

**College Within the High School**  
**Student Handbook**  
**2017-2018**



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## Butler County Community College

**Affordable • Accessible • Quality Education**

Butler County Community College (BC3), chartered in 1965, was the first community college in Western Pennsylvania. On September 26, 1966, the College opened its doors to 242 day and 190 evening students. Today, 5,300 students are enrolled in credit programs. Another 15,000 people take part annually in the many other educational opportunities available.

Butler County Community College offers over 70 associate degree, career, transfer, and certificate programs. Now more than ever, students are discovering the advantages of obtaining an Associate degree before entering the workforce or moving to a four-year college or university.

The BC3 main campus is located on 335 acres along Decatur Drive in Butler Township. The College is easily accessible from many of the major highways that traverse Butler County. The 21 buildings on main campus house classrooms, the Library, and 36 laboratory areas in addition to the College's administration and student support offices. Campus buildings are placed under tall oak trees, among rolling hills, and border on the old Oak Hills Golf Course. Other BC3 locations include: BC3@Cranberry, BC3@Lawrence Crossing, BC3@LindenPointe, BC3@Brockway, and BC3@Armstrong.

For more information, go to the BC3 website: [www.bc3.edu](http://www.bc3.edu)

### College Within the High School

Butler County Community College's **College Within the High School (CWHS)** program is specifically designed for college bound high school students who have demonstrated a strong academic performance by the end of their Freshman year. In this program Sophomores with a 3.25+ G.P.A., Juniors with a 3.0+ G.P.A., and Seniors with a G.P.A. of 2.75+, and the permission of their guidance counselor or principal to take actual BC3 credit courses can earn transferable college credits during their sophomore, junior and senior year right in their own high school.

College Within the High School courses use the same syllabus and instructional materials and follow the same semester schedule as do the same courses taught at one of BC3's campuses or online. Classes are scheduled in area high schools before, during, or after the school day, in the evening, or on a Saturday. High school faculty or staff members approved to teach for CWHS have submitted a professional application to the college, had their credentials reviewed, and are authorized adjunct BC3 faculty members.

Since Butler County Community College started working with high schools through its College Within the High School program in the fall of 1997, over 4500 high school juniors and seniors from 47 high schools in eight Western Pennsylvania counties and one county in Ohio have enrolled in BC3 courses taught at their own high schools.

For more information, go to the Butler County Community College website: [bc3.edu](http://bc3.edu) > **Programs & Classes > High School Programming.**

## College Within the High School FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **1. Will my Butler County Community College credits transfer to the four-year college of my choice?**

The courses offered in the College Within the High School program satisfy the general education requirements at four-year colleges and universities. In fact, over 70% of the students attending BC3 plan on transferring their BC3 credits to a four-year school.

**The final decision to accept credits by transfer rests with the senior-level institution. Be aware that a course in which a grade of less than a “C” is earned may not transfer. It is the student’s responsibility to find out if a BC3 course will transfer.** Call or e-mail the school to which you wish to transfer your credits, and request to speak to a transfer counselor. Supply the transfer counselor with the course description (found in the BC3 catalog and online at [bc3.edu](http://bc3.edu)) of each course you’ll be transferring. Contact the Coordinator of High School Programming, at 724-287-8711, ext. 8254, if you need the course’s syllabus.

### **2. How do I transfer my Butler County Community College credits to the college I plan on attending?**

- **Request a BC3 transcript.** Students are responsible for requesting their BC3 transcript be sent to a different institution. BC3’s Transfer Request Form is found in this handbook, will be mailed to you at the beginning of the semester, and is also available to download on the BC3 website: [bc3.edu](http://bc3.edu) > **Current Students > Records & Registration> Request Transcripts.**
- **Contact the college or university** directly to find out where BC3 should send the transcript.
- **Wait until your course is completed to request your transcript.** One of the most valuable pieces of a transcript is the grade. Make sure grades have been posted before requesting a transcript be sent to another institution
- Once completed, **mail or fax the form to the Office of Records and Registration**—address and fax number are on the form.

### **3. How do I buy my textbook?**

You will be notified as to how you will be buying your textbook. You can buy it in person at the BC3 Bookstore or via the BC3 website or It MIGHT be sold by your instructor at the first class

You can also purchase your textbook via the BC3 website: [bc3.edu](http://bc3.edu) > **Services & Resources > Bookstore > BC3 Online Bookstore.** The book will be shipped directly to your home.

