

Foundations of Learning

FOUNDATIONS OF LEARNING

MILES FEROLI

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We designed this Open Educational Resources (OER) First Year Courses textbook, *Foundations of Learning*, to help you navigate the transition to college and to prepare you for your future academic career. Our editorial team brings together Eastern Kentucky University faculty, staff, and students from various disciplines and areas. We are committed to a process of open pedagogy and value student participation in knowledge production, so students were actively involved in all stages of the creation of this book. We are grateful to our student team for gathering and creating resources and providing valuable feedback on all chapters to make this an accessible and exciting resource for their peers! Some of the content you will find in this book is original and unique to Eastern Kentucky University, while other content has been adopted from other Open Educational Resources (OER).

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UNIT I

UNIT 1: MAKING CONNECTIONS

CHAPTER 1: GETTING STARTED

Welcome to GSD 101: Foundations of Learning!

GSD 101: Foundations of Learning is a first year seminar class that orients and onboards you into the Eastern Kentucky University experience. Throughout this course, you will develop learning strategies scientifically proven to improve classroom performance. You will learn about campus resources and engage in activities that promote personal, intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and career development. As a bonus, you will hone communication, critical reading, and critical thinking skills as you join the ECU community.

What is this textbook?

We designed this Open Educational Resources (OER) First Year Seminar textbook to help you navigate the transition to college and to prepare you for your future academic career. Our editorial team brings together Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) faculty, staff, and students from various areas. We are committed to a process of open pedagogy and value student participation in knowledge production. In fact, students were actively involved in all stages of the creation of this book! We are grateful to our student team for gathering and creating resources and providing valuable feedback on all chapters to make this an accessible and exciting resource for their peers. Some of the content you will find in this book is original and unique to ECU, while other content has been adopted from other Open Educational Resources (OER).

Open Educational Resources (aka OER) are resources available digitally, for free, on the web. OER can take many forms, including textbooks.

Your OER textbook is:

- Openly accessible (free) and available to all students on the web
- Designed to be accessible using standard web browsers, mobile devices, screen readers and other assistive technology
- Available in multiple formats
- Printable
- Downloadable

How to use this OER?

View the video below for a brief tutorial on how to navigate the textbook.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=308#oembed-1>

Why should I care about this textbook?

College can be both exciting and overwhelming when you first get started, and we want to make sure that you can focus on the excitement rather than the anxieties that may come with a new beginning. In GSD 101, we want to explore what you are passionate about and help you move towards realizing those passions. Some of you already know exactly where you want to go in life, and some of you might feel that there are many paths leading into different possible futures.

Why should I care about this class?

GSD 101 is designed to support you during your first year at ECU by providing access to an extensive support network bringing together students, faculty, and staff. You will learn about your major, get to know your peers and the college, and develop the skills you need to be successful at ECU and beyond. You will also participate in co-curricular activities that will help you become an active member of the university community, some of which are tied to a Registered Student Organization (RSO). With the help of the university's innovative DegreeWorks, you will explore your educational and career goals. The seminar will also connect you with the many resources available at ECU, such as tutoring and scholarship opportunities.

GSD 101 Frequently Used Resources

Student Email

Your student email is one of the most critical resources you will use during your academic career; all university communications sent via email will be sent to your student account and you must use your student account any time you email an ECU service or employee, including your

professors. Since you will be receiving updates and important information from your professors and the university, you must have access to your university's email system and check it daily. Your email account must be activated in order to gain access. Step-by-step instructions are below for setting up your new email account using Microsoft Authenticator.

MyEKU

MyEKU is a critical site that provides you a “one-stop-shop” for a lot of your needs, including access to information about your financial aid, registration, advising, grades, and more. Use your EKU email address and password to access your [MyEKU portal](#).

Google Drive or Office 365

As an EKU student you have access to the [Google Drive Suite](#) and [Microsoft 365](#). If you're having trouble accessing either platform, visit the IT Help Desk located in the Keen Johnson Ground Floor or contact [IT via chat, telephone, or their ticketing system](#).

Canvas

Canvas is EKU's online learning management system. It's where your professors will share important things like the course syllabus, assignments, and announcements. In many courses, you'll use Canvas to turn in your homework, take quizzes and/or tests, and see your grades. Knowing how to use Canvas will help you stay organized and keep up with your schoolwork at EKU.



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DegreeWorks

DegreeWorks is a web-based degree audit tool designed to allow students and their advisors to track their degree progress, and prepare for registration and graduation.

As a student, DegreeWorks will allow you to easily monitor your requirements as you complete them and stay on track with your program of study.

DegreeWorks is NOT a replacement for advising. You should work with your advisor and utilize Degree Works together to move efficiently toward completing your program's requirements.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding DegreeWorks, please reach out to your advisor.

GSD 101 Frequently Asked Questions

What are some things that I'm going to do in GSD 101?

- Work with a GSD 101 instructor to build student success habits
- Develop your sense of belonging on ECU's campus
- Reflect on your academic and professional goals
- Acquire study skills like time management, note taking, journal keeping, and more
- Learn about course offerings at ECU and build an academic plan
- Learn about your respective major, its learning objectives, and career opportunities
- Explore ECU's co-curricular learning opportunities

Who teaches GSD 101?

GSD 101 is taught by faculty and staff members from a variety of academic disciplines and areas at ECU. They are invested in your success and will support you as you navigate the ups and downs of transitioning into ECU.

What is co-curricular learning?

Co-curricular learning refers to experiences outside of the classroom that complement classroom learning. For example, you might join a student club, go on field trips, or attend events on campus. Co-curricular activities have multiple benefits. Besides socializing with more students, faculty, and staff, co-curricular learning can help with developing skills that could be beneficial academically and professionally.

I already know how to succeed at learning and school. Do I really have to take this course?

Yes! This class not only builds on previous skills you learned inside and outside the classroom prior to attending ECU, it also gives you the opportunity to share your knowledge with other students, connect established ideas and experiences to new ones, and apply your skills through active learning strategies such as case studies, group discussions, and short presentations.

Additionally, this class connects you to a network of ECU resources and people that are specifically available for first year students.

How can I get the most out of GSD 101?

- Show up on time for class
- Communicate with your instructor about any frustrations, concerns or issues you're having that impact your ability to succeed in GSD 101
- Complete your work and submit it on time to the best of your ability

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CHAPTER 2: WELLNESS

It all starts with you!

Congratulations for deciding to invest in yourself and making it to the second week of classes! You chose to be a part of Eastern and now the university is here to support you as you grow academically, professionally, and personally. At ECU you will not just obtain the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in your desired career path through the classes you take; you have joined a community of staff, faculty, and other students who want to help you become the best version of yourself. In this section, we invite you to consider your own health, learn about healthy practices and different components of well-being, and explore what steps you can take to take care of yourself and others as a way to succeed at ECU.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will:

- Explain the dimensions of wellness and why wellness is important for students
- Provide tips for communicating with professors, especially when stressed
- Describe what personal and social wellness campus resources are available to you as an ECU student

Why college?

When asked, most students say they're in college primarily for the job they want after graduation. And they are correct that a college education pays off enormously in terms of future earnings, job security and stability, and job satisfaction. Decades of research shows that people with a

university education will make much more in their lifetime on average and be much happier with the work they do.

Yet, career issues are only a part of the big picture. A university education results in many other personal benefits, and these also should be part of your motivation for doing well and continuing with your college plans. Here are a few additional, not-so-obvious and long term benefits of a university education:

- You will have a fuller life and a better understanding of the world around you
- You will gain decision-making and problem-solving skills
- You will meet people with varied backgrounds and experiences and have a richer social life
- You will gain self-confidence
- You will gain learning skills that can continue for a lifetime
- You will make more informed decisions about lifestyle issues and live healthier
- You will make wiser economic decisions the rest of your life
- You will be better equipped to navigate and interact with other people, organizations, and governmental agencies
- You will feel more fully a part of your community, the larger culture, and history

Sadly, however, it's important to recognize that some students do not succeed in college and "drop out" within the first year. Sometimes it's because of an unsolvable financial problem or a personal or family crisis. Yet, two other big reasons for why students don't complete their course work are: (1) motivation and focus and (2) mental health.

A class like GSD 101 helps you stay motivated when things get tough, but it can't necessarily give you motivation to start with. That's part of what you yourself have to bring to ECU. What we can promise you is that you can learn the skills for succeeding in college and we can provide the opportunities for supporting your success.



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=312#h5p-11>

What is wellness?

Well-being is an overall state of happiness, health, and the sense that your life is going well. It encompasses many different aspects of your life such as your physical health, relationships,

career, and environment. All of these aspects of your life are connected and affect how happy you are.

It is crucial to understand that wellness is not merely the absence of illness or distress. Wellness is a lifelong process of making decisions to live a more balanced and meaningful life. A good way to enhance your wellness is by evaluating your current state and establishing systems to guide you towards a fuller sense of well-being.

The Global Wellness Institute defines wellness as “the active pursuit of activities, choices, and lifestyles that lead to a state of holistic health”.

Why Does Wellness Matter to Students?

Students’ health and well-being contribute to your ability to learn in all disciplines including health and physical education. This learning, in turn, contributes to overall well-being. Learning the skills to research and analyze knowledge is key to making healthy choices and informed decisions. As a result, you may recognize and change your own behaviours as you become critical consumers of health information.

Health and wellness are foundational to student success. Yet we do not always have control over our own wellbeing: social environments, personal background, economic status, geographic location, and belief systems all have an impact on our health, for instance. Leading a healthy life can be particularly challenging for college students as you navigate new academic and personal challenges and increased responsibilities. Between classwork, jobs, and family obligations, it’s often hard to get enough rest or eat a healthy meal. You, like many of your peers, may deal with anxiety, mental health conditions, or chronic illness, and may wonder how to achieve a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

Since health is a complex social phenomenon, wellness and wellbeing can take many forms, and we can take a lot of different steps to take care of ourselves and others. Well-being does not look the same to everyone. To further explore the many aspects of well-being, consider the Wellness Wheel, which breaks down wellness into nine different dimensions:



Figure 2.1: The Wellness Wheel (Wellness Wheel handout).

Physical wellness: Taking care of your body through physical activity, nutrition, sleep, and mental well-being. For example:

- Engage in some form of physical activity every day for at least 30 minutes
- Eat a variety of healthy foods
- Get an adequate amount of sleep every night (7–9 hours)

Emotional wellness: Making time to relax, reduce stress, and take care of yourself. Paying

attention to both positive and negative feelings and understanding how to handle these emotions. For example:

- Practice [mindfulness](#)
- Start a gratitude journal
- Pay attention to self-talk and shift toward positive self-talk
- Track emotions daily to look for patterns and possible triggers

Academic/career wellness: Expanding your knowledge and creating strategies to support continued learning. For example:

- Set up academic goals
- Create a study schedule and plan ahead
- Form a study group
- Connect with a mentor to further your understanding of career ideas
- Review your short and long-term career goals regularly to make sure you are on track

Social wellness: Taking care of your relationships and society by building healthy, nurturing, and supportive relationships and fostering a genuine connection with those around you. For example:

- Make an effort to keep in touch with individuals who are supportive
- Practice active listening skills
- Join a club or an organization to meet new people
- Be mindful of commitments you make – know your limitations (don't spread yourself too thin)
- Apply for a campus job to broaden your occupational horizon and become connected with the career side of campus

Creative wellness: Valuing and actively participating in arts and cultural experiences as a means to understand and appreciate the surrounding world. For example:

- Play an instrument or make music
- Engage in the visual arts
- Try creative writing
- Engage in creativity through movement (dance)

Spiritual wellness: Taking care of your values and beliefs and creating purpose in your life. For example:

- Volunteer
- Meditate
- Express gratitude
- Practice forgiveness and compassion for yourself and others

Environmental wellness: Taking care of what is around you. Living in harmony with the Earth by taking action to protect it and respecting nature and all species. For example:

- Spend time in nature
- When possible, travel by walking, riding your bike, or taking public transportation
- Recycle and compost
- Use reusable water bottles and shopping bags

Financial wellness: Learning how to successfully manage finances to be financially responsible and independent. For example:

- Create and maintain a budget
- Pay your bills on time
- Pack your lunch to limit how often you eat out
- Meal plan before grocery shopping

Intellectual wellness: Being open to exploring new concepts, gaining new skills, and seeking creative and stimulating activities. For example:

- Try a new activity at school or in the community
- Explore things that you are curious about
- Read and write for pleasure

Stress and College

We all live with occasional stress. Since college students often feel even more stress than most people, it's important to understand it and learn ways to deal with it so that it doesn't disrupt your life. Stress is a natural response of the body and mind to a demand or challenge. The thing that causes stress, called a stressor, captures our attention and causes a physical and emotional reaction. Stressors include physical threats, such as a car we suddenly see coming at us too fast, and the stress reaction likely includes jumping out of the way—with our heart beating fast and other physical changes. Most of our stressors are not physical threats but situations or events

like an upcoming test or an emotional break-up. Stressors also include long-lasting emotional and mental concerns such as worries about money or finding a job.

Since many stressors are unavoidable, the question is what to do about the resulting stress. A person can try to ignore or deny stress for a while, but then it keeps building and starts causing all those problems. So we have to do something. Consider first what you have typically done in the past when you felt most stressed. Here are a few examples of how college students have responded to stress:

1. Drinking alcohol
2. Drinking lots of coffee
3. Sleeping a lot
4. Eating too much
5. Eating too little
6. Smoking or drugs
7. Having arguments
8. Sitting around depressed
9. Watching television or surfing the Web
10. Overly complaining to friends
11. Exercising, jogging, biking
12. Practicing yoga or tai chi
13. Meditating
14. Using relaxation techniques
15. Talking with a professor or counsellor

What's wrong with the first ten stress-reduction behaviors listed? Why not watch television or get a lot of sleep when you're feeling stressed, if that makes you feel better?

While it may feel better temporarily to escape feelings of stress in those ways, ultimately they may cause more stress themselves. If you're worried about grades and being too busy to study as much as you need to, then letting an hour or two slip by watching television will make you even more worried later because then you have even less time. Eating too much may make you sluggish and less able to focus. Alcohol, caffeine, smoking, and drugs all generally increase one's stress over time. Complaining too much to friends? Over time, your friends will tire of hearing it or tire of arguing with you because a complaining person isn't much fun to be around. So eventually you may find yourself even more alone and stressed.

Yet there is a bright side: there are lots of very positive ways to cope with stress that will also improve your health, make it easier to concentrate on your studies, and make you a happier person overall. The last five items on our list are more positive ways to cope.

Change of Routine and Homesickness

For many students, college marks a shift in your routine. High school students and workers have their days highly structured for them. College students have much more autonomy over their day to day lives. Therefore, it's critical that you create a routine for yourself so that you build a strong foundation that sets you up for success.

Tips for Building a Routine

- Make a list with all the things you need to do
- Structure your day – morning, midday, evening – according to priority
- Get specific
- Have buffer time for flexibility
- Put it into motion and reevaluate every so often

Tips for Homesickness

It's extremely normal to feel adrift when you're away from home, wherever that may be. The knee-jerk reaction to homesickness for students is often to go home; however, by going home you're missing out on the different chances for you to build a routine, establish and deepen relationships on campus, and attend events. Here are some things you can do to help work through homesickness:

- Set regular calls with loved ones
- Plan a visit to have something to look forward to
- Bring things from home as reminders
- Acknowledge your feelings and know they are normal
- Talk to a friend, family member, or counselor
- Join a Registered Student Organization (RSO)
- Dive into your coursework
- Attend events on campus

Communication with Professors and Stress

College students are sometimes surprised to discover that professors like students and enjoy getting to know them. The human dimension of college really matters, and as a student you are an important part of your professor's world. Most professors are happy to see you during their

office hours or to talk a few minutes after class, especially if you're facing obstacles with your coursework.

Active participation in learning is a key to student success. Talking with your professors often leads to benefits beyond simply doing well in that class:

- Talking with professors helps you feel more comfortable in college and more connected to the campus. Students who talk to their professors are less likely to become disillusioned and drop out.
- Talking with professors is a valuable way to learn about an academic field or a career.
- You may need a reference or letter of recommendation for a job or internship application. Getting to know some of your professors puts you in an ideal position to ask for a letter of recommendation or a reference in the future when you need one.
- Because professors are often well connected within their field, they may know of a job, internship, or research possibility you otherwise may not learn about. A professor who knows you is a valuable part of your network. Networking is very important for future job searches and other opportunities. In fact, most jobs are found through networking, not through classified ads or online job postings.
- Think about what it truly means to be educated: how one thinks, understands society and the world, and responds to problems and new situations. Much of this learning occurs outside the classroom. Talking with your highly educated professors can be among your most meaningful experiences in college.

Tips for Success: Talking with Professors

When you have a question, ask it sooner rather than later.

Be prepared and plan your questions and comments in advance.

Be respectful but personable and communicate professionally.

Be open minded and ready to learn. Avoid whining and complaining.

There is no such thing as a "stupid question."

Emailing a Professor: Best Practices

Email has a critical role in education and has become an important and valuable means of communicating with professors. Especially when it is difficult to see a professor in person during office hours, email can be an effective form of communication and interaction with professors. Email is also an increasingly effective way to collaborate with other students on group projects or while studying with other students.

Students who text with friends have often adopted shortcuts, such as not spelling out full words, ignoring capitalization and punctuation, and not bothering with grammar or full sentence constructions. This is inappropriate in an email message to a professor, who expects a more professional quality of writing. Most professors expect your communications to be in full sentences with correctly spelled words and reasonable grammar.

Follow these email writing guidelines:

- Use the subject line to label your message effectively at a glance. “May I make an appointment?” says something; “In your office?” doesn’t.
- Address email messages as you do a letter, beginning “Dear Professor _____”.
- Include your full name, your class number, and/or your class time, especially at the start of the semester when professors are still getting to know you.
- Get to your point quickly and concisely. Don’t make the reader scroll down a long email to see what it is you want to say.
- Because email is a written communication, it does not express emotion the way a voice message does. Don’t attempt to be funny, ironic, or sarcastic. Write as you would in a paper for class. In a large lecture class or an online course, your email voice may be the primary way your professor knows you, and emotionally charged messages can be confusing or give a poor impression.

