your mind and body.

**Exercise 3: What are some other healthy things you do, or can do, when you get stressed?**

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

Bring your feedback to discuss with your counselor on ____________________.

General Suggestions for Taking Tests

1. Plan your arrival so that you have plenty of time. Be sure to check your test taking material prior to leaving for the exam. (Showing up for an exam late or without a pencil is a sure way to focus unfavorable attention on yourself.)

2. Read all directions. Underline key words in the directions that give indication as to how your answers are to be recorded and how they should be worded.

3. Budget your time. Survey the test to determine the type and number of questions to be answered. Determine where you will start on the test. Check yourself at 15 to 20 minute intervals to determine if you are progressing at an acceptable rate.

4. Be aware that you may have problems remembering from time to time. If you find yourself blocking, move on to the next question.

5. Ask for help in interpreting test questions which you do not understand.

6. Be aware of any negative statements you are telling yourself about the test. Such statements as “I’m failing, I didn’t study for this, and the test is too hard for me” are sure ways of increasing anxiety.

7. Do not be concerned with what the other students are doing. (Another sure way of increasing anxiety is to tell yourself you are the only one having trouble.)

8. As a general rule answer the easy questions first.

Taking Objective Exams

1. Answer the questions in order.

2. Leave check marks by the questions which are doubtful.

3. Read the questions carefully. Be especially careful of questions containing negative words such as “not, no, least,” etc.

4. Check for wording such as “all, most, some, none; always, usually, seldom, never; best, worst; highest, lowest; smallest, largest.”

5. Watch for limiting phrases in true-false statements. Names, dates, places are often used
as the key to make a statement false.

6. In multiple choice questions look for grammatical inconsistency between the stem and the response. In most cases the alternative is not correct if you find an inconsistency.

7. Change your answers only if you are sure you made an error.

**Taking Problems Tests**

1. Use the technique of budgeting your time.

2. Work the easiest problems first.

3. Write down formulas, equations, and rules before you begin working on the test.

4. Check your answers when time permits. Check for addition and multiplication errors by reversing numbers whenever possible.

5. Show all your work; label your answers.

**Essay Exams**

1. Read all questions first. Write down the key points that occur to you as you read the questions.

2. Plan the amount of time you can spend on each question based on the difficulty and the amount of points to be received.

3. Answer the easiest questions first.

4. Underline key words in the questions that give you a clue about how to answer. Words such as “define, compare, contrast, explain,” require different ways of answering.

5. Answer all questions. If you don’t know the precise answer try to write a closely related one.

6. Be neat and legible.

7. Leave enough space between answers to be able to add information you may recall while working on other items.

**How to Avoid Study Without Really Trying**

1. Don’t have the appropriate materials that you’ll need.
2. Realize after you begin studying that you need to go to the bathroom, or are hungry, or that you need to write a letter, or that you aren’t clear about an assignment, or that you have to find out the details of a friend’s Saturday night date.

3. Dwell on how dull the course is and thoroughly believe that if you just had a half-way decent instructor all the material would be easier to understand and be more interesting.

4. Plan to study all the time and schedule no recreational time. This will allow you to feel virtuous and help keep you from seeing that you actually put in very little productive study time.

5. Develop a kind of smug, superior attitude that can be used to impress others with the fact that you don’t need to study, that it somehow is beneath your dignity and that it is not worth your serious consideration.

6. Only study in your room with the door open at the dorm. This will assure you of being there if friends call or drop in.

7. When people do come and interrupt your study, don’t send them away because you’ll hurt their feelings.

8. If your dorm is too quiet, find a place to study in the library where there is a lively social gathering. (An alternative to the library would be in the snack bar, next to the TV, and sitting at a table with a group of people playing cards.) Why be bored when you study?

9. Remember and practice the things you learned about studying when you were in high school. College isn’t any different.

10. Always drink beer while you study. It helps you relax, and popping all those cans builds strength in your hands and arms.

11. Remember that “A clean and uncluttered desk is a sign of a sick mind.”

12. Never study material you don’t enjoy since you’ll obviously never use it anyway.

13. Always remember that people will think you’re smarter if you flunk a test because you didn’t study rather than flunking it when you did study.
Important Words in Essay Questions

The following terms appear frequently in the phrasing of essay questions. You should know their meaning and answer accordingly. (The list and the sense of definitions, though not the exact words, are adapted from C. Bird and C.M Bird, Learning More by Effective Study, Appletom-Century-Crofts, New York, 1945, pp. 195-198)

COMPARE: Look for qualities or characteristics that resemble each other. Emphasize similarities among them but in some cases also mention differences.

CONTRAST: Stress the dissimilarities, differences, or unlikeliness of things, qualities, events, or problems.

CRITICIZE: Express your judgment about the merit or truth of the factors or views mentioned. Give the results or your analysis of these factors, discussing their limitations and good points.

DEFINE: Give concise, clear and authoritative meanings. Don’t give details, but make sure to give the limits of the definition. Show how the things you are defining differs from the things in other classes.

DESCRIBE: Recount. characterize, sketch, or relate in sequence or story form.

DIAGRAM: Give a drawing, chart, plan, or graphic answer. Usually you should label a diagram. In some cases, add a brief explanation or description.

DISCUSS: Examine, analyze carefully, and give reasons pro and con. Be complete, and give details

ENUMERATE: Write in list or outline form, giving points concisely one by one.

EVALUATE: Carefully appraise the problem, citing both advantages and limitations. Emphasize the appraisal of authorities and, to a lesser degree, your personal evaluation.

EXPLAIN: Clarify, interpret, and spell out the material you present. Give reasons for differences of opinion or of results, and try to analyze causes.

ILLUSTRATE: Use a figure, picture, diagram, or concrete example to explain or clarify a problem.

INTERPRET: Translate, give examples of, solve, or comment on a subject, usually giving your judgment about it.

LIST: As in “enumerate,” write an itemized series of concise statements.

OUTLINE: Organize a description under main points and subordinate points, omitting minor details and stressing the arrangement or classification of things.
CONQUERING YOUR FINALS

How is this week different?

1. No classes—this will change your schedule.
2. Routine is changed.
3. Friends leaving—may want to see them for the “last time.”
4. Other _______________________

Schedule for Finals

1. Prepare a general schedule. As much as possible, stick to your regular schedule.
   * Avoid late hours. Try not to stay up all night.
   * Calmly review your material and then get a good night’s sleep.
   * Refrain from excessive use of caffeine.
   * Maintain a healthy diet and get some exercise.

2. Utilize the hours when you are most efficient.

3. Schedule study breaks for yourself. Try not to set unrealistic goals (e.g. "I will study for two hours and take a 10 minute break" instead of "I will study for six hours and not take any breaks").

4. If possible, try not to study for two similar courses consecutively. Break up similar courses and nervous people will only enhance your own sense of anxiety.

5. Try to remain detached from the "panic mania" around you. Being around panicky and nervous people will only enhance your own sense of anxiety.

6. Know when and where your exam will be given.

7. Relax for the half-hour before the test.

8. Take a break between your exams, when your schedule permits. Try to unwind a bit.
Organizing Your Study Time

1. Write the dates and times of all your final exam on a calendar.

2. Go through ever course and make a “TO DO” list of study preparations.

   A. Ask Yourself:
      * What will my final cover? (cumulative v. specific chapters)
      * What percent of my final grade is based on the final exam?
      * What priority is the course, relative to other courses I am taking?
      * How am I already doing in this course?
      * Have I finished all of the reading and/or assignments?
      * Do I have all of my lecture notes? Are they organized?
      * How much time will it take to cover this material?

   B. Start breaking up material, which will be covered on the final, into smaller sections.
      * Determine how much time it will take to review the material. (Be sure to include time to review/condense text and notes.)
      * If there is too much material to cover well, try to determine what will be the most important and concentrate on these areas.

3. Plot study periods from now until the final for each class.

   A. To prevent burnout, optimal study periods include 50-60 minutes of study time with 10 minute breaks between where you can review and self-test.

   B. Allow longer study periods for grasping larger concepts and forming relationships among facts and concepts.

   C. Pick a place to study that is comfortable and has minimal distractions (i.e. well lit, quiet, warm, etc.)

   D. Be aware of your biological clock and use this information to determine your optimal study times.

   E. Take breaks after putting in study time.

   F. Try not to disrupt your normal routines; allow time for a balance of your normal activities (i.e. exercise, sleep, eating, social).
My plan for Finishing the Semester

1. Make a “TO DO” list of all the things you have to do between now and the end of the semester. The list should include academic work like papers, projects, finals, social obligations, and any moving tasks.

2. Assign a priority to each item according to importance.

3. Write the date each item is due and transfer that date to your personal calendar.

4. Make a plan for accomplishing each item and set up a time schedule for accomplishing the plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Ranking</th>
<th>To Do</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
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- Prepare for exams in advance. Don’t wait until it is final exam week to start “cramming” in all sorts of new information. Ideally, finals are a time to review previously learned material, not a time to learn new material.

- Learn how to manage your time more effectively.

- Learn how to read texts, take notes, and take test.

- Learn how to manage your anxiety.
How To Keep Calm During Tests

1. Prepare well in advance.

2. Admit to yourself, “I will not know all of the answers”.

3. Don’t go to class too early. Other people’s panic is contagious.

4. Don’t quiz each other just before the exam.

5. Allow yourself time to “warm up”. Don’t panic if you don’t know the first few questions.

6. Pay attention to test, not to yourself or others.

7. If you notice you are not thinking well, relax yourself physically during the exam.

8. Don’t hesitate to ask for clarification

9. Read over the test and PLAN your approach.

10. Continue learning and refining your study skill techniques
Some Brief Relaxation Exercises

Below are listed some brief relaxation exercises that you may wish to employ anytime during your day, in between classes, before exams, while studying, before a presentation or speech, prior to a big date or an appointment.

**GENERAL DIRECTIONS:** For all of these exercises, it is best to be seated, eyes closed, feet flat on the floor or crossed at the ankles, and hands resting comfortably in the lap. Begin each exercise with a deep breath that you let out gently. As you let it out, feel yourself beginning to relax already. **Gentle Arousal:** After the exercise, slowly and gently activate by breathing a little more deeply, wiggling your fingers and toes, and opening your eyes at your own rate.

**EXERCISE I:**

**Tense-Relax** (General directions first) Clench your fists. While keeping them clenched, pull your forearms tightly up against your upper arms. While keeping those muscles tense, tense all the muscles in you legs. While keeping all those tense, clench your jaws and shut your eyes fairly tight...not too tightly. Now while holding all those tense, take a deep breath and hold it for 5 seconds...Then, let everything go all at once. Feel yourself letting go of all your tensions. Just enjoy that feeling for a minute as your muscles let go more and more.

Actually, if we had a finely-tuned electromyograph hooked up to you measuring the level of tension in your muscles, it would show that you relax more and more and more for up to 20 minutes. Just enjoy focusing, gently, on letting go (Arouse gently).

**EXERCISE II:**

**Heaviness and Warmth** (General directions first) Just imagine that your feet and legs are getting heavier and heavier and warmer and warmer. It’s almost as if you are wearing some lead boots. Feet and legs heavy and warm, heavy and warm. Now, imagine your stomach and the whole central portion of your body getting warm...warm and relaxed. My forehead is cool...cool...relaxed and cool. And my breathing is regular...easy and regular. Just feel the warm and heaviness spread all over the body. (Arouse gently).

**EXERCISE III:**

**Breathing Your Body Away** (General directions first) Gently focus your attention on your feet and legs. Be aware of all the sensations from your feet and legs. Now, inhale a long, slow breath, and as you do, breathe in all the sensations from your feet and legs. In your mind’s eye, imagine that you are erasing this part of your body. Now, as you exhale, breathe out all those sensations. Once again, breathe in your feet and legs, and exhale it from your body, so that, in your mind you can see only from your hips up. Now, with another long breath, breathe in all the parts of your body to your neck, and, as you exhale, breathe it away...Now, beginning with your fingers, breathe in your fingers, hands, wrists and arms, and exhale them away...Now, your neck and head...as you breathe in, imagine your neck and head being erased and, now, breathe them away. Let’s go back over the whole body in one breath, beginning with the feet. A long slow breath in, and as you do, erase any little parts that still remain. Now, a long slow breath out, as you exhale all the remaining parts. Just sit quietly for a minute and enjoy feeling yourself relax deeper and deeper. (Gently arouse)
A Favorite Scene, Place or Person (General directions first) As you’re sitting quietly, recall, in your mind, the most relaxing thought you can. Perhaps it’s a favorite place, a vacation spot or favorite retreat of some sort; or it might be a person with whom you feel at peace, or some scene—a meadow, or whatever works for you. Take a few seconds to get that in mind...Now, see or imagine that in your mind. Be sure to feel those good feelings you have when you are in that place. Just let them take over your whole awareness...If your thoughts wander, just take them gently back to that peaceful, relaxing place. (Arouse gently)

EXERCISE V:

Ideal Relaxation (General directions first) With your eyes closed, take a moment to create, in your mind’s eye, an ideal spot for relaxation. You can make it any place real or imagined and furnish it any way you want. Wear the clothes you are most comfortable in. Enjoy, now, in your own mind, going there. You’ll want to feel at ease and melllow as you lounge in your ideal place for relaxation. Just enjoy it for a minute... (Gentle arousal)

EXERCISE VI:

Cool Air In, Warm Air Out (General directions first) With your eyes closed, and while relaxing quietly, gently focus on the end of your nose. As you breathe in, feel the air coming in the tip of your nose. As you breathe out, feel the air coming out the tip of your nose...Notice that the air coming in is cooler than the air going out...Gently focus on the cool air coming in, and the warm air going out. As your attention wanders, just gently bring it back to the tip of your nose...(Gentle arousal)

EXERCISE VII:

Focus on a Word (General directions first) Pick some word which has “good” vibrations associated with it for you—a word which you associate with relaxation, comfort, peace. It could be a word such as “serenity” or “cool, peaceful, joy, free,” etc...Now, just let that word hold the center of your thoughts, gently bring it back to that word...After a while, perhaps your mind will drift to other gentling, restful thoughts. If so, just let it wander...When it does drift to stressful thoughts, move back to your original word. (Gentle arousal)

EXERCISE VIII:

Something for Use Anywhere (General directions first) With practice, you will become more adept at relaxing, while awake, anywhere. As you do, here’s a way to let yourself relax while going about your day. You can do it while walking, sitting in class, taking a test, on a date, etc. First, smile. Yes, smile to remind yourself that you don’t actually have all the cares of the world on your shoulder—Only a few of them. Then, take a long, deep breath, and let it out. Now, take a second long deep breath, and as you let it out, feel yourself releasing the tensions in your mind and in your body. Just let yourself relax more and more, as you continue whatever you were doing. (Gentle arousal)
Other Tips
BURN-OUT

- **Recognize the problem.** Watch for signs of stress such as forgetfulness, fatigue, sleeplessness, changes in appetite, increased physical sickness like colds and headaches, withdrawal from social situations, increased mood swings or emotional outbursts.

- **Balance your lifestyle.** People subject to negative stress are often perfectionists, idealists, and workaholics, who can never really please themselves. Identify other areas in your life you would like to develop besides your primary focus; then get involved in some stress-relieving activities.

- **Build positive social supports, and control negativity in your environment.** Seek out projects in which you'll work with people who have a positive attitude. If you have to work with a negative person, limit the amount of time you must spend with the person, and stick to those limits. Look for positive affiliations in your social relationships or club memberships.

- **Gain control where you can.** Ask to be involved in decisions that affect you. Seeking flexible hours for work to accommodate your needs for exercise, for example, may be an option. If you are not in control of your schedule, ask for help. Asserting yourself and expressing your needs help reduce the negative emotions of fear and anger.

- **Work smarter, not longer.** Start and end all appointments on time. Schedule realistic breaks between projects or studying. Allow yourself enough time to get to places. Pressuring yourself with tight deadlines increases stress and reduces your effectiveness.

- **Quit doing something.** If you are overcommitted, say "no" and mean it the next time you are asked to do another favor that will raise your stress level. If possible, cut out activities that are causing you stress.
• **Control thoughts that you are indispensable.** To control stress, you must learn to accept your mortality, your vulnerability, and your limits.

• **Employ personal strategies to avoid or cope with burnout.** Do something for yourself each day. Eat well and get enough sleep. View mistakes and setbacks as learning experiences. Acknowledge your strengths and achievements, and reward yourself. Identify your life purpose, and pursue activities that are compatible with your mission.

• **Employ interpersonal strategies.** Identify the people, places, and activities in your life that make you feel good. Stay away from relationships that drain you.

  • **Use stress management techniques.** Fantasize a mini-vacation. Take a break during the day and close your eyes, imagining yourself in a favorite peaceful place. Go to the beach and feel the sand and warmth of the sun. Listen to the birds and the waves. See the calm beach scene. Five minutes there, and you will be mentally and physically relaxed.
Setting and Achieving Goals

Identify:  
*Recognize what needs to be changed in your life:*
  
  - What do you want to change?
  - How do you want your life to be?
  - Where are you with a particular concern at this time?
  - How do I get there from here?
  
  Example:  
  I’m tired of having a low “G.P.R.”

Specific:  
*Group the major areas of change into a smaller, more manageable, goal:*
  
  Example:  
  I need to procrastinate less and study more frequently

Achievable:  
*Make a brief list (1) of obstacles that would prevent you from achieving your goal:*
  
  Example:  
  My dorm room has too many distractions.
  I don’t have a schedule or plan for my best study time each day.

*Make a brief list (2) of resources that would help you achieve your goal:*
  
  Example:  
  I have a calendar that would help me plan daily times.
  I know other students in my class study daily, maybe they could help me.
  I have the afternoons off from class, would this make a good study time?
  My academic advisor would have good study skills suggestions.

*Make a brief list (3) of benefits the goal will achieve:*
  
  Example:  
  Better test scores
  Higher G.P.R.
  More efficient study time means less last minute cram sessions.
  A better year-long balance between academic, social, and personal time.