- Most textbooks can be sold back to the Bookstore on the main or branch campuses at certain times during the year; identify yourself as a College Within the High School student. The Bookstore also has an online buyback program available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For more information go to [bc3.edu](http://bc3.edu) > **Services & Resources > Bookstore > BC3 Online Buyback.**

#### **4. How do I get my final grade?**

In an effort to reduce paper waste, BC3 has gone “green.” Paper copies of final grades at the end of the semester are no longer mailed to students’ homes. Grades will be available on the bc3.edu website via the MyBC3 Portal. Check out the “HOW TO” INFORMATION handout or the MyBC3 Student Portal pages in the Student Handbook to find out how to access unofficial transcripts which will include your semester grades.

#### **5. What do I do if I must withdraw from my class?**

A student wanting to withdraw from a course must first notify his/her instructor, and then contact the Office of Records and Registration at 724-287-8711, ext. 8331, AND the Coordinator of High School Programming at ext. 8254, **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**.

A student may withdraw from a course up through the ninth week of the semester. The only withdrawals allowed after that time are Medical Withdrawals.

A student may apply for a Medical Withdrawal at any time during the semester up until the final exam. Application is made by submitting to the Registrar a Medical Withdrawal Form completed by a physician no later than the last class day before the final. Contact the Coordinator of High School Programming for this form.

#### **6. Will I receive a tuition refund if I withdraw from a course?**

In general, the College’s refund policy for on campus or online courses is as follows for the typical semester:

- Before the class starts—100% refund
- 1st 5 work days of the semester—all but \$25 of your tuition/fees
- 6th-10th work days of the semester—75% refund
- 11th+ work days of the semester—no refund

For students taking a College Within the High School course, the amount of the refund is determined on a case-by-case basis by the Director of Records and Registration. It is imperative that you contact the Office of Records and Registration AND the Coordinator of High School Programming **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** once you decide to withdraw.

#### **7. How will withdrawing from a course affect my grade?**

A student who withdraws from a course up until the third week period will not have the course appear on his/her record.

A student who withdraws from a course after the third week period up to and including the ninth week of the semester will receive a “W” grade on his/her record. “W” grades do not affect the student’s GPA.

A student who simply stops attending class and fails to follow the above procedure will receive an “F” grade in the course. That grade will appear on the student’s BC3 transcript.

## Academic Transcripts

Official Transcripts are maintained in the Office of Records and Registration. **In order to protect students' privacy rights, we must receive a signed request before releasing transcripts.** Transcript requests may NOT be requested by phone.

Transcripts can be requested in person at the Office of Records and Registration which is in the Student Success Center. Transcripts may also be ordered by mail or fax. Requests by mail should be sent to:

Butler County Community College  
Office of Records and Registration P.O. Box 1203  
107 College Drive  
Butler, PA 16003-1203  
Fax: 724-287-0092

Transcript delivery methods include regular mail, pick-up in person (photo ID is required), and electronic delivery.

Electronic transcript delivery is a new delivery method Butler County Community College is offering via e-SCRIP-SAFE. Transcripts to institutions that are participating in the e-SCRIP-SAFE network will be delivered electronically. To see a list of institutions that we can send electronic transcripts to, view the [eSCRIP-SAFE network membership list](#):

<http://www.scrip-safe.com/products/electronic-transcripts/network-members.aspx>

If the institution is not on this list or if you would like your transcript sent to an individual, please provide the name and email address of the recipient and we will deliver it electronically through e-SCRIP-SAFE's out of network service.

You can request transcripts using the [Transcript Request Form \(PDF\)](#) or by mailing a written request which includes the following information:

- Full name, and any former names
- Butler County Community College ID or social security number
- Daytime telephone number
- Current address
- Complete mailing address where transcript should be sent (specify department or person to whom transcript should be addressed)
- Transcripts cannot be faxed
- Your signature (transcripts cannot be processed without signature)

**TRANSCRIPT FEE:** First copy is free - \$4.00 for each additional copy. **Payment must be received for faxed requests before the transcript is released. No Transcript will be issued for any student or alumnus who has a financial hold or any other obligation to the college.** Please allow 3 working days to process your official transcript.