Getting Started with E-Mail

- If you don’t have your own computer, find out where on-campus computers are available for student use, such as at the library or student computer lab.
- Use your ECU email for all communications with ECU staff and faculty.
- Give your email address to professors who request it and to other students with whom you study or maintain contact. Email is a good way to contact another student if you miss a class.
- Once you begin using email, remember to check it regularly for messages.

- Don't use capital letters to emphasize. All caps look like SHOUTING.
- Avoid abbreviations, nonstandard spelling, slang, and emoticons like smiley faces. These do not convey a professional tone.
- Don't make demands or state expectations such as "I'll expect to hear from you soon" or "If I haven't heard by 4 p.m., I'll assume you'll accept my paper late."
- When you reply to a message, leave the original message within yours. Your reader may need to recall what he or she said in the original message.
- Be polite. End the message with a "Thank you", "Sincerely", or something similar.
- Proofread your message before sending it.
- With any important message to a work supervisor or professor, it's a good idea to wait and review the message later before sending it. You may have expressed an emotion or thought that you will think better about later. Many problems have resulted when people sent messages too quickly without thinking.

Student Success Resources at ECU

At ECU, we're dedicated to creating opportunities for students to reach their full potential. We understand that for you to reach your full potential you need wrap-around support services that welcome you, provide you accurate and timely information, and impart the unique skills needed to thrive in college. In this section, you will be introduced to the different offices that exist at ECU to champion your personal health and wellness.

Mental Health and Wellness

As noted in the section above, mental health challenges are a leading cause for why students don't complete their course work. Many people understand that their physical health – how your body feels and how it is functioning – is important. People know they need to be intentional in their efforts to take care of their physical health through eating, sleeping, and attending to everyday life tasks; however, your emotional and mental health is just as important as your physical health. If you're unhappy, distressed, and overwhelmed much of the time, you will not do as well as in college because your ability to engage with your classes, classwork, and social activities can be clouded. Moreover, research demonstrates that your emotional and mental health directly influences your physical well-being, often resulting in a tough cycle to break.

EKU's Counseling Center (Whitlock Building, 5th Floor)

To help you with the stressors of college life, you can visit EKU's Counseling Center. The Counseling Center not only focuses on mental health, but motivation, academic performance, and strategies for improving overall happiness. The office is staffed by trained mental health clinicians. Anything you share is held in the strictest confidence, and there is no charge for care. Whether you wish to better your mental health or need help with working through past or current challenges, the Counseling Center is available to help.

EKU's Psychology Clinic

EKU's Psychology Clinic is another resource that is free for EKU students. The EKU Psychology Clinic is an outpatient integrated behavioral health care facility operated by the Department of Psychology at Eastern Kentucky University. **EKU Psychology Clinic Services Include:**

- Individual Therapy
- Assessment, Evaluation, or Testing Services for different behavioral health diagnoses and disorders
- Consultation Services
- Couples & Family Therapy
- Therapy, Processing, & Support Groups such as the Autism Clinic and the Trauma and Suicide Prevention Clinic
- Outreach Services
- Tele-psychological Services

Services are provided by doctoral students working on graduate degrees in clinical psychology. All clinicians have received specialized graduate training and are closely supervised by a licensed psychologist faculty member.

Counseling Center Takeaways

- Free to EKU students
- Walk-in and scheduled appointments available between 8 am – 4:30 pm Monday through Friday
- Services:
 - Individual and group therapy
 - Couples therapy
 - Outreach programs and workshops
 - 24/7 on-call counselor line: 859-622-1303

Wellness Rooms & Sensory Spaces

- ECU Counseling Center Relaxation Room – Whitlock 567
- Student Stress Management Center (interactive space for sensory support & a place to rest)
Rowlett 145

Bobby Verdugo & Yoli Ríos Bilingual Peer Mentor and Tutoring Center aka “El Centro” (Library 106)

El Centro offers bilingual tutoring and mentoring for students interested in multilingual and multicultural community building and scholarship. Tutoring is offered in a variety of languages including Spanish, German, Japanese, etc. Additionally, El Centro also offers tutoring in subject areas such as social work, public health, sciences, anthropology, sociology, etc. El Centro provides a space to apply the skills learned in language and culture classes in real-world settings through volunteering or service-learning community engagement.

El Centro also offers mentoring services where students meet once a week with a peer mentor. Each student is assigned a mentor based on major, academic, or personal needs. Within each mentoring session, students can receive help with navigating college, class advising, schedule building, networking, interview skills, email best practices, applications, essays, resumes, cover letters, scholarships, etc.

ECU Honors Program

Why apply to ECU Honors?

- Examine new ideas across disciplinary boundaries
- Explore opportunities for research and nationally competitive awards
- Experience new ideas, communities, and cultures

The ECU Honors Program makes innovative, hands-on, and thought-provoking classes and resources available to motivated and creative students who want an in-depth college classroom experience with a strong grounding in an interdisciplinary, liberal arts education. Current ECU students are welcome to apply to the Honors Program, even if they did not start in it during their first semester at ECU. No matter the major, students in the Honors Program benefit from small, innovative classes that can fulfill general education and university requirements. Before graduating as an ECU Honors Scholar, each student completes an honors thesis on a topic of their choice. The application for currently enrolled students to join ECU Honors will be shared in ECU Students Today. Visit the [ECU Honors](#)

[website](#) to learn more or email ECU Honors Assistant Director [Kevin Watts](#).

Center for Student Involvement (CSI)

The Center for Student Involvement (CSI) is your key to unlocking your own exceptional Eastern experience. Whether you are wanting to learn more about student organizations and events, develop your leadership skills, participate in community service, or meet new people and make friends, the Center for Student Involvement is there to help.

Located in the Powell Student Center, the Center for Student Involvement fosters connection, collaboration, and community for all students. This central hub for involvement houses the departments of Student Life & First-Year Experience (SL&FYE), Community & Global Engagement (CGE) and Fraternity & Sorority Life.

- Excel as a leader inside and outside the classroom
- Enhance your ECU experience through internships, co-ops, and other methods of increasing your employability after graduation
- Engage with your campus community
- Travel to state and national honors conferences and join cultural trips to major cities across the United States

Center for Student Parents (Turley House)

The Center for Student Parents is a place to feel supported, accepted, and prepared for life as a parenting college student. Through guidance, academic support, advising, workshops, referrals, and employment opportunities, student parents can graduate and meet educational and personal goals. At the Center for Student Parents Richmond location there is a:

- Computer and study lab
- Family friendly study spaces

The Richmond office is located in the Turley House. The Corbin office is located in Room 117.

Office of Military and Veterans Affairs (Powell Middle Floor)

The Office of Military and Veterans Affairs (OMVA) offers a variety of services and opportunities for students who have served in the United States Military, including targeted tuition rates, priority registration, and adventure programming. OMVA also houses a VA certifying official who assists with the completion of paperwork each semester. This office also facilitates a number of opportunities for Vets to connect with fellow Vets through peer-to-peer mentoring and tutoring,

adventure programming, and special workshops designed to meet the needs of our Vets. The staff also serves as advocates for our valued service members and their families.

Student Life and First Year Experiences (Powell Middle Floor)

Being an ECU Colonel means building upon what you learn in the classroom by embracing the opportunities and experiences ECU offers. Foster your intellectual, physical, and social development through programs and services that challenge and support you as you develop attitudes, abilities, and skills for life-long learning within an ever-changing global environment.

Your college experience is what you make of it. Make the most of your time at ECU.

- Follow your passions and make a difference by volunteering.
- Make memories that last a lifetime through Student Life & E3 events.
- Develop your leadership skills and abilities with our leadership programs.
- Embrace your hobbies and interests through hundreds of student organizations and clubs.
- Join a community of dedicated and supportive students who share your goals and values by joining a fraternity or sorority.

You can check out events on campus through the [Engage website](#).

Physical Health and Wellness

Similar to mental health and wellness, physical health and wellness is critical to your success as an ECU student. If you're sick, hurt, or too stressed out to move your body around in a way that feels good or without difficulty or pain, it is inevitably going to impact your ability to attend class, pay attention, and participate in events.

ECU's Student Health Services (Rowlett Building 103)

Student Health Services is an outpatient, acute care clinic located on the first floor of the Rowlett Building on ECU's Richmond campus. All enrolled ECU students are welcome to use Student Health Services for free. Some of the services provided are:

- Evaluation and treatment of illnesses and injuries
- Physicals
- Gynecological care and birth control
- Rapid testing for flu, strep throat, urinary tract infections, mononucleosis, anemia and blood sugar

- Continuation of allergy injections
- TB skin testing
- Mental health services by a psychiatric nurse practitioner
- Evaluation and treatment of sexually transmitted infections and diseases

To be seen you need to make an appointment. To schedule an appointment call 859-622-1761. Please arrive on time for all appointments. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday 8 am – 4:30 pm.

Campus Recreation

Campus Recreation's mission is to enhance campus and community life by providing excellent service, programs, and experiences that encourage holistic well-being. They are here to develop students, be inclusive, and bring fulfillment to student's college experience. They offer an array of opportunities to get involved and find community on campus.

Access to the facility and their programs is included in your student fees as long as you are taking 5 or more credit hours on the Richmond campus. Campus Recreation is also the largest student employer on campus, and there are 20 different Camp jobs where you can gain career building skills!

Check out the mobile app "EKU Campus Recreation" and follow their social media accounts to stay in the know.

Food on Campus

Case Dining Hall, aka "Upper Case"

Upper Case features full access for breakfast, lunch, or dinner, with international entrees, grill, deli, salad bar, and more. The dining style is an all-you-can-eat buffet where you "swipe" or "tap" using your TransAct App to get in. All full-time undergraduate students under the age of 21, having earned fewer than 60 credit hours, or less than four academic semesters living on campus, are required to live in

Campus Recreation Includes:

Group Exercise
 Personal Training
 Open Recreation
 Team and Individual Sports
 Esports
 Rock Climbing
 Outdoor Workshops
 Adventure Trips
 Swimming
 Health and Wellness Promotion
 Special events like Rec the Ravine and Zips and Zombies!

University residence hall facilities and must choose one of the residential meal plans. This means that, more than likely, you have the option to eat at Upper Case for a majority of your meals. If you do not enroll in a meal plan, the minimum plan will be assigned to you at the beginning of the academic term (5-Day All Access with 300 flex).

Lower Case

Lower Case hosts food establishments where you can use traditional forms of payment or your flex dining dollars. Currently, there is Moe's Southwest Grill, Panda Express, Subway, Chick-fil-A, and a POD Express. Depending on your meal plan status, you could use a VIP swipe during certain hours. Find out more about [campus dining options](#).

The Corner

Located on the 1st floor of the Powell Building, The Corner offers burgers, fries, pizzas, and more. They accept traditional forms of payment or your flex dining dollars.

Stratton Café

Stratton Café may be ECU's best kept secret with a full salad bar, grilled items, a deli, and a home cooking station. The Café is located in the Stratton Building.

Registered Dietician

Did you know ECU has a registered dietitian who is available to support you with your dietary needs?

Jillian Cupp is a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University where she completed her undergraduate degree in General Dietetics; she then went on to complete her dietetic internship in Riverdale, Georgia at Southern Regional Medical Center. Jillian has previous experience as a clinical dietitian at Northside Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia, and was a part-time diet tech in an eating disorder clinic. Jillian adheres to a health-at-every-size and all-foods-fit philosophy and wants to assist in busting nutrition myths for college students.

Jillian is available to help students with food allergies/intolerances and find foods in Case Kitchen to accommodate their dietary needs.

If you would like assistance, please contact Jillian at cupp-jillian@aramark.com

Colonel's Cupboard

The Colonel's Cupboard at Eastern Kentucky University provides a variety of resources to students as part of the university's commitment to ensuring students have what they need to succeed.

These items are available at no cost to students:

- Fresh foods: dairy, eggs, vegetables, various frozen and refrigerated items
- Pantry foods: canned foods, boxed foods, snack food items
- Toiletry items: soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, menstrual products
- Clothing: available through Colonel's Closet (located within the Cupboard)

Please be sure to check our hours before visiting, or [submit a request through Engage](#) to confirm when the Cupboard is available. The Cupboard offers both walk-in and appointment hours. During walk-in hours, students may go directly to Powell 215 to visit the Cupboard; appointments MUST arrive at Powell 152 to be escorted to the Cupboard.

University Support and Wellness Resources

Some student support units on campus are about making sure you get what you need administratively. That is, they are about making sure you have what you need at the university level to be successful in your classes, your dorms, and your favorite places to eat.

Big E Central (Whitlock 2nd Floor or bigcentral@eku.edu)

Big E Central is your primary resource for navigating financial aid, scholarships, billing, payment plans, and registration assistance.

If it is outside of our operating hours, submit a request through [their online form](#).

Walk-In Availability – Mon-Thurs: 8 am – 4pm and Phone Availability – Mon-Fri: 9 am – 4 pm

Center for Student Accessibility (Whitlock 3rd Floor)

The Center for Student Accessibility (CSA) assists students by coordinating campus and program accessibility and providing support in attaining educational goals. Students requesting services, including deaf and hard-of-hearing students, must submit a completed application for services and current health-related documentation.

Applications, documentation guidelines, and additional information are available on the [CSA website](#).

Appointments are made by calling (859) 622-2933 or emailing accessibility@eku.edu.

Office of Advising and Career Services (Whitlock 468)

The Office of Advising and Career Services (OACS) assists students in achieving their academic

and career-related goals, from navigating their first year of college and choosing an inspiring major/career to pursuing experiential learning and preparing to target a variety of job opportunities. Services include academic advising, career counseling, co-op/internship search and assistance, job search preparation, employer events, and a Part-Time Job Program.

Card Services and Meal Plans (Powell Ground Floor)

Your Colonel Card serves as your official ECU identification and is used for services on campus like meal plans (meal swipes and flex dollars), building access, athletics, events, Colonel Cash, mail and package collection, and borrowing materials from ECU Libraries.

Visit [Colonels' Card FAQ Guide](#) for more information.

Housing

Eastern Kentucky University has a two-year residency requirement because we strongly believe that living on campus provides both immediate and long-term benefits. National studies and those specific to ECU both confirm that students who reside on campus:

- Tend to remain in school at a higher rate and have higher GPAs than those who never lived on campus.
- Come into contact more often with their peers and may be exposed to different ideas and cultures that strengthen communication and interpersonal skills.
- Tend to be more involved in campus activities and have more contact with faculty, university staff members, and other students, which results in deeper, more meaningful relationships that often continue beyond their time at ECU.

You'll read more about housing and navigating potential opportunities for growth later in the semester. For more information about ECU's housing, please visit the [ECU Housing website](#).

Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX (Jones Building 416)

The Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX performs the following four functions in service to the University community:

- Policy on Discrimination and Harassment,
- Recruitment and Selection Practices,
- Trainings and Educational Programs, and
- Equal Opportunity.

Sexual harassment and sexual assault are forms of sex discrimination that are prohibited by Title IX and may include off campus conduct of such nature. The Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX is charged with the University's compliance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. File a report here: [Equal Opportunity and Title IX Reporting Form](#)

EKU Police Department (701 Vickers Drive, Richmond KY 40475 | Phone: 859-622-111)

The Eastern Kentucky University Police Department provides 24-hour patrol of campus buildings, parking lots, residence hall exteriors, and campus grounds. Patrol is by motor vehicle, bicycle, and on foot. The department does not provide patrol services to the regional campuses, but may provide other services to include investigations and crime prevention programs. File a report at [Campus Security Authority Incident Form](#).

Summary

- Pay attention to, rather than ignore, things that cause you stress and change what you can.
- Accept what you can't change and resolve to make new habits that will help you cope.
- Get regular exercise and enough sleep.
- Evaluate your priorities, work on managing your time, and schedule restful activities in your daily life. Students who feel in control of their lives report feeling much less stress than those who feel that circumstances control them.
- Slow down and focus on one thing at a time and know when to say no to distractions—don't check for email or text messages every few minutes.
- Break old habits involving caffeine, alcohol, and other substances.
- Remember your long-range goals and don't obsess over short-term difficulties.
- Make time to enjoy being with friends.
- Explore new activities and hobbies that you enjoy.
- Find a relaxation technique that works for you and practice it regularly.
- Get help if you're having a hard time coping with emotional stress.
- The college and its staff want to see you succeed, but you have to ask for the help you need to succeed.
- Using Student or Campus services is not a sign of weakness; it is a trait of successful students.
- Participate in your learning by respectfully talking with professors. Active communication with professors often leads to benefits beyond class grades.

References

Global Wellness Institute. (2024). *What is wellness?* Global Wellness Institute.
<https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/what-is-wellness/>

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CHAPTER 3: METACOGNITION

Learning with style

Imagine this scenario: You've entered a paper airplane competition where the best paper airplane maker will receive \$1000. You are given a blank piece of paper and are told to build a paper airplane. Before you begin, you have to choose how you'll learn to build a paper airplane from these four options:

1. Watch a video with no sound showing you how to build the airplane.
2. Listen to someone describe how to build the airplane.
3. Read a step-by-step list for how to build the airplane.
4. See a picture of the airplane and you make a guess at how to build it.

To boost your odds of winning that \$1000, which instructional method would you choose?



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=327#h5p-21>

Maybe you're thinking, "why can't I have a video with sound and closed captions that also shows me what the end product looks like? I like listening to instructions but also like to be able to see what they are doing and what it's supposed to look like when it's done." Perhaps, you are saying to yourself, "I actually don't know what one I would pick."

Whether you know immediately which instruction method you'd pick or don't see a method that feels right to you, the primary thing to know is that sometimes you're going to be given flexibility and sometimes you're not. So, you need to become aware of the various ways that you can accomplish your assignments and learn information in the most effective ways.

The fun thing about college is that you get to have more control over your situations. That is, for the most part, you get to decide how you want to engage with your homework and when. A huge

part of homework, though, and by extension, learning, is figuring out the best ways to take in and process the information being taught to you. Therefore, this chapter is going to ensure you have the best skills and strategies to be successful in the learning process.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will:

- Describe what metacognition is
- Explain how learning works and supports you holistically
- Discuss strategies for how to learn best for you
- Define information literacy and the key skills and concepts associated with information literate learners
- Explain why information literacy matters as a college student, a professional, and a citizen
- Identify on and off campus resources that can support your learning

Metacognition and How It Helps You Succeed

“Learning is not an event, but rather a process that unfolds over time” (Stahl et al., 2010).