Based on your 3 lists, develop an “action plan” for achieving your goal:

Example:  
In my slow time from 3:00-5:00 pm, I will study 2 subjects per day, for 1 hour each.

Time Limited:
*Set a time frame to accomplish stages of your goal “action plan”:*

Example:  
1st Week  Study 1 hour a day Monday - Friday.
2nd Week  Study 1 hour a day on Tuesday & Thursday, and 2 hours a day on Monday, Wednesday & Friday.
3rd Week  Study 2 hours a day Monday - Friday.

Measurable:
*Identify people who will help you monitor or accomplish the goal:

Example:  
Find a study partner
Attend a “Time Management & Procrastination” workshop at the Learning Skills Center, Henderson Hall.
Announce to your friends that 3-5 pm is your study time in the library.

Reassess your goal on a weekly basis:

If you are having trouble accomplishing any goals by the specified time frames, are the time frames too strict or is the goal not at a small and manageable level?
Acknowledgment that you will have success and failures in achieving any worthwhile goal.

Example:  
If studying 2 hours a day is not working, change the goal to 1 hour a day and reassess why you need to accomplish the goal of 2 hours a day.

Realistic:  
*You will have a higher chance of achieving any goal if you can answer “yes” to all of these questions:*

1. Am I doing this for myself? (Is this really “my” goal?)
2. Is this a fair and realistic goal for me to accomplish?
3. Does this single goal directly help me accomplish long range life goals?
4. Am I capable of supporting this goal emotionally and physically?
5. Can I close my eyes and mentally visualize myself reaching this goal?

Remember that goals are not set in stone. If the direction of your long range goals changes, so should your immediate goals!!
HOW IS COLLEGE DIFFERENT FROM HIGH SCHOOL?

High school is a TEACHING ENVIRONMENT in which you acquire facts and skills. College is a LEARNING ENVIRONMENT in which you take responsibility for thinking through and applying what you have learned.

Understanding some of the important differences between high school and college may help you achieve a smoother transition.

The following outlines the differences between high school and college.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOLLOWING THE RULES IN HIGH SCHOOL</th>
<th>CHOOSING RESPONSIBLY IN COLLEGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school is <em>mandatory</em> and usually <em>free</em>.</td>
<td>College is <em>voluntary</em> and <em>expensive</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your time is structured by others.</td>
<td>You manage your own time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You need permission to participate in extracurricular activities.</td>
<td>You must decide whether to participate in co-curricular activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can count on parents and teachers to remind you of your responsibilities and to guide you in setting priorities.</td>
<td>You must balance your responsibilities and set priorities. You will face moral and ethical decisions you have never faced before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each day you proceed from one class directly to another, spending 6 hours each day--30 hours a week—in class.</td>
<td>You often have hours between classes; class times vary throughout the day and evening and you spend only 12 to 16 hours each week in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of your classes are arranged for you.</td>
<td>You arrange your own schedule in consultation with your advisor. Schedules tend to look lighter than they really are.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are not responsible for knowing what it takes to graduate.</td>
<td>Graduation requirements are complex, and differ from year to year. You are expected to know those that apply to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guiding principle:</strong> You will usually be told what to do and corrected if your behavior is out of line.</td>
<td><strong>Guiding principle:</strong> You are expected to take responsibility for what you do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of your decisions.</td>
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Note: These pages are based on a pamphlet prepared by Old Dominion University with funding from the Virginia Department of Education and retrieved from the Southern Methodist University Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center web page at http://smu.edu/a Alec/transition.html/
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS</strong></th>
<th><strong>COLLEGE PROFESSORS</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers check your completed homework.</td>
<td>Professors may not always check completed homework, but they will assume you can perform the same tasks on tests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers remind you of your incomplete work.</td>
<td>Professors may not remind you of incomplete work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance.</td>
<td>Professors are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are often available for conversation before, during, or after class.</td>
<td>Professors expect and want you to attend their scheduled office hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers have been trained in teaching methods to assist in imparting knowledge to students.</td>
<td>Professors have been trained as experts in their particular areas of research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers provide you with information you missed when you were absent.</td>
<td>Professors expect you to get from classmates any notes from classes you missed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers present material to help you understand the material in the textbook.</td>
<td>Professors may not follow the textbook. Instead, to amplify the text, they may give illustrations, provide background information, or discuss research about the topic you are studying. Or they may expect you to relate the classes to the textbook readings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers often write information on the board to be copied in your notes.</td>
<td>Professors may lecture nonstop, expecting you to identify the important points in your notes. When professors write on the board, it may be to amplify the lecture, not to summarize it. Good notes are a must.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers impart knowledge and facts, sometimes drawing direct connections and leading you through the thinking process.</td>
<td>Professors expect you to think about and synthesize seemingly unrelated topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates.</td>
<td>Professors expect you to read, save, and consult the course syllabus (outline); the syllabus spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers carefully monitor class attendance.</td>
<td>Professors may not formally take roll, but they are still likely to know whether or not you attended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guiding principle:</strong> High school is a teaching environment in which you acquire facts and skills.</td>
<td><strong>Guiding principle:</strong> College is a learning environment in which you take responsibility for thinking through and applying what you have learned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES</td>
<td>SUCCEEDING IN COLLEGE CLASSES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school year is 36 weeks long; some classes extend over both semesters and some don't.</td>
<td>The academic year is divided into two separate 15-week semesters, plus a week after each semester for exams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classes generally have no more than 35 students.</td>
<td>Classes may have 100 students or more.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| You may study outside class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute test preparation. | You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class each week.  
**Note:** If you are taking 12 credit hours, this is 24-36 hours of study per week. |
| You seldom need to read anything more than once, and sometimes listening in class is enough. | You need to review class notes and text material regularly. |
| You are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class. | You are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class. |
| **Guiding principle:** You will usually be told in class what you need to learn from assigned readings. | **Guiding principle:** It's up to you to read and understand the assigned material; lectures and assignments proceed from the assumption that you've already done so. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TESTS IN HIGH SCHOOL</th>
<th>TESTS IN COLLEGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Testing is frequent and covers small amounts of material.</td>
<td>Testing is usually infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material. You, not the professor, need to organize the material to prepare for the test. A particular course may have only 2 or 3 tests in a semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makeup tests are often available.</td>
<td>Makeup tests are seldom an option; if they are, you need to request them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers frequently rearrange test dates to avoid conflict with school events.</td>
<td>Professors in different courses usually schedule tests without regard to the demands of other courses or outside activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers frequently conduct review sessions, pointing out the most important concepts.</td>
<td>Professors rarely offer review sessions, and when they do, they expect you to be an active participant, one who comes prepared with questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guiding principle:</strong> Mastery is usually seen as the ability to reproduce what you were taught in the form in which it was presented to you, or to solve the kinds of problems you were shown how to solve.</td>
<td><strong>Guiding principle:</strong> Mastery is often seen as the ability to apply what you've learned to new situations or to solve new kinds of problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADES IN HIGH SCHOOL</td>
<td>GRADES IN COLLEGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades are given for most assigned work.</td>
<td>Grades may not be provided for all assigned work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistently good homework grades may raise your overall grade when test grades are low.</td>
<td>Grades on tests and major papers usually provide most of the course grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra credit projects are often available to help you raise your grade.</td>
<td>Extra credit projects cannot, generally speaking, be used to raise a grade in a college course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial test grades, especially when they are low, may not have an adverse effect on your final grade.</td>
<td>Watch out for your first tests. These are usually &quot;wake-up calls&quot; to let you know what is expected—but they also may account for a substantial part of your course grade. You may be shocked when you get your grades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You may graduate as long as you have passed all required courses with a grade of D or higher.</td>
<td>You may graduate only if your average in classes meets the departmental standard—typically a 2.0 or C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding principle: “Effort counts.” Courses are usually structured to reward a “good-faith effort.”</td>
<td>Guiding principle: “Results count.” Though “good-faith effort” is important in regard to the professor’s willingness to help you achieve good results, it will not substitute for results in the grading process.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Student Counseling Service (SCS) at Texas A&M University is available to help make the transition from high school to college as smooth as possible. We provide a variety of services:

**Academic Counseling**
…provides students with an opportunity to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enhance study and exam-taking behavior while decreasing anxiety related to academic performance. Other services include assessment of study behaviors, screening for learning disabilities, an extensive collection of study skills self-help resources, and workshops on topics such as time management.

**Career Counseling**
…helps students in their career planning process. Career Counseling & Testing Services promote student development and self-knowledge which result in fulfilling career choices. Services include individual and group counseling sessions designed to help clarify life/career goals, improve understanding of the world of work, identify career options based on abilities, interests, personality characteristics, and values, and develop individualized career plans.

**Personal Counseling**
…is a process that facilitates self-discovery and growth. It can help to increase self-confidence, improve relationships, enhance academic performance, achieve educational goals, and aid in making good decisions for emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual well being. The SCS provides individual, couples, and group counseling for concerns that are common among undergraduate and graduate students, and that often interfere with academic performance.

**Other Important Information**

The SCS provides short-term counseling to any student currently enrolled at TAMU who has paid the general student service fee. All SCS services are confidential. No record of services exist in either the client’s educational or placement records. No information is released without written authorization from the client. There are some exceptions to confidentiality; please contact the SCS for details.
How to Get Along with your College Professor

1. Go to class! Regular attendance is important not only for good relations with the professor, but also for ensuring that you don’t miss anything. Professors may say they don’t care about class attendance. Don’t believe it! They notice who’s there and who’s not.

2. If emergencies arise that cause you to miss class, be sure to get notes from someone in the class whose work you respect. At the next class meeting after your absence, tell the professor you’ve gotten the notes, but that you want to double-check to make sure you didn’t miss announcements of upcoming tests, etc. Don’t dwell on the reason for your absence. The professor has probably heard it before.

3. Don’t be late! The first few minutes of class are often used for vital announcements of upcoming tests, due dates for assignments, etc.

4. “Better late than never” is usually a good rule of thumb, but not always. Note the professor’s reaction when other students are late, then guide your own actions accordingly. If he/she ignores students walking in late, that doesn’t mean it’s okay, but it’s better than missing class entirely. If the reaction to student tardiness is somewhat stormy, it may be better to miss class than to call attention to yourself in an unfavorable light.

5. Professors usually announce office hours at the first class meeting each semester. It is to your advantage to know your professors and for them to know you. Make an appointment to see each of your professors no later than the fifth class meeting. Appointments may be made before or after class, over the telephone, or by e-mail. If for some reason you must cancel, be sure to call! Remember, teaching is not your professor’s only responsibility. Don’t expect that he/she will always be available at your convenience.

6. The purpose of meeting with a professor, regardless of your level of interest in the course, is to enhance your understanding of what is going on in class. Before your appointment, be sure you have done the following.

* Previewed your text to familiarize yourself with topics for the remainder of the course.
* Reviewed your notes up to that point and identified topics or issues that you don’t understand.
* Written down at least three or four good questions about the course, such as potential topics for papers or projects, questions about the most effective ways to study the material, etc.
* Located the professor’s office so that you won’t be late for the appointment due to wandering around the halls at the last minute.
* Make sure you know the professor’s title (Dr., Mr., Ms.) and how to pronounce his/her name.
7. Getting to know professors can have other benefits as well. Most of them are interesting people, knowledgeable about many topics beyond their own discipline. You may discover that you have common interests that can be the basis for a good relationship long after you have finished the course. You may also find that a particular field is much more interesting to you than you previously thought. It is not unusual for decisions about college majors to originate with a good student-professor relationship. Finally, professors may have information about special opportunities that you may find useful. Summer internships, competitive awards, graduate programs, etc., are usually posted on cluttered bulletin boards and are sometimes hard to spot. A professor who knows you may be the key to your becoming aware of these special opportunities. A single office visit won’t change your life, but it could lead eventually to many “fringe” benefits that wouldn’t have come your way if you hadn’t gotten to know your professors.

8. Get assignments in on time! Earthquake, fire, flood, and catastrophic illness are the only excuses for turning assignments in late. You’ve got 24 hours in your day just like everyone else. You want the professor to know who you are for the right reasons! There is a definite relationship between students who do poorly on tests, receive low final grades, or fail courses, and those who turn assignments in late.

9. Being courteous in class doesn’t mean you have to agree with everything that’s being said. When asking questions, don’t be hostile or demanding and don’t back the professor into a corner. When you disagree or don’t understand a point, be positive. Preface your question with leads like “Could you clarify the relationship between . . . ?” or “Could you elaborate on . . . ?” Avoid negative leads like “I don’t see how . . . ” or “Don’t you think . . . ?”

10. Grades are another area in which professors and students sometimes disagree. Never discuss a grade when you are angry. A test may have seemed unfair to you, but don’t label it as such when you’re discussing it with the professor. Be specific but courteous when making your points. Remember, regardless of how skillful your arguments are, the odds are that your grade won’t be changed on that particular test. But, if you make your points well, the next test may be much better constructed and may seem to you to be a fairer measure of your knowledge of the material.

11. Most professors are experts in their fields. Many of them are not experts in psychometrics or applied learning. Realizing that very few of them have had formal training in test construction or in how to teach may help you to understand their occasional shortcomings in these areas. Most good professors have gotten that way by trial and error. Improved teaching often depends on the kind of feedback they receive from students. Avoid being negative in your comments. Specific, positive, constructive feedback can really improve the learning situation.

12. Sit toward the front of the class and act like you’re paying attention. There is a strange but definite relationship between your distance from the professor and your distance from an “A”. Regardless of how dry a lecture might be, there is always something communicated that you will be responsible for.

13. Always bring a notebook and textbook to class. This communicates preparedness and interest, even if neither of these qualities applies to you.

* Adapted from materials used at the University of North Texas.
Personal Grade Report Sheet

Use this sheet as an easy way to keep a record of all graded material (labs, assignments, papers, exams, quizzes etc) in your courses. It will also provide you with an opportunity to go back and review each activity and your preparation to see if any adjustments need to be made for the next round. List all activities required for the class by “date due”. Don’t forget to update your current GPR after each new grade received!

Course: ___________________________  Semester: ___________________________
Instructor: ________________________  Class time: _________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
<th>Points Possible/Earned</th>
<th>Grade / GPR</th>
<th>Post Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

If you would like to calculate your GPR for your course or semester, you can use the following website:
http://honors.tamu.edu/Honors/StudentServices/AcademicAdvising/GPRcalc.aspx
Graduate School Survival Strategies

1. Manage yourself in relation to time.
   A. Tool kit: include weekly schedule, monthly calendar, semester calendar, to do list.
   B. Identify and eliminate time bandits
   C. Find and utilize hidden pockets of time
   D. Use your peak time to best advantage
   E. Divide and conquer (break large tasks into manageable units; space study)
   F. Delegate

2. Use active techniques for study
   A. Intent
   B. Overview
   C. Relate to previously learned material
   D. Review
   E. Take the learning styles inventory at http://www.vark-learn.com and check out the helpful study tips given.

3. Develop a support system and plan for self-care
   A. Let family members/significant others know what you need
   B. Form a study group
   C. Maintain balance (exercise, social life, time for self)

Texas A&M University
Student Counseling Service
Cain Hall
(979) 845-4427
scs.tamu.edu
Suggestions for Improvement Based on LASSI Scales

Anxiety (ANX)
- Reduce worry about school by adequate preparation
- Develop strategies to improve grades
- Learn to relax
- Practice breathing and grounding exercises before and during exams
- Examine self-talk and how it is increasing anxiety
- Engage in encouraging self-talk about exams

Attitude (ATT)
- Obtaining degree should be high priority
- Develop educational goals
- Increase sense of control over academic outcomes
- Focus on learning instead of “training to get a good job”
- Study all subjects, regardless of interest level
- Look for something interesting in each class
- Suspend judgment about worth of course content

Concentration (CON)
- Sit “front and center” in classes to avoid distractions
- Seek help (counseling) if personal problems cause loss of concentration
- Identify distractions and ways to eliminate them
- Engage in active listening and reading

Information Processing (INP)
- Decide what you are supposed to learn for each topic covered
- Restate material from texts and lectures in your own words
- Determine how new material fits together and with what has already been learned
- Look for relationships in material you are learning
- Relate your studies to your own experiences and life whenever possible

Motivation (MOT)
- Keep current with class assignments
- Do all work assigned
- Prepare before class
- Work hard in each class, regardless of interest level
- Set high standards for all classes
- Read all textbook assignments
Self Testing (SFT)
- Review class notes after class and before next class
- Develop potential exam questions
- Restate what has been read

Selecting Main Ideas (SMI)
- Use textbook headings, introductions, and summaries to identify main points
- Use verbal cues in lectures to help identify main ideas
- Outline text and lecture notes to identify main points and supporting ideas
- Use first and last sentences of textbook paragraphs to identify main ideas

Study Aids (STA)
- Italicized words
- Textbook headings
- Compare notes with other students
- Make charts, tables, diagrams, 3 x 5 cards
- Group study
- Review sessions/help sessions
- Supplemental Instruction
- Old exams

Time Management (TMT)
- Develop a study schedule and stick to it
- Study some every day
- Avoid procrastination
- Avoid cramming
- Study between classes and during daytime hours
- Avoid socializing so much that study time is impacted

Test Strategies (TST)
- Plan time budget for exam
- Ask for clarification of any exam items you don’t understand
- Prepare well in advance of exam
- Adapt preparation techniques to course requirements and type of exam
- Conduct post-test analysis to determine changes needed in study and test taking strategies

Student Counseling Service
A Department in the Division of Student Affairs
Texas A&M University
Cain Hall, 845-4427
scs.tamu.edu
IDENTIFICATION OF PERSONAL STRESSORS

The first step in reducing stress is to become aware of the major sources of stress in your life. Although you are probably aware of the major ongoing environmental stresses in your life, you are likely to underestimate how many stressful changes occur every day to which you are forced to adjust. In order to become aware of the amount of stress you have had in the last year, please fill out and then score the following "Schedule of Recent Experience." This schedule was prepared by Thomas Holmes, M.D. at the University of Washington School of Medicine, Seattle, Washington.