**SEE OTHER SIDE FOR THE TRANSCRIPT REQUEST FORM** or  
**DOWNLOAD** a copy of the **Transcript Request Form** by going to:  
**bc3.edu** > Current Students > Records & Registration > Request Transcripts.

**OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT REQUEST FORM**

Butler County Community College  
Office of Records and Registration  
P.O. Box 1203  
Butler, PA 16003-1203

<p>Transcript Request Form Instructions:</p> <p>1. Students must type directly on this form or print legibly.</p> <p>2. Form may be mailed or faxed to: <i>Butler County Community College Office of Records and Registration P.O. Box 1203 107 College Drive Butler, PA 16003-1203 Fax: 724-287-0092</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please allow 3 working days to process your transcripts.</li> <li>• Requests will <b>NOT</b> be honored for a person who has a financial hold or another obligation to the college.</li> <li>• The student <b>MUST</b> provide written permission if someone else will be picking up their transcript.</li> <li>• Photo ID required to pick up a transcript.</li> <li>• Your <b>ENTIRE</b> transcript will be sent.</li> </ul>
<p><b>TRANSCRIPT FEE:</b> First copy is free - \$4.00 for each additional copy. Please pay by check or cash. <b>If you fax your request, we will need payment before the transcript is sent.</b></p>	

**STUDENT INFORMATION**

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Current Name \_\_\_\_\_

Former Name \_\_\_\_\_ BC3 ID or SSN \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address for Confirmation of Electronic Delivery \_\_\_\_\_

**TRANSCRIPT ORDER INFORMATION**

Select One Delivery Method  Electronic Delivery  Regular Mail  Pick Up in Person

When to Process: (Select One)  Mail Now  Hold Until Semester Ends  
 Hold Until Summer Session – Ending in June  
 Hold Until All Other Summer Sessions End

Name of Recipient/Institution \_\_\_\_\_ Atten/Office \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail or Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Electronic transcript delivery is a new delivery method Butler County Community College is offering via eSCRIP-SAFE. Transcripts to institutions that are participating in the eSCRIP-SAFE network will be delivered electronically. To see a list of institutions that we can send electronic transcripts to, view the [escrip-safe network membership list. http://www.scrip-safe.com/products/electronic-transcripts/network-members.aspx](http://www.scrip-safe.com/products/electronic-transcripts/network-members.aspx) If the institution is not on this list or if you would like your transcript sent to an individual, please provide the name and email address of the recipient and we will deliver it electronically through escrip-safe’s out of network service.

## College Within the High School and My.BC3

Once BC3 registers you for your class, you will be able to access **MyBC3 Portal**. You will need your BC3 Student ID # which is **highlighted** on your tuition receipt. This means that, via the **Student Portal**, you can check out your schedule, get unofficial transcripts showing semester grades, access your MyBC3 e-mail, and much more. (*Note:* CWHS students are not able to use the Student Portal to register for or pay tuition for a class.) Below are directions to access the **Student Portal**.

### YOU MUST KNOW YOUR STUDENT ID!

Where to find your Student ID Number (7 digits) once you are enrolled in your class:

1. **Highlighted** on your Statement of Account/Tuition Receipt
2. **May be highlighted** on your "Welcome" memo

### BC3 Student Portal Login Directions

1. Go to **bc3.edu** > **Current Students** > **MyBC3 Portal**
2. Your User Name is the letter b followed by your Student ID
  - a. Example: If your student ID is 4000587 your User Name is b4000587
3. The first time you login your password is your 8-digit date of birth
  - a. Example: If your date of birth is January 3, 1987 enter 01031987 as your password.
4. If you would prefer to change your password, click the check box before the "I want to change my password after logging on." Once have entered your user name and password, you will be redirected to a Change Password page.
  - a. Enter your 8-digit birthdate as your old password and then enter your new password twice.

### How to get an Unofficial Transcript:

Login to the MyBC3 Portal

1. Unofficial Transcripts - You can view your unofficial Transcripts through Portal Services.
  - a. If you would like an Official Transcript, please contact the Office of Records and Registration.
2. Under PORTAL SERVICES, Click on the Academic Profile option
3. Click the TRANSCRIPT option
4. Select the 'UG Undergraduate Transcript' transcript type
5. Click the Submit button

## My.BC3 E-Mail Directions

You **must use** your MyBC3 e-mail address as **ALL** correspondence needs to be sent through your BC3 provided e-mail account. This is for your safety and ours.

