

Tips for Academic Success

Study skills are the key to success at GRCC! Most students have to enhance the skills they bring to the college setting. It is normal to find that you are required to digest larger amounts of information at a quicker pace than that which was required in high school. Furthermore, the nature of testing at the college level often demands a conceptual as well as factual level of understanding. There are skills that can be learned which will facilitate this transition:

Realistically Plan Your Time

Time management skills can help you feel more in control of your life so that you can find more free time and more effective study time.

- Structure your academic schedule as if it were a 40-hour work week
- Use a planner or calendar to write down all your regularly scheduled activities as well as any due dates for papers or exams. Plan time for sleep, exercise, and social activity
- Determine your best study environment and time of the day. Plan study time each week that is consistent with your style
- Take ten minutes before each class to review your notes from the previous class. Take ten minutes after each class to "fix up" and review the notes just taken
- Break large or overwhelming tasks into smaller manageable steps
- Reward yourself for completing tasks. This means noting what you have accomplished even if an entire project is not complete

Read Actively

- Before you read, preview the material in the chapter. Read any introductions or chapter summaries
- Have a purpose when you read. You may want to think of a question that you are trying to answer in each section of material. Do not move ahead in the chapter until you can answer your question. Ask yourself, "Am I getting it?" If not, go back and find the place where you last understood the material and reread
- Focus on the main idea and any supporting information
- Take notes as you read. Try making an outline of the material by organizing the main ideas and each supporting detail
- In your own words, write a brief summary of the main ideas. Or, draw a diagram illustrating the relationships between the main ideas

Maximize Your Memory Potential

- Before trying to memorize, assess your level of concentration. If you are not able to focus, you are not likely to retain much information. Determine what you need to be able to focus (e.g., food, a short nap, a walk, several deep breaths, etc.), take care of this need, and then refocus
- Use flashcards. Write a word or formula on the front of a card and its definition on the back. Go through the cards until you can define each word correctly
- Create acronyms. Make up a word or phrase using the first letter of each term you want to remember (e.g., the spectrum of colors in a rainbow can be remembered with Roy G. Biv = red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet)

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- Draw diagrams of concepts that you are trying to remember. Be able to verbally explain the concept and reproduce the diagram
 - Study to the point of recall, not simply recognition. This means that you can define and explain material in your own words
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Take Tests Wisely

- Pay close attention to directions, both oral and written
 - Skim the entire exam before answering anything, then plan your time according to difficulty and value of each item
 - Answer the easy questions first, then go back and do the more difficult questions. Pay attention to information in questions that may help in other parts of the exam
 - Watch out for qualifier words in questions (e.g., none, some, frequently, never, most, etc.)
 - BREATHE-10 deep, abdominal breaths will help release tension and enhance your focus. Remind yourself that your entire future does not rest on one test and that you will learn from this experience regardless of how well you do on the exam
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Campus Resources

Counseling and Health Services
Counseling Office
LSC Building, Rm 231
(253) 833-9111, ext. 2460

Student Help Center
Holman Library, Rm. 201
(253) 833-9111, ext. 2325

Math Learning Center
SMT Building, Rm 355
(253) 833-9111, ext. 4498

Project Class/Trio
LSC Building, Rm. 269A
(253) 833-9111, ext. 2655

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