The world is not static. It is dynamic and uncertain. Learning enables you to adapt to your uncertain environments and succeed in a competitive environment. At ECU, **we define learning as a process** rather than a product that can lead to significant change over time. This change is influenced by three interrelated areas: (1) Motivation (2) Emotion and (3) Cognition (Figure 1).

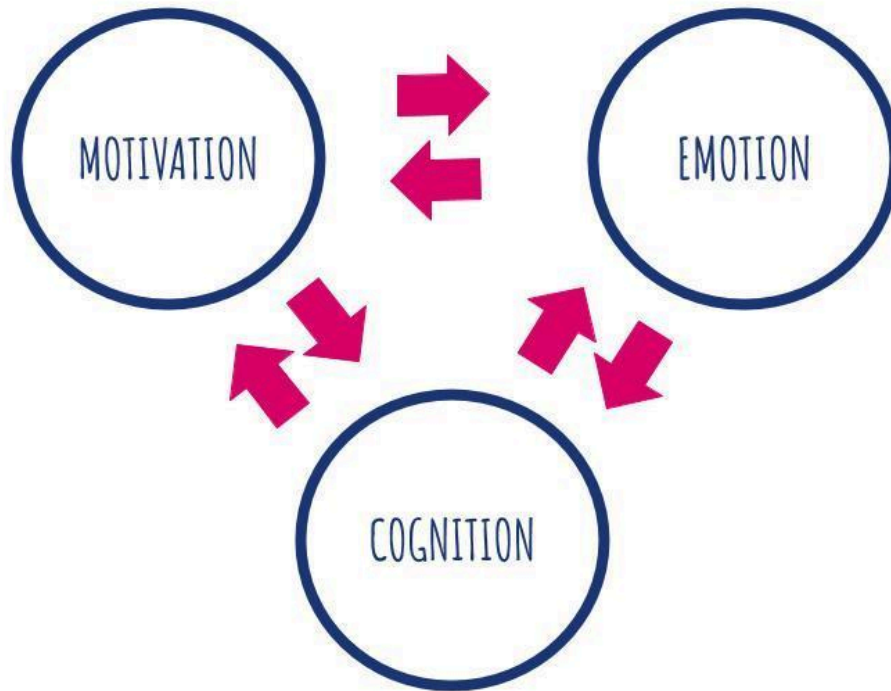


Figure 3.1 Interrelated process that guides learning (Source: Beardsley, 2020).

Motivation and **emotion** both have the same underlying Latin root “to move.” Motivation and emotion are words that describe things that “charge,” “drive,” or “move” our behavior. When we experience emotions or strong motivations, we feel the experiences (Stangor & Walinga, 2014). Motivation and emotion are crucial for learning because, when working together, they enable you to truly grasp and apply new information and abilities (Boekaerts, 2010).

Importantly, motivation and emotion are complex and wrapped up within one another. Think about why you are currently in college. Are you here because you enjoy learning and want to pursue an education to make yourself a more well-rounded individual? If so, then you are *intrinsically* motivated. However, if you are here because you want to get a college degree to make yourself more marketable for a high-paying career or to satisfy the demands of your parents, then your motivation is more *extrinsic* in nature. People aren’t just one or the other. Our motivations are often a mix of both intrinsic (example: love for what you do) and extrinsic factors (example: getting paid), but the nature of the mix of these factors might change over time.

So, what is cognition?

Upon waking each morning, you begin thinking and contemplating the tasks that you must complete within the day. In what order should you run your errands? Should you go to the gym, work, or the grocery store first? Can you get these things done before you head to class, or will they need to wait until class is done? These thoughts are one example of cognition at work.

Simply put, cognition is thinking, and it encompasses the processes associated with perception, knowledge, problem solving, judgment, language, and memory.

When brought together, motivation, emotion, and cognition are important aspects of metacognition. Metacognition is the awareness of one's thought processes and an understanding of the patterns behind them. The metacognition cycle involves:

- Assessing the task
- Evaluating strengths and weaknesses
- Planning the approach
- Applying strategies
- Reflecting

Watch the video below to learn more about metacognition!



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=327#oembed-1>

As the video points out, metacognition is a cycle that tends to become easier to access and repeat the more you engage with it. That's why at first learning feels hard. Because learning *is* hard. However, metacognition – knowing how to learn – is one way to make it a little bit easier.

Metacognition is not a tool that you leave behind at ECU once you graduate. Research (Lovett et al, 2023) demonstrates that knowing learning is a process that you can improve upon means you will take this with you beyond your time at ECU. Critically, it will help you in your future career and personal life.

Thinking Skills

So what are the various types of thinking skills, and what kind things are you doing when you apply them? In the 1950s, Benjamin Bloom developed a classification of thinking skills that is still helpful today; it is known as Bloom's taxonomy. He lists six types of thinking skills, ranked in order of complexity: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Anderson and Krathwhol (2001) updated Bloom's Taxonomy with details outlining each skill and what is involved in that type of thinking, as you can see in the figure below.

Thinking Skill	What It Involves
1. Remembering and Recalling	Retrieving or repeating information or ideas from memory. This is the first and most basic thinking skill you can develop (starting as a toddler with learning numbers, letters and colors).
2. Understanding	Interpreting, constructing meaning, inferring, or explaining material from written, spoken, or graphic sources. Reading is the most common understanding skill; these skills are developed starting with early education.
3. Applying	Using learned material or implementing material in new situations. This skill is commonly used starting in middle school (in some cases earlier).
4. Analyzing	Breaking material or concepts into key elements and determining how the parts relate to one another or to an overall structure or purpose. Mental actions included in this skill are examining, contrasting, or differentiating, separating, categorized, experimenting, and deducing. You most likely started developing this skill in high school (particularly in science courses) and will continue to practice it in college.
5. Evaluating	Assessing, making judgements, and drawing conclusions from ideas, information, or data. Critiquing the value and usefulness of material. This skill encompasses most of what commonly referred to as critical thinking; this skill will be called on frequently during your college years and beyond. Critical thinking is the first focus of this chapter.
6. Creating	Putting parts together or reorganizing them in a new way, form, or product. This process is the most difficult mental function. This skill will make you stand out in college and is in very high demand in the workforce. Creative thinking is the second focus of this chapter.

Figure 3.2 – Types of Thinking Skills

All of these thinking skills are important for university work (and life in the “real world,” too). You’ve likely had a great deal of experience with the entry level thinking skills. The mid level skills are skills you will get a lot of practice with in university, and you may be well on your way to mastering them already. The upper level thinking skills are the most demanding, and you will need to invest focused and intentional effort to develop them.

These thinking skills overlap with and transfer to the Kentucky’ Graduate Profile’s list of 10 Essential Skills. These 10 skills, which will be discussed at length later in the textbook, were identified as the 10 primary skills that employers around the state of Kentucky are wanting from employees. As you can see in Figure 3.3 below, many of these skills you develop through your course work are also skills that will assist you in the workplace.

The 10 Essential Skills

 Communicate effectively.	 Perform professionally within their chosen field of study or occupation.
 Think critically in order to solve problems and create new ideas and solutions.	 Engage in civic life to improve society.
 Apply quantitative reasoning skills to analyze and solve numerical problems.	 Collaborate and work in teams.
 Interact effectively with people from diverse backgrounds.	 Apply academic knowledge, skills and abilities to their chosen career.
 Adapt to changing circumstances while leading and supporting others.	 Use information for decision making.

Figure 3.3: Kentucky's Council for Postsecondary Education's 10 Essential Skills

Mechanics of Learning

Reconstructing experiences in your brain (learning) uses a lot of resources, including energy (from food) and biological material (neurons). However, these resources are limited, including the space available for the brain in the skull. Thus, brains prioritize what we learn and what we store in our memory. As a result, most information your brain encounters is filtered out and lost.

For example, have you had an experience where you feel motivated to learn and make an effort but you are unable to because you don't have the energy or the bandwidth? This means that you have limited resources – less energy from food and less neurons to fire and make connections. Scientists have isolated a mechanism to remember the main barriers to learning, and by doing so, we can learn of mechanisms to combat these barriers. The acronym used to combat the main barriers to learning is **WARP**:

Working Memory – refers to our capacity to temporarily hold and manipulate a limited amount of information in an easily accessible state. Research indicates that working memory can typically manage around 4 distinct “chunks” of information at any given time. Our ability to hold on to information in working memory is highly temporary, usually lasting only 10 to 15 seconds unless it is actively used, rehearsed, or otherwise processed. For instance, when you're listening to a lecture, your working memory is constantly engaged in processing incoming auditory information,

allowing you to comprehend current sentences and relate them to previous ones, even if you're not taking notes. However, a 20-minute lecture would quickly overwhelm working memory, requiring the active processing and transfer of information to other memory systems.

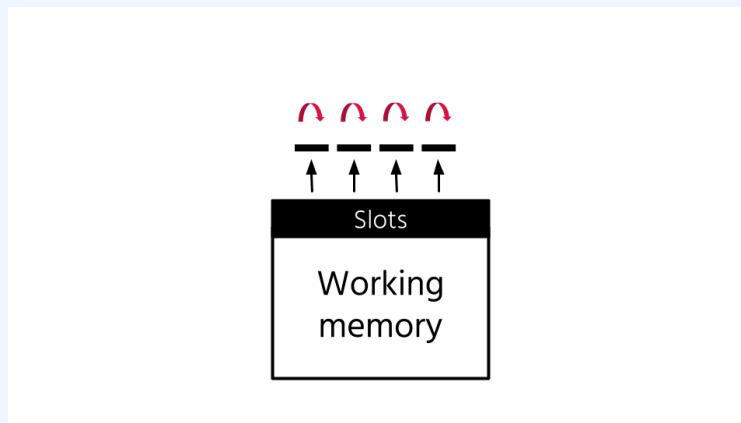


Figure 3.4 A depiction of the limited capacity of working memory (Beardsley, 2020).

Attention – can become distracted or depleted. If we're not paying attention, the information does not enter our memory system in a retrievable manner, or it is encoded in a deficient manner. In the example above, whilst listening during a lecture if there is a lack of focus and attention the working memory, short-term memory and therefore long-term memory is compromised. In the next section, we will discuss specific ways to practice attention.

Retrieval – is accessing the information stored from our memory. If you do not practice recalling your stored information, your long-term memories become inaccessible as the routes you made to creating new information become buried. Think of it as erasing and deleting old music on a hard drive. In the next section of this chapter we will discuss specific ways to practice retrieval.

Prior Knowledge – can be thought of “as stored knowledge and beliefs about the world that have been acquired by an individual” (Brod, Werkle-Bernger & Shing, 2013). As our learning builds on what is already there, our pre-existing or prior knowledge is one of the most significant determinants of subsequent learning. In the example above, before attending a lecture on a topic, having read the chapter addressing the topic and completing any assigned reading will only enhance the number of slots that your working memory can hold!

Sleep to Learn

Recent research reveals the critical role sleep plays in learning (Tamaki & Sasaki, 2022). An important discovery showed a mechanism during sleep where the activity of neurons – types of nerve cell in the brain and brain stem – related to what had been learned during the day. When we go through deep sleep (rapid eye movement or REM sleep), we ‘replay’ what we have learned in the brain areas of the hippocampus and the neocortex. This replay has been shown to play an important role in memory consolidation (Ji & Wilson, 2007; Breton & Robertson, 2013). Memory consolidation is where a temporary memory is transformed into a long-term memory (LTM). These findings show the importance of good sleep health to memory consolidation and learning. Moreover, while we don’t necessarily have to sleep during the day, we do need to give our brains a break – as breaks provide an opportunity to practice memory consolidation. Examples of taking “brain breaks” include: exercising, taking a short nap (15–30 minutes), meditating and unplugging from all devices and distractions.

Attention to Learning

We can think of attention as a spotlight. Unlike working memory, we do not have four available slots/spotlights for attention. There is only one, single spotlight of attention – a single beam of light. What we shine it on – internally or externally – is what we pay attention to. We cannot integrate information that we do not pay attention to! It is important to pay attention to what you pay attention to, as this is what you integrate into your brain’s memory.

Hari (2021) interviewed experts about managing your attention:

Professor Earl Miller, a neuroscientist at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, explains ‘your brain can only produce one or two thoughts’ in your conscious mind at once. That’s it. ‘We’re very, very single-minded.’ We have ‘very limited cognitive capacity’. But we have fallen for an enormous delusion.

The average teenager now believes they can follow six forms of media at the same time. When neuroscientists studied this, they found that when people believe they are doing several things at once, they are juggling. ‘They’re switching back and forth. They don’t notice the switching because their brain sort of papers it over to give a seamless experience of consciousness, but what they’re actually doing is switching and reconfiguring their brain moment-to-moment, task-to-task – and that comes with a cost.’

There is a name for this: it’s called the switch-cost effect! For example, let’s say you are working on a homework assignment, and you receive a text, you glance over it for three seconds – and then you go back to your assignment. In that moment, your brain must remember what you were doing

before, and you have to remember what you thought about it. When this happens, the evidence shows that ‘your performance drops. You’re slower. All as a result of the switching.’ (par. 10)

Here is a great video that explains the same concept of why multitasking is more harmful than helpful:



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Evidence-Based Learning Strategies

What does evidence-based mean? This means that there is a lot of research and repeated findings to back up this science! This section is about smart learning versus hard learning. Smart learning uses scientific evidence to spend less time, effectively sending information into long term memory.

Retrieval Learning or Active Recall

From a cognitive perspective, we can place learning activities into two broad categories: *encoding activities* and *retrieval activities*. Encoding related activities focus more on “putting information in” to long-term memory (memorization). Retrieval related activities focus more on “taking information out” of memory – i.e. practicing the extraction of information from our long-term memory. For example, when you listen to a professor, read articles, watch videos, create concept maps or write essays while looking at your notes, you perform *encoding activities*. On the other hand, when you complete practice tests, write learning journals, teach peers, create concept maps or write essays *from memory without referring to your notes*, you perform *retrieval activities*.

In short, when you complete activities without referring to your notes or the textbook, you are required to retrieve the information from your memory system. When you reconstruct memory systems, you automatically strengthen retrieval routes! Now, most students practice retrieval for the first time during their first quiz or exam; however, active recall should be practiced several times **before** an actual test, quiz, or exam in order to be successful.

How can YOU incorporate active recall?

Active recall can be easily incorporated into your current study in several ways. One method

involves taking whatever learning resource you use—whether it be lecture slides, classroom notes, or the textbook and making a list of concise questions based upon the content and lecture objectives for the course. The next time you revise the topic, instead of re-reading your notes or textbook, go straight to the questions and answer as many as you can **without reading your notes**. If there are questions that you get wrong, refer to your notes and then try to re-answer the question correctly. Color-coding the questions based on whether you got them right (green) or wrong (red) is a helpful way of tracking progress. Integrating spaced repetition into your topics and questions is another scientifically validated way to boost memory retention (Butler, 2010). Try and make use of online question-based resources such as [Kahoot!](#), practice quizzes at [Khan Academy](#), [Quizlet](#) and your professor's previous quizzes or exams (ask them if they have any!) before, during and after a study session.

How to sample the Active Recall Strategy for a given topic or lecture	
<i>How long?</i>	<i>What do I do?</i>
10 minutes	Take a short quiz on the topic in order to determine what you already know (Prior Knowledge).
20 – 30 minutes	Review and study lecture notes, the textbook, or other class resources.
10 – 15 minutes	Write down from memory all that you read in the form of short points.
5 – 10 minutes	Take a break!
10 – 15 minutes	Take a practice quiz on the topic without referring to notes or your textbook.
5 minutes	Check your answers. See what you answered correctly, and review what questions you got wrong. Take a break, and repeat!

Spaced Learning

How we schedule learning activities matters. Research shows that if you would like to move content into LTM, then distributing the practice of the content and learning is critical. Rather than intensively cramming right before the exam, a more effective strategy is to distribute your exam preparation over multiple sessions. This is known as spaced practice or spaced learning.

How can you incorporate spaced learning?

Here is a sample schedule for a given topic/lecture!				
Day 1	The Next Day	After 3 Days	After 1 Week	After 2 Weeks
Initial study session followed by an active recall strategy.	Revisit and review with a practice test.	Revisit and review with a practice test.	Revisit and review with a practice test.	Revisit and review with a practice test.

Congratulations! By this point, the topic/lecture that you are trying to learn will be in LTM!
Want to learn more? Watch this video on spaced learning techniques.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=327#oembed-3>

Studying at the last minute is never beneficial. The best way to learn effectively is to space out your studying sessions.

Teach what you learn

Finally, the learning-by-teaching effect has been demonstrated in several research studies. Students who spend time teaching what they've learned go on to show better understanding and knowledge retention than students who simply spend the same time re-studying. This is because teaching is a form of retrieval practice (active recall) and usually employs spaced learning. In this way, you succeed in practicing all three of the evidence-based strategies!

How can you teach what you learn?

- Learn the material as if you're going to teach it to others.
- Pretend that you're teaching the material to someone (Active Recall).
- Check if your teaching is accurate!
- Teach the material to other people/students (Spaced Learning).
- As you get better at this, work on-campus at one of the several tutoring centers to get paid whilst you learn yourself and help others.

Information Literacy

You interact with information daily. For class, you read textbooks, perform research, and interact with digital media. Outside of class, you consume and create content for social media, seek answers to questions, and read about issues that impact you directly. Information literacy is an important set of life skills that foster success in the personal, academic, and professional areas of your life.

What is information literacy?

Information literacy requires skills but also an understanding of how information is created and organized. Your attitude is also important. Information-literate individuals have the desire to find quality information and embrace traits like curiosity and persistence. The [American Library Association](#) defines information literacy as a set of integrated abilities that empower individuals with the following skills and knowledge:

- An ability to be reflective while seeking information.
- An understanding of how information is produced and valued.
- An understanding of how to use information to create new knowledge.
- An ability to participate ethically in communities of learning.

[The Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education \(ACRL, 2016\)](#) breaks information literacy skills and knowledge into six concepts. Woven together, the six concepts provide students with a robust set of information literacy abilities for success in college and beyond. Use the graphic below to read about each of the six information literacy concepts. Turn the cards over for a set of questions that will help you apply these concepts.