1. Login to the **MyBC3 Portal**
2. Click the “**CLICK TO ACCESS YOUR MY.BC3 EMAIL**” link **above the calendar** on the right.
3. Once the redirect login page opens, enter B + 7-digit Student ID as the username and the same password you use for the MyBC3 Portal, and then click Sign In.
4. If this is the first time logging in, you will need to set your time zone before moving on. From the drop-down menu scroll up and choose (UTC 05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada) then click OK
6. **Follow any screens or prompts** until you get to your Inbox.

## How to Login to Blackboard

Blackboard is the Learning Management System that BC3 uses to deliver course content online. Some College Within the High School instructors use it to augment their courses, so you may be asked to login to it.

### Option #1:

1. Login to the **My BC3 Portal**
2. Click the “**Blackboard**” link in the Application Links window on the top left.
3. **First time logging in** to Blackboard, follow Option #2, steps 2 – 5 below.
4. If you **already logged into Blackboard**, enter your **username** (*b + Student ID number*) and password (whatever you used last time you logged into Blackboard), click **login**.

### Option #2:

1. Go to <https://blackboard.bc3.edu> (There is no www. in the address.)
2. Your **Username** is the **letter b** followed by your **Student ID** number (7 digits) Example: If your student ID is 4000587 your Username is b4000587
3. The **first time** you login your **password** is your **8 digit date of birth**  
Example: If your date of birth is January 3, 1987 enter 01031987 as your password.
4. **Change your Password:**
  - a. On the **My Blackboard** page, click **Personal Information** in the **Toolbox** window on the top left.
  - b. Click **Change Password**
  - c. **Type the same new password** in both boxes. (Passwords are case sensitive.)
  - d. Click **Submit**

## MyBC3 Student Portal Help

If you need any help with the Student Portal in viewing your schedule, getting an unofficial transcript, accessing MyBC3 e-mail, or logging in to Blackboard, contact the BC3 Help Desk by phone or online:

### **BC3 Help Desk Hotline**

**Local:** 724-287-8711 extension 8441

**Toll-Free:** 1-888-826-2829 extension 8441

**Please listen carefully to the menu options, as your call will be directed to the appropriate personnel based on your number selection.** After-hours voice mails will be responded to the next BC3 business day (no sooner).

**Forgot your password?** Submit a Fast Form like the one shown above or call the Help Desk Hotline Toll-Free at 1-888-826-2829 extension 8441 and listen carefully to select the correct menu option.

**Forgot your Student ID number?** Complete, sign and return the [Student ID Number Form](#) found at: [bc3.edu](http://bc3.edu) > Current Students > MyBC3 Portal > What is my Student ID number > Student ID Request Form (PDF).

## LIBRARY SERVICES

College Within the High School students have an array of resources available through BC3's Heaton Family Learning Commons. These resources are available in person at the library itself as well as online for students who live a significant distance from the library.

### BC3 Library Services for Students Who Live near the Main Campus

If you would like to visit BC3's Heaton Family Learning Commons and take out books, you can do so if you have a BC3 photo ID card. Go to the Office of Records and Registration in the Student Success Center where your photo will be taken. You will need to know your BC3 student ID # (on your tuition receipt) and will need to show a form of ID.

### BC3 Library Off-Campus Services

Butler County Community College's Heaton Family Learning Commons is committed to providing resources and services to students and faculty at off-campus sites. Access to our library catalog, databases, and other resources are provided through the My.BC3 Portal:

1. Go to [bc3.edu](http://bc3.edu)
2. Click on the **MyBC3** link in upper right corner
3. Select the **MyBC3 Portal Login** link and login as directed
4. Library Services is listed under the portal's College Resources menu
5. Look under the Databases A-Z link for a list of resources that include the following:
  - **America's Newspapers**—Full text articles from over 800 U.S. newspapers
  - **CQ Researcher** — Use to find reports on issue topics.
  - **Credo Reference** — Collection of online reference books. Uses as a starting point to become familiar with a topic, get overviews of topics, learn vocabulary for a topic.
  - **eBook Collection (through EBSCOhost)** — Collection of several thousand online books.
  - **EBSCOhost** — Database of several thousand magazines, journals, and newspapers, as well as other resources.
  - **Facts on File reference databases** — Reference databases for reports and articles on current and issue topics (Issues & Controversies, World News Digest, Science News)
  - **Global Road Warrior** — Resource for information on countries.
  - **Hoovers** — Resource for information on businesses and industries.
  - **OVID Nursing Collection** — Collection of full-text nursing journals.
  - **PubMed** — Index to medical journals.