**Schedule of Recent Experience**

Instruction: Think back on each possible life event listed below, and decide if it happened to you within the last year. If the event did happen, check the box next to it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(check here)</th>
<th>(score points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Death of a spouse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Death of a close family member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Death of a close friend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Jail term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Final year or first year in college</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Pregnancy (to you or caused by you)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Severe personal illness or injury</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Any interpersonal problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Financial difficulties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Arguments with your roommate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Major disagreements with your family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Major change in personal habits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Change in living environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Beginning or ending a job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Problems with your boss or professor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Outstanding personal achievement</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Failure in some course</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Final exams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Increased or decreased dating</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Change in working conditions</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Change in your major</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Change in your sleeping habits</td>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Several day vacation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Change in eating habits</td>
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<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Family reunion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Change in recreational activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Minor illness or injury</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Minor violations of the law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Major change in church activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Sexual difficulties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>In-law troubles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Gaining a new family member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Marital separation from spouse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>Being fired from work</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Marital or relationship reconciliation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Mortgage or loan over $10,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Mortgage or loan less than $10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>Major change in health of family member</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your total score___
Schedule of Recent Experience

**Scoring**

The "score points" for each life event are listed below. Write in the score points for those events that happened to you. Add up the score points to get your total.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Event</th>
<th>Score Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>63</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>37</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>63</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>73</td>
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<td>35</td>
<td>65</td>
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<td>36</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The more change you have, the more likely you are to get sick. Of those people with a score of over 300 for the past year, almost 80 percent get sick in the near future; with a score of 150 to 299, about 50 percent get sick in the near future; and with a score of less than 150, only about 30 percent get sick in the near future. So, the higher your score, the harder you should work to stay well.

Copyright 1976 by Thomas H. Holmes
### External Study Distractions Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#1</th>
<th>#2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy studying here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I study here I am often distracted by certain individuals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quiet, dark, and light arrangements here are not helpful for studying.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The temperature conditions here are not very good for studying.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can work more hours on the phone/Internet here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are many things here that don’t have anything to do with study.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instead of studying, I spend more time on the phone/Internet here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My breaks tend to be long when I study here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I usually don’t study here at regular times of the week.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can’t be especially productive at distractions here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I take many breaks when studying here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can listen to music or play music while I study here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can often hear the phone ringing when I study here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can often hear a television radio or TV when I study here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other people often interrupt me when I study here.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total the number of True or False responses for each study location.**

**Answer True or False for each statement below.**

---

**PASS Programs for Academic Success Skills**

S.C.S. TAMU-EDU
979.845.4427
CAN HALL
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

**SERVICE COUNSELING**

STUDENT NATION
# TIME MANAGEMENT SHEET

Consider study, classes/labs, church, exercise, personal needs, socializing, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
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<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00-7:00 am</td>
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## Count Your Hours

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## Important Projects

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# Exam Action Planner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Today's Date:</th>
<th>Course Title:</th>
<th>Exam Date:</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam Type:</th>
<th>Days Until Exam:</th>
<th>Study Hours:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Study the Following:**

- [ ] Class Notes
- [ ] Supplemental Reading
- [ ] Text
- [ ] Handouts
- [ ] Other: ___________________

**Exam Covers the Following subjects/areas/concepts:**

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

**Code the above:**

- * Has the most emphasis
- ▼ Areas I already know
- 0 Areas I do not know
- 1, 2, 3 Ranks what I need to study first, second, etc...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smaller Tasks for #1</th>
<th>Time Assigned</th>
<th>Reward for Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smaller Tasks for #2</th>
<th>Time Assigned</th>
<th>Reward for Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smaller Tasks for #3</th>
<th>Time Assigned</th>
<th>Reward for Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smaller Tasks for #4</th>
<th>Time Assigned</th>
<th>Reward for Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Revision Date: 8/022b) (g:user/public/handouts/academic/exam plan.pub)
On Campus Services
Eligibility for Services

Currently enrolled Texas A&M students who have paid the student service fee are eligible for counseling services. The Student Counseling Service does not charge for counseling services.

Records and Confidentiality

It is necessary to keep records of services in order to ensure adherence to standards of care and to fulfill legal and ethical requirements. However, you can be assured that no record of counseling is made on an academic transcript or in a job placement file. No information about counseling is released outside of the SCS without your written permission. Staff at the SCS may confer with one another in order to provide you with the best possible care.

Exception to Confidentiality

It is important that you be aware of the instances in which confidential information may be released to others.

• When you provide written authorization.
• When there is the risk of imminent harm to you or an other person, the SCS will disclose information as needed to protect your life or someone else’s life.
• When there is reason to believe that a child or elderly person may be physically, emotionally, or sexually abused. Law requires that this be reported to the proper authority.
• In criminal proceedings.
• When there is sexual misconduct on the part of mental health professionals.

Other SCS Services

• Study Skills Improvement
• Career Counseling
• Stress Management
• Biofeedback Training
• Self-Help Resources
• Self-Help information on our web site http://scs.tamu.edu
• Presentations and Workshops
• HelpLine 845-2700 (evening & weekend assistance)
• Mentors Information

Ask your counselor for information about these services.

CRISIS SERVICES

Students experiencing a crisis may come to the Student Counseling Service preferably between 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM Monday through Friday (845-4427). The SCS is open 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

After 4 PM or on weekends, call the HelpLine at (979) 845-2700 (V/TTY), or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.

HOW TO RECEIVE SERVICES

To register for your initial appointment go online to http://scs.tamu.edu

• Click on the “Login to SCS Online Student Services” link
• Enter UIN #
• Your pin # will be your date of birth written as follows:

Example: February 3, 1981 020381

Please click the final submit button. You should receive an e-mail confirming your appointment within 24 hours. If you do not or have difficulty registering please call the SCS for further assistance at 845-4427.

Texas A&M University has a strong institutional commitment to the principle of diversity in all areas. In that spirit, admission to Texas A&M University and any of its sponsored programs is open to all qualified individuals without regard to any subgroup classification or stereotype.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations will be made in accordance with the law. If you require ADA accommodations, please indicate what your needs are at the time you register for services or five working days before the program you plan to attend.

Cain Hall
(979) 845-4427
http://scs.tamu.edu
Benefits and Risks

Between sessions, it is important to know that the sessions are designed to help you understand and make changes in your life. However, it is also important to be aware that some sessions may require you to reflect on difficult topics or experiences. It is important to communicate any concerns you have about the sessions to your therapist, as they can provide guidance and support.

Single Session Counseling

Your First Appointment

Possible appointments include be planned together, where only your needs and your counselor work together to identify the best pathway for you. Your counselor will also be available for you to talk about any concerns you may have about the sessions.

Individually Counseling

Individually counseling is ideal for addressing specific issues, providing support and guidance in areas such as stress, anxiety, or depression. It can help you gain insight into your thoughts and behaviors, as well as develop coping strategies to manage your challenges. Individual counseling can be conducted in a one-on-one setting, allowing for a more personalized approach to addressing your unique needs and circumstances.
NON-COMPLIANCE/ LACK OF FOLLOW-UP

It is strongly recommended that treatment recommendations are followed, appointments are kept, and that before stopping treatment it is discussed with the consulting psychiatrist. It occasionally happens that a student will terminate treatment by not scheduling a return appointment, not coming for an appointment, or canceling and not rescheduling. We consider this practice dangerous because students then deprive themselves of the opportunity to interactively discuss any risks involved. The consulting psychiatrist is unable to provide treatment under these circumstances. Therefore, we emphasize that if you do not follow up as agreed and do not discuss this with your psychiatrist within a week, that this serves as your notification to the Student Counseling Service that you have decided to terminate the treatment relationship. The relationship between you and your psychiatrist is important, one that can be instrumental in achieving your treatment goals.

WE COMMEND YOU

We commend you for your interest in caring for yourself. Coming to the SCS shows that you have a strong interest in helping yourself achieve personal, academic, and career goals. We wish you every success.

HOW TO RECEIVE SERVICES

To register for your initial appointment go online to scs.tamu.edu

- Click on the “Online Registration” link
- Enter Student ID #
- Your pin # will be your date of birth written as follows:
  day/month/year
  03/02/1981

Please click the final submit button. You should receive an e-mail confirming your appointment within 24 hours. If you do not or have difficulty registering please call the SCS for further assistance at 845-4427.

OTHER COUNSELING SERVICES

- Academic & Career Resource Center
- Study Skills Improvement
- Career Counseling
- Personal Counseling
- Marriage/Couple's Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Stress Management
- Biofeedback Training
- Crisis Intervention
- Referral Information
- Self-Help Resources
- Mentor Information
- Presentations and Workshops

Ask your psychologist or counselor for information about these services

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations will be made in accordance with the law. If you require ADA accommodations, please indicate what your needs are at the time you register for services or five working days before the program you plan to attend.

Texas A&M University has a strong institutional commitment to the principle of diversity in all areas. In that spirit, admission to Texas A&M University and any of its sponsored programs is open to all qualified individuals without regard to any subgroup classification or stereotype.
WHAT IF YOU WANT TO STOP TAKING YOUR MEDICATION?

What if you need to work with the psychologist to develop a new treatment plan if you're feeling better or if you've been in treatment for a long time and want to try something new.

To ask for an appointment, you need to call your health provider or contact your insurance company to see if they cover the cost of theVR. Contact them for more information.
PASS Learning Skills Certificate

Self-Help Options

Popular PASS Workshops
- Conquering Finals
- Maintaining Focus
- Stress Management through Biofeedback Training
- Stress Management & Test Anxiety
- Study Success Strategies
- Time Management & Procrastination
- Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) Interpretation
- Determining Your Learning Style
- Now You’re Speaking My Language: Talking with Professors

Self-Help Online Links & Handouts

scs.tamu.edu/academic/academiclinks.asp

PASS Learning Skills Certificate

Group - Help Options

Popular PASS Groups
- Academics Anonymous
- Academic Survival
- First Generation College Student
- Insider’s Guide: Navigating Your First Year Aggie Experience

All groups and workshops meet in Cain Hall, unless otherwise noted. Please preregister for workshops and counseling at:

http://scs.tamu.edu/

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is respected to the limits allowed by law. The SCS makes no record of your visits on academic transcripts or placement files.

PASS (Programs for Academic Success Skills)
Learning Skills Certificate Program

A program designed to enhance academic performance

SCS.TAMU.EDU
A department in the Division of Student Affairs

Texas A&M University has a strong institutional commitment to the principle of diversity in all areas. In that spirit, admission to Texas A&M University and any of its sponsored programs is open to all qualified individuals without regard to any subgroup classification or stereotype.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations will be made in accordance with the law. If you require ADA accommodations, please indicate what your needs are at the time you register for services or five working days before the program you plan to attend.
Programs for Academic Success Skills (PASS) Learning Skills Certificate

Who could benefit from the PASS Learning Skills Certificate Program?

1. Initial Counseling Session: The student meets with a PASS counselor to discuss academic and personal goals. The student also completes a learning skills inventory.

2. Assessment: A learning skills inventory is used to identify areas for improvement and to assess the student's strengths and weaknesses.

3. Assessment: A learning skills inventory is used to identify areas for improvement and to assess the student's strengths and weaknesses.

4. Exit Counseling Session: When the student has completed the course, the exit counseling session is conducted.

Programs:

Learning Skills Certificate Program in the PASS

Who could benefit from participation in the PASS Learning Skills Certificate Program?

- Students who want to graduate in a timely manner
- Students with disabilities or learning differences
- Students with academic or personal challenges
- Students who want to enhance their academic skills
- Students who want to develop essential life skills
- Students who want to improve their study habits
- Students who want to increase their confidence
- Students who want to reduce stress and anxiety

Programs:

Learning Skills Certificate Program in the PASS

Who could benefit from participation in the PASS Learning Skills Certificate Program?
Student Learning Center
Basic Information
Student Learning Center

http://slc.tamu.edu

The Student Learning Center has won the 2008 National College Learning Center Association Frank L. Christ Outstanding Learning Center Award!

The award recognizes the center’s commitment to supporting and strengthening the academic experience of students at Texas A&M University by providing a variety of programs and services that promote retention and success.

About Us
The Student Learning Center provides Supplemental Instruction and tutoring free of charge to all Texas A&M University students.

The SLC offers STLC courses, which teach students how to improve their study skills and prepare for the job market.

The SLC manages developmental programs for students who have not yet passed the assessment tests required by the state.

Study Tips

- General
- Time Management
- Reading Textbooks
- Setting Goals
- Preparing for Exams
- Success Tips from Fellow Aggies

Tutoring

Drop-In Tutoring (DIT) is available for most lower level math and science courses on the first floor of Hotard Hall during fall, spring, and summer terms. For a current schedule and list of courses, please see the tutoring page.

Tutor Zones (TZ) cover a wide variety of subjects. Tutor Zones are currently held in Studio 12 of The Commons and the West Campus Library. Look for our table and tutors and just ask for help! Tutor Zones are available during the fall and spring semesters.

If students need help in a particular course that is not listed and would like to see if a tutor is available for that course, they should contact the SLC tutor coordinator, Linda Callen, at 845-2724 by e-mail at lcallen@tamu.edu.
STUDENT LEARNING CENTER

Tutoring

Drop-in tutoring is available for most lower level math and science courses on the first floor of Hotard Hall. Tutors are also available to help out with many other courses. If you need help in a particular course and would like to check to see if a tutor is available for that course contact the tutor coordinator.

http://slc.tamu.edu/tutoring.shtml
Linda Callen
979-845-2724

Supplemental Instruction (SI)

SI is an academic assistance program designed to improve the student’s academic performance and increase retention. The SI program targets traditionally difficult core curriculum courses and provides regularly scheduled, out-of-class, peer-facilitated group study sessions. SI leaders conduct three 50-minute study sessions per week. Classes include, but are not limited to:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Economics
- Geography
- History
- Management
- Physics
- Political Science
- Psychology

http://slc.tamu.edu/supplemental-instruction/
Linda Callen
979-845-2724
Mentor Programs
What are mentors?

Mentors are TAMU faculty, staff, and administrators who volunteer extra office hours to make themselves available to students who just want to talk to someone. We currently have about 165 mentors on campus.

What do mentors do?

- Mentors advise students in their area of experience and competence.
- Mentors stay informed about current TAMU services so they can act as effective referral sources to students whose problems are outside the Mentor’s expertise.
- Mentors provide a caring, nonjudgmental ear when a student just needs to talk.
- Mentors provide a smile, a helping hand, and eagerness to serve as stepping stones instead of stumbling blocks – these are the nuts and bolts of Mentoring.

(The ATMentors program does not attempt to replace or substitute for the programs provided by departmental advisers, the Student Counseling Service, and the many other valuable student services available at TAMU. On the contrary, Mentors work hand-in-hand with all of these services, helping students to locate and use them.)

Why Have A Mentor?

There are many reasons to find a mentor that can range from getting course advice to working out a personal crisis. No matter what the issue is, whether good or bad, ATMentors are always there to listen.

ATMentors is a mentorship program designed to operate on "your own terms." You and your chosen mentor can determine how often you meet, whether you have set meetings, or if you just drop in from time to time. You get out of the relationship what you put into it.

Find A Mentor

ATMentors have offices all over campus. To help students readily identify them, Mentors display ATMentors door plaques. Students can trust that faculty and staff members who display an ATMentors door plaque are willing to help students in need.

Students can also request a Mentor by calling the ATMentors program office at 979-845-6900 for a referral or e-mailing us at ATMentors@tamu.edu.
Discover

DISCOVER is an interactive, comprehensive, web-based career planning program designed to help students research careers and identify suitable majors. DISCOVER provides initial career assessments and a wealth of information on college majors, occupations, schools, internships and job search skills.

Students can access DISCOVER through the SCS homepage. Once students complete the interests, abilities and values inventories, the inventories summary immediately identifies career areas for students to further explore occupations and related majors. All search results can be saved and organized in the career portfolio section. Students are encouraged to bring their inventories summary to discuss with a career counselor at the Student Counseling Service if further assistance with career exploration is desired.
University Writing Center
Basic Services Offered

What services does the UWC provide?

Our main objective is to provide one-on-one consultations with a trained writing consultant. In consultations, we work with you to determine what you need. Want help getting started? Reading your assignment? Doing research or writing footnotes? Just an opinion on your draft? We will answer your questions regarding any part of the writing process. The UWC also helps faculty who include writing in their classes, provides handouts with tips about writing (available both on-line and outside our front entrance), and sponsors an on-line writing lab (OWL) that allows you to send us parts of your paper (like the introduction) and a question (i.e., whether the thesis is clear). For a quick question during business hours, students can access the UWC through the Online Writing Lab or by calling the Write Line at (979) 845-2160.

Writing Resources

- Research & Documentation
- Planning & Drafting
- Revising & Editing
- Document Types
- Webliography
- Freelance Editors

How do I make an appointment?

Appointments can be made in person (on the second floor of Evans Library), over the phone (458-1455), or at our website (writingcenter.tamu.edu). Once you arrive at the website, follow these simple steps:

1. Follow the “Make an Appointment” link at the top of the page
2. Click on “Make an Appointment”
3. Search for available dates and times
4. Select a time by double-clicking
5. Enter the information required
6. Log out of the appointment schedule
7. If the appointment has been successfully made, you will receive an email confirmation

Getting the Most from Your Consultation

- Schedule an Appointment. We can sometimes accommodate walk-in clients, but it’s best to have an appointment.
- Think about what type of help you need. You’ll get more out of your session if you come with specific problems to address or questions to ask.
• Bring a copy of the assignment you are working on. It will prove helpful, for both you and our staff, to have the assignment on hand, so we can work together in evaluating how successfully you are completing the project.

• Arrive on time. Consultations typically last from 30 to 45 minutes.

• Visit while you still have ample time to make changes to your work. After the consultation, you’ll probably have new insights into your writing and ideas you want to incorporate into your paper, so leave yourself time to revise.
Basic Writing Formats
USING THE APA FORMAT

The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, or "APA style", presents detailed instructions and guidance on manuscript preparation, writing styles, and reference lists. This guide shows how to cite some common information sources. (See manual below for more examples.)