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=327#h5p-14>

Why does information literacy matter?

In today's complex information environment, the average user has access to over one billion websites and over one hundred million videos on YouTube. Millions of books, magazines, and articles are published every year. Finding the right information for the right purpose takes some skill and attention.

Information literacy is a life skill that will help you apply critical thinking and reflection to locate, evaluate, and use quality information. An information-literate individual embraces the research process (even when it's messy), synthesizes information from multiple sources, and makes conscientious choices when sharing information. Start building your information literacy skills now and you will find yourself applying the ideas at school and work while empowering yourself to become an active citizen.

S.I.F.T: Evaluate Information in a Digital World

Within this complex information environment, you're constantly encountering information that demands scrutiny, whether you're scrolling through social media, checking the latest news, or diving into a class assignment. At ECU Libraries, you'll find not only a wide range of credible resources—books, scholarly journals, academic research databases, and more!—but also expert assistance from our librarians. They're information literacy experts, specially trained to help you navigate today's complex information environment. The ability to critically assess both academic and online sources is more crucial than ever, and it's precisely this essential skill that our librarians can help you develop.

Traditional evaluation checklists—focusing on things like domain (.com vs. .org), ads, typos, design, or citations—are often insufficient on their own. That's why, as part of ECU Libraries' commitment to your information literacy, we recommend instead starting with the S.I.F.T. method. This approach offers a more robust and effective way to evaluate information, both online and often in print. S.I.F.T. is an acronym for four simple yet powerful steps: Stop, Investigate, Find, and Trace.

Stop	When you first encounter a source of information and start to read it—STOP. • Do you know the author, publisher, publication, or website to be credible? Don't read, share or • Then, STOP and check your emotions. If you are having a strong emotional reaction, whether i perspectives. Slow down as you move to the next step.
Investigate the Source	Don't rely on what the source says about itself in an "About Us" section. Instead open multiple brow • In one tab, you might look up your source in Wikipedia. • In another tab, Google your source and consider what other sites say about the source. Open e • Start piecing together different bits of information from across the web to get a better picture • Carefully read and consider everything you read about the original source. A fact-checking site—like FactCheck, Snopes, Politifact, or Reuters— may help.
Find trusted coverage	Look for more—and potentially better—coverage of the topic: • Look and see what other coverage is available on the same topic. • Seek out more trusted, more in-depth, or maybe just more varied viewpoints and sources that • Scan multiple sources and see what the expert consensus seems to be. Even if you don't agree Keep track of trusted news sources, but don't rely on only the news sources that you always agree
Trace claims, quotes, and media back to the original context	A lot of re-sharing and re-reporting happens online, and much of what we find on the internet has b content helps to determine credibility by establishing that context. For example: • Has a video clip been strategically edited or cut to leave something out? • Is that picture real and its caption true, or is it being misrepresented in some way? • Is that claim about a new medical treatment based on a research finding accurately represent • Again, fact-checking sites—or reverse image searches (TinEye)—may help.

Prefer a video introduction? Check out this video from EKU Libraries:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=327#oembed-4>

The S.I.F.T. approach was created by [Mike Caulfield](#), a digital literacy expert who focuses on fake news and how to detect it. If you'd like to learn more about the S.I.F.T. method, ECU Libraries [Evaluating Information: S.I.F.T. \(The Four Moves\) – Research Guide](#) provides a more detailed look at the method with videos from Caulfield that walk you through each step.

EKU Resources to Support Your Learning

Bobby Verdugo & Yoli Ríos Bilingual Peer Mentor and Tutoring Center aka “El Centro” (Library 106)

El Centro offers bilingual tutoring and mentoring for students interested in multilingual and multicultural community building and scholarship. Tutoring is offered in a variety of languages including Spanish, German, Japanese, etc. Additionally, El Centro offers tutoring in subject areas such as social work, public health, sciences, anthropology, sociology, etc. El Centro provides a space to apply the skills learned in language and culture classes in real-world settings through volunteering or service-learning community engagement.

El Centro also offers mentoring services where students meet once a week with a peer mentor. Each student is assigned a mentor based on major, academic, or personal needs. Within each mentoring session, students can receive help with navigating college, class advising, schedule building, networking, interview skills, email best practices, applications, essays, resumes, cover letters, scholarships, etc.

Center for STEM Excellence (New Science Building Atrium)

We partner with students and instructors to support excellence in STEM teaching and learning. All services are free to current ECU students learning in any STEM courses and programs. Our resources include drop-in learning (tutoring) and skill-building workshops in science, technology, engineering, and math courses.

Sign up for a workshop or drop-in tutoring using this link: [Center for STEM Excellence Portal](#)



Student Spotlight

"I love education and academia and I knew I was always going to go to college. I would say many people don't know it's (college) for them until they try it out. The old college try. However, that can be difficult at times so I would just do what you think is best for your future!"

-Ellie Craft, English, Class of 2025.

Center for Student Accessibility (Whitlock 3rd Floor)

The Center for Student Accessibility (CSA) assists students by coordinating campus and program accessibility and providing support in attaining educational goals. Students requesting services, including deaf and hard-of-hearing students, must submit a completed application for services and current health-related documentation.

Applications, documentation guidelines, and additional information are available on the [CSA website](#).

Appointments are made by calling (859) 622-2933 or emailing accessibility@eku.edu.

EKU Libraries

EKU Libraries is your hub for the learning support you will need to be successful at EKU:

- Need a place to focus? The Main Crabbe Library has [spaces for individual and group study](#).
- Have a question about a library research assignment? One of our many qualified and friendly librarians is available to help you one-on-one in the library, [via chat](#), or by [scheduling a research appointment in advance](#).
- Prefer DIY help? Check out our [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) or [YouTube tutorials](#).
- Tight on time? A library staff member can pull an item from their shelves and put it on hold

for you to pick up at our Main Desk by [using the “Request It” link](#).

- Taking classes online or at a distance? We have a [vast array of online resources available 24/7](#), including books, articles, and videos. Also, if you need a print resource, we can mail items to off-campus students. For more details, see our [FAQ on checking out books](#).

Math & Statistics Tutoring Center (Wallace Building 342)

The Math and Statistics Tutoring Center offers walk-in tutoring, online tutoring, and one-on-one dedicated help. The center also has the ability to record the tutoring sessions so you can review them at any time.

Resources for current students include practice tests, tips for overcoming test anxiety, strategies for developing study plans and much more.

Sign up for a tutoring appointment using this link: [Math/Stats Tutoring Portal](#)

Noel Studio for Academic Creativity (Crabbe Library)

Located in the Crabbe Library, the Noel Studio helps ECU students develop effective communication and writing skills through peer-to-peer meetings called consultations, which are available both in-person (on the ECU Richmond campus) and online (via Zoom). The Noel Studio also provides technology, spaces, and resources to help students complete their academic work.

Schedule a consultation using this link: [Noel Studio Consultation Portal](#)

Student Success Center (Crabbe Library Ground Floor 106D)

Located on the first floor of the Crabbe Library, the Student Success Center is designed to serve as a one-stop-shop where students can get assistance with an array of areas like coursework, financial aid, study skills, choosing a major, course registration, stress management, and much more.

Sign up for a workshop using this link: [SSC Tutors Available](#)

Summary

- **Learning** is a process that unfolds over time.
- **Cognition** encompasses the processes associated with perception, knowledge, problem solving, judgment, language, and memory.
- *Sleep* plays a critical role in learning.
- **Metacognition** is knowing how to learn by understanding and regulating your own thought processes—a cyclical skill involving assessing, planning, applying, and reflecting.

- The acronym used to combat the main barriers to learning is **WARP** (working memory, attention, retrieval, and prior knowledge).
- You cannot integrate information that you do not pay attention to.
- There is no such thing as multitasking. Your brain switches its attention based on how many tasks you perform at one time. This increases the likelihood of you not retaining much information.
- Key evidence-based learning strategies include: active recall, spaced learning, and teaching what you learn.
- Information literacy is critical to learning information that supports both your academic work and your general well-being.
- Whenever a source provokes a strong positive or negative feeling, that's a sign to double-check the credibility of that information.
- El Centro, Center for Student Accessibility, ECU Libraries, Math & Stats Tutoring Center, Noel Studio for Academic Creativity, Center for STEM Excellence, and the Student Success Center all exist for FREE at ECU to support your learning.

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CHAPTER 4: TIME MANAGEMENT

Time flies when you're having fun

The shift to college, whether you are a first time new student, a transfer student, or a non-traditional student, is about learning what works for you. That is, you need to decide how you are going to set your goals, organize your priorities, manage your time, and create strategies that assist you throughout your time at ECU. Since college often places new connections, new situations, and new ways of seeing the world in front of you, many of the skills and habits that worked for you in high school or your previous learning environments may not work for you in college. Throughout this chapter we will explore time management and goal-setting strategies to help you get and stay organized with your time.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will:

- Explain expectations of time from high school to college
- Identify reasons for why we procrastinate and strategies to work through it
- Time management techniques

Managing Time

Time is a popular philosophical concept. You may have heard some of the following sayings:

- That is a waste of time.
- Time is money.
- We have all the time in the world.

- The time is right.
- I'm having the time of my life.
- Time heals all wounds.
- We have some time to kill.

As a society, time is also how we keep track of when where we're supposed to be (work, home, class, meeting friends and family, etc.). Think about how many measures of time you have in your home (clocks, watches, cell phones, TVs, computers, microwaves, ovens, thermostats, etc.). It is obvious that time is important to us.

However, time is a limited and precious commodity. If you used your time poorly last Wednesday, you can do nothing to get it back. Other commodities may allow for accumulating more or starting over, but time does not. We cannot "save" time nor earn more time. What we can do though, is find better ways to spend our time, allowing us to accomplish our most important tasks and spend time with the people most important to us.

You may find that time management in college is very different from anything you have experienced previously. For the last 12 years, almost all your school time was managed by educators and your parents. What you did and when you did it was controlled by others. In many cases, even after-school time was set by scheduled activities (such as athletics) and by nightly homework that was due the next day.

In the workplace, the situation is not very different, with activities and time-on-task being monitored by the company and its management. This is so much a part of the working environment that many companies research how much time each task should take, and they hold employees accountable for the time spent on these job functions. In fact, having these skills will help you stand out on the job and in job interviews.

In college, though, there is a significant difference because a great deal of time management is left up to you. While it is true that there are assignment due dates and organized classroom activities, learning at the college level requires more than just the simple completion of work. It involves decision-making and the ability to evaluate information. This is best accomplished when you are an active partner in your own learning activities.

K-12	College
Many class activities are planned.	Class time is given to receiving information.
Homework is often similar for each student.	You may have freedom in homework choices.
Time is managed by others more often.	Time is managed by the student.

Why and how time can be mismanaged

Simply put, procrastination is the act of delaying some task that needs to be completed. It is something we all do to greater and lesser degrees. For most people, a little minor procrastination is not a cause for concern. But there are situations where procrastination can become a serious problem with a lot of risk. These include: when it becomes a chronic habit, when there are a number of tasks to complete and little time, or when the task being avoided is very important.

Because we all procrastinate from time to time, we usually do not give it much thought, let alone think about its causes or effects. Ironically, many of the psychological reasons for why we avoid a given task also keep us from using critical thinking to understand why procrastination can be detrimental, and in some cases difficult to overcome.

To get better at time management, you must understand some of the hurdles that may stand in your way. For college students, procrastination is often one of the biggest. What follows is an overview of procrastination with a few suggestions on how to avoid it.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=333#oembed-1>

Strategies to work through procrastination and manage time

Consider that there are 7 days in a week, a day has 24 hours, and each hour has 60 minutes. This means then there are 168 hours in a week. How are you spending it?

How do you spend your 168 hours in a week?

Reasons for Procrastination:

- Lack of energy
- Fear of failure
- Confused on assignment/task
- Lack of focus

- Child Care
- Class
- Community Service / Volunteer
- Commuting / Transportation
- Eating / Food Preparation
- Exercise
- Family
- Friends
- Household / Child Care Duties
- Internet / Social Media / Phone / Texting

- Party
- Recreation / Leisure
- Relationship
- Sleeping
- Spirituality / Prayer / Meditation
- Study
- Video Games
- Watching TV or Movies, Netflix, Youtube
- Work / Career



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=333#h5p-16>

Now that you have mapped out how you spend your time, take a look at some ways that you can strategize:

Avoid Procrastination

Manage Distractions

Distractions are a significant cause of procrastination. It is so easy to play a video game a little while longer, scroll social media, or finish watching a movie when we are avoiding a task. Putting

aside distractions is one of the primary functions of setting priorities so that important tasks get completed.

Some distractions are obvious: your friend sends you a text, your family needs your attention, or there is loud construction outside the window. However, other distractions are less obvious. Sometimes we can be distracted by our thoughts and feelings. When we are feeling stressed or overwhelmed, these internal causes can be just as distracting. One way to deal with internal distractions is to keep a study journal. At least once a day write an entry about how you have used your time and whether you succeeded with your schedule for the day. If you struggled to keep your daily schedule, identify what factors kept you from doing your work. This journal will help you see your own habits and distractions so that you can avoid things that lead to procrastination.

Pomodoro Technique

A key aspect of overcoming procrastination is developing strategies to get started. Often, committing to complete one small task can be enough to begin moving ahead. For example, just taking out your laptop, opening a new document, and typing a title can create some forward momentum. A well-known technique for managing time that can help with procrastination is called the Pomodoro Technique. The Pomodoro Technique was developed by Francesco Cirillo. The basic concept is to use a timer to set work intervals that are followed by a short break. The intervals are usually about 25 minutes long and are called pomodoros, which comes from the Italian word for tomato because Cirillo used a tomato-shaped kitchen timer to keep track of the intervals. Setting a timer is a small task that will provide you with the momentum to overcome procrastination.

Organize

Use the Syllabus to your advantage

Perhaps the most important document to read in any course is the syllabus. The syllabus contains crucial information, such as the schedule of topics, major assignments and due dates, and how to get in touch with the instructor and when and where their office hours are.

SCP 140 - Topics in Astronomy Spring I 2022

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Allyson Sheffield
OFFICE M-216
E-MAIL asheffield@lagcc.cuny.edu

OFFICE HOURS Monday, 12:30 – 2:00pm, Room M-216
 Wednesday, 5:00 – 6:30pm, Online (zoom link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/>)

CLASS DETAILS Tuesday, 3:25 - 6:45pm, Room E-348
 3 hours / 3 credits

PREREQUISITES CSE099/ENA/ENG/ESA099/ECC101, **MAT096**

TEXT *Astronomy*, Fraknoi, Morrison, and Wolff. Openstax (2016)
 ISBN 13: 978-1-947172-24-1
 This is a **FREE** online textbook:
<https://openstax.org/details/books/astronomy>

A print copy can also be purchased for approximately \$60.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- ✦ To describe the scientific method.
- ✦ To describe the sky above and various celestial phenomena.

Make sure you know when and where your instructor's office hours are

Be aware of the prerequisites, especially math requirements.

Check that you have access to the textbook. What is the price?

Figure 4.1 shows you an example of a sample syllabus for a course, with some of the key pieces of information to immediately note.

Is there anything in the syllabus that is unclear? If so, note this and plan to ask your instructor. BUT before doing this, make sure the question is not answered someplace else in the syllabus!

Create a Semester Schedule

Examples of Key Dates to Know for College

One important aspect of organization is knowing the important dates for your classes and the college in general. Academic deadlines matter and deadlines in college may not be flexible. A student needs to be aware of key dates throughout the term. The responsibility for knowing important dates lies with the student. A course syllabus is prepared by your instructor and is like a roadmap for your learning journey ahead. The course syllabus that you get for

each class you take will have important dates for that specific class. The college will also put important dates on an academic calendar for the school.

A semester schedule gives you a visual picture of the tasks and events that will happen during the semester. If you are taking a number of classes, this is a tool that will help you see what is coming up next. You may wish to use different colors to distinguish between different classes, or between your academic events and personal events.

Below is an example of GSD 101's "Creating Your Master Course Schedule" assignment where students are asked to practice making a semester schedule.

Semester start and end dates
Holidays or campus closures
Last day to drop a class with a complete refund
Last day to drop a class
Exam or finals week

Weekly Schedule – My Master Schedule

In this task, you will be filling out your typical weekly schedule for the semester. Include recurring events only. The second half of this assignment you will spend time managing your classwork and homework for the week as an example to manage your time effectively.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7 am							
8 am							
9 am							
10 am							
11 am							
12 pm							
1 pm							
2 pm							
3 pm							
4 pm							
5 pm							
6 pm							
7 pm							
8 pm							
9 pm							
10 pm							

Figure 4.2: Page 1 of *Creating Your Master Course Schedule*

My Week at a Glance

Using the chart below, you will fill out assignments and homework associated with this week or the upcoming week of classes. You will only be filling out the chart based on this week, but feel free to utilize a resource like this to plan each week of your semester. Add more rows as you see fit to meet the needs of your schedule.

HOMEWORK		
<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Summary of the Task</i>	<i>Class</i>
TEST/PROJECTS/ASSESSMENTS		
<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Summary of the Task</i>	<i>Class</i>
ODDS AND ENDS		
<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Summary of the Task</i>	<i>Class</i>

Figure 4.3: Page 2 of *Creating Your Master Course Schedule*

Break Down Large Tasks

One of the biggest challenges college students may have is accurately estimating how much time it will take to complete a task. We might think we're going to be able to read an assigned chapter in an hour, but what if it takes three hours to read and understand the chapter? Having the skill to know how long a homework assignment will take is something that can be developed. However, until we can anticipate work and study time accurately, it is best to leave some time in our schedule in case it takes longer than we had anticipated.

How you divide the time is up to you. If it is going to take you five hours to study for a final exam, you can plan to spread it over five days, with an hour each night, or you can plan on two hours one night and three hours the next. What you do not want to do is plan on studying only a few hours the night before the exam only to find out that you greatly underestimated the time that you would need. If that happened, you would run out of time before finishing, with no way to go back and get more time to study. In this kind of situation, you might even be tempted to "cram" or "pull an all-

nighter,” which means going without sleep for the entire night and using that time to study. While this method of trying to make up for poor planning is common enough to have a name, rarely does it produce the best work.