- **Reference USA** — Resource for locating businesses.
- **Salem Health** — Health reference resources.
- **WestlawNext** — Resource for legal and business information. Includes articles from legal and business journals, statutes, news.

### **ASK A LIBRARIAN**

Get help from a librarian. Use the Ask a Librarian form located under the Heaton Family Learning Commons section of the BC3 portal and website.

### **REQUEST A BOOK FROM THE BC3 LIBRARY IF YOU LIVE NEAR ONE OF BC3'S OFF CAMPUS SITES**

If a book is in the Heaton Family Learning Commons collection, you can request that it be delivered to one of the off-campus sites. To do this, you must first search the catalog and retrieve the full record of the book that you want to request. Click on the book's title to view the full record. To place a delivery request:

Click on the Request button, which is one of the buttons located at the top of the book's record.

1. Enter your name, barcode and PIN.
  - Name - your first and last name
  - Barcode - barcode number on your BC3 student photo ID, if you do not have an ID, contact the Heaton Family Learning Commons at (724) 284-8511.
  - PIN - this is your PIN for the Library catalog, which you create. To set up a PIN number, leave the box blank and you will be prompted to create one.
2. Enter a "cancel if not filled by" date.
3. Enter a pick-up location: Butler, Cranberry, Jefferson County (Brockway), Lawrence County (Lawrence Crossing), or Mercer County (Linden Pointe)
4. Click the Submit button.

Books will be delivered via routine courier runs to the selected site's administrative office where you can pick them up. Please return borrowed items to the same office.

### **FIND ARTICLES: JOURNAL, MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES**

#### **EBSCOhost**

EBSCOhost indexes the contents of thousands of magazines, journals, and newspapers. Use it to search for articles on a wide array of topics. EBSCOhost includes several different databases; select and search those most relevant to your topic. Access through Beck Library on Blackboard.

## **REQUEST AN ARTICLE**

Sometimes only the citation of an article is available in EBSCOhost or from some other source like an Internet site. You can request articles using the library's Interlibrary Loan form. We will photocopy articles that are available at the Heaton Family Learning Commons, or request them from another library if we do not own the journal, and mail them to your home address. Allow about a week to receive an interlibrary loan request.

## **AMERICA'S NEWSPAPERS**

America's Newspapers indexes and includes the text of articles from over 800 U.S. newspapers. Newspapers indexed include national newspapers like the New York Times, and local newspapers like the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and the Butler Eagle. Access through Beck Library on Blackboard.

## **ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES AVAILABLE THROUGH BECK LIBRARY ON BLACKBOARD**

**CQ Researcher** contains lengthy, balanced reports on contemporary issues. It is listed under Beck Library on Blackboard's Find Articles button.

**Facts on File Reference Suite** includes three databases: World News Digest, Issues & Controversies, Today's Science as well as an online dictionary, almanac and encyclopedia. The Issues & Controversies contains reports, overviews, and statistics on contemporary issues. The World News Digest contains short, concise news articles, and Today's Science contains science-related news and reports. It is listed under Beck Library on Blackboard's Find Articles button.

**Encyclopedia Britannica** useful as an introduction to a topic. Find it under Beck Library on Blackboard's Ready Reference button, and within the Almanacs, Encyclopedia, & Dictionaries folder.

## **Reference USA**

Use to locate information on businesses or to create lists of businesses using various criteria such as yellow page subjects, SIC codes, and geographic locations. Find it under Beck Library on Blackboard's Subject Search button, and within the Business folder.

## **CADCAM Net**

This is an excellent resource for technology-related articles. It is listed under the Subject Search button, and within the Technology folder. The link also provides a user name and password, which you will have to enter in order to view CAD/CAM's articles.

## College Survival Vocabulary

**Accreditation** – If a school is accredited, it means that the school has met the accrediting organization's competency requirements.

**Admissions** - The process of being accepted by a college or university to take classes as a student.

**Articulation Agreement** – This is an agreement between two schools regarding the transferring of credits.

**Associate's Degree** - A degree awarded by a community college for the completion of a specified curriculum, usually consisting of 60-64 credits.