- Additional help from APA style companion website: http://apastyle.apa.org

QUOTATIONS
- Enclose quotations, with <40 words, in "" quotation marks, then cite the source immediately after using (author, year, p. #) -- use paragraph number (para. #) for non-paginated material.
- To display quotations with 40 or more words in a freestanding block: start on a new line, indent a half inch from left margin, double-space entire quotation (no quotation marks), and then cite the source immediately after. Indent the 1st line of each paragraph of the quote an extra half inch.

IN TEXT (parenthetical citations)
- Follow the author-date citation method (author’s last name, publication year). Examples:
  - In a recent study of reaction times (Walker, 2000)...
  - Walker (2000) compared reaction time ...
  - Several studies (Balda, 1980; Kamil, 1988; Pepperberg & Funk, 1990) show that...
  - For works with 3-5 authors, use all author surnames the 1st time you cite the source in text, then use (1st author’s surname et al., date) each time you cite the source after that.
  - Personal communications (letters, memos, interviews, phone conversations, E-mail and discussion group messages), cite in text only: (R. A. Smith, personal communication, May 10, 2009).

REFERENCE LIST
- References (citations) should include: author, editor (if there is one), publication date, title, and publication information; and if available, the DOI (digital object identifier - unique alphanumeric string usually found on the 1st page of a document) when citing both print and electronic sources.
- If no author, move the title to the author position; alphabetize by first significant word in the title.
- For edited books, place the editor’s name in the author position followed by (Ed.), or (Eds.).
- Capitalize only the 1st word of an article title, chapter title, or subtitle; and proper nouns.
- Italicize the name of a journal, magazine, or newsletter; and italicize the title of a book.
- Enclose non-routing information in brackets after the title to help identify the original source [Brochure, Data file, Motion picture, Audio podcast, Lecture notes, CD, Video webcast].
- Publication information should include: (for books) city, 2-letter state abbreviation, and publisher name; (for journals, newsletters, magazines) volume number, and page numbers.
- Italicize the volume number of a journal, magazine, or newsletter; and if each issue begins with page 1, then include the issue number (no italics) in parentheses () following the volume number.
- For a journal article, give the range of page numbers; for a book chapter, newspaper article, or article on discontinuous pages, precede the page range with "p." (page) or "pp." (pages).
- List references in alphabetical order by surname, and then by initials, of the first author.
- Alphabetize group authors (agency, association, institution) by first significant word in the name.

PERIODICALS

*Journal Article, One to Seven Authors, with DOI (print copy)*

*Magazine Article, DOI not available, each issue begins with p.1 (print copy)*

*Newsletter Article, each issue begins with p.1, discontinuous pages (print copy)*
Daily Newspaper Article, (print copy)

BOOKS

Subsequent Edition, One to Seven Authors (print copy)

Edited Book (print copy)

Article or Chapter in an Edited Book or Reference Book, Two or More Editors (print copy)

ELECTRONIC SOURCES

- For article or book chapter accessed online with no DOI assigned, use the URL for the home page of the journal or book publisher.
- Do not include database name, unless the archival document is only accessible from a database (i.e. ERIC, JSTOR, discontinued journals, dissertations, or unpublished papers). Use the URL for the home page (or entry page) of the online archive.
- Do not use retrieval date (of source accessed) unless content changes over time (wikis, blogs).

Journal Article, One to Seven Authors, DOI not available (accessed online)

Magazine Article, DOI not available (accessed online)

Newspaper article (accessed online)

Book, edited, with DOI (accessed online)

Encyclopedia Article, Lead Editor (Large Editorial Board), DOI not available (accessed online)

Blog Post

Government Report, Corporate Author (accessed online)

ERIC Document -- book (accessed online)

Dissertation (accessed online from a database)

LEARNING AND OUTREACH SERVICES
USING THE CHICAGO MANUAL OF STYLE (CMOS) FORMAT
AUTHOR-DATE STYLE (14th ed.)

The Chicago Manual of Style (14th ed.) contains information about citing material in text as well as about two basic documentation systems: (1) the documentary-note (or humanities) style and (2) the author-date style. The Chicago Manual also provides guidelines for spelling and punctuation and discusses the treatment of numbers, quotations, illustrations, tables, foreign languages, mathematical symbols, abbreviations, and so on.

If you are asked to use the Chicago Manual format, consult The Chicago Manual of Style (14th ed.). Copies are located in the following reference areas:

- Evans Library, 1st floor, Humanities/Social Sciences
- Library Annex, 5th floor, Science/Engineering
- West Campus Library (WCL)
- Policy Sciences and Economics Library (PSEL)
- Medical School Library (MSL) – call #: Z253 U585c 1993

IN-TEXT CITATIONS FOR AUTHOR-DATE STYLE

- Uses "and" (written out) and no comma between name and date.
- Separate two or more references in same parenthetical citation by semicolons.
- Place author-date citations where they least interrupt the thought flow.
- Citations to interviews are best made in running text but can be added to ref list.
- Citations must agree exactly with their corresponding entries in reference list.
  - Single author: (Blinkworth 1987)
  - Two or three authors: (Collins and Wortmester 1953)
  - More than three authors: (Zipursky et al. 1959)
  - Group as author: (EPA 1986)
  - Different authors with same last name and same date: (P. Brown 1991)
  - Page or other reference: (Blinkworth 1987, 125)
  - Multiple references: (Light 1972; Light and Wong, 1975; Rooster 1976)
  - Additional works by same author: (Garcia 1941, 1944)
  - Same author and dates: (Keller 1896a, 1896b, 1907) or (Keller 1896a,b, 1907)

REFERENCE OR CITATION LIST

- All sources cited in text must be included in the reference list.
- May be called Works Cited, Literature Cited, Sources Cited, or simply References.
- Arrange references in a single alphabetical list according to rules used for indexing.
- Single-author entries come before multi-author entries beginning with same name.
- List all works by one author, editor, etc., together in chronological order.
- Use 3-em dashes for repeated names (e.g., Webb, J. D. 1986 / _______ 1987).

CITATIONS IN THE AUTHOR-DATE STYLE

See Chicago Manual of Style and Web sites listed on handout entitled "Citation Styles for WWW Sites" for additional examples and advice, particularly for electronic resources.

One Author

Two Authors

Three Authors
[Note: Can also use semicolons between author names.]
More Than Three Authors

Editor, Compiler, or Translator

Editor, Compiler, or Translator with an Author

Organization, Association, or Corporation as "Author"

Chapter in a Book

Article Titles and Journal Titles (several styles available)

Popular Magazines

Newspapers

Microfiche

Published, Broadcast, or Recorded Interviews

Unpublished Interviews
Petersen, Tim G. 1989. Interview by author. Long Beach, Calif.: 1 August.

Electronic Resources
USING THE MLA FORMAT

Excellence in library instructional services supported by the Federation of Texas A&M University Mothers' Clubs.

The information in this handout, taken from The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th edition, covers many cases in research papers when outside sources will need to be credited. For additional information about other cases, consult the MLA Handbook at the reference desks located throughout the Libraries.

LB2369 GS3
2009
Library of Congress
call number

CITATIONS IN THE BODY OF THE PAPER

When you omit the author's name in your sentence: One researcher has found that dreams move backward in time as the night progresses (Dement 71). When you mention the author's name in your sentence: Freud states that "a dream is the fulfillment of a wish" (154). When you cite more than one work by the same author: One theory emphasizes the principle that dreams express "profound aspects of personality" (Foulkes, Sleep 184). But investigation shows that young children's dreams are "rather simple and unemotional" (Foulkes, "Dreams" 78). When the work has two or three authors: Psychologists hold that no two children are alike (Gesell and Ing 68). When a work has no author, begin with the word by which the title is alphabetized in the "Works Cited" list: Random testing for steroids use by athletes faces strong opposition by owners of several teams ("Steroids" 22).

CITATIONS IN THE "WORKS CITED" LIST

Double space all entries and list in alphabetical order by author's last name. Generally, entries have three main divisions (author, title, and publication information), each followed by a period and two spaces. See the MLA Handbook and Web sites listed on the handout entitled "Citation Styles for the WWW" for additional examples and advice.

Book with One Author

Two Books by the Same Author (Note: After the first listing of the author's name, use three hyphens and a period for the author's name; list books alphabetically.)

Book with Two or Three Authors

Book with Four or More Authors

Book with a Corporate Author


Work with More than One Volume
Using the MLA Format (continued) LEARNING AND OUTREACH SERVICES HTTP://LIBRARY.TAMU.EDU/HANDOUTS SUMMER 2009

**Work in an Anthology**

**Work with an Editor**

**Essay in a Collection of Essays**

**Second or Later Edition**

**Reprint**

**Excerpted Article Reprinted in a Reference Work**

**Journal or Magazine with Continuous Pagination**

**Journal with New Page Numbers for Each Issue**

**Weekly, Biweekly, or Monthly Magazine Article**

**Article in a Newspaper**

**Article from a Reference Book**

**Government Publication**

**Radio or Television Program**

**Film**

**Personal Interview**
Lesh, Philip. Personal Interview. 12 Nov. 1996.

**Web Page**

**Article in an Electronic Journal or Full-text Database**


For additional examples for Web resources, please refer to the FAQ for MLA Style on the MLA Web page - [http://www.mla.org](http://www.mla.org)
USING THE TURABIAN FORMAT

The examples below follow the style of Kate L. Turabian's *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (6th ed.). Please refer to this manual for a more complete explanation of the footnote (F⇒), parenthetical reference (P⇒), bibliographic (B⇒), and reference list (R⇒) styles as well as for the endnote style (not shown). Also note that you may underline titles of works or italicize them, but you should never use both italics and underlining in the same manuscript.

BOOKS

**One author:**


P⇒ (Franklin 1985, 54)


**Two authors:**


P⇒ (Lynd and Lynd 1929, 67)


**Three authors:**


P⇒ (Lyon, Lyon, and Lucas 1983, 42)


**Edition other than the first:**


P⇒ (Bober 1948, 89)


Excellence in library instructional services supported by the Federation of Texas A&M University Mothers' Clubs.
Editor or compiler as "author":


P ⇒ (von Hallbert 1984, 225)


PERIODICALS
Journals or Magazines:


P ⇒ (Jackson 1979, 180)


Newspapers:

F ⇒ Irish Daily Independent (Dublin), 16 June 1904.

P ⇒ (Irish Daily Independent [Dublin], 16 June 1904)

Note: News items from daily papers are rarely listed separately in a bibliography or reference list. If a newspaper is cited only once or twice, a note or a parenthetical reference in the text is sufficient.

ENCYCLOPEDIAS
Unsigned Articles:


P ⇒ (Columbia Encyclopedia, 5th ed., s.v. "cold war")

Signed Articles:


Note: Well-known reference books are generally not listed in bibliographies. In notes or parenthetical references the facts of publication are usually omitted, but the edition, if not the first, must be specified.

ELECTRONIC SOURCES
Electronic document:

F ⇒ Rosabel Flax, Guidelines for Teaching Mathematics K-12 (Topeka: Kansas State Department of Education, 1979) [database on-line]; available from EBSCOhost, ERIC, ED 178312.

P ⇒ (Flax 1979)


Additional Turabian-style formats for electronic sources can be found at:

- A Brief Citation Guide for Internet Sources in History and the Humanities (Version 2.1) http://www.h-net.org/~africa/citation.html
- The University of Southern Mississippi, USM Libraries: Turabian Style Guide http://www.lib.usm.edu/~instruct/guides/turabian.html
Tips for Essay Writing
Getting Started

Online Writing Lab
http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/owl

If you have trouble coming up with a thesis right away, there are other ways to help you get started writing. Writing, after all, is a way of discovering what you want to say. As long as you begin with a definite goal, you eventually will discover a purpose and a thesis. Then your later drafts can follow a definite plan. The order of the steps is immaterial—as long as you complete them all.

Even if you do begin with a workable thesis, it might not be the one you end up with. As you work and discover new meanings, you might need to revise or even discard your thesis and start again. Nothing in the writing process is finished until everything is finished.

Here are some techniques that might help you decide what you want to say:

KEEP A JOURNAL
Use a well-constructed notebook
Record your reactions to something you’ve read or seen
Ask questions and answer them
Describe people, places, and things
Explore fantasies, daydreams, nightmares, fears, hopes
Write conversations or letters that will never be heard or read
Examine the things you hate or love

USE JOURNALISTS QUESTIONS
Who was involved?
What happened?
When did it happen?
Where did it happen?
How did it happen?
Why did it happen?

ASK YOURSELF ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS
What is my opinion of X?
Is it good or bad?
Is it beneficial or harmful?
Will it work or fail?
Does it make sense?
What is my attitude about X?
Am I for it or against it?
Do I like it or dislike it?
Getting Started

Do I accept it or reject it?
Does it make me happy or sad?
Do I approve or disapprove?
What have I observed about X?
What have I seen happen?
What is special or unique about it?
What strikes me about it?
What can’t suggest about X?
What would I like to see happen?
What should be done?
What should not be done?

BRAINSTORM AND LIST

1. Find a quiet spot, and bring a timer, a pen or pencil, and paper.
2. Set the timer for 30 minutes.
3. Try to protect yourself from interruptions. Sit with your eyes closed for a while, thinking
   about absolutely nothing.
4. If you’ve already spelled out your purpose and your audience’s questions, focus on these.
   Otherwise, repeat this question: “What can I say about my topic?”
5. Write down every idea that occurs to you. Don’t evaluate them. Don’t worry about complete
   sentences or other grammar problems. Trust your imagination. Even the wildest ideas might
   have some merit.
6. Keep pushing and sweating until the timer goes off. No matter how silly the ideas become.
7. If the ideas are still flowing, reset the timer and continue.
8. Take a break.
9. Confront your list. Strike out useless material, and sort what’s left into categories. Include
   any other ideas that pop up.
10. Identify a pattern of thought.
11. Fill in holes by elaborating, clarifying, and supporting your ideas.

DO SOMETHING OFF THE WALL

- Use information from your research or quotes from what you have read that you find
  inspiring.
- Try rewriting the information or quote (or whatever you are rewriting) without using the
  vowel e, or something really unusual like that.
- This takes your mind off the fact that you don’t know what to write and forces you to focus
  on having a ton of things to write about and no idea how to do it.
- When this happens, your own ideas start to pop out, and you can let yourself slip back into
  using that oh-so-useful letter e. The French novelist Perec broke years of writer’s block by
  playing this challenge game with himself. He eventually wrote an entire novel without the
  letter e anywhere in it. The book was entitled La disparition and was translated into English by
  Gilbert Adair and retitled A Void.

FREEWRITE

Write quickly for five to ten minutes without stopping. If you can’t think of anything to say, writing,
"I’m stuck-I can’t think of anything!” over and over will at least force you to start moving your pen
on the paper. You'll soon become bored and more interesting ideas will begin to appear on your paper.

FOCUS YOUR FREEWRITE
In focused freewriting, you begin with a general idea in mind. Let's say you've decided to write an argument paper on gene therapy; you might start with "I don't have a clue what to think about gene therapy, but I guess if it's something that might help people..." You should find yourself thinking about what you already know or feel about the topic you're considering.

VISUALIZE IT
Clustering is a way of generating ideas by creating a visual. A cluster is useful for understanding the relationships among the parts of a broad topic or for developing subtopics. To create a cluster, do the following:

1. Write down your topic, or thesis, in the middle of a blank piece of paper, and circle it.
2. Write down what you see as the main parts of the topic in a ring around the topic circle.
   Circle each one and draw a line from it to the topic in the center.
3. Think of any ideas, examples, facts, or other details relating to each main part. Write each of these down near the appropriate part, circle it, and draw a line from it to the part.
4. Repeat this process with each new circle until you can't think of any more details to add. Some of the trails may lead to dead ends, but you will end up with various trains of thought to follow and many useful connections among ideas.


If you prefer a tighter organizational structure, try creating a flow chart to map out your ideas:
1. Write down your topic at the top of a lined page.
2. Underneath the main topic in a horizontal row, write down what you see as the main sub-points of your topic.
3. Think of examples, facts, and/or other details relating to each sub-point, and arrange in vertical lists underneath the appropriate headings.
Understanding Your Assignment

This handout provides a list of definitions of verbs often used in writing assignments. Use this list when you consider the approaches your writing assignment requires.

Analyze To separate something into parts and discuss, examine, or interpret each part.

Classify To put something into a category with things of a similar type. You might need to defend or explain how you arrived at a category and how one category differs from another.

Compare To examine two or more things and to show their similarities.

Contrast To examine two or more things and to show their differences.

Criticize To analyze and make reasoned judgments about something. Please note that your judgments may be positive, negative, or both.

Define To give the meaning of a term or concept. A definition may be simple or complex. The available techniques for definition include examples, synonyms, antonyms (opposites), etymology (word history), or dictionary definitions.

Describe To give the physical or non-physical qualities or characteristics of something.

Discuss To offer the pros and cons of an issue. Sometimes "discuss" is used more broadly to include any of the other terms on this list—for example, it may mean "write something interesting or significant about a topic."

Enumerate To make a list of something's component ideas, aspects or parts.

Evaluate To give a reasoned opinion about something, usually in terms of the merit of a particular work, idea, or person.

Explain To describe how something functions. To give a definition for something.

Identify To indicate, or describe, what a thing is, what it is composed of, or when and where it occurs.

Illustrate To give examples or to describe something.
Interpret To comment upon something or explain its meaning.

Outline To give a historical overview of something, or to describe its main ideas or parts.

Prove To argue a position by supporting your claims with factual evidence.

State To explain something clearly and concisely.

Summarize To give the main points or highlights of a longer work. To give a condensed account of an article, story, or event.

Trace To give a historical overview or outline of some change. To summarize a chronological or sequential order of events.
The first step in the research process for all of your assignments is selecting a topic that meets two requirements:

1. The topic must be interesting. Writers who are interested in their topics have a good chance of making their topics interesting to readers.
2. The topic must be researchable. Trivial topics that might have popular interest but little serious scholarly interest are not appropriate for assignments in many academic writing courses: for example, "The Best Place to Spend Spring Break." The topic must be old enough to have a substantial research base yet new enough to still be relevant and interesting. Do not commit yourself if you are unsure about the availability of sources. Find out how much material the library has on the topic.