Develop a plan for your project by working backward and estimating how much time each step will take. One tool that can help you do this is the online [Assignment Calculator](#) from the University of Minnesota. It helps you put your assignments and research projects into a timeline.

Use Small Blocks of Time

By using smaller blocks of time, you can cover material in chunks and not have to worry about the larger whole. A mistake that many people make is that they try to cram information into their minds in one large session. This isn't a successful nor long term strategy for most students.

Look for smaller blocks of time to study. For example:

- Consider creating flash cards for material that you need to learn. You can take a set of flashcards with you and work whenever a few minutes become available. If you use one of the many flashcards or self-testing apps available on your phone, you'll be able to easily pull out your phone and make use of those small blocks of time.
- Self-testing is one of the most effective ways to learn. Create a list of study questions for your course. Pull out the list when you have time available, and review a few questions. Keep track of those you answer correctly, and those you need to study more.
- Does your course include access to online videos that explain and review key concepts? Watch a video or two to review, or to improve your understanding of a key course idea.
- Some courses also include access to online self-study questions. Try answering a few review questions in your spare moments. These online quizzes usually provide immediate feedback on what you understand, and what you should study further.
- Do you like to learn by listening? Make an audio recording of the important points you want to remember, and listen while you commute or exercise. Maybe audio books are for you – are any of your course materials available in this format?

Prioritize

Time Management Matrix

To better see how things may need to be prioritized, you can make a list of the tasks you need to complete and then arrange them based on importance and urgency in a quadrant map often called a Time Management Matrix.

To create a matrix, you begin by making a list of things you need or want to do in a day and

then draw your own version of the grid below. Write each item in one of the four squares; choose the square that best describes the item based on its urgency and its importance. When you have completed writing each of the tasks in its appropriate square, you will see a prioritization order of your tasks.

Examples can be found in each box!	Time Management Matrix	
	<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>
<i>Urgent</i>	• Studying for an exam this week. • Submitting my background check for clinical observations.	• Buying tickets to see a movie with friends tonight. • Free food at an event in the Ravine tonight.
<i>Not Urgent</i>	• Completing a mandatory training by the end of the semester. • Practicing and spending time with a treasured hobby.	• Scrolling social media before bed. • Rearranging your dorm room after arranging it earlier in the week.

Daily Top Three

The idea behind the daily top three approach is that you determine which three things are the most important to finish that day and these become the tasks that you complete. It is a very simple technique that is effective because each day you are finishing tasks and removing them from your list. Even if you took one day off a week and completed no tasks on that particular day, a daily top three strategy would have you finishing 18 tasks in the course of a single week. That is a significant number of things crossed off your list.

RSO Spotlight: The ASLA Club

The ASLA Club is a place where students can learn and practice American Sign Language (ASL) while making friends and learning about Deaf culture. We make sure our events are accessible by providing interpreters and using ASL, so even if you do not know much ASL, you are welcome to come and learn with us.



In ASLA, we...

- Practice ASL with New Friends
- "Voice-Off" ASL Experience
- ASL Geared Games
- Connect with Deaf and Hard of Hearing People
- Earn Accomplishments for Graduation

Requirements: \$10 Fee and Volunteer Hours

ASLA Club: a welcoming space for both Deaf and hearing people to communicate and connect.

EKU Student Support Resources

Now that you're a college student, there are many opportunities that are going to be new, exciting, scary, frustrating, complicated, and thrilling. The unfortunate thing is that you won't be able to do everything. However, with the right perspective and practice you'll figure out what works for you and what doesn't. The important thing to recognize is that managing your time in ways that work for you will help you succeed, but that automatically means you're going to have to get through the times that you fail at it. Failing at time management-like missing classes, being behind on homework, not keeping up with your digital calendar, choosing to hang out with friends instead of going to your advising meeting, or forgetting to submit an assignment—doesn't mean that you need to continue to miss classes or not keep up with your calendar. You just need to reflect, adjust, and move on.

Many college students imagine that their time at ECU will be linear. That is, they believe that it happens in a straightforward way like the image below:



Figure 4.4: Graphics courtesy of Greg Stoup, Rob Johnstone, and Priyadarshini Chaplot of The RP Group

In reality, the student journey looks more like this:

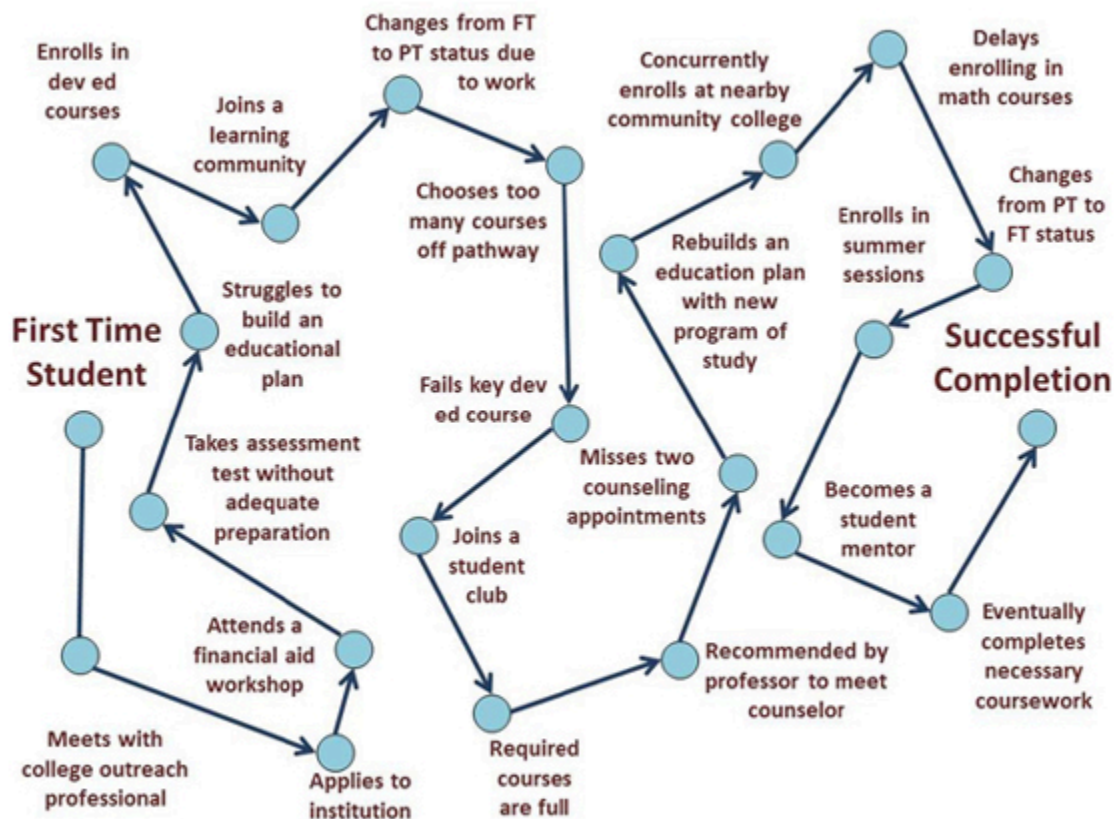


Figure 4.5: Graphics courtesy of Greg Stoup, Rob Johnstone, and Priyadarshini Chaplot of The RP Group

And so, remember that there are these resources to help you learn how to and practice time management, talk to someone if you're feeling overwhelmed, and get your body moving to keep your mind sharp:

There are **personal wellness** and **sense of belonging** resources like the:

- Counseling Center (Whitlock 5th floor) and Zone of Wellness (Whitlock 5th Floor)
- Campus Rec Center
- Colonel's Cupboard (Powell 215) where you can get (or donate) different foods and clothes
- Student Life and First Year Experience (Powell Middle Floor)
- Center for Inclusive Excellence and Global Engagement (Powell Ground Floor)
- Bobby Verdugo & Yoli Rios Bilingual Peer Mentor and Tutoring Center aka "El Centro" (Library 106)
- Office of Military and Veterans Affairs (Powell Middle Floor)
- Corq app / [Engage website](#) to check out Registered Student Organization and campus events
- Student Health Services (Rowlett Building)

There are **academic wellness** resources like:

- The Student Success Center (Ground Floor of Library Room 106D)
- Center for STEM Excellence (New Science Building – Lobby)
- The Noel Studio for Academic Creativity (Library)
- Bobby Verdugo & Yoli Rios Bilingual Peer Mentor and Tutoring Center aka "El Centro" (Library 106)
- ECU Libraries

There are **university support** resources like:

- Big E Central (Whitlock 2nd Floor or bigecentral@ecu.edu)
- Center for Student Accessibility (Whitlock 3rd Floor)
- Center for Student Parents (Turley House)
- Office of Advising and Career Services [OACS] (Whitlock 4th Floor)
- Card Services and Meal Plans (Powell Ground Floor)

Summary

- Managing your time will look different than in high school.
- Mismanagement of time can be easily done while attending college.
- Procrastination is a common issue students face during their first semester, and there are ways to avoid it.
- Prioritizing your time through a Time Management Matrix can be a useful strategy to organizing your time at college.

- ECU has various support service on campus to help you succeed while you are here.

References

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UNIT II

UNIT 2: SUCCESS HABITS

CHAPTER 5: MINDSET AND MOTIVATION

It's never too late to learn something new

To reach your academic goals and pass your expectations, finding and maintaining motivation and engagement in school is an important first step to achievement and success. This section can help give ideas on how to find and maintain motivation to engage in the things you want to do.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will:

- Identify what a fixed mindset is and what a growth mindset is
- Explore motivation and engagement
- Provide strategies to stay motivated and engaged

Fixed mindset and Growth Mindset

One of the main purposes of college is to develop our minds and become more complex, flexible thinkers. Our brains can be shaped, developed, and changed throughout our entire lifespans. The extent to which we can develop our minds depends on our beliefs about how our minds work. We all set our minds to believe certain things, and our beliefs help or hinder us as we move through life. Our beliefs and our ways of thinking develop into habits of mind. Numerous psychologists have researched this topic. One of the best-known researchers in this area is Dr. Carol Dweck, who has studied these habits of mind extensively, and explored the effects of fixed and growth mindsets on individuals' learning.

When people have a **fixed mindset**, they generally believe they are born with a certain amount of talent and intelligence that can't be changed or can only take them so far in life. Students with

a fixed mindset might say, “I just can’t do it!”; “I’m not good at math”; “I guess college isn’t for me!” or “I’m not smart enough” because they compare themselves to others or feel that effort is futile. These students tend to focus only on results, so a low score on a test may indicate to them what they already believed: they’re not smart enough to succeed.

When you have a **growth mindset**, you tend to think that your intelligence can change through experience and effort, and that you can do anything you set your mind to doing. Students with a growth mindset might say, “I made a mistake, but I can learn from that and do better next time,” or “If I give myself more time and utilize resources, I can write a better essay next time.” This is because they believe that putting in effort and practice will lead to positive results and increased competence. Students with a growth mindset tend to focus on the processes of learning in each discipline, so a low paper score may indicate to them that they need to review the rubric and identify which stages of the writing process they could spend more time on to do better on the next assignment. Take a moment to view the video, “Growing Your Mind,” to understand what determines your intelligence. This video explains how your intelligence can improve over time. To improve your intelligence, you must have grit, perseverance, and a growth mindset.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=346#oembed-1>

Fixed Mindset Personality Attitude & Approaches	Key Elements of Learning	Growth Mindset Personality Attitudes & Approaches
Everyone is born with certain skills and aptitudes.	Beliefs about human potential	With effective strategies and time, people can improve their skills and aptitudes.
Believe abilities and knowledge that come easily indicate natural talent, and that if something isn't easy, it cannot be learned.	Effort and Difficulty	Value the effort itself as a key element of gaining knowledge and mastery.
Generally avoid challenges and see obstacles as signs they are in the wrong direction.	Challenges and Obstacles	Seek out new challenges and see obstacles as problems to solve and ways to grow.
Hides or makes excuses for mistakes; becomes discouraged and frustrated by failure.	Mistakes and Failures	Takes ownership of mistakes and understands that failure often leads to learning and long-term success.
Rejects negative feedback and can become defensive; likely focuses on positive feedback.	Feedback, Criticism, and Suggestions	Appreciates the perspectives of others and welcomes candid feedback.
Success is limited to a few specific areas along a firmly defined pathway.	Outlook on the Future	Success is possible in many areas, once individuals create their own learning pathways.

Figure 5.1: Fixed Mindset vs. Growth Mindset table

Factors of Motivation and Engagement

The properties of motivation and engagement are very complex as there are so many intertwined factors that can influence them. A problem many students face is determining which factor is causing them to be unmotivated or not engaged in school.

To help you identify the factors that are unmotivating and not engaging, fill out the interactive materials below. If you want more information about each factor and ways you can improve your motivation and engagement, you can interact with Figure X.



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=346#h5p-3>



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=346#h5p-4>

To find more information about each factor and ways you can improve your motivation and engagement, click any of the purple 'i's on the graphic below.



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=346#h5p-5>

Motivation and Engagement: A Relationship

Motivation is the reason you are doing the assignment and *engagement* affects the quality of your input in the assignment. Both are important in success. They are independent of each other but together could make a world of difference and even make studying easier.

An Analogy: Pre-requisite classes

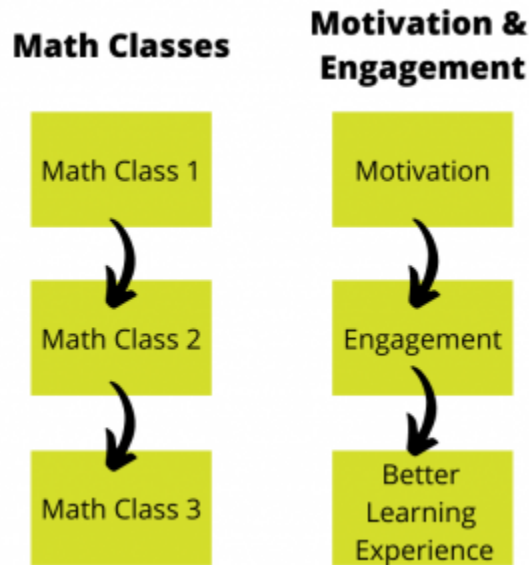


Figure 5.2: Performance in the prerequisite class can influence performance in future classes unless the quality of the input changes

With pre-requisite classes, you must complete the beginner class before continuing in studying the more challenging topics. In this case, Math 1 must be completed prior to Math 2. If the first course is completed with a lack of understanding of the topic, the second course will become harder unless the time, energy and care inputs are increased. However, if you pass Mass Class 1 with a high understanding of the concepts, Math Class 2 will be easier unless you begin to slack off and reduce your time, energy and care inputs.

Similarly, you must have the motivation to begin the learning activities before you can be engaged in them. Just as each math class is a separate, independent course, motivation and engagement are separate, independent, properties.

Some Examples of the Relationship between Motivation and Engagement

- You can be highly motivated, but it may not transition into high engagement. You can be highly motivated to find the quickest and easiest path to pass the assignment. In this example, you limit your time, energy, and care to only meet the requirements of the assignment and then move on to something more enjoyable.
- You can be highly engaged in the study assignment, but it may not mean you are highly motivated. In this example, you have decided to begin the study assignment so you might as well do a respectable job.
- You can be highly motivated and highly engaged. In this example, you find the study assignment you are doing the best thing in the world.
- You can have low motivation and low engagement. In this example you find the study assignment is the worst thing in the world.



Student Spotlight

"EKU felt like home when I toured. I wanted the full college experience—making memories and meeting new friends—but I also knew I wanted to be the first in my family to graduate and walk across that stage. Take full advantage of your time in college—it's an amazing experience, and it goes by fast!"

-Lilly Morris,
Broadcasting and Electronic Media,
Class of 2026

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

As we talked about briefly in Chapter 3: Metacognition, what type of mindset you have, and how you learn, depends on your motivation and how you maintain your motivation for learning. While there are many different learning styles, we can distinguish two major approaches to learning. One type of learner needs an outside stimulus to motivate their learning, or is *extrinsically motivated*. **Extrinsic motivation** is defined as a desire to engage in behavior for external reasons (Riley, 2016). This type of learner motivation is aimed at performance-based goals. Learners driven by extrinsic motivation focus on grades and rewards.

Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is driven by the learner's own inner experience of reward and satisfaction that comes with the process of learning, without outside rewards. When intrinsically motivated, learners tend to focus more on the satisfaction they gain through the process of learning. Instead of learning for the grade or recognition, students begin to learn because they want to (Riley, 2016), which often leads to more in-depth learning. Intrinsic learning-based goals develop from curiosity, a belief that one can learn, determination and a willingness to overcome challenges to learning.

Carol Dweck identifies learners that have performance-based goals and learning-based goals, as having Fixed Mindsets and Growth Mindsets, respectively. Watch this video to learn more about [how to develop a growth mindset from Carol Dweck](#).

Grit

Grit is a concept developed by the psychologist Angela Duckworth, who studied children and adult learners to discover that intelligence or talent did not necessarily determine success at learning a task. The concept of grit has been praised and criticized, and it's important to understand it to tease out its limitations and possible areas of usefulness.

Studying individuals in various environments (including school and the workplace), Duckworth's (2016) initial findings showed that neither overall intelligence nor other factors like "good looks" were the most significant predictors of individual success. Instead, she found that grit – "passion and perseverance for very long term goals" – was the most decisive factor in determining success. Critics have pointed out that Duckworth ignores significant predictors of success that are outside a person's control, such as a family's zip code or income level.

Characteristics of Grit

Courage: Gritty people are not afraid of failure. They welcome failure as part of the growth process. They brush themselves off and try again using what they learned from the experience of failure. Many people freeze up because they fear failure. Gritty people live by the words of Eleanor Roosevelt: "Do something that scares you everyday."

Conscientiousness: Gritty people are meticulous while also achievement-oriented. They strive to do the best they possibly can and are tenacious. Gritty people do not complete just the minimum requirements of any task, they put their all into what they do and deliberately make the best effort possible at all times.

Commitment and focus on long-term goals: Gritty people find value and meaning in the effort that it takes to reach a long-term goal. They zone in on their goals and have the stamina to reach them.

Resiliency: Gritty people bounce back from setbacks and continue to bounce back until they have reached their goals. They are hardy and do not easily give up.