**Bachelor's Degree** - A degree awarded by an upper-division higher education institution for the completion of a specified curriculum, consisting of approximately 120 credits.

**Catalog** - The annual publication that explains college policies, procedures, programs and course descriptions.

**Course Description** - The brief, official statement of the content and prerequisites of each course. These are included in the college catalog.

**Course number** - The three-digit number following the subject code, which identifies a particular course, such as PSYC **201**.

**Credit Hour** – Numerical unit assigned to a course based on the content and amount of time spent in class.

**Drop/Add Period** – The period during which a student can make changes to his/her schedule without penalty.

**Electives** – Courses a student can select in order to complete a program of study, sometimes with restrictions, depending on one's major.

**Full-Time Student** - Students must generally be enrolled in 12 credit hours to be considered full-time.

**General Education Requirements** – A core of courses in such areas as the humanities, social sciences, mathematics, natural sciences and communication common to all degree programs. They are intended to introduce students to the richness and diversity of the various academic disciplines.

**Liberal Arts** – While some colleges and majors focus on preparing students for specific careers, a liberal arts education focuses on developing intellectual skills, general knowledge and reasoning abilities.

**Major** – A major is the academic area a student has chosen to study in depth

**Prerequisite** – A requirement which must be met before enrolling in a specific class, usually the completion of a lower-level class in the same subject or demonstration of proper knowledge through assessment.

**Registration** – The process of enrolling in a specific course and section.

**Scholarships** – Student financial aid based on academic achievement, financial need or a combination of factors. Scholarships do not have to be repaid.

**Section Number** – The numerical code following the subject code and course number in the schedule of classes. (PSYC 201 **H01**)

**Semester** – Colleges on semesters divide their academic year into two equal periods.

**Subject Code** – The four-letter abbreviation, which identifies the subject area of a course, such as **PSYC** for Psychology courses.

**Syllabus** – A course outline and information on classroom policy, assignments, grading and materials to be used in a class, given to students by the instructor at the beginning of the course.

**Transcript** – An official record of a student's course work and grades. This is required to transfer credits to another college or university.

**Transfer** – The acceptance of college course work between institutions of higher learning. How transferred courses apply to a student's degree completion depends on the student's major and required curriculum at the school granting the degree.

(Adapted from Rio Salado College's "Dual Enrollment Handbook" and How to Get Good Grades in College. Dayton, OH: Woodburn Press, 2000.)

# Know What to Expect in College

*In most instances, people experience greater success when they know what to expect. In college, expect to find the following:*

## **Varying Class Sizes**

Class sizes vary, depending on the college and the course. While most classes have fewer than 30 students, college classes can have anywhere from 15 to 200+ students.

## **The Need for Critical Thinking Skills**

In college, you have a great deal of reading to do, and you are expected to understand and remember what you read. You are also expected to be able to draw conclusions, form opinions and evaluate the ideas of others.

## **More Emphasis on Tests and Less Busywork**

While all instructors assign work to be done outside of class, homework grades often account for only a small portion of a student's final grade. In many cases, the midterm and the final exam will make up the majority of a student's quarter or semester grade.

## **The Need for Personal Responsibility**

In college, you have a tremendous amount of freedom. No one monitors your progress, no one checks to see if you are going to class and no one knows whether or not you are doing your assignments. You are responsible for your own academic progress.

## **Consequences for Low Grades**

All colleges have academic standards that students must meet in order to stay enrolled. Students who let their grades fall below a certain point are generally put on academic probation. Most colleges require that students on probation bring their grades up by the end of the following term, or they are withdrawn from school.

## **Less Time in Class and More Emphasis on Independent Study**

In college, you are expected to do most of your learning on your own. For every hour you spend in class, you should plan to spend two hours out of class reading, studying and completing assignments.

(Adapted from: How to Get Good Grades in College. Dayton, OH: Woodburn Press, 2000.)

# Nine Steps to Getting Good Grades in College

## **Attend Every Class**

- If you want to get good grades in college, you must attend every class- not almost every class, every class.

## **Be Organized**

- Use an assignment notebook or planner.
- Use three-ring notebooks for class notes.
- Organize and save computer work.
- Keep returned papers, quizzes and tests.
- Get phone numbers for classmates.
- Maintain a neat and organized study space.