Your instructor may ask you to avoid topics that are overworked--for example, gun control, abortion, capital punishment. Be sure to record other topics your instructor asks you to avoid.

The following questions might help you to select a topic.

- Briefly define or describe your topic. Try to answer questions reporters usually ask -- who? what? when? where? why?
- What claim are you going to make about this topic? What is your thesis?
- What is the scope of your topic? What are the main points you will discuss? List them in their order of importance.
- Are there points or issues you will need to omit in order to narrow your topic? What are they?
- Give a brief account of what other people have said or written about your topic.
- In a paper, your personal opinion should be clear. Check with your professor to see whether he/she wants you to expressly state your opinion with terms like "I think" or "I believe."
- Who is your audience for this essay? What aspects of the topic will be interesting and relevant to your audience?
- What aspects of the topic may not be interesting or relevant to your audience?
- Give a brief explanation of issues that might make your topic arguable or controversial.
- Which of these issues will you emphasize in your essay? Explain why these issues seem relevant to your thesis.
- Will you purposely avoid any of these issues? Explain why.

Developing a Thesis

Online Writing Lab
http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/owl

A thesis statement is the main idea of your paper. Developing a working thesis should be among your first priorities. "Working" is the operative word here; your thesis may change through the writing and research process, but it is imperative to start with a definite plan in mind.

Ask questions
Mulling over a topical checklist can help you circumvent writer's block; it can also help you discover a number of possibilities for developing a thesis. While thinking through these questions, consider whether you want to inform or persuade your readers.

1. Exactly what is my subject? Can my paper inform or persuade my audience on this point? Should I emphasize the positive or the negative aspects of my subject?
2. Can my subject be divided up into parts? Is one aspect more important or more relevant to my audience than others? What point should I stress in my thesis? How should I organize the paper to achieve this emphasis?
3. What does my subject remind me of? Is my subject—whether a person, a thing, or an event—similar to another subject that may be familiar to my readers? Are there any unexpected and enlightening similarities? Is the comparison favorable or unfavorable? Does this comparison make my subject easier to understand? How can I use these comparisons to clarify my point for my reader?
4. If my subject is an event or object, what caused or created it? Would understanding the cause or a precedent make it easier for my audience to understand my subject?
5. What effects has my subject had or is it likely to have? Are the effects important or unexpected?

Developing a working thesis
Once you've chosen a topic, you need to decide what you're going to say about it. Remember the working thesis should have two parts: the topic itself and your comment on the topic. You can make the thesis more explicit later, but for now, get the basics down. For example: "The use of public school vouchers by the states should not only be allowed but encouraged by the federal government." Note that the chosen topic is at the first of the sentence, and what the writer wants to say about it is at the end. This working thesis is enough to get you started. You can begin researching and reading about the topic, gaining information to support the above claim.

An explicit thesis statement
When your research is underway, you can make the thesis statement more explicit by articulating the lines of argument, analysis, or explanation, depending upon what you need for the type of paper you
are writing. You can complicate the language and make the thesis more interesting later. For now, using the following template may help you get started on your writing project.

In this essay, I plan to (argue, defend, explain, demonstrate, analyze) that ________________ because (1) ____________, (2) ____________, and (3) ________________.

When this formula is applied to the sample working thesis stated earlier, it becomes:

In this essay, I plan to argue that the use of public school vouchers should be encouraged by the federal government because public schools will be forced to improve if they have to compete for students, because students should be able to have access to the best education possible, no matter where they live, and because the future of our country depends on quality education for everyone.

Refining the thesis statement
After working on the paper and building an introduction, the thesis can always be reworded, or refined.

While the use of school vouchers is currently up to the discretion of the states with no interaction or interference from the federal government, the country would be best served if the government would not only recommend but encourage the use of vouchers.

Notice that the lines of argument are not articulated in this version of the thesis statement. If you've created an outline or developed an explicit thesis and are sure where you're going with the rest of the paper, this is an acceptable way to approach the assignment. The obvious danger in this method is the temptation to wander or stray off topic.

One way to curb that tendency is to go ahead and fully detail your plan for the paper in the thesis statement. You may prefer this method even if you don't tend to wander off track! Consider this version of our sample thesis:

While the use of school vouchers is currently up to the discretion of the states with no interaction or interference from the federal government, the country would be best served if the government would encourage the use of vouchers; if more people used vouchers, public schools would be forced to improve because they would be competing for students, students would have access to quality education, no matter where they lived, and the future of our country depends on quality education for all its citizens.

You're probably thinking, "But that's too long!" It is a long sentence, but it's a grammatically correct sentence. And really, a thesis doesn't have to be just one sentence. A period could easily replace the semi-colon after "vouchers" and before "if more people." Sometimes for longer papers, a thesis paragraph is perfectly appropriate.

The bottom line is, keep your options open—develop a working thesis and then an explicit thesis to guide you, but allow yourself the freedom to write the type of thesis that's right for your writing assignment. Think of the thesis statement as an umbrella shielding your whole paper. If a portion of your paper falls outside the umbrella, either cut it out or extend the breadth of your umbrella.
Revising Your Paper

Online Writing Lab
http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/owl

After you have finished writing your paper, let it rest for a period of time. Then go back to it and check out the following:

Assignment
☐ The draft carries out the assignment.
☐ The draft meets every requirement of the assignment. (Consider both content and style.)

Audience
☐ The draft is clearly geared toward the target audience; anyone reading this could tell for whom it was written.
☐ The arguments are appropriate for the audience.
☐ The draft captures the interest of the audience and will appeal to the intended readers.
☐ The language, tone, and argument are appropriate to the audience and the type of paper.

Title & Introduction
☐ The title accurately tells the reader what the paper is about.
☐ The title and introduction catch the reader’s attention.
☐ The introduction has a thesis which makes the main argument or topic clear.

☐ The thesis is unified, arguable, and specific. The thesis can complete the following sentence, "In this paper, I will . . .”

Argument
☐ The draft fulfills the contract made in the introduction and supports the thesis.
☐ The draft sticks to the argument throughout the paper.
☐ There are reasons to support every component of the thesis.
☐ Every reason is supported by facts, testimony, logic, examples, or other material.

Organization of Main Points
☐ The main points are all relevant to the thesis.
☐ The main points come in clear order, such as least to most important, chronological, or logical.

Paragraphs
☐ Every paragraph is fully developed; the reader will not be left with questions.
☐ No paragraph is so long that it will tire the reader. Breaks are made in logical places.
☐ Paragraphs are logically related to one another.
☐ Transitions tie paragraphs into a coherent whole.
Sentences
- Sentences are varied in length, structure, and type.
- The sentence structure makes an effectively transition between ideas.
- Topic sentences clearly introduce the subject(s) addressed in each paragraph? (It may be helpful to limit subjects to one per paragraph, or identify groups of paragraphs that create a unit which develops one point.)
- Weak sentences are identified, then revised or cut—they may be confusing, awkward, or uninspired.

Words
- All words that may be technical or unfamiliar to the audience are clearly defined.
- Verbs are active and vivid.
- The language is clear and simple.
- No words are potentially offensive, either to the intended audience or anyone else.
- Unnecessary words or phrases are avoided. The required word count is not what determines the length.
- The draft meets the assignment's format guidelines, as outlined by the instructor. (Re-checked the assignment sheet to be sure.)
- The draft has page numbers, as required.
- The instructor's name is spelled correctly and the course and section number are correct.
- The correct documentation style is used.

Conclusion
- The conclusion is more than just a restatement of the introduction.
- The draft concludes in a memorable way that emphasizes the thesis, rather than just abruptly stopping or trailing off.

Final Thoughts
- Once the draft is revised, there is still one more task: look for typing or printing errors. Spelling and grammar checkers miss many errors, so read aloud, very slowly, from a print out.

Adapted from a handout used at The Center for Learning, Teaching, Communication, and Research, Berea, Kentucky.

Sources


Common Pitfalls and Getting the Grade You Want

1.214 Evans Library
205 West Campus Library
writingcenter.tamu.edu
979.458.1455

Errors in writing are often difficult to identify. Below are some sentences demonstrating "common pitfalls." Under these sentences are suggestions for improvement and examples of revisions.

**Sources**
Let the reader know who it is you are quoting and from what context you took it. Be sure to follow quotes with analysis (why you used the quote).

**Original:**
Some people think that, "If we compete on wages in a no-win game of who can pay workers the least, we will grow to resemble our competitors" (Durbin 73).

**Revision:**
In her article on American workers and the American dream, Melissa Durbin argues, "If we compete on wages in a no-win game of who can pay workers the least, we will grow to resemble our competitors" (73). Published in the *Houston Chronicle*, Durbin's article expresses the perils of economic competition.

**Quotations Standing Alone**
Generally speaking, it is better not to use a complete quotation unless you comment on it in some way. Try to include only the most relevant or important part of the quote. Introduce it with the author's name or with a phrase that links your ideas to the quotation. Continue the idea expressed by the quotation with your own words.

**Original:**
Debates about environmental issues and animal protection continue today. "In the four years that the Endangered Species Act has languished in congressional limbo, seven species have become extinct and the populations of dozens more have nosedived" (Begley 59).

**Revision:**
In her article on environmental debates, Sharon Begley refers to the Endangered Species Act as having "languished in congressional limbo" while the populations of various species are coming dangerously close to extinction (59).
Lengthy Quotations, Too Many Quotations

You have a minimum amount of space to make your point; quotations, by themselves, do not build your argument. Save your quotations for when an exact phrase or sentence is absolutely necessary or for when you need a vivid example. No more than 30% of your paper should be quoted material.

Verb Tense

Use present tense verbs when describing events occurring in a poem, story, novel or play. ("Hemingway writes..." or "Hamlet says...")

Original:

In her short stories, Flannery O'Connor wrote about violence and the grotesque in the Southern gothic experience.

Revision:

In her short stories, Flannery O'Connor writes about violence and the grotesque in the Southern gothic experience.

Repetition of the Title

Instead of repeating the title, use "the work," "this novel," "the drama," "the tale," etc. Don't say something like, "The previously mentioned work" or "This work of our author."

Original:

"A Rose for Emily" by William Faulkner is a story about the decay of the Southern gentile class. In the previously mentioned work, Emily represents the traditions of past generations. This story has often been read as an example of the Southern gothic story.

Revision:

"A Rose for Emily" by William Faulkner explores the decay of the Southern gentile class. Emily, the title character, represents the traditions of past generations. This story has often been read as an example of the Southern gothic genre.

Reference to the Author

Refer to the author by his/her full name the first time you mention him/her and after that by last name only.

Original:

Sandra Cisneros began writing at the age of ten. Sandra Cisneros studied creative writing at the Iowa Writer's Workshop, where she earned a Master of Fine Arts degree. Sandra Cisneros is the author of House on Mango Street, Woman Hollering Creek, and various collections of poetry.

Revision:

Sandra Cisneros began writing at the age of ten. She later studied creative writing at the Iowa Writer's Workshop and earned a Master of Fine Arts degree. Cisneros is the author of House on Mango Street, Woman Hollering Creek, and various collections of poetry.

Style

Consider your audience. Be direct, be professional, and be yourself. Don't be pompous and showy, but don't be over-familiar. Avoid slang and clichés.
Original: This book was good, but I didn't really understand it.

Original: The magnanimous aspects of the aforementioned novel were eclipsed by the Byzantine language and convoluted theoretical explications.

Revision: This text presents a comprehensive exploration of certain concepts. However, the author's ideas are often difficult to decipher because of the complex vocabulary and insufficiently defined terms.

Author's Opinion The author may not necessarily believe in his characters' actions, so don't say "Shakespeare felt it was okay to murder one's stepfather" when talking about the character Hamlet.

Summary You can be sure your instructor will have read the work. Your thesis statement should analyze, not summarize a topic.

Structure of the Argument Save your best argument for last, or start with an obvious point and end with a compelling one.

Misuse of Literary Terms Terms can be tricky. Before you use one, look it up in a handbook of literary terms.

All quotations taken from Writing Traditions, Texas A&M University (1999).
Common Writing Tasks
Your objectives when composing a business letter are as follows:

- to be understood exactly as you intended
- to secure a response to your message—and, where applicable, a favorable one
- to maintain favorable relations with those with whom you communicate
- to be absolutely correct in each and every statement you make.

To achieve these goals, your business letter should include the following elements:

1. **Primary Element**: The letter’s important “news”—your reason for writing—should be in the first paragraph.
2. **Secondary Element**: Information that develops the “news” should be in the middle paragraph(s), including explanations, supporting details, reasons the reader should act.
3. **Closing Element**: The last paragraph should tell the reader what action to do next, including clarification that suggests course of action and statements that tell the reader what attitude or response is required.

You will get better results by making your audience the focus of the letter, not yourself. Anticipate how the letter will *look, sound,* and *seem* to your audience. Re-word sentences to eliminate some of the “I” and “my” emphasis and concentrate on what you can do for the reader. By saying what you *can* do, you avoid sounding negative or self-important.

**Cover Letters**

Familiarize yourself with the job announcement and the organization to which you’re thinking about applying. Determine where your interests and credentials intersect with the needs of the company. For more details on writing cover letters, see our handout “Guidelines for Cover Letters.”

**Direct or Deductive Letters**

**Good-news** (acceptance, announcements, information, granting requests, reminders, thank-yous, congratulations):

1. Best news/main idea
2. Explanation—Give necessary details and/or background information.
3. Positive, friendly closure—Express your appreciation, or make a clear statement of the
desired action.

**Direct-requests** (simple claim letters, some collection letters, asking simple favors, seeking information, placing orders, reserving rooms, etc.):

1. **Main idea**—State your request, main statement, or question; give reasons, if necessary.
2. **Further explanation**—Give all necessary and desirable details along with optional, but often helpful devices, such as charts, graphs, lists, headings.
3. **Courteous closure/motivation to action**—Make a clear statement of the action you desire along with information to make the action easier; express appreciation for doing the action.

**Indirect or Inductive Letter**

**Bad-news** (refusals, compromises):

1. **Buffer**—Begin with a pleasant, neutral statement about the situation.
2. **Explanation**—Tactfully state the necessary details beginning with pertinent, favorable details and ending with the unfavorable facts.
3. **Decision, news, main idea**—State these without sacrificing clarity.
4. **Positive, friendly closure**—Offer additional help or suggestions, invite future action, give a clear statement of action desired, or emphasize goodwill.

**Persuasive requests** (sales, some collection and claim letters, requests for interviews):

1. **Attention**—How will your request benefit or interest the reader?
2. **Further explanation**—Give descriptive details or psychologically appeal to the reader.
3. **Desire**—Make a clear statement to help create reader’s desire to fulfill your request.
4. **Courteous closure**—Clearly state the action desired giving a special inducement to help the reader realize the benefits of the action.

**Sources:**


Guidelines for Cover Letters

Online Writing Lab
http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/owl

One of the most important parts of your resume package is a cover letter; in fact, do not send your resume without one. By highlighting how your skills and experience can contribute to the company, a good cover letter will invite the reader to browse your resume for more detailed information.

Be concise and personal. Good cover letters should show your sense of purpose, your enthusiasm for the position/company, and how you can help the company to meet their goals and needs. Conduct research on the company so that your cover letter is tailored to it specifically—these are not mass-produced letters! The letter should be directed to a specific individual in the company and should mention a specific next step you will be taking.

Below are some guidelines to follow as you create your cover letter:

FORM

- Make sure the letter follows a professional business letter format.
- Make sure it is on bond paper.
- Like your resume, the cover letter should be grammatically correct, with no punctuation or spelling errors. Make sure you proofread carefully.
- Address each employer by name and title. (Usually, you can call the company and ask who the hiring manager is for the position for which you are interested.)
- If you cannot find the hiring manager’s name, begin your letter with “Dear Hiring Manager for [name of position].”
- Do not begin with “Dear Sir or Madam:” or “To Whom It May Concern:”

CONTENT

- Tailor your letter to each job opportunity, as much as possible. Demonstrate some detailed knowledge of the company.
- Assess the organization’s needs and goals. Then match your skills to how they will benefit the organization.
- Use a mature voice.
- Avoid long sentences that may be unclear.
- Use action verbs.
- Show confidence, enthusiasm, and optimism in your tone.
- Be professional and respectful.
- Show some personality, but avoid being too unorthodox.
- Make sure your letter is in a logical sequence.
• Make sure each paragraph is organized around a main point.
• Keep your letter to one page only.

FORMAT

• **Opening Paragraph:**
  Target a specific position in the organization. State how you heard about the position/organization. Tell who you are (senior at A&M in Civil Engineering).

• **Paragraphs 2/3:**
  Highlight specific skills and experiences that qualify you for the job you’re applying for. Use concrete examples to expand what you listed on your resume and to show how your education and experience make you suitable for the position. Explain how you would contribute to the organization. Indicating that you know specific details about the organization is not absolutely necessary; however, it is a good way to catch the eye of the hiring manager reading the letter. Your cover letter should **elaborate**, not **copy**, your resume.

• **Closing paragraph:**
  Highlight action! Ask the person for an interview at their convenience. Indicate what materials you have enclosed and offer to provide any additional information (writing sample, portfolio). Thank the person for their consideration and indicate you are looking forward to hearing from them. Or better yet, let them know you will be calling them!

For more detailed information about effective cover letters go to <http://www.quintcareers.com/tutorial_14b_ans.html>.

Additional Information

Much of the communication in a business or organization is in the form of memorandums, or memos. These internal documents may have a variety of readers and purposes and may cover many different situations. While memos can be formal or informal, they are always more informal than letters and are usually sent within an organization rather than to outside readers.

**Audience**
- Your readers will range in position from supervisors to peers to subordinates and will be familiar with your institution's projects and the jargon related to the business, so you will not need to provide much background information.
- They will have many roles, from producers to users.
- They may be experts or novices in their field.
- Whoever they are, they are usually busy people who don't have time to waste on confusing, disorganized information. When you write a memo, be organized and informative, yet succinct.
- You may send a memo to a single reader or to many readers, all concerned with the subject of the memo.

**Purpose**
- You may write to respond to a request.
- You may request specific information or a specific action from the reader, often a co-worker.
- You might be thanking someone for help or trying to persuade someone to provide additional support.

**Style**
- Ostentatious language, excessively technical jargon, or complicated syntax will make you sound pompous. Be cordial, straightforward, and lucid, and strive for a relaxed and conversational style.
- Generally, your tone should be neutral or positive, but you have to occasionally issue complaints or reprimands in memos. Use caution in negative situations. You never know who will read the memo. Be aware of the effect of your words.

**Format**
- Memos should be single-spaced with double spaces between paragraphs, in block form. They should be kept to a single page if possible.
- Memos have two sections: the heading and the body.

The **heading** consists of date, to, from, subject, and cc.

*Date:* Write the full name of the month, or use its standard abbreviations. Don't use numerals as in 6/1/05.
To: Generally, address people of higher rank by title. If your company policy or your relationship with the addressee allows, you may omit courtesy (Mrs., Ms., Mr.) or professional (Dr., Dean, etc.) titles. For most formal situations, use the addressee's full name; in some informal situations, you may use first names. If the addressee's name alone is not sufficient to ensure that the memo will reach its destination, put an identifying tag directly after the name (Johnny Depp, Payroll Office). If the memo is directed to three or four people, list their names alphabetically or in descending order of their position in the institutional hierarchy. If several names are required you may use "TO: See Below" and then place the names at the bottom of the memo. If the group is too large to list, follow "TO" with an identifying classification (TO: Faculty, Board of Directors, etc.)

From: Place your name on this line, and do not use a courtesy title. If you believe that reader(s) may not know you, identify yourself by using your job title or department name. Handwrite your initials to the right of your typed name.

Subject: Since the subject often determines where or how the memo will be filed and even if it will be read, it should be concise and accurate.

CC: List names of other people who will receive copies of your memo. The CC line can be placed in the heading, next to the heading, or at the bottom of the document.

The body states your exact purpose for writing so that reader(s) can quickly gain an understanding of the memo’s content and how it related to them. If the memo is longer than a page, use the first paragraph to provide background information. An outline will help you organize your thoughts. Focus your reader’s attention on main ideas rather than on details and digressions. Strive to be plain, direct, and brief.

Decide on a pattern of organization that best suits your purpose. The two most common for memos are deduction and induction.

- Deduction presents ideas in decreasing order of importance and generally assumes that the reader is well acquainted with the topic under discussion. This strategy spares readers needless loss of time wading through material they may already know. Most business memos use this pattern. Place supporting facts in subsequent sentences for readers who may be unfamiliar with the subject. Place any background information last.

- Induction presents ideas in increasing order of importance. If you have to announce bad news or your reader may not understand the main idea without significant prior preparation, use this form. Lead up to the most forceful idea; then present that idea at the end of the memo.

• Finish with a courteous and clear call for action. Tell your reader precisely what results you expect to follow from reading your memo. It may be helpful to include deadlines. Give the reader a clear and specific sense of what to do.

Attachments
- Identify your attachments at the bottom of the page in case they inadvertently get separated from the memo.

Sources

Check out our online resources including handouts, podcasts and more. Call the Write Line for quick questions. 979.845.2160
SAMPLE MEMO

DATE: March 1, 2007

TO: Dr. Sally Abrahams, Head, Department of Biology

FROM: Valerie Balester, Executive Director, University Writing Center

SUBJECT: Support for Jean Rowling for Teaching Excellence Award

I write to urge you to honor Jean Rowling for her teaching. Dr. Rowling was one of the first faculty members to offer a writing-intensive course at Texas A&M. In fact, she was the first faculty member to invite me to visit with her about making her course writing-intensive, and she was delightfully open to suggestions I had for enhancing the writing that was already occurring in her class (WIZZ 850).

Dr. Rowling uses writing as a way to reinforce and deepen student learning and has an innovative way of making the writing real to her students by providing them with an actual audience. With her first writing assignment, she encourages students to think on paper. Students in the field, observing many different practices, spend a bit of time at the end of a trip thinking about a problem that a typical dragon trainer might encounter. They also write longer, more formal reports, using collaborative strategies that help them work together for the final product.

I invited Dr. Rowling to do a number of talks that have been enthusiastically received by her peers from across the university. Once other faculty members understand that a scientist can incorporate writing successfully in classes without detracting from course content, they are inspired to assign writing as well. She has also been featured in our faculty newsletter, mentioned in our faculty blog, and been interview for a writing center podcast.

Because of her willingness to share her experiences, she has had a positive impact on both students in her classes and on students across the university. She truly deserves recognition. If you have any questions about her candidacy, I would be more than happy to answer them.
Writing Effective Presentation Slides

Slides can add value to your presentation; however, they can also turn a good presentation into a flop. Like all visual aids, slides should enhance your presentation, not carry it. Never give a presentation with slides unless you are 100% prepared to give that presentation without them. At no time should the visuals overshadow you as the speaker.

Starting Out

1. Select a topic you are interested in; it will make writing and giving your presentation much easier. Make sure your topic fits the assignment and that it is expansive enough to fill the time allotted but not so vast that it cannot be covered sufficiently.

2. Brainstorm. Write down anything and everything that comes to mind about your topic. Don’t dismiss any ideas. Try to think of a large quantity of ideas so you can choose the best ones. Encourage exaggerated ideas and build from ideas you have already had. You can also ask for input from others for a broader view of your topic.

3. Determine your audience. Your audience will determine the level of formality of your presentation. If you are giving a specialized speech, define any terms the audience may not know. Pinpoint areas in your speech where the audience may disagree with you and strengthen your argument in that section.

Organizing

Write a thesis for your presentation just as you would for a paper, then make a list of your key points and order them from weakest to strongest. Your introduction should grab your audience’s interest. Try a strong photo on your title slide. While that slide is viewed, introduce your topic, present your thesis, and give your audience an overview or a sense of the presentation’s direction. The conclusion should end on a strong note—don’t simply summarize. It’s boring. Think of an example or idea that will stay with the audience and back it up with a strong or memorable image.

Editing

Once you have framed the basic presentation, cut the text on the slides to a bare minimum—just what is necessary to enhance or illustrate your spoken words. Slides are like billboards. People will look at them only for a second before they divert their attention elsewhere, which, of course, should be you. Placing a paragraph on a slide will misfire, as your audience will either try too hard to read it and miss what you are saying or read it before you finish speaking, making what you have to say irrelevant. In PowerPoint, “ctrl B” will blacken the screen, a good trick if you want to turn the audience’s attention away from the visual for a short time.
In addition to ensuring the content on your slides is short and concise, your presentation as a whole should be condensed to keep the audience’s attention. If a lengthy presentation is necessary, make sure it is dynamic enough to keep them focused. Rehearse your presentation ahead of time so you know how long it will be, adding time for questions or comments from the audience.

Slides, like anything else written, need proofreading. You do not want to embarrass yourself on presentation day with a “their” instead of a “there” blown up 50x on a projector screen.

**Bells and Whistles**

Make your presentation visually interesting. Default design templates are not a bad way to go if you are design-challenged; however, design is useful to learn for those making slide presentations often. (See the University Writing Center’s handout on designing presentation slides for more information.) Use charts, graphs, and diagrams to illustrate your points. Make sure all visual aids are related directly to your presentation content.

Having a legible font size is one of the most important aspects of your slides. If you have minimal text on your slide, as you should, making the font large enough to read should not be a problem. If you have Microsoft PowerPoint, here is a tip to see if your text is legible: Go to slide sorter view and adjust the zoom to 66%. If you can read the slides, so can your audience.

Many people take advantage of bullets when creating their slides. Bullets are not always a good thing, and should be used sparingly and in the right context (making a list). Sub-bullets look messy and visually complex although one level of sub-bullets on a slide is fine. Make sure each bullet begins with the same style of capitalization and ends with consistent punctuation. (Either they all end with a period or they all end with nothing). If your slide looks too crowded, something is wrong.

Don’t get carried away with the animation or transitions features. Minimal animation can add a nice touch to your presentation, but too much “checkerboard in” special effects look cheesy. Use attention-grabbing animation only where you need to add emphasis and stick with classic options such as “fade in” as opposed to “spiral in.” Animations should be fast—you don’t want to bore your audience while your title takes two minutes to scroll across the screen. Your animation should make sense and look natural according to the layout of your information. (For example, the title should never appear last.) Above all, animation should not hinder the legibility of your slides.

Strong stage presence will take your presentation much further than good slides. When you are presenting, make sure you have energy and “give a speech.” DON’T read from your slides. Stand up and move around, make interesting gestures, and maintain eye contact with your audience. If you are actively participating in your presentation, so will your audience.

**References**


A progress report informs the reader about the status of a project. It is often written at set times throughout the duration of a project. Depending on the project, the reader, and how frequent a report is submitted, the length will vary.

You may have been given a rough outline of what to include in a report which contradicts the general outline given below. If this situation arises, use this guideline as a supplement.

First analyze your audience by asking yourself the following questions.

- How does my work impact my audience?
- What decisions does my audience need to make based on my report?
- What information does my audience need in order to make that decision?
- What impression do I want my audience to have about my work?
- What should I include or emphasize in my report to create that impression?

Second, determine the best way to communicate with your audience. Remember that progress reports can take different forms: brief verbal reports at weekly or monthly staff meetings, periodic e-mails to supervisors, formal reports for clients, and so on.

With audience in mind, also consider whether you should present your report in narrative or bullet form? Should the report use color codes, (green—project is going fine; blue—needs attention; or red—problematic), have headers and sub-headers, or simply include sets of graphs?

**Progress Report Introduction**

- Purpose of the report (introduce the project and the remind the reader that this is an update on progress)
- Overview of the project (briefly summarize the project’s status)
- Survey of the progress since last report (review the project itself, including the major tasks and what you should have accomplished by this point)

Do not forget to identify the addressee, the project’s name, and the precise dates the progress report covers. The goal when writing the body of a report is to convey information as clearly and simply as possible. After reading the body, readers should not ask, “What does this mean?” or “Where is this?”
Progress Report Body

- Tasks accomplished since last report (what has actually been accomplished?)
- Tasks in progress (what is going on now?)
- Problems encountered (what key issues still need to be addressed and how are these issues being solved?)
- Changes made (what key decisions have been made?)
- Tasks to accomplish (what is on the horizon?)

It may be helpful to divide the body into subsections and to give reference to any attachments that contain more specific information (e.g., Project Gantt Chart). Also, show change over time by evaluating the issues that continually arise and, if this is applicable, state whether the project will meet its deadline. Be sure to make clear references to dead-ends that yield unprofitable results. You can also include hours worked and give credit to the group members who assisted in accomplishing tasks. In addition, explain the problems encountered and supplement them with the course of action taken to remedy them. State the consequences of these problems on the deadline, budget, or management structure. If there are no problems, indicate this in your report.

Progress Report Conclusion

- Summarize the work done since the last report and any major changes made to the project.
- Convey confidence or concern about overall work on the project.

It is important to be honest in your evaluation, since this will help supervisors know how they can help. You may also indicate in your report that you are willing to apply adjustments that the reader may suggest.

Sources:
Dubinsky, Paretti, Mark Armstrong. Progress Reports. 24 July 2007
http://wiz.cath.vt.edu/tw/TechnicalWriting/ProgressReports/index.htm


We write proposals to request something—permission, resources, sponsorship—or to urge someone to take action. A crucial step in writing a proposal is to know your audience and to be clear about what you want. Usually a proposal writer is fulfilling a class assignment or responding to an opportunity that has been announced (usually referred to as a CFP or call for proposals). In such cases, know all the requirements established for proposal writers. Read carefully for any guidelines or requirements. You have to use a specific format or include certain information. You may have to meet deadlines or provide supporting material such as letters of reference. If you disregard the proposal’s parameters, you can be certain it will be unsuccessful. Sometimes, you will be writing an unsolicited proposal, convincing someone to do something they had not previously considered. In that case, you may have more freedom in your presentation, but you’ll need to research your reader to make your appeal attractive.

Format
Proposals can be presented in many ways, including application forms, letters, essays, or formal reports. If a format has not been specified in the call for proposals or assignment and you can’t find a sample for a similar proposal, decide on what is most appropriate. Your readers will appreciate simplicity and concision.

Don’t forget that many readers skim. Make the writing visually appealing by keeping paragraphs reasonably short and using headings. Headings and topic sentences at the beginning of each paragraph will guide the reader and make it easy to find the main ideas.

Keep fonts simple and readable, and never go below a 12-point. If you are filling in a form and the text is too long for the prescribed space, do not decrease the font size. Instead, edit your work and omit unnecessary words. If it is still too long, re-evaluate the content and cut examples or other extraneous or supporting material.

Elements of a proposal
The elements included here are those commonly found in proposals; however, not every proposal requires all these elements in this order. Use the call for proposals or assignment, as well as your judgment about your audience and purpose, to decide what to include.

Title. The title should be descriptive and capture the essence of what you want to achieve. For example, “Enhancement of Classroom Instruction in Large-Enrollment, College-Level Classes,” or “Funding of Deep Sea Exploration of Hellenic Ruins in Asia Minor.”
Abstract. An informative summary of the project in 250 words or less that includes the problem, proposed project, solution, or work plan, the method, and the significance.

Cover Page, Table of Contents, List of Figures, List of Appendices. These are added in long or formal proposals to help the reader find information.

Qualifications. Your qualifications and those of anyone working on the project should make the reviewers feel you are competent to carry out the plan.

Define or demonstrate the problem. Also called the statement of purpose, this section explains why the project being proposed is worth approving or funding, what problems it addresses, or how it will contribute to knowledge or to the field. For example, why would we want to enhance instruction in large classes? What is currently happening in large classes that suggests improvement or enhancement is needed? How severe is the problem and what do you expect a solution would do to address it, as specifically as possible.

Review of the relevant literature or describe the state of the art. Have you done your homework? Review the most current knowledge on the topic and demonstrate that you know what others experts in the field have to say about it or related matters. How does your work fit in with theirs? It might, for example, replicate it; or it might contest it or extend it into new areas.

Description of the project, solution, or work plan. Be specific and realistic about exactly what you will do. If you want to report on research at a conference, make it clear you have conducted the research. If you want to get money to conduct research, demonstrate that you know exactly how you will proceed. Don't promise what you cannot deliver: the plan should be feasible and plausible. Never overpromise or inflate. Do show enthusiasm for the project.

Significance. Describe what your work contributes to knowledge or to the area you are working within or how solving the problem you identified in this way is optimal. Are you offering a new point of view, a new theory, a refinement on an old theory? Are you offering an innovative approach to an old problem, or helping us deal with a new one? How will accepting your proposal advance the agenda of the readers? Will they see a tangible or measurable result from your work?

Methods. Be as specific as possible at all levels about exactly what you will do. You might also address methods others have used and whether you are making any refinements to their processes.

Problems. The problems section is to be distinguished from the statement of the problem. It is typically brief, but also is a frank acknowledgment of barriers that might impede your progress or derail your project. To offset the negative impact, make it clear that this section is your way of thinking through obstacles so that they do not catch you unawares. Offer possible solutions or alternatives you might take if you reach an insurmountable obstacle.

Budget. Present your expected costs and revenue (if any) specifically and clearly. Do not hide costs or lump items together in a way that might look like you are padding the budget or hiding something. Remember to refer to the call for proposals for guidelines on how much detail is needed or for limits on what you might request, both in dollar amounts and in types of expenditures.
Timeline. The timeline shows you have a realistic view of what you can achieve and how long it will take. It shows you are well-prepared and have time management skills.

References. Any research or literature you cited or consulted in preparing your proposal should be cited. (This does not include the call for proposals or tips on how to write a proposal, just material directly related to your project.) A reader might skip to the references to see if you are including the most current or trusted research.

Appendices: supplementary material or data. If including data in the report would make it too long or too technical, but it supports your argument, you can put it in an appendix. You can also use appendices for letters of support, timelines, budgets, copies of surveys, proof from an Institutional Review Board that you have permission to do the work, and so on. If the budget or timeline are very long or complex, they might be added to the appendices as well. Separate out each item and label it as an appendix, and include a list of appendices with the table of contents. If something in the appendices is particularly important, make sure you have included a reference to it in the main proposal, usually in parentheses (Appendix 1).

In your final draft, make sure all the parts fit together. Do your timeline and budget include all the personnel you said will be participating? If your timeline calls for an environmental impact statement to be completed before work begins, do you need to add that to the budget?

Style
The style of a proposal will be somewhat dictated by the audience, type of proposal, and purpose. In most academic proposals, especially in the technical or scientific disciplines, the valued style is clear, direct, and unbiased. Jargon and common acronyms can be used if the audience is narrow and expert, but be wary. Many proposals go to both expert and non-expert readers for review.

If your proposal is in essay form and is written for a popular audience, the language may be more impassioned and poetic, but clarity is still valued by most readers. In academic writing, you need to present a logical argument and avoid fallacies.

Editing
Following prescribed proposal guidelines is one way to show respect for your readers; another is to proofread the proposal so that it is error-free and readable. No matter how innovative or groundbreaking your ideas, they will be ignored if your proposal makes you look careless, indifferent, or sloppy.
• Sell yourself through pertinent, unique details that stand out.
• Relate your skills and achievements to the job.
• Focus on the organization where you want to work.

These are some objectives of a resume, and an effective resume can do all those things. But remember, no single resume is a cure all. To have this effective resume you need to:

• gear it toward a specific goal,
• make it original, and
• be willing to prepare a resume to fit each organization and each job.

Before you actually write your resume, consider who will be reading it. Generally speaking, it will be someone who is busy with many details and probably has a number of other resumes to read. You need to design your resume to get that reader’s attention. Give your audience something to remember you by—“The woman who . . .” or “The man who . . .” This is one place not to be humble. Think of all your good points and use them to sell yourself.

Resume Sections
The sections you include in your resume vary, depending on what you can say about yourself and what you wish to emphasize. The order and format may also vary.

Personal data: Resumes generally use your full name. Does that mean full middle name or just your initial? It is up to you. It’s your resume. To be sure that the prospective employer can contact you, both college and permanent addresses are usually included. Also, be sure to include the following:
• dates you will be at college and permanent addresses,
• the telephone number at each address, and
• an email address that you can access at either location.
However, if your home address is Taiwan, you’ll probably use only your local address on your resume. It may look like this:

John Q. Smith
827 University Drive
College Station , Texas 77844
(979) 493-8229
jqs96@yahoo.com
Career Objective: Relate this section directly to the job you want and make sure you tie in the skills you have acquired from particular jobs, outside activities, or your education. Avoid general statements like “opportunity for advancement” or “to acquire people skills.”

Examples:
- A position involving the development of management information systems on mini- or microcomputers leading to responsibilities as a systems analyst.
- A summer internship with a construction company that requires skills in field engineering, cost controlling, planning, scheduling, and estimating.

Education: Pay attention to placement of information on the page. Use special type or underlining to highlight the features you think are most important. What aspect do you want to emphasize: your degree? your college? your GPR?

Example of standard entry:
Texas A&M University
Bachelor of Science, May 2001
Major: Civil Engineering; GPR: 3.7/4.0

Same information, different emphasis:
Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering, May 2001
Texas A&M University, GPR: 3.7/4.0

You may also include significant courses. Recruiters already know the basic courses taken in your major, so list the course work that is different or the few high-level courses that are really important.

Listing special projects sets you apart and is especially interesting to employers. It may be a research project done for a class or as an outside project. Describe it briefly, giving the most important facts.

Work Experience: Short sentences will highlight your job skills, allowing the employer to picture you as an active person on the job.
- List job titles, places worked, and dates.
- Use action verbs to describe the work you did.

Example:
Research Analyst
Jon Dear, Inc.; Waterloo, Iowa; Summer 2001
- Supervised 13 assistants gathering information on cows' eating habits
- Researched most recent information on cows' nutritional needs
- Analyzed data to determine how to reduce number of feeding hours while maintaining nutritional quality

Note: Highlighting job titles is one standard way to arrange the work experience section. However, if your jobs have been for companies that carry a lot of clout in your field, you may want to begin with and highlight the company name.

Skills: Not all resumes include a skills section, but this is a good way to emphasize the skills you have acquired from your various jobs or activities.
• List any jobs, club activities, projects, special offices you have had.
• Think of skills you have developed from these experiences, i.e., sales: count cash, communicate with customers; Greek house president: lead meetings, negotiate disagreements.
• Group your skills under 3-5 basic skills categories that relate to the job you are seeking and use these as skill headings.
• List your skills with significant details under the appropriate major heading.
• Arrange your skills for their best presentation with headings in order of importance and skills under each heading in their order of importance.
• Make sure that you relate all headings and skills to the job you want.

Examples:
Management
• led committee to prepare and establish new Memorial Student Center Constitution
• evaluated employees' work progress for monthly reports
Communication
• wrote weekly advertisements for MSC to appear in Battalion
• conducted monthly club meetings for 35 members of MSC OPAS
Programming
• analyzed and designed a program to record and average student grades
• designed program to record and update items of fraternity's $85,000 annual budget
College Activities: This section points out your leadership, sociability and energy level as shown in your different activities.
• List organizations in order of importance.
• Add any official position you have had.
• Choose activities that support your job objective.

References: List these on a separate sheet of paper that matches your resume. Include the name, address, and, if available, phone number and email address of each reference; then add a sentence that tells your connection with that person. You are not required to include references with your resume, so you may simply add the statement: References available upon request. This sentence allows you to be selective as to who gets your list of references.

Resume Styles: Now is the time to decide the organizational style you want to use for your resume: targeted, functional, chronological, or imaginative. The style you choose depends upon what you want to highlight.

Targeted resumes: Targeted resumes show qualification for one specific job; however, their use is limited to one particular job. Use this kind of resume when you have paid or unpaid experience that relates to the job you want. Begin each entry with your job title highlighted by underlining or boldface print.
• List experience in order of importance regardless of chronological sequence.
• Make special note of increasing responsibilities, either through job titles, or through descriptive details.
Functional resumes: Functional resumes emphasize specific skills; however, they do not show professional growth. This resume style is especially useful when the skills you've acquired through activities, jobs, or experience are more impressive than the jobs you've had. It uses the SKILLS section described earlier in order to highlight your skills.

- Relate your skills headings to the job you want.
- Arrange skills and headings in order of importance.

Chronological resumes: Chronological resumes are traditional, acceptable, and show professional growth; however, your special capabilities and accomplishments may be lost, and gaps in your employment history are more obvious. This resume style will highlight your employer's name, so use it if you have worked for an important company, like IBM, but had an unimpressive job title, like asst. clerk.

- Begin each entry with the employer's name and your dates of employment.
- Use borders or special pictures you create yourself.

Putting It All Together
Now you're ready to play with your resume information to make it work for you, here are some points to remember:

Sections: Move sections around to emphasize your important facts. Ask yourself:

- Is your work experience more important than your education?
- Are your college activities more important than your past jobs?

Space Use: Use "white space" to make your resume look good. First impressions count, so make yours a good one. It can make the difference between the interview file and the circular file.

Headings: Use different kinds of type, underlining, bold face, all capital letters and indentation to show your organizing ability.

Length: Many companies prefer one-page resumes; however, this may vary according to your field and career objective. Find out from contacts in the industry or the Career Center.

Color: Some companies prefer resumes on white paper only; however, use your own judgment. Your resume is a representation of YOU.

Now you've got the basics. You're ready to set up the facts and then play with the sections to make your resume a winner. With a high-quality, professional resume, you'll be able to do all the following:

- Catch the reader's attention
- Give pertinent details
- Sell yourself, and
- Get your foot in the door

Sources:


In designing effective documents, consider...

✓ Who is my audience?
✓ What is my purpose?
✓ How will my readers use the document?

Start with basic decisions:

- **Page size**: which works best with your document (letter, legal, etc.)?
- **Quality of paper**: which type is appropriate for your document (i.e., cotton bond paper for a résumé, lamination for signs, or sturdy paper for brochures)?

Five principles should guide formatting decisions:

- **Proximity**: group related items together.
- **Alignment & Balance**: make sure that text and graphics line up and create a unified design.
- **Repetition**: work with similar information in similar places to create consistent patterns.
- **Contrast**: make opposing elements of a document stand out against each other (i.e., black text on a white background).
- **Emphasis**: place and format elements, such as headings and subheadings, so they catch readers’ attention.

Six techniques used to emphasis text:

Emphasizing parts of the page draws readers’ attention to a particular area. Use the following techniques for emphasis:

- **Chunking**: information clustered in small chunks makes it easier for the reader to understand.
- **Queueing**: the order of visual information displayed indicates level of importance.
- **Filtering**: visual patterns distinguish various types of information (i.e., notes in a box or a border around an important paragraph).
- **Color variation**: different colors can add emphasis to a particular heading or subheading.
- **Highlighting**: use **boldface**, **italics**, **small capitals**, **large font size**, or **underlining** to bring attention to words.
- **Illustrations**: they are often viewed first; use them to convey ideas discussed in the surrounding paragraphs (i.e., photographs, drawings charts, or graphs).
Page Design Details:
- Symmetrical designs evoke a balanced and restful appearance.
- Asymmetrical designs are unbalanced and suggest movement across the page.
  (See http://desktoppub.about.com/od/designprinciples/i/aa_balance1.htm and
  http://desktoppub.about.com/od/designprinciples/i/aa_balance2.htm)

White space:
- Keeps related elements together
- Isolates and emphasizes important elements
- Provides breathing room between blocks of information

Line length: Readers tend to tire when reading long lines; but short lines can interrupt normal reading pattern.

Line spacing: Should be consistent. Most technical documents use single spacing within paragraphs and double spacing (letters, memos, instructions) or space and a half (proposals, formal reports).

Lists: Can be bulleted, numbered, or in the form of a checklist. Generally, they make easy reading. However, do not overuse lists. Too many bullets at too many levels can make a document choppy and difficult to read. Most importantly, keep lists grammatically consistent (Parallel). Example: Non-parallel (I like swimming, to run and biking.) Parallel (I like swimming, running, and biking.) (See http://web.uvic.ca/wguide/Pages/SentParallel.html)

Columns make room for more information on the page, facilitate repetition, and create a visual pattern. While they are seldom used in academic papers, they are used frequently in journal and other periodicals, brochures, and posters.

Headings help guide the reader through the document.

Font styles are easy to read and appropriate for the document are best. Serif fonts are considered easier to read for body text; sans serif fonts are often used for headings.

Font size should be 12 point for an essay or report, 28 point for a Power Point slide show, and larger fonts for headings or titles; smaller for captions).

Font effects, such as FULL CAPITALIZATION, engraving, or outlining, are best used in informal documents.

Justification is the alignment of words along the left and right margins of the text. Most documents are left-justified. Use ragged right margins if a justified (straight) right margin results in large, unequal spaces between words or odd hyphenation.

References
Writing about a Person: Memoirs, Autobiographies, and Biographies

Definitions

- **Memoir** – a story that relates to one part of the writer’s life and reflects on reoccurring themes throughout the writer’s life.¹
- **Autobiography** – longer counterparts of memoirs; this is a longer work that gives a complete account of the writer’s life or of a particular theme throughout the writer’s life.¹
- **Biography** – A written account of the series of events that make up another person’s life.²

Memoirs

- **Choosing a Subject**:¹
  - It does not need to cover every experience and detail. It simply explores themes and details and uses these to develop a story.
  - It will not simply list details and memories one after another; each story that is told should tie back to the issues and themes being explored. Therefore, the reader should know what each detail or story meant to the writer and his or her life overall.
- **Structure of the Memoir**:¹
  - Include only those stories or memories that contribute to the development of the overall theme that you have chosen. Then look back at them and decide what made them important to you.
  - Do not speed through pivotal moments; you need to give the reader a chance to let them sink in. Use words that bring them into the experience with you.
  - You can either go through the stories chronologically or you can use flashbacks - “a technique of moving back and forth through time”.
- **Voice in the Memoir**:¹
  - Voice: “the personality or the mood of the speaker you hear talking to you as you read the memoir.”
  - Your voice needs to let your attitude shine through. Depending on the subject, you may need to be emotional, distressed, etc.

Autobiographies³

- **Things you may include**: introduce yourself, where you were born, birthday, family, where you live/lived, place of worship, friends, talents, things hard for you, what you do/don’t like to do, pets, sports/activities, favorite music, your goals in life, hobbies, favorite books, most important thing currently in your life.
- After you make a list of these things, go through and check off what you wish to include.
The things that you choose should tie together well and may support an overall theme of your writing. For example, how did each of the things that you talk about mold you into the person that you are today?

Biographies

- **Things that should be included:** date and place of birth and death, family information, lifetime accomplishments, major events of his/her life, effects/impact on society and their historical significance.
- You should not simply list these things, you should dig deeper to find captivate your reader. You could start off with an interesting detail that ties in with your facts.
- **Questions you could consider to tie it all together:**
  - Was there something in his/her childhood that shaped his/her personality?
  - Was there a personality trait that led him/her to be successful or impeded progress?
  - What were some turning points in his/her life?
  - What was his/her impact on history?

Citing Sources
Citing and Using Sources

1.214 Evans Library  
205 West Campus Library  
writingcenter.tamu.edu  
979.458.1455

Any time you draw ideas or information from outside your own experience, you should cite where you found the information. In other words, in order to avoid plagiarism, give credit to the source. For specifics regarding documentation styles (MLA, APA, CME, CMOS, Turabian, how to cite WWW and other electronic sources, or how to cite government documents,) visit the TAMU Library’s Citation Guides.

What do I need to document?

- Any idea, conclusion, information, words, or data directly derived from someone else
- Paraphrases and summaries
- Quotations

What do I not need to document?

- General knowledge
- Common sayings
- Self-evident opinions or conclusions
- Information found in several sources (at least three)

How can I best bring outside sources into my paper?

Summarizing, paraphrasing, or quoting directly are the most common ways to incorporate sources into your researched prose. Why should you think about the ways you use sources? It is important to keep the subject interesting to your reader. Restrain yourself when you feel the urge to quote. Often, direct quotes contain more information than is necessary for your purpose. To be more succinct, paraphrase the author’s ideas. It is a good idea to quote only when the author has said it so well that you can’t improve it. Otherwise, summarize or paraphrase. Your audience will appreciate hearing your voice when they read your writing.

Direct Quotation

Direct quotation is simply that—using the source’s exact words within the context of your own prose. Quotes should be identified with quotation marks (four typed lines or less) or by a block quote format (longer than four typed lines) in order to separate them from your words or the words of other sources. Direct quotations should always have three parts:

- Quote : Material taken directly from the author
- Source : Material that documents the source, such as page numbers
- **Tag**: Material that explains the quote

Note the following examples, in which the **tag** and **source** (MLA is used in this example) are marked. Also note the different ways the same information is conveyed in each example:

1. In Duin's and Graves' *study of vocabulary instruction*, it is noted that "traditional vocabulary instruction is not effective" (328).
2. "Traditional vocabulary instruction is not effective," *notes a recent study* (Duin and Graves 328).
3. "Traditional vocabulary instruction," *notes a recent study*, "is not effective" (Duin and Graves 328).

Remember that tags, or signal phrases as they are sometimes called, are an excellent place to give the credentials of your source, no matter what type of citation you are using (summaries, paraphrases, direct quotations). Reference lists rarely give degrees or offices held, but these can help lend credibility to the information within the citation. Tags can also be used to add needed information to the actual quotation, summary, or paraphrase without detracting from your reference material. For example:

According to Lloyd Benson, veteran lead dispatcher for the Dixie National Forests, "In my experience, forest fires can frequently be predicted with careful attention to weather conditions" (Smith 4).

Without the tag, or signal phrase, we would have no reason to believe the source. Also, consciously using tags or signal phrases may help prevent quote dumping, or not integrating quotes.

**Dumped Quote:**
The passage also stresses that the foreigner must be able to blend in with hegemonic British society. "[Dracula] was a criminal socialist, a monster who had no respect for the hereditary continuities, the racial 'equilibrium,' or the evolutionary elite" (Dijkstra 271).

**Revised with proper attribution (tag, signal phrase):**
The passage stresses that the foreigner must be able to blend in with hegemonic British society. Critic Brian Dijkstra also argues that, "[Dracula] was a criminal socialist, a monster who had no respect for the hereditary continuities, the racial 'equilibrium,' or the evolutionary elite" (271).

Avoid monotony by varying the manner in which you give credit to a source. Is your source taking a neutral stance, inferring or suggesting some connections, arguing a point, or agreeing with other scholars? For example:

As Flora Davis has noted, "...
Toni Morrison, recipient of the 1993 Nobel Prize in Literature, has stated, "...
"..." claims linguist Noam Chomsky.
Psychologist H. S. Terrace offers an odd argument for this view: "...
Terrace answers these objections with the following analysis: "..."
The following list offers a variety of verbs that might help to make your source's stance clear.

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<thead>
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<th>acknowledges</th>
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<th>admits</th>
<th>agrees</th>
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</table>

Paraphrasing

Online Writing Lab
http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/owl

Paraphrases - Your Own Words
Paraphrasing involves the rephrasing of an author's ideas or statements in new words. They do not simply substitute synonyms for the author's words, but substantially rewrite the original without changing its meaning. Paraphrases should thoroughly and accurately reiterate the original text. This is a way to smoothly assimilate someone else's ideas into your own writing. You must always remember to cite this information since you are borrowing ideas from someone else. Failure to do so is considered plagiarism.

What Do Paraphrases Do?
Paraphrasing helps writers curb the urge to directly quote everything; it is distinctive because it allows you to absorb the material and then explain it thoroughly, showing a deeper understanding of the original passage. When you paraphrase well, you demonstrate that you are a careful and intelligent reader. Paraphrasing becomes especially important when you are writing to a diverse audience because it allows technical information to be translated into simpler terms by selecting words better suited to that wider audience.

How Are Paraphrases Used?
Paraphrasing can be used many ways in scholastic, professional, and private writing. Paraphrases serve various functions including, but not limited to, the following:

- exploring meanings,
- restating ideas,
- clearing away confusion,
- explaining a topic to a general or different audience,
- setting up quoted material, or
- interpreting unfamiliar terms.

When Do I Need To Paraphrase?
There are many reasons to use a paraphrase, as opposed to a summary or direct quotation. You might need to paraphrase in any of the following situations:

- The ideas in the original passage are more important than the style and authority of the author.
- The ideas are more memorable than the author's language.
- The original language is difficult to comprehend.
- A quotation is too long and/or wordy.
- The original passage needs to be clarified.
The source of a quotation is unknown.

**What If I Am Having Trouble?**
If you are struggling with writing a paraphrase, here are a few helpful tips.

Change the sentence structure and then the words, or vice versa.
Break-up long sentences and combine shorter ones.
Try to understand the original passage as a whole idea.
Choose only the information that helps you; don't paraphrase unnecessary material.
Remember that you can use direct quotations in a paraphrase as long as you cite them accordingly.
You do not have to omit details (like a summary).

**Checklist**

- Does the paraphrase consist of 100% your own words?
- Did you correctly cite any direct quotations?
- Did you do more than just substitute synonyms?
- Did you do more than just change the sentence structure?
- Did you make it clear that you are using someone else's thoughts?
SCHOLARLY JOURNAL OR POPULAR MAGAZINE?
HOW TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE

Journals and magazines are important sources for information!
Distinguishing between the two can be difficult!

Ask at the reference desk in Evans Library if you have questions,
Ulrich’s identifies the audience and characteristics of specific journal titles.

Ulrich’s International Periodicals Directory
1. Go to the library’s homepage: library.tamu.edu
2. Click the “Databases” Tab
3. Type in Ulrich’s

Scholarly Journals
- Generally have a serious look.
- Often contain pictures, graphs, and charts.
- Written by “experts” in particular fields (subject disciplines).
- Report on original research or experimentation.
- Often reviewed (refereed) by author’s peers before publication.
- Intended audience is other scholars (researchers, professors, students)
  and “experts” familiar with the language of the discipline.
- Credit given to sources used (i.e. citations).
  o In-text citations
  o Bibliography or reference list
  o Footnotes or endnotes
- Published by academic presses or endorsed by professional associations.

Examples: American Historical Review
JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association
Journal of Applied Physics
Modern Fiction Studies

Popular Magazines
- Available in many formats.
- Often attractive in appearance
- Often contain many photographs and other eye-catching graphics.
- Generally written by professional writers or journalists
- Generally not written by scholarly “experts” in any one field.
- Intended audience is the general public.
- Language used is simple and entertaining.
- Rarely credit their sources (i.e. no citations).
- Published by commercial presses.
- Contain advertisements.
- Can be purchased at newsstands, grocery stores, and large bookstores.

Examples: Newsweek
Sports Illustrated
Rolling Stone
Time
Categories of Research Tools and Resources

- There are 3 broad categories of research tools and resources:
  - Primary
  - Secondary
  - Tertiary
- These categories vary according to the subject discipline.
- As always, ask at one of the reference desks if you have any questions.

Primary Sources
- Materials that have not been interpreted by another person.
- In the Humanities and Social Sciences, these materials include:
  - Diaries
  - Letters
  - Memoirs
  - Census data
  - Other types of data
  - Newspapers
  - Books written at the time of the “event”
  - Interviews
  - Manuscripts
  - Surveys
  - Dissertations
  - Questionnaires
  - Periodical articles

- In the Physical Sciences, these materials include:
  - Research reports
  - Periodical articles
  - Dissertations
  - Technical trade bulletins
  - Original research
  - Patents
  - Conference proceedings

- Original research is also being shared on the Internet via
  - Listservs
  - Web-based bulletin boards
  - Blogs
  - Forums

Secondary Sources
- These sources analyze, critique, report, summarize, interpret, or somehow restructure an original work (primary source).
- Include reviews, reference books like encyclopedias and handbooks, and many of the forms taken by primary sources such as periodical articles and books.

Tertiary Sources
- Finding tools that provide access to primary and secondary sources.
- Include bibliographies, periodical abstracts and indexes, literature guides, library catalogs, and lists of references or works cited.
EVALUATING WEB SOURCES:
A CHECKLIST

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

☐ What is the specific purpose of the Web site?
☐ To whom is it aimed?
☐ Does the Web site meet your particular information needs?

SOURCE AND AUTHORITY

☐ Is the author/producer of the Web site readily identifiable?
☐ Is the author/producer a qualified expert?
  o Does the Web site include a page indicating his/her credentials?
  o Can you verify his or her credentials by using other sources of information?
  o Can the author/producer be contacted for further questions or comments?
  o Is there an E-mail link on the Web site?
☐ Consider the URL:
  o What type of Web site is it?
    - .edu for educational or research material
    - .gov for government material
    - .org for materials from organizations
    - .com for commercial products and commercially sponsored Web sites
  o Is this type of Web site appropriate for the material being made available?
☐ Do you have reason to believe that the information being presented is biased?
☐ Are copyrights clearly stated, including the name of the Web site’s owner(s) and the current date?

CONTENT

☐ Is the information presented accurate?
  o Unlike scholarly journals and books, Web sites are rarely reviewed by one or more of the author’s peers or any kind of editorial board.
  o Never assume the information presented is correct.
  o Always use critical thinking skills to judge the overall validity of the Web site.
☐ Does the author have a particular point of view? Is there any evidence of bias?
☐ Is the information presented fact or opinion?
  o Can it be proved to be true?
  o Can it be verified by documents?
☐ Is the source for the information provided clearly stated, regardless of whether it is the author’s original work or borrowed from elsewhere?
☐ How comprehensive is the Web site?
  o What is the depth of the information provided?
  o Does it cover a specific time period and/or a specific aspect of a topic?
  o Does it strive to be comprehensive in scope?
CURRENCY

- When was the Web site created and first placed on the Web?
- When was the Web site last updated?
- Is there a "Last Updated" notice on the page?
- Do the links to remote Web sites function?
- Are those pages current (i.e., up-to-date) as well?

LEGIBILITY, STYLE, AND FUNCTIONALITY

- Is the Web site designed in a clear and logical fashion?
- Can you easily navigate the pages?
  - Are the navigational buttons clearly labeled (i.e., Back, Home, Go To Top)?
  - Are the navigational buttons visible on every page?
  - Do these buttons function?
  - Do other embedded links also work?
- Are the subsections well organized and easy to follow?
- Are there any typographical, grammatical, or spelling errors?
- Is there a way to search the Web site for specific content? This is especially important for comprehensive or extensive Web sites.

SUMMING THINGS UP

- Never, ever rely solely on a Web site to meet your particular information needs! The information presented may “appear” to be accurate and authoritative, but you can never be sure unless you have at least one other source with which to back it up.
- Seek out additional print and electronic resources (books, journal articles, research papers, etc.) to verify and complement the information provided on the Web site.

SURFERS BEWARE!

Anyone can publish anything at all on the Web!
_So let the surfer beware!

As you do your research, remember:

- Although an address of a personal Web site may have an “.edu,” “.gov,” or “.org” ending, these entities may not sanction all of the Web sites linked to their own Web pages.
- Also, affiliation with these often, but not necessarily, reputable groups, companies, and institutions is no guarantee of the authoritiveness, relevance, or accuracy of any of the links from their pages.
Fall 2010 Academic Resources
Engineering/Business/Mathematics

Is extra help available if I need it?

YES! There are lots of additional resources in place to help students succeed at Texas A&M and specifically in engineering. Most students make the mistake of waiting too long to ask for help. As soon as a student feels they don't understand course material, they should use all the resources available to them. These resources include:

1. Contact the faculty member - all faculty set up office hours each semester so students can visit with them if they need extra help or have problems to discuss. Don't be afraid to use this resource!
2. Ask your departmental Academic Advisor - the advisors work with students to help them succeed. They can direct students to the departmental tutoring and other resources.
3. Ask other students - forming study groups is one of the best ways to get additional help. Another student may be able to explain a concept in a way that fellow students understand. Study groups can also quickly identify problems that the professor can address for the whole class. Many times it helps to know that you're not the only one confused about a topic or concept covered in class.
4. In the freshman engineering courses, peer teachers are available to help students in class, they provide outside class support (tutoring, pre-exam review sessions, mentoring, etc.) and they also provide feedback about course related issues to the faculty instructors. Information about peer teachers can be found on this web site - just click on the link for "Current Students", then click "Peer Teachers/Tutoring".

Some helpful resources available outside the college of engineering include:

Mathematics:  http://www.math.tamu.edu/courses/  (click on Help Sessions, Week in Review, Calctab Help, or Streaming Video)


Chemistry:  http://www.chem.tamu.edu/class/fyp/fypintro.html

University Writing Center:  http://writingcenter.tamu.edu

Student Learning Center:  http://slc.tamu.edu

Dept. of Multicultural Services Tutoring:  http://dms.tamu.edu/academic.htm

Phi Eta Sigma (Freshman Honor Society) Tutoring:  http://www.tamu.edu/pes/tutoring.php

A+ Tutoring offers tutoring for several technical courses, both engineering and business:  http://www.aplustutoring.ws/

4.0 and Go offers tutoring for several technical courses, both engineering and business:  http://4.0andgo.com/
Department of Multicultural Services Free Tutoring
tutor.tamu.edu

The mission of the DMS Peer Tutoring Program is to facilitate student academic success by providing personalized academic assistance and course-specific peer tutoring to assist students in the development of study skills essential to success in coursework.

We are here to help you become independent learners and master the content in your courses. We offer one-on-one tutoring in math and science with tutors that are supportive and encouraging.

Courses Offered
We offer FREE one-on-one and group tutoring for all currently enrolled undergraduates at Texas A&M University. The courses for which tutoring is offered vary from semester to semester.

The classes below are currently being tutored by DMS. Log in to view available sessions for each course.

- CHEM101
- BIOL111
- MATH150
- PHYS218
- CHEM107
- MATH142
- MATH151
- MATH152
- PHYS208
- PHYS201
- TEST101
- CHEM102
- BIOL112
- CHEM227

Where: Free Tutoring is offered in Rudder Tower

When: Sunday through Wednesday

Time: Hour sessions offered from 4:00pm to 8:00pm

How: Sessions are by appointment one on one.

Cost: The tutoring program is free of cost.
Supplemental Instruction (SI)
http://slc.tamu.edu/supplemental-instruction/

SI is an academic assistance program designed to improve the student's academic performance and increase retention. The SI program targets traditionally difficult core curriculum courses and provides regularly scheduled, out-of-class, peer-facilitated group study sessions.

SI leaders conduct three 50-minute study sessions per week. If an SI Leader is assigned to your course, the leader will be attending either the same section as you, or another section of the class held by the same professor. Whether or not the SI Leader attends your section, you are still welcome at the SI session. If you have any questions, please contact the Student Learning Center at 845-2724.

ECON202
ECON203
GEOG304
HIST105
HIST106
PHIL240
PSYC107
BIOL111
BIOL112
BIOL113
CHEM101
CHEM102
CHEM106
CHEM222
CHEM227
CHEM228
POLS206
POLS207
### Economics

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Tutoring Program

Phi Eta Sigma's primary focus is a tutoring program for Texas A&M Freshmen. The service is free of charge and open to any Freshman student of any major. The students are tutored by Phi Eta Sigma members who have excelled in the class that the student needs help with.

If you are a Phi Eta Sigma member who is interested in tutoring, please email our Tutoring Chair, Jesse Banales, at jessebanales@yahoo.com. Send him your name, contact information, and classes that you are willing to tutor for.

If you are a Texas A&M University Freshman looking for some additional help with your classes, attached is a complete list of tutors and their emails. If you have any future questions please email our Tutoring Chair, Jesse Banales, at jessebanales@yahoo.com with your name, contact information, and what classes you are looking for help with. He will be glad to help you!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Grayson</td>
<td>BIOL 111/112, CHEM 101, MATH 141</td>
<td><a href="mailto:megrayson@yahoo.com">megrayson@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Chisholm</td>
<td>MATH 161/131, ANSC 107/108, CHEM 111/112, HIST 106</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ralyssc@neo.tamu.edu">ralyssc@neo.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Karen Grabowski</td>
<td>MATH 141 POLS 207 PSYC 107, 300 PHIL 251 MUSC 200 HIST 101 GEOG 203</td>
<td><a href="mailto:karengrabbo@neo.tamu.edu">karengrabbo@neo.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jacklyn Neitzel</td>
<td>MATH 141/142, POLS 206/207</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jacklyn05@neo.tamu.edu">jacklyn05@neo.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Amanda Stuart</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:manda99@neo.tamu.edu">manda99@neo.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nadia Alameddin</td>
<td>MATH 131, 166 ENGL 104 SOCI 205 PSYC 107 BIOL 111</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jon Garcia</td>
<td>CHEM 101, 102, 107 PHYS 208, 218 MATH 141, 142, 150, 151, 152, 221, 251, 253 ENGR 111, 112</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sciens24@neo.tamu.edu">sciens24@neo.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<td>MATH 150, 151, 251</td>
<td><a href="mailto:scudder2012@live.com">scudder2012@live.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hilary Cooksley</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:hilarycooksley@aol.com">hilarycooksley@aol.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Emily Pair</td>
<td>any accounting and business, Math 141, 142</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ekp252@neo.tamu.edu">ekp252@neo.tamu.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Smith</td>
<td>Biomedical Engineering Math and Science courses</td>
<td><a href="mailto:edwardthemighty@tamu.edu">edwardthemighty@tamu.edu</a></td>
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</table>
Academic Success Workshops

Workshops are 1 hour long.

Pre-Registration for workshops is necessary.

Time Management & Procrastination
This workshop covers strategies for improving time management skills and managing procrastination.
- September 15, Wednesday, 1:50 p.m.
- October 4, Monday, 12:45 p.m.
- October 28, Thursday, 4:15 p.m.
- November 9, Tuesday, 2:20 p.m.
- November 19, Friday, 11:30 a.m.

Study Success Strategies
This workshop covers learning strategies including college level techniques for reading texts and taking notes, test preparation and test taking strategies, and post test analysis.
- September 16, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.
- September 29, Wednesday, 12:45 p.m.
- October 13, Wednesday, 1:50 p.m.
- November 8, Monday, 3:00 p.m.
- November 23, Tuesday, 12:45 p.m.

Stress Management & Test Anxiety
Feeling stressed with school? Attend this workshop to learn how to manage stress and test anxiety.
- September 20, Monday, 11:30 a.m.
- October 12, Tuesday, 4:15 p.m.
- October 21, Thursday, 2:20 p.m.
- November 2, Tuesday, 12:45 p.m.
- November 17, Wednesday, 4:00 p.m.

Smart Reading Strategies
Struggling with college reading? This workshop provides helpful tips to improve your reading rate, comprehension, retention and concentration.
- October 19, Tuesday, 11:10 a.m.
- November 3, Wednesday, 4:00 p.m.

Now You’re Speaking My Language: Talking With Professors
This workshop will dispel myths and stereotypes about professors, offer suggestions for working with professors, and provide additional academic resources and strategies for success in the classroom.
- November 1, Monday, 3:00 p.m.

Maintaining Focus
This workshop covers goal setting, motivation, concentration, and dealing with distractions.
- November 15, Monday, 12:30 p.m.

Conquering Finals
It's that time of year again. All or nothing. Late nights; way too much coffee. No sleep, extreme stress and general brain drain. Or does it have to be that way? This workshop describes how to attack finals in a balanced approach. Understanding the finals "game" is the one sure way to make the finals time just another ordinary week in college.
- December 1, Wednesday, 4:00 p.m.
- December 7, Tuesday, 4:00 p.m.

Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) Interpretation
The LASSI measures awareness about and use of learning and study strategies. It provides information about study skills strengths and weaknesses in comparison to other college students. Results of the measure can be used to develop techniques for improving study strategies. Time required to take the LASSI is approximately 30 minutes. Interpretation of the measure by a counselor is required. Pre-registration for test interpretation is necessary, and the LASSI must be completed 2 business days prior to the interpretation session.

The LASSI interpretation workshop is a half hour long. Students arriving late will not be admitted due to the brevity of the workshop.

- September 13, Monday, 4:30 p.m.
- September 28, Tuesday, 4:00 p.m.
- October 20, Wednesday, 4:00 p.m.
- October 26, Tuesday, 4:30 p.m.
- November 4, Thursday, 4:00 p.m.
- November 10, Wednesday, 4:30 p.m.
- November 16, Tuesday, 4:00 p.m.
- November 22, Monday, 4:30 p.m.
- December 2, Thursday, 4:00 p.m.

Biofeedback Workshop
Anxiety can cause, and be caused by, academic stress. Test anxiety is a good example of this. Biofeedback is a technique that can be helpful in understanding and managing your anxiety, reducing it’s impact on academic performance.

Tuesdays 10:30-12:00 p.m.
Wednesday 1:30-3:00 p.m.

Alternating weeks until the end of October. Workshops offered both days every week starting in November.
Group Counseling  
Counselor referral to group is needed 5 business days prior to start date.

Academics Anonymous Groups  
- September 15 – November 10  
  Wednesdays, 3:00-4:15 p.m.  
- September 17 – November 12  
  Thursdays, 2:30-3:45 p.m.

Academic Survival Group  
- November 2 – December 7  
  Tuesdays, 2:30-4:00 p.m.

Insider’s Guide – Navigating Your First Year Aggie Experience  
- September 20 – November 15  
  Mondays, 3:00-4:15 p.m.

Thesis/Dissertation Support Group  
- Tuesdays, 5:00-6:30 p.m.  
- Wednesdays, 5:00-6:30 p.m.

First Generation College Students Group  
- Tuesdays, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Career Workshops  
Explore Majors and Careers with DISCOVER  
DISCOVER is an interactive web-based career planning program. This introductory workshop will teach you how to effectively utilize features of the DISCOVER program for career exploration and occupational research.

November 4  
Thursday  
11:00 a.m.

November 17  
Wednesday  
3:30 p.m.

Career Assessment Workshop: Using the Career Lift-off to Identify Potential Occupations  
Learn which environments and occupations match your interests, preferences, and style. Registration and completion of inventory are needed two business days prior to workshop.

October 5  
Tuesday  
3:00 p.m.

October 27  
Wednesday  
3:00 p.m.

November 16  
Tuesday  
3:00 p.m.

Career Assessment Workshop: Using the Strong Interest Inventory to Help Identify Career Interests  
Learn how to match interests with academic majors and occupations. Registration and completion of interest inventory are needed two business days prior to the workshop.

October 20  
Wednesday  
3:00 p.m.

October 25  
Monday  
11:45 a.m.

November 4  
Thursday  
1:30 p.m.

Career Assessment Workshop: Using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to Help Identify Personality Characteristics  
Learn how to incorporate your personality into career planning. Registration and completion of personality measure are needed two business days prior to the workshop.

November 2  
Tuesday  
2:00 p.m.

November 10  
Wednesday  
11:00 a.m.

November 15  
Monday  
3:00 p.m.

True Colors: Follow Your True Colors To The Work You Love*  
During this interactive workshop, you will increase your understanding of the “True Colors” of your personality. You will identify your natural gifts and talents, which can be used in many different occupations. You will also identify your true values—ideas, activities, and things you prize or regard highly. Finally, you will identify potential careers that appeal to your true colors and use your preferred careers. An additional benefit is increased understanding of personalities that differ from yours.

November 30  
Tuesday  
2:00-4:00 p.m.

*This workshop requires a minimum of 25 participants; if fewer than 25 are registered for the workshop one business day before it is scheduled, the workshop will be cancelled.