Focus on excellence: Gritty people focus on achieving excellence, not perfection. The former is a state of mind in which you continuously strive and grow to be the best that you can be. The latter is an unachievable status where better is never enough.

Do you feel like the story of grit does not capture the full picture? You're not alone. Many academics and others have critiqued the usefulness of centering the concept of grit in our stories of growth. Have you ever heard the phrase, "pull yourself up by your bootstraps?" It suggests that all you need to succeed is to lift yourself up, fully under your own volition. It ignores that the people, systems, and environments around you can have profound effects on your ability to accomplish empowerment.

One concept that helps illustrate this critique of grit is another idea in the field of psychology, "learned helplessness." It sounds like a concept used to belittle a person, but it's actually a natural response to unpleasant stimuli that are beyond a person's control. In the many types of experiments used to investigate the concept, animals were given unpleasant stimuli that one group had the ability to stop, and the other group was unable to stop or control. The second group learned to give up, because they were not able to stop painful events from affecting them. This is where the concept of "learned helplessness" originates. When a person experiences a series of negative factors beyond their control, it's a common and intuitive response to develop learned helplessness. Some say the concept of grit fails to capture this nuance.

Growth Mindset, Failing, and Grit

Something you may have noticed is that a growth mindset would tend to give a learner grit and persistence. If you had learning as your major goal, you would normally keep trying to attain that goal even if it took you multiple attempts. Not only that, but if you learned a little bit more with each try, you would see each attempt as a success, even if you had not achieved complete mastery of whatever it was you were working to learn. People who believe their abilities can change through learning (growth vs. a fixed mindset) readily accept learning challenges and persist despite early failures.

Your motivation, ambition, hard work, and persistence helped you to acquire your skills. In other words, you have grit, shown perseverance, and have a growth mindset when it comes to the skills you identified. You will discover that you can also have grit, perseverance, and a growth mindset for most of the new skills you will be challenged to learn at college, by applying the same methods and strategies you used to gain your current skills.

College is the perfect place to build your intrinsic motivations for learning and developing your growth mindset, to persevere, and show your grit. College is where you have the most autonomy over your learning; you decide how you will progress. Most assignments require you to include

your insights and ideas and independent thoughts. You will be encouraged and given many opportunities to network and be a part of the community of learners at college to build an environment in which you feel supported and safe to learn. In college there are also many resources at your disposal to help you accomplish your goals.

Overcoming Interpersonal Difficulties and Resolving Conflicts

Despite having the right motivation and mindset, there are still obstacles that create distractions as we move towards our goals. Sometimes the distractions stem from conflict. Conflicts among people who are interacting are natural. People have many differences in opinions, ideas, emotions, and behaviors, and these differences sometimes cause conflicts. Here are just a few examples of conflicts that may occur among college students:

- Your roommate is playing loud music in your room, and you need some quiet to study for a test.
- You want to have a nice dinner out, but your spouse wants to save the money to buy new furniture.
- Your instructor gave you a C on a paper because it lacks some of the required elements, but you feel it deserves a better grade because you think it accomplished more important goals.
- Others at your Greek house want to invite only members of other fraternities and sororities to an upcoming party, but you want to open up the guest list to include a wider range of students.

Rather than viewing disagreements as roadblocks or battles to be won, a growth mindset approaches conflict as an opportunity for learning, understanding, and strengthening relationships. Two things are necessary for conflict resolution that does not leave one or more of the people involved feeling negative about the outcome: attitude and communication.

A conflict cannot be resolved satisfactorily unless all people involved have the right attitude:

Respect the perspectives and behaviors of others. Accept that people are not all alike and learn to celebrate your differences. Most situations do not involve a single right or wrong answer.

Be open minded. Just because at first you are sure that you are right, do not close the door to other possibilities. Look at the other's point of view. Be open to change—even when that means accepting constructive criticism.

Calm down. You can't work together to resolve a conflict while you're still feeling strong emotions. Agree with the other to wait until you're both able to discuss it without strong emotions.

Recognize the value of compromise. Even if you disagree after calmly talking over an issue,

accept that as a human reality and understand that a compromise may be necessary in order to get along with others.

With the right attitude, you can then work together to resolve the issue. This process depends on good communication:

Listen. Don't simply argue for your position, but listen carefully to what the other says. Pay attention to their body language as you try to understand their point of view and ask questions to ensure that you do. Paraphrase what you think you hear to give the other a chance to correct any misunderstanding.

Use "I statements" rather than "you statements." Explain your point of view about the situation in a way that does not put the other person on the defensive and evoke emotions that make resolution more difficult. Don't say, "You're always playing loud music when I'm trying to study." Instead, say, "I have difficulty studying when you play loud music, and that makes me frustrated and irritable." Don't blame the other for the problem—that would just get emotions flowing again.

Brainstorm together to find a solution that satisfies both of you. Some compromise is typically needed, but that is usually not difficult to reach when you're calm and have the right attitude about working together on a solution. In some cases, you may simply have to accept a result that you still do not agree with, simply in order to move on.

In most cases, when the people involved have a good attitude and are open to compromise, conflicts can be resolved successfully. Yet sometimes there seems to be no resolution. Sometimes the other person may simply be difficult and refuse to even try to work out a solution. Regrettably, not everyone on or off campus is mature enough to be open to other perspectives. With some interpersonal conflicts, you may simply have to decide not to see that person anymore or find other ways to avoid the conflict in the future. But remember, most conflicts can be solved among adults, and it's seldom a good solution to run away from a problem that will continue to surface and keep you from being happy with your life.

Putting it All Together

In this section we discussed mindset, motivation, and engagement. You learned that intrinsic motivation is how you can develop your growth mindset and the key factors to intrinsic motivation are competency, autonomy, and relatedness.

So, remind yourself, how do YOU develop a growth mindset for everything you want to learn? You must see the need to learn, want to learn the skill, or create a reason to learn the skill. Determine your intrinsic motivation. Then YOU must sustain your motivation by:

Feeling competent: You must genuinely feel you can learn the skill. Reflect on your past success and integrate those strategies used to apply to the new skill. You have to be willing to put in the time and effort to improve your learning and be willing to humble yourself when you do

not get it correct immediately so you don't give up. You have to accept that failure is part of the learning process.

Having autonomy: You must have choices of how you learn to experience learning on your own terms. You have to look for options for how you complete tasks and accomplish goals.

Feeling relatedness: You must feel connected with your learning environment, instructors, professors, classmates, and other resources to help you develop your learning. You need to be a self-advocate and ask questions, take initiative to form study groups, seek resources that you need, ask for clarification when you need it, and offer assistance when you can.

Summary

- During your first semester, try to refocus your approach on a **growth** mindset rather than a **fixed** one.
- Motivation and engagement need to have a good relationship to help you gain knowledge while in college.
- **Extrinsic** motivation is a desire to engage in behavior for external reasons.
- **Intrinsic** motivation is driven by the learner's own inner experience of reward and satisfaction that comes with the process of learning.
- Characteristics of **Grit** are: **Courage, Conscientiousness, Commitment and focus on long-term goals, Resiliency, and Focus on excellence.**
- Conflict resolution comes when all parties involved have the right attitude.
- Good communication includes **listening, using "I" statements, and brainstorming a solution together.**

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CHAPTER 6: CLASSROOM HABITS + STUDY STRATEGIES

Show up to class to show up for yourself

In order to reach your academic goals, meet your expectations, and make progress towards the completion of your degree, you have to do work. Sometimes this work may feel like you are jumping through the hoops that professors or your program created. It may feel like jumping through some hoops is redundant, or it's a struggle to jump through the hoop. The learning experience and problems you face while working towards your academic goals can be difficult. College is where you expand your mind and thinking skills. Part of the expansion is not the technical information you learn in class, but how to manage yourself and manage the struggle.

This chapter can help you get through some of the hurdles you may face in order for you to be able to surpass your goals and expectations.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will:

- Get an understanding of why we take notes
- Identify and evaluate the note-taking methods/systems
- Learn about active reading strategies
- Learn how to read different texts

Classroom Habits

Note-Taking Systems, Methods and Study Guides

The following is a chart with a brief explanation of the main note-taking systems that are described in more depth later in this chapter.

Method	Description	When to Use
Lists	A sequential listing of ideas as they are presented. Lists may be short phrases or complete paragraphs describing ideas in more detail.	This method is what most students use as a fallback if they haven't learned other methods. This method typically requires a lot of writing, and you may find that you are not keeping up with the professor. It is not easy for students to prioritize ideas in this method.

Learning Cycle

9/05

Prof. Jones

p. 1

The learning cycle is an approach to gathering and retaining info that can help ^{students} be successful in Col. The cycle consists of 4 steps which should all be app'd. They are preparing, which sets the foundation for learning, absorbing, which exposes us to new knowledge, capturing, which sets the information into our knowledge base and finally reviewing and applying which lets us set the know. into our memory and use it.

Preparing for learning can involve mental preparation, physical prep, and oper. prep. Mental prep includes setting learning goals for self based on what we know the class w/ cover (see syllabus). Also it is very important to do any assignments for the class to be able to learn w/ confidence and

Physical Prep means having enough rest and eating well. Its hard to study when you are hungry and you won't listen well in class if you doze off.

Operation Prep means brining all supplies to class, or having them at hand when studying...this includes pens, paper, computer, text book, etc. Also means getting to school on time and getting a good seat (near the front).

Absorbing new knowledge is a combination of listening and reading. These are two of the most important learning skills you can have



The list method is usually not the best choice because it is focused exclusively on capturing as much of what the instructor says as possible, not on processing the information. Most students who have not learned effective study skills use this method. Even if you are skilled in some form of shorthand, you should probably also learn one of the other methods described here because they

are all better at helping you process and remember the material. You may want to take notes in class using the list method, and then transcribe your notes to an outline or concept map after class as a part of your review process. It is always important to review your notes as soon as possible after class and write a summary of the class in your own words.

Outlines	The outline method places most important ideas along the left margin, which are numbered with roman numerals. Supporting ideas to these main concepts are indented and are noted with capital letters. Under each of these ideas, further detail can be added, designated with an Arabic number, a lowercase letter, and so forth.	A good method to use when material presented by the instructor is well organized. Easy to use when taking notes on your computer.
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Learning Cycle

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Learning is a Cycle made up of 4 steps

- I. Preparing: Setting the Foundation for Learning
- II. Absorbing: (Data Input) Exposure to new knowledge
- III. Capturing: Taking ownership of the knowledge
- IV. Review & Apply: Putting new knowledge to work

I. Preparing:

A-Mental Prep -

- 1- Do Assignments - New knowledge is built on prior knowledge
 - a) Assignments from prior classes
 - b) Readings! (May not have been assigned in class - see Syllabus!)
- 2- Review Syllabus
 - a) Know what instructor expects to cover
 - b) Know what assignments you need to do
 - c) Set yr. own obj.



B-Physical Prep

- 1- Get right amount of rest - Don't zzz in class.
- 2- ~~Get~~ right - Hard to focus when you are hungry.
- 3- Arrive on time.

C-Practical Prep: (Organizational Prep)

- 1- Bring right supplies - (Notebooks, Texts, Pens, etc.)
- 3- Sit in the front of class
- 2- Arrive on time
 - a) Get organized and ready to listen
 - b) Don't interrupt the focus of others
 - c) Get a good seat

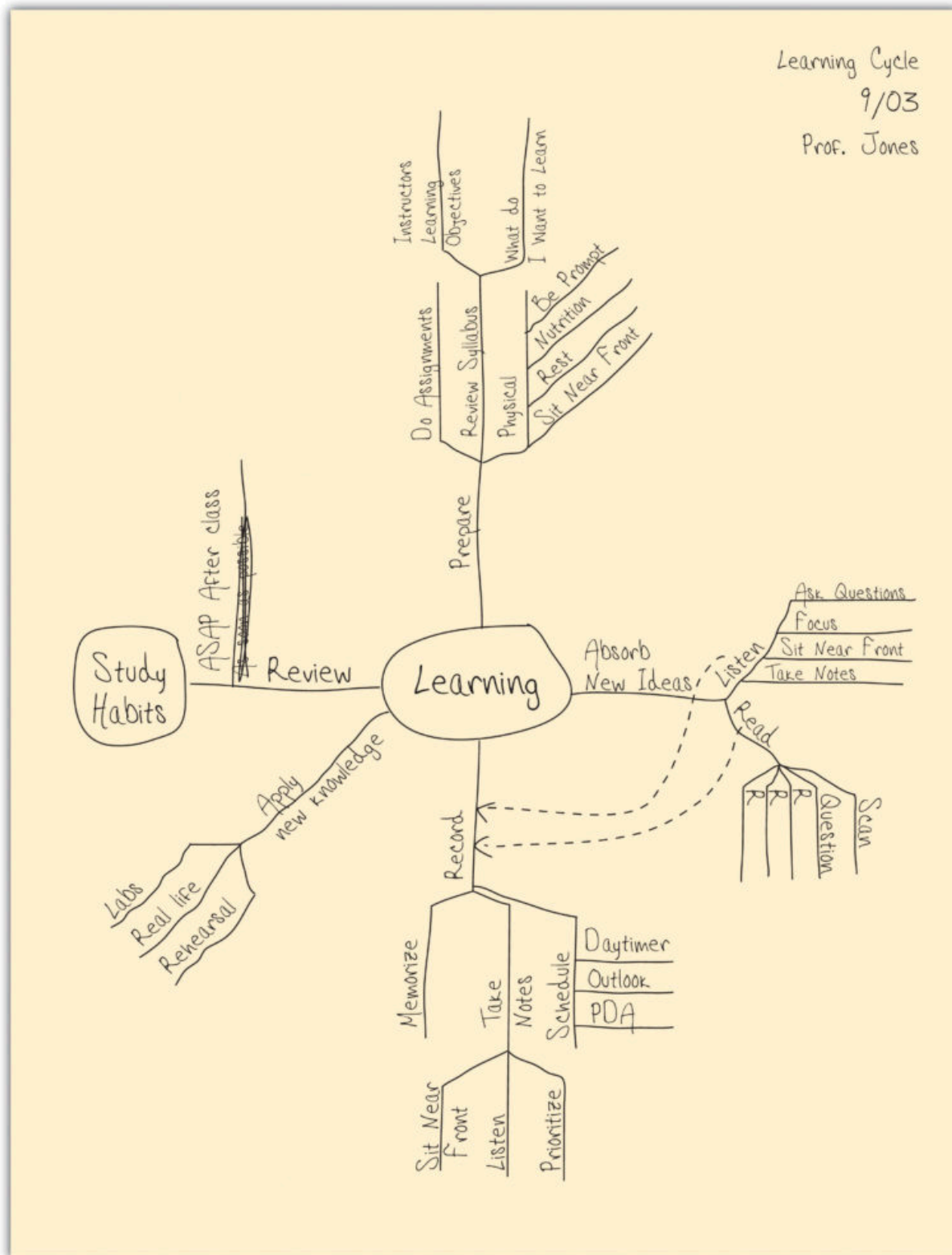
The advantage of the outline method is that it allows you to prioritize the material. Key ideas are written to the left of the page, subordinate ideas are then indented, and details of the subordinate ideas can be indented further. To further organize your ideas, you can use the typical outlining numbering scheme (starting with roman numerals for key ideas, moving to capital letters on the

first subordinate level, Arabic numbers for the next level, and lowercase letters following.) At first you may have trouble identifying when the instructor moves from one idea to another. This takes practice and experience with each instructor, so don't give up! In the early stages you should use your syllabus to determine what key ideas the instructor plans to present. Your reading assignments before class can also give you guidance in identifying the key ideas.

If you're using your laptop for taking notes, a basic word processing application (like Microsoft Word or Google Docs) is very effective. Format your document by selecting the outline format from the format bullets menu. Use the increase or decrease indent buttons to navigate the level of importance you want to give each item. The software will take care of the numbering for you!

After class be sure to review your notes and then summarize the class in one or two short paragraphs using your own words. This summary will significantly affect your recall and will help you prepare for the next class.

Concept Maps	When designing a concept map, place a central idea in the center of the page and then add lines and new circles in the page for new ideas. Use arrows and lines to connect the various ideas.	Great method to show relationships among ideas. Also good if the instructor tends to hop from one idea to another and back.
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Concept mapping is a very graphic method of note-taking that is especially good at capturing the relationships among ideas. Concept maps harness your visual sense to understand complex material "at a glance." They also give you the flexibility to move from one idea to another and back easily (so they are helpful if your instructor moves freely through the material).

To develop a concept map, start by using your syllabus to rank the ideas you will listen to by level of detail (from high-level or abstract ideas to detailed facts). Select an overriding idea (high level or abstract) from the instructor's lecture and place it in a circle in the middle of the page. Then create branches off that circle to record the more detailed information, creating additional limbs as you need them. Arrange the branches with others that interrelate closely. When a new high-level idea is presented, create a new circle with its own branches. Link together related circles or concepts by using arrows and symbols to capture the relationship between ideas. For example, an arrow may be used to illustrate cause or effect, a double-pointed arrow to illustrate dependence, or a dotted arrow to illustrate impact or effect.

As with all note-taking methods, you should summarize the chart in one or two paragraphs of your own words after class.

Cornell Method	The Cornell method uses a two-column approach. The left column takes up no more than a third of the page and is often referred to as the "cue" or "recall" column. The right column (about two-thirds of the page) is used for taking notes using any of the methods described above or a combination of them. After class or completing the reading, review your notes and write the key ideas and concepts or questions in the left column. You may also include a summary box at the bottom of the page.	The Cornell method can include any of the methods above and provides a useful format for calling out key concepts, prioritizing ideas, and organizing review work. Most colleges recommend using some form of the Cornell method.
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LEARNING CYCLE

Prof Jones

9/03

Page 1

*Chart from
Powerpoint

NTS: What brain
foods should
I include in my diet?

What is the difference
between hearing
and listening?

How does Jones signal
something is important?

4 Steps of Learning Cycle

I Preparing

II Absorbing

III Capturing

IV Reviewing and Applying

I Preparing

Mental: Do Assignments

Review syllabus

Set learning goals

Physical: Get sleep

Eat right

Operational: Supplies on hand

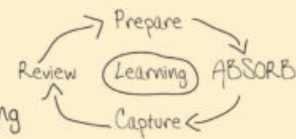
Sit in the right part of
the class

II Absorbing: Listening and Reading

1 Listening - Hearing w/ the obj of
UNDERSTANDING.

Focus on what is being said - give the
speaker your undivided attention. Don't
prejudge. Find ways of confirming what you
just heard is what they intended. Eliminate
distractions.

Look for Signals: Each instructor uses
different ways to let you know what is
important: Writing on the board, repetition,
change of inflection.



There are 4 steps to effective learning: Preparing, absorbing, capturing and reviewing. Each of these steps must be used continually to be a successful student.

The Cornell method was developed in the 1950s by Professor Walter Pauk at Cornell University. It is recommended by most colleges because of its usefulness and flexibility. This method is simple to use for capturing notes, is helpful for defining priorities, and is a great study tool.

The Cornell method follows a very specific format that consists of four boxes: a header, two

columns, and a footer. The header is a small box across the top of the page. In it you write identification information like the course name and the date of the class. Underneath the header are two columns: a narrow one on the left (no more than one-third of the page) and a wide one on the right. The wide column, called the “notes” column, takes up most of the page and is used to capture your notes using any of the methods outlined earlier. The left column, known as the “cue” or “recall” column, is used to jot down main ideas, keywords, questions, clarifications, and other notes. It should be used both during the class and when reviewing your notes after class. Finally, use the box in the footer to write a summary of the class in your own words to help you make sense of your notes in the future and serve as a valuable tool to aid with recall and studying.

Active Reading

Effective reading requires more engagement than just reading the words on the page. In order to learn and retain what you read, it’s a good idea to do things like circling key words, writing notes, and reflecting. Actively reading academic texts can be challenging for students, but practicing the following steps can help make time spent reading more efficient and productive:

Preview: You can gain insight from an academic text before you even begin the reading assignment. For example, if you are assigned a nonfiction book, read the title, the back of the book, and the table of contents. Scanning this information can give you an initial idea of what you’ll be reading and some useful context for thinking about it. You can also start to make connections between the new reading and knowledge you already have, which is another strategy for retaining information.

Read: While you read an academic text, you should have a pen or pencil in hand. Circle or highlight key concepts. Write questions or comments in the margins or in a notebook to help you remember what you are reading and also to build a personal connection with the subject matter.

Summarize: After you read an academic text, it’s worth taking the time to write a short summary, even if your instructor doesn’t require it. The exercise of jotting down a few sentences or a short paragraph capturing the main ideas helps you understand and absorb what you read and gives you ready study and review materials for exams and writing assignments.

Review: It always helps to revisit what you’ve read for a quick refresher. It may not be practical to thoroughly reread assignments from start to finish, but before class discussions or tests, it’s a good idea to skim through them to identify the main points, reread any notes at the ends of chapters, and review any summaries you’ve written.

Dealing with Special Texts

While active reading is very useful for most assignments, you should consider some additional strategies for reading assignments in other subjects below.

Mathematics Texts

Mathematics present unique challenges in that they typically contain a great number of formulas, charts, sample problems, and exercises. Follow these guidelines:

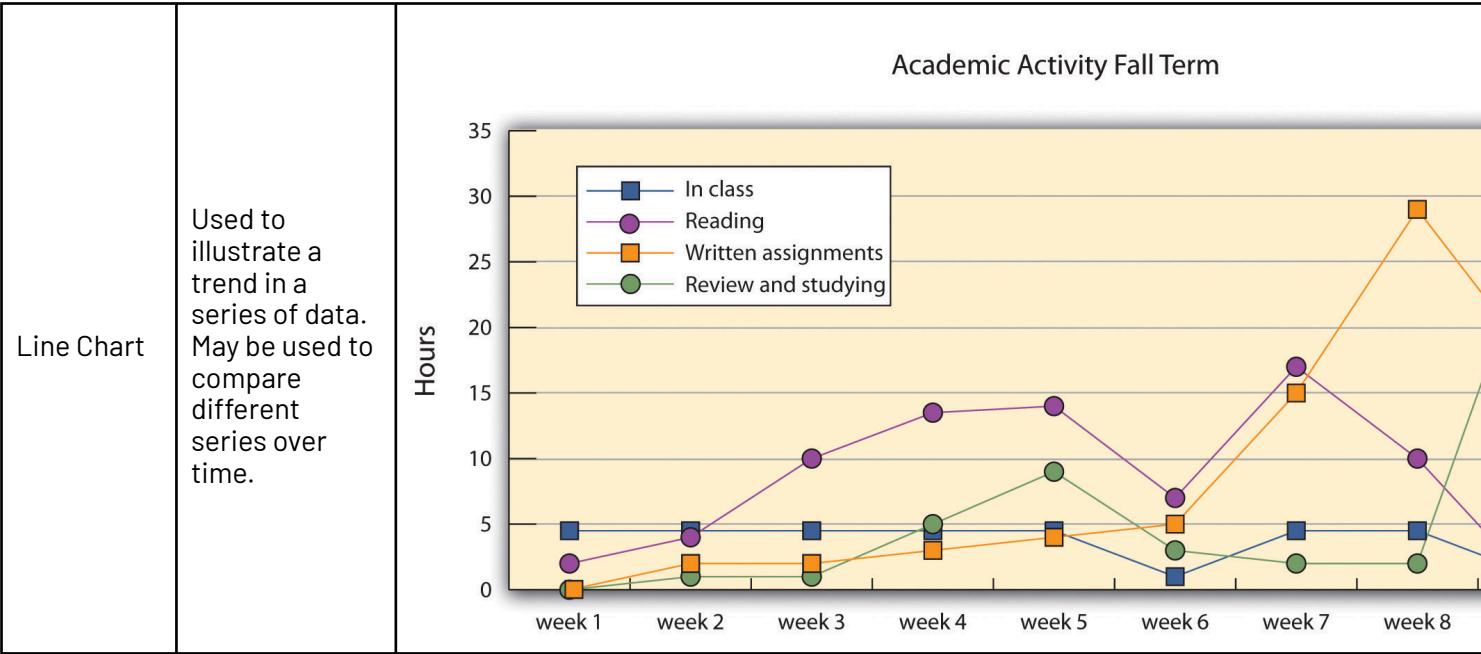
- Do not skip over these special elements as you work through the text.
- Read the formulas and make sure you understand the meaning of all the factors.
- Substitute actual numbers for the variables and work through the formula.
- Make formulas real by applying them to real-life situations.
- Do all exercises within the assigned text to make sure you understand the material.
- Since mathematical learning builds upon prior knowledge, do not go on to the next section until you have mastered the material in the current section.
- Seek help from the instructor or teaching assistant during office hours if need be.

Reading Graphics

Textbooks contain tables, charts, maps, diagrams, illustrations, photographs, and the newest form of graphics—Internet URLs for accessing text and media material. Many students are tempted to skip over graphic material and focus only on the reading. Don't. Take the time to read and understand your textbook's graphics. They will increase your understanding, and because they engage different comprehension processes, they will create different kinds of memory links to help you remember the material.

To get the most out of graphic material, use your critical thinking skills and question why each illustration is present and what it means. Don't just glance at the graphics; take time to read the title, caption, and any labeling in the illustration. In a chart, read the data labels to understand what is being shown or compared. Think about projecting the data points beyond the scope of the chart; what would happen next? Why?

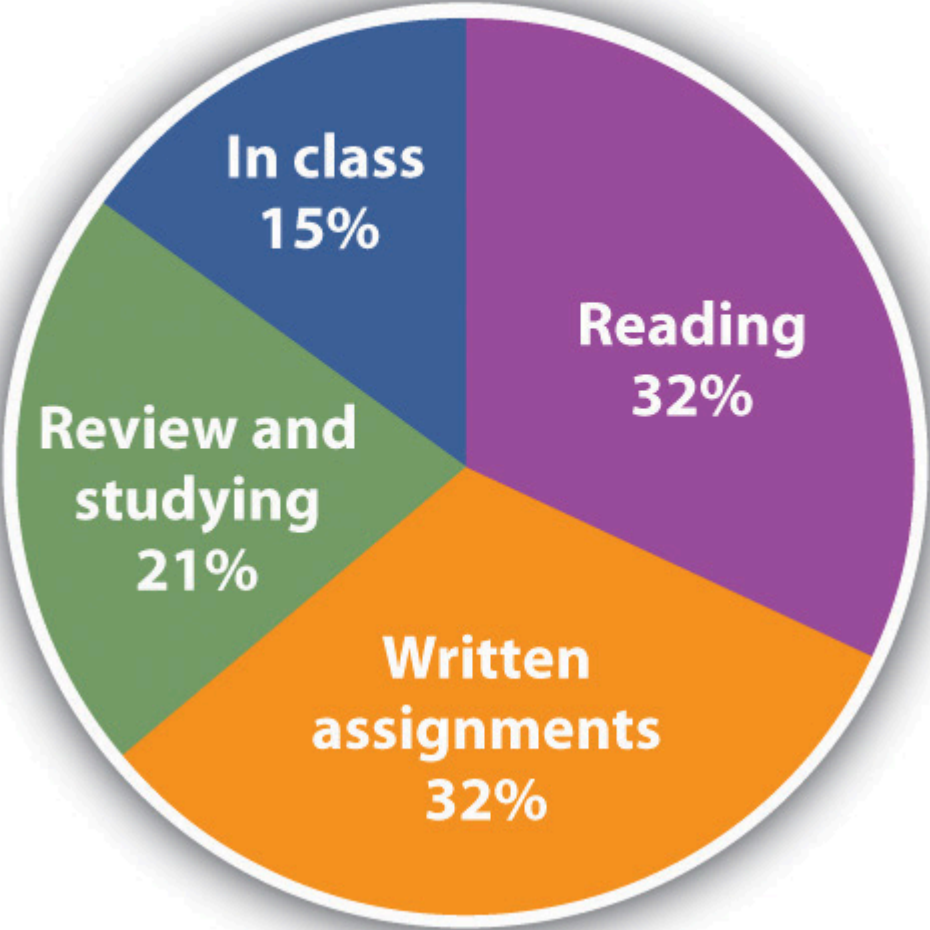
Type of Graphics	How are they used?	Example																								
Table	Most often used to present raw data. Understand what is being measured. What data points stand out as very high or low? Why? Ask yourself what might cause these measurements to change.	Number of Hours Read <table><tr><th></th><th>Mon</th><th>Tue</th><th>Wed</th><th>Thu</th><th>Fri</th></tr><tr><th>At the library</th><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>6</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><th>In my room</th><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>1</td><td>5</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><th>Total</th><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>7</td><td>2</td></tr></table>		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	At the library	2	2	6	2	1	In my room	3	4	1	5	1	Total	5	6	7	7	2
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri																					
At the library	2	2	6	2	1																					
In my room	3	4	1	5	1																					
Total	5	6	7	7	2																					
Bar Chart	Used to compare quantitative data or show changes in data over time. Also can be used to compare a limited number of data series over time. Often an illustration of data that can also be presented in a table.	<table><caption>Number of Hours Read (Bar Chart Data)</caption><tr><th>Day</th><th>At the library</th><th>In my room</th></tr><tr><td>Mon</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Tue</td><td>2</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>Wed</td><td>6</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Thu</td><td>2</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>Fri</td><td>1</td><td>1</td></tr></table>	Day	At the library	In my room	Mon	2	3	Tue	2	4	Wed	6	1	Thu	2	5	Fri	1	1						
Day	At the library	In my room																								
Mon	2	3																								
Tue	2	4																								
Wed	6	1																								
Thu	2	5																								
Fri	1	1																								



Pie Chart

Used to illustrate the distribution or share of elements as a part of a whole. Ask yourself what effect a change in distribution of factors would have on the whole.

Academic Activity



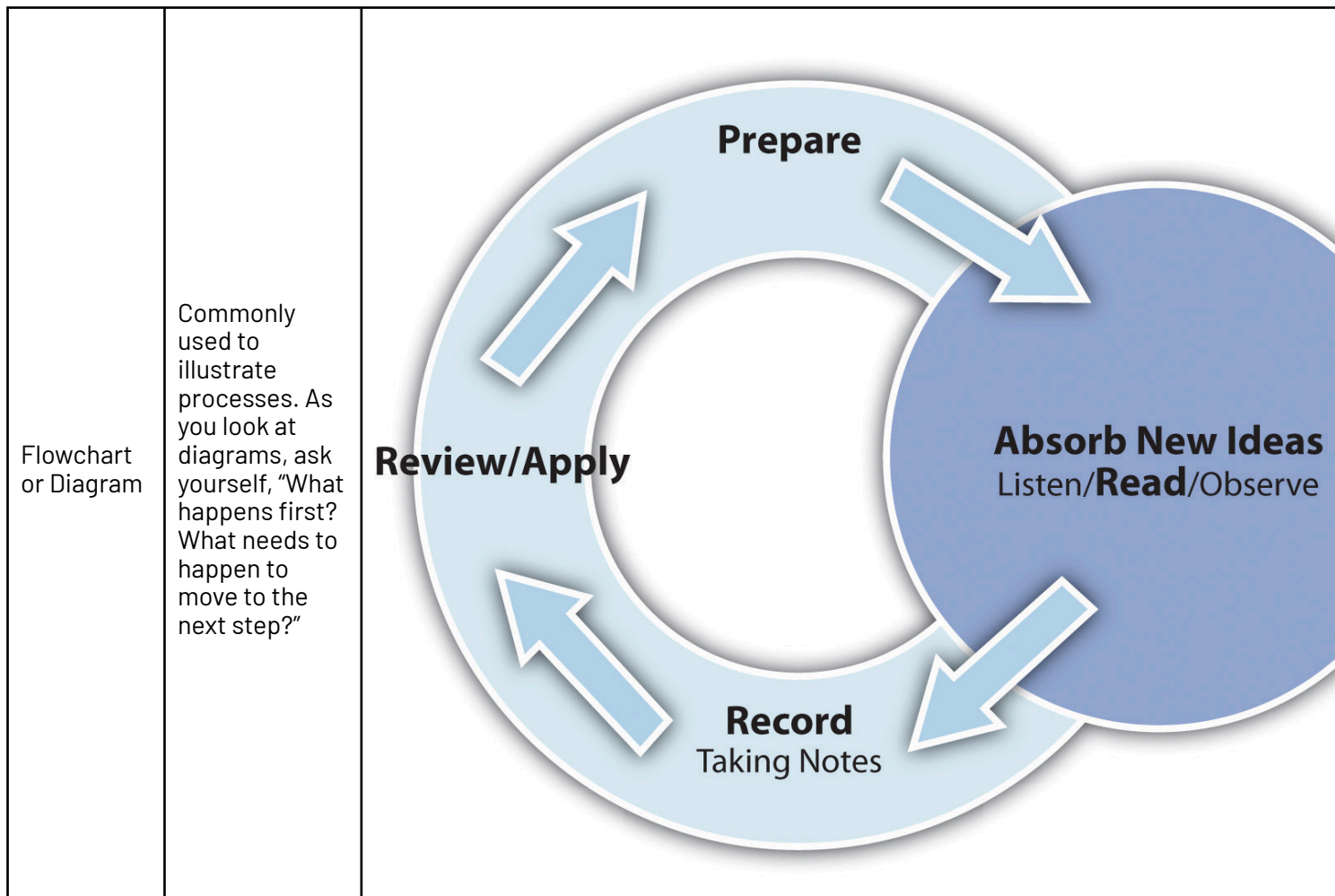
Map	Used to illustrate geographic distributions or movement across geographical space. In some cases can be used to show concentrations of populations or resources. When encountering a map, ask yourself if changes or comparisons are being illustrated. Understand how those changes or comparisons relate to the material in the text.	Effect of Postwar Suburban Development City of Oak Hills  The map illustrates the expansion of the City of Oak Hills. The 1942 boundary is shown as a solid orange area, while the 1953 boundary is shown as a larger yellow area that encompasses the 1942 area and extends significantly further north and east. The labels 'City Boundaries 1942' and 'City Boundaries 1953' are centered within their respective colored regions.
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Photograph

Used to represent a person, a condition, or an idea discussed in the text. Sometimes photographs serve mainly to emphasize an important person or situation, but photographs can also be used to make a point. Ask yourself if the photograph reveals a biased point of view.



Illustration	Used to illustrate parts of an item. Invest time in these graphics. They are often used as parts of quizzes or exams. Look carefully at the labels. These are vocabulary words you should be able to define.	Parts of a Flower Petal Attracts insects and other pollinators Anther Makes pollen Stamen Provides support Sepals Formerly protected the flower bud Ovary Contains egg cells Pistil Pollen tube through
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Troubleshooting your reading



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Listening

You listen to others in many situations: to interact with friends, to get instructions for a task, or to learn new material. There are two general types of listening situations: where you will be able to interact freely with the speaker (everyday conversations, small discussion classes, business meetings) and where interaction is limited (lectures and webcasts).

In interactive situations, you should apply the basic principles of active listening (see

“Principles of Active Listening”). These are not hard to understand, but they are hard to implement and require practice to use them effectively.

Principles of Active Listening

- **Focus on what is being said.** Give the speaker your undivided attention. Clear your mind of anything else. Don't prejudge. You want to understand what the person is saying; you don't need to agree with it.
- **Repeat what you just heard.** Confirm with the speaker that what you heard is what he or she said by paraphrasing what you heard the speaker say.
- **Ask the speaker to expand or clarify.** If you are unsure you understand, ask questions; don't assume.
- **Look for nonverbal signals as well as the words used.** Nonverbal messages come from facial expressions, body positioning, arm gestures, and tone of voice. Confirm these body language messages just as you would verbal messages by saying, for example, “You seem very excited about this idea.”
- **Listen for requests.** A speaker will often hide a request as a statement of a problem. If a friend says, “I hate math!” this may mean, “Can you help me figure out a solution to this problem?”

Listening in a classroom or lecture hall to learn can be challenging because you are limited by how—and how much—you can interact with an instructor during the class. The following strategies help make listening at lectures more effective and learning more fun.

Get your mind in the right space. Prepare yourself mentally to receive the information the speaker is presenting by following the previous prep questions and by doing your assignments (instructors build upon work presented earlier).

Get yourself in the right space. Sit toward the front of the room where you can make eye contact with the instructor easily. Most instructors read the body language of the students in the front rows to gauge how they are doing and if they are losing the class. Instructors also believe students who sit near the front of the room take their subject more seriously and are more willing to give them help when needed or to give them the benefit of the doubt when making a judgment call while assigning grades.

Focus on what is being said. Eliminate distractions. Turn your cell phone off and pack it away in your backpack. If you are using your laptop for notes, close all applications except the one that you use to take notes. Clear your mind and keep quiet. Listen for new ideas. Think like an investigative

reporter: you don't just want to accept what is being said passively—you want to question the material and be convinced that it makes sense.

Look for signals. Each instructor has a different way of telling you what is important. Some will repeat or paraphrase an idea; others will raise (or lower) their voices; still others will write related words on the board. Learn what signals your instructors tend to use and be on the lookout for them. When they use that tactic, the idea they are presenting needs to go in your notes and in your mind—and don't be surprised if it appears on a test or quiz!

Listen for what is not being said. If an instructor doesn't cover a subject, or covers it only minimally, this signals that that material is not as important as other ideas covered in greater length.

Sort the information. Decide what is important and what is not, what is clear and what is confusing, and what is new material and what is review. This mental organizing will help you remember the information, take better notes, and ask better questions.

Take notes. We covered taking notes in much greater detail earlier in this chapter. Taking notes can help recall what your instructor said and notes can help you organize your thoughts for asking questions.

Ask questions. Asking questions is one of the most important things you can do in class. Most obviously it allows you to clear up any doubts you may have about the material, but it also helps you take ownership of (and therefore remember) the material. Good questions often help instructors expand upon their ideas and make the material more relevant to students. Thinking through the material critically in order to prepare your questions helps you organize your new knowledge and sort it into mental categories that will help you remember it.

Dealing with Special Listening Challenges



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Study Strategies

Myths of Studying



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<https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=369#h5p-8>

Transitioning to college, you may find that the study strategies used in high school or other learning environments are no longer as effective. Improvements upon existing strategies or new strategies are often required to get on the right path forward to reach your academic goals.

In order to know if the study strategies you used in high school still work in university, you have to try it – but be ready to improve and adapt the strategies to fit your new situation. You will

know if the strategies need changes if you are getting too stressed or having an unbalanced study schedule.

In *Chapter 3: Metacognition* and *Chapter 4: Time Management*, you learned about different strategies to assist your learning process and manage your time. Those strategies you read and watched videos about are similar strategies for how to engage with studying. The following strategies are just a few that can help you succeed in your classes.

Using Mnemonics

Mnemonics (pronounced new-monics) are a way to remember things using reminders. Did you learn the points of the compass by remembering NEWS (north, east, west, and south)? Or the notes on the music staff as FACE or EGBDF (every good boy does fine)? These are mnemonics. When you're first learning something and you aren't familiar with the foundational concepts, these help you bring up the information quickly, especially for multistep processes or lists. After you've worked in that discipline for a while, you likely don't need the mnemonics, but you probably won't forget them either.

Here are some familiar mnemonics you may find useful:

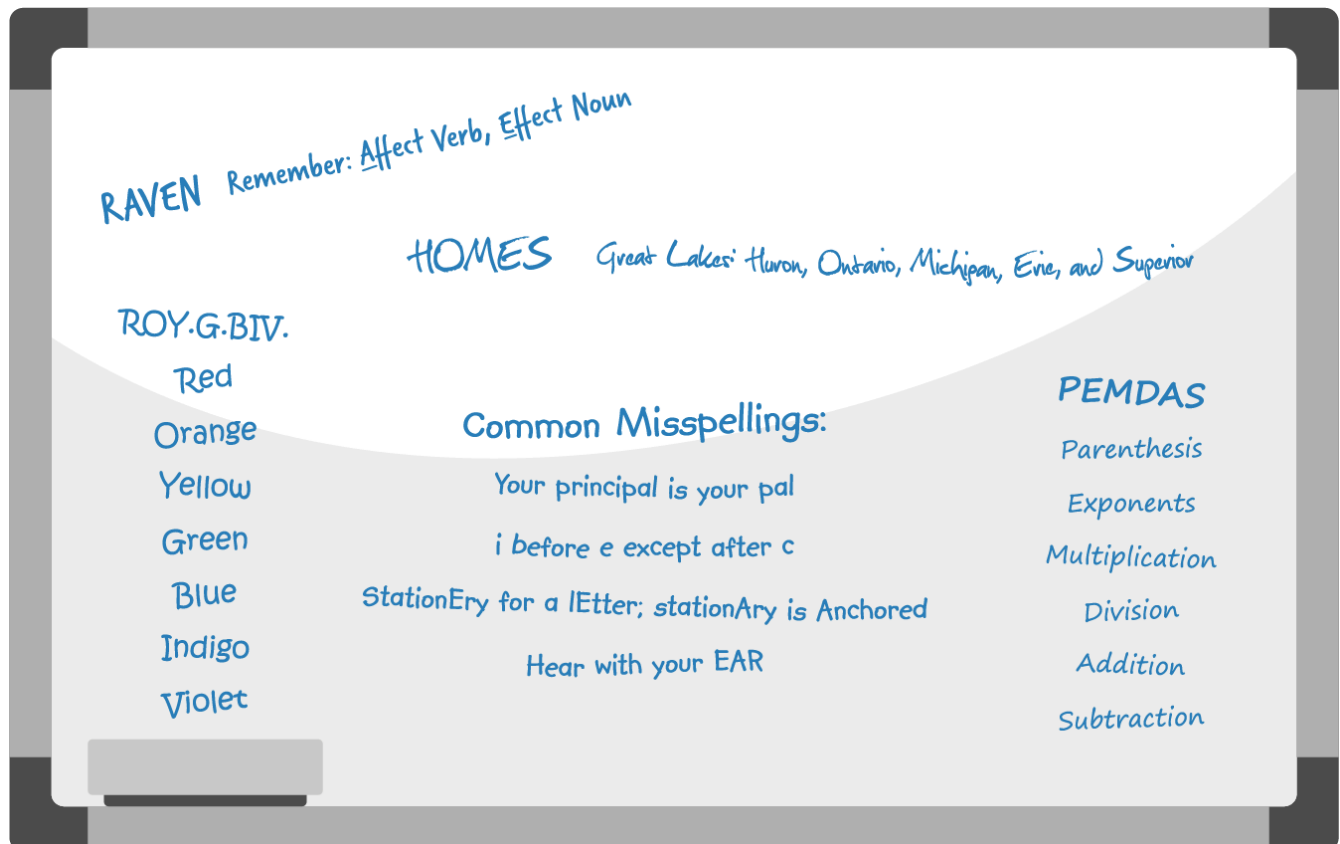


Figure 6.1: Familiar Mnemonic Devices

You can certainly make up your own mnemonics, but be careful that your reminder isn't so complex and convoluted that it is more difficult to remember than the information you were relating it to!

Practicing Concept Association

When you study, you're going to make connections to other things—that's a good thing! It shows a highly intelligent ability to make sense of the world when you can associate like and even somewhat unlike components. If, for instance, you were reading Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," and you read the line that he had been in Birmingham, you may remember a trip you took with your family last summer through Alabama and that you passed by and visited the civil rights museum in Birmingham. This may remind you of the different displays you saw and the discussions you had with your family about what had happened concerning civil rights in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s in the United States.

This is a good connection to make, but if your assignment is to critique the literary aspects of King's long epistle, you need to be able to come back to the actual words of the letter and see what trends you can see in his writing and why he may have used his actual words to convey the powerful message. The connection is fine, but you can't get lost in going down rabbit holes that may or may not be what you're supposed to be doing at the time. Make a folder for this assignment where you can put things such as a short summary of your trip to Alabama. You may eventually include notes from this summary in your analysis. You may include something from a website that shows you information about that time period. Additionally, you could include items about Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and death and his work for civil rights. All of these elements may help you understand the significance of this one letter, but you need to be cognizant of what you're doing at the time and remember it is not usually a good idea to just try to keep it all in your head. The best idea is to have a way to access this information easily, either electronically or in hard copy, so that if you are able to use it, you can find it easily and quickly.

Generating Idea Clusters

Like mnemonics, idea clusters are nothing more than ways to help your brain come up with ways to recall specific information by connecting it to other knowledge you already have. For example, Andrea is an avid knitter and remembers how to create complicated stitches by associating them with nursery rhymes she read as a child. A delicate stitch that requires concentration because it makes the yarn look like part of it is hiding brings to mind Red Riding Hood, and connecting it to that character helps Andrea recall the exact order of steps necessary to execute the design. You

can do the same thing with song lyrics, lines from movies, or favorite stories where you draw a connection to the well-known phrase or song and the task you need to complete.

Group Studying

Study groups are a great idea—as long as they are thoughtfully managed. A study group can give you new perspectives on course material and help you fill in gaps in your notes. Discussing course content will sharpen your critical thinking related to the subject, and being part of a group to which you are accountable will help you study consistently. In a study group, you will end up “teaching” each other the material, which is the strongest way to retain new material. But remember, being in a group working together doesn’t mean there will be less work for you as an individual; your work will just be much more effective.

Picking Group Members

- **Think small.** Limit your study group to no more than three or four people. A larger group would limit each student’s participation and make scheduling of regular study sessions a real problem.
- **Go for quality.** Look for students who are doing well in the course, who ask questions, and who participate in class discussions. Don’t make friendship the primary consideration for who should be in your group. Meet up with your friends instead during “social time”—study time is all about learning.
- **Look for complementary skills and learning strengths.** Complementary skills make for a good study group because your weaknesses will be countered by another student’s strengths. When a subject requires a combination of various skills, strengths in each of those skills is helpful (e.g., a group with one student who is really good at physics and another at math would be perfect for an engineering technology course). Finally, a variety of learning strengths is helpful because each of us picks up differing signals and emphases from the professor that you can share with each other, so you will not likely miss important points.
- **Meet regularly.** When you first set up a study group, agree to a regular meeting schedule and stick to it. Moving study session times around can result in non-participation, lack of preparation, and eventually the collapse of the study group.

How to conduct a group study session

1. **Assign a moderator, and rotate the role of moderator or discussion leader.** This helps

ensure “ownership” of the group is spread equally across all members and ensures active participation and careful preparation.

2. **Define an agenda and objectives.** Give your study sessions focus so that you don’t get sidetracked. Based on requests and comments from the group, the moderator should develop the agenda and start each session by summarizing what the group expects to cover and then keep the group to task.
3. **Assign follow-up work.** If there is any work that needs to be done between meetings, make sure that all team members know specifically what is expected of them and agree to do the work.

Include some of the following items on your agenda:

Review and discuss class and assignment notes since your last meeting.

Discuss assigned readings.

Quiz each other on class material.

“Reteach” aspects of the material team participants are unsure of.

Brainstorm possible test questions and responses.

Review quiz and test results and correct misunderstandings.

Critique each other’s ideas for paper themes and approaches.

Define questions to ask the professor.

Handling the Test

Quiz, Test, Exam, Midterm, Final: All powerful words that can make any student’s stomach drop. It’s normal to feel stress, just as we discussed in our “Coping with Stress” assignment this semester, when met with testing. Yet, the reality is that assessments are just a part of college life and serve as a big portion of your grade for a course. Just as we have been talking about this semester, this stress and anxiety can be managed and coped with in healthy ways. Being able to cope with this situation and master test anxiety are crucial to becoming a successful college student. Doing well on exams comes down to two key parts:

1. How you prepare for the test

2. How you approach the test itself

Test Prep

It may sound wild, **but test prep starts on the very first day of class.** As soon as you receive your syllabus, look for any information about exams. Most instructors includes test dates, the number of exams, and test format on the syllabus. If this information isn't in the syllabus, be sure to attend class regularly to get the details, which is one of the essential habits for essential test prep.

As exam day draws near, shift your focus to organizing and reviewing what you have learned. Be sure to outline key concepts, highlight important terms, and use your notes to create study guides or flashcards. The goal is to make all the materials easier for you to review and remember. If your instructor offers a review session, **go!** Most review sessions include vital information about what to expect on the exam. If you cannot attend a review session, be sure to get to class early on exam day to review notes and helpful information with other students.

Lastly, make sure you know what the exam format ahead of time. Multiple choice? Short response? A little bit of everything? Understanding the exam format will help you know how to study and relieve some test anxiety.

Essential Habits for Successful Test Prep

Attending Class

Taking Organized, Detailed Notes

Keeping Up with Required Readings

Test-Anxiety

Most of us have felt it at some point: you sit down for an exam, read the first question... and suddenly, your mind goes completely blank. It's perfectly normal to feel some anxiety before a test. In fact, a little nervous energy can be a *good* thing. It helps sharpen your focus and can even boost your motivation to study.

But when it becomes overwhelming and starts to interfere with your ability to concentrate, remember what you've studied, or even think logically and clearly during the exam, it shifts from helpful to harmful. At that moment it is no longer nervousness, it is test anxiety that can impact your ability to show your instructor what you know.

Test Anxiety is an array of physical, psychological, and Test anxiety emotional characteristics that students may experience, either prior to test-taking or during test-taking, that hinders them from organizing clear and concise thought patterns associated with the act of examination or with a particular subject of examination (Spada, Nikcevic, Mo-neta, & Ireson, 2006).

Recognizing when your anxiety has crossed that line is the first step in mastering how to manage and cope with your anxiety. With the right tools and strategies, you can overcome this anxiety and perform your best.

How to Deal with Test Anxiety

As we have mentioned, being unable to focus and feeling overwhelmed can be signs of test anxiety. However, there are strategies we can utilize to help you regain control of the situation and overcome test anxiety.

You can always start with a few basic relaxation techniques:

Pause, and take a few sleep, deep breaths. This can help calm your nervous system and clear your mind.

Sit back and reset your focus. Remind yourself that you are prepared for the challenge in front of you and bring your attention back.

Try to ignore distractions around you. Attempt to not let noises, movements, or other students' behavior guide your focus away from the test.

If one or more of these techniques work for you, you can then use some test-taking strategies to work through the exam:

Scan the entire exam first. Notice the types of questions included. If you prepared correctly, these should be unsurprising in the moment. However, seeing question types that were unexpected can let you plan effectively.

Start with what you know. Answer questions that come easy to you. Getting a “win” early on can help boost confidence and give you more time on harder questions.

Skip the tough ones. With this being the opposite of the last strategy, we don't want to get stuck on a question. Make a note of the question and move on. We can return to that question when you have more time.

Keep an eye on the time. If you have a limited amount of time, then you need to pace yourself

accordingly. Note the number of questions and how much time to see how long you can spend on each question.

These strategies will help you manage your anxiety and put you on a path to mastering test-taking at the collegiate level. With time and practice, you will gain more confidence and feel better equipped to face future exams.

Student Spotlight: Evie, the Therapy Dog



Evie is a labradoodle who has been working since she was two years old. She received her training and certification for pet therapy from a Kentucky non-profit organization, Pawsibilities Unleashed. Her training allows her to be in public spaces where she is invited and scheduled. Pet therapy animals provide a wide range of benefits and interventions to the populations they work with. Working on a college campus, Evie provides stress relief, unconditional positive regard, and a safe space to simply exist in the chaos of life

Summary

- Review your past tests to learn from your mistakes. Evaluate your results and consider why you got answers right or wrong; think about how you studied for this test and what you might need to change about your study habits; and finally, judge whether you managed your test-taking tasks well. Next, correct your mistakes and write out the correct answers. Finally, make your past tests part of your study notes and make adjustments to how you study or take tests to prevent making similar mistakes in the future.
- Frequent study is more effective than just studying before a test or exam. Study every day

merging your class and reading notes, and creating questions for your professor on areas of confusion.

- Apply or visualize the material to make it more meaningful and cement your knowledge by testing yourself.
- Study in course units by using notes and text to create summaries or outlines of the material.
- A least a week before a major test or exam, gather what you know about what the test will cover, review your summaries and outlines and come up with likely test questions to use to test yourself. You may need to go back to review sections of notes based on expected test questions.
- Group study that is well managed can be an effective way to deepen your learning and understanding. Pick quality group members, meet regularly, assign a rotating moderator, set up an agenda and assign follow up work for group members.
- Test anxiety is a common feeling when preparing for exams in college. Just as with normal stress, there are ways to cope with test anxiety and strategies for test taking to relieve stress.

References

Spada, M., Nikcevic, A., Moneta, G., & Ireson, J. (2006). Metacognition as a mediator of the effect of test anxiety on a surface approach to studying. *Educational Psychology*, 26(5), 615–624.

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CHAPTER 7: FINANCIAL LITERACY

How can I become financially responsible?

Welcome to the financial side of college life: where you need to make informed decisions on best ways to handle your money. For some of us, we will be scouring the campus and city to find the best deals for food on a given night. For others, you will need to make decisions on what “big-ticket” items you can pay for now while in school. Regardless of your situation, however, you will need to introduce yourself to the basics of financial literacy and its role in your college experience. With beginning knowledge, and a little bit of strategic planning, you will be able to understand your financial situation while anticipating future plans and setting goals for the semesters beyond this.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will,

- Discuss the importance of having goals for financial success
- Explore financial aid terms
- Introduce Big E Central's role for students

Financial Aid

Outside of personal and family contributions, financial aid is another way students can help pay for college. It includes federal financial aid, state and regional scholarships and grants, and private funding.

Federal Financial Aid

Federal financial aid consists of grants, loans, and student employment, also known as “federal work-study.” The amount and types of aid you are offered are based on you and your family’s financial need. Federal aid requires an application called the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. A new application is required for each year you’re in college. The FAFSA application tends to become available in early October. Complete your FAFSA by early November to receive priority aid consideration. Go to [FAFSA® Application | Federal Student Aid](#) to complete your FAFSA application. FAFSA’s website will guide you through the process of applying for aid.

Things to note:

- You must be a U.S. citizen or an Eligible Noncitizen to apply for federal financial aid. Visit [About FAFSA](#) for more information.
- If you are homeless or housing insecure and living *without* one or both parents you can apply for college money on your own as an “unaccompanied homeless youth.” To learn more, visit [Understanding FAFSA](#).

Federal Student Loans

Federal student loans are government-supported, low interest loans called direct loans. They have to be paid back after you graduate or leave school. The government sets an annual maximum that a student can borrow. First year students have the lowest annual maximum while seniors have the highest.

Student loans are either **subsidized** or **unsubsidized