## **Manage Your Time Well**

- Do not overextend yourself.
- Plan ahead.
- Be organized.
- Make efficient use of your time.

## **Be Successful in Class**

- Learn how to adapt to different instructors.
- Be prepared for each class.
- Sit in the front of the class whenever possible.
- Communicate with your instructors.
- Be on time to each class.
- Participate in class.
- Be a good group member.

## **Take Good Notes**

- Be an active listener.
- Take notes to help you pay attention.
- Recognize important information.
- Take notes that are easy to read.
- Go over your notes as soon as possible.
- Get lecture notes if you are absent.

## **Know How to Read a Textbook**

- SCAN by reading subtitles, words in bold and italic print, summaries, charts and review questions.
- READ with a purpose.
- REVIEW by scanning the material to check your comprehension

## **Study Smart**

- Find a good place to study.
- Get started.
- Know your learning style.
- Organize your study time.
- Know how to study for test.
- Know how to memorize and remember information.
- Know how to use technology.
- Use tricks when making a presentation or speech.
- Know how to write a paper.

## **Use Test-Taking Strategies**

- Get off to a good start. Have everything you need (pencil, pen, calculator, etc.), and get to the test early.
- Develop a plan. Before you begin, quickly look over the entire test and develop a plan.
- Mark the questions you want to return to. Put a dot or check mark by any answer that you're not sure of. After you've gone through all of the questions, go back to the ones that you've marked and try them again. *If you're not sure of an answer, go with your first instinct.*

- Increase your odds on multiple-choice questions.
  - When you're reading a multiple-choice question, try to come up with the answer in your head before you look at the answer choices.
  - Read all of the answer choices. Don't be tempted to mark the first one that sounds good.
  - If you're not sure of an answer, cross out the choices that you know are incorrect, and make an educated guess. If you have absolutely no idea, choose (b); it's the correct answer up to 40% of the time.
  - If two of the choices are similar or opposite, one of them is probably the correct answer.
  
- Know how to approach essay questions.
  - Read each essay question and then start with the easiest one. This will help you gain confidence, and it will give you time to think about how to answer the harder questions. Be sure to note how many points each essay is worth and adjust the time you allot to each question accordingly.
  - Before you do any writing, brainstorm. Jot down key words and ideas, along with the points that you want to cover in your answer. If you have time, organize these ideas and points into a simple outline; if not, number them in the order you want to present them.
  - Begin writing. Write legibly, and use clear, concise, complete sentences. (Studies have shown that when two identical essays are graded, the one that's easier to read gets the higher grade.) In your opening paragraph, introduce your topic and tell the reader what he/she can expect to learn from your essay. In the middle paragraphs, present supporting ideas along with facts, examples and details. In your final paragraph, summarize the main points; give a brief analysis, etc. Finally, reread your entire essay and make any necessary corrections.
  - If you don't know the answer to an essay question, take a couple of minutes to write what you can about the subject. You might hit on something and get partial credit. If you don't have time to finish an essay, briefly list the points you would have covered. Again, you might get partial credit.
  - Look for key words in true/false questions. Statements with always, never, every, all and none in them are usually false. Statements with usually, often, sometimes, most and many in them are usually true.
  
- Be prepared for open book tests. To prepare for an open book test, do the following:
  - 1) Put self-stick notes or bookmarks in your textbook to help you locate specific information.
  - 2) Go through your notes and highlight the most important information.
  - 3) Write down all the information that you know you'll need on one sheet of paper.

- Improve your math test scores. The following tips will help you get the highest grade possible on a math test.
  - 1) As soon as you get your test, write down the formulas, equations, etc. that you need to remember at the top of your test.
  - 2) Before you start to solve a problem, try to estimate what the answer will be.
  - 3) If you're having difficulty with a problem, try drawing a picture or diagram
  - 4) Don't spend too much time on one problem. If you get stumped, go on, and come back to it later.
  - 5) Show all of your work, you may get partial credit.
  
- Check Your Answers.
  
- Go Over All Returned Tests.
  
- Reduce Test Anxiety
  - To reduce test anxiety, study enough to feel confident that you know the material.
    - Start studying early.
    - Mentally practice going through the testing experience.
    - Walk into the test with your head up and your shoulders back.

(Adapted from: How to Get Good Grades in College. Dayton, OH: Woodburn Press, 2000.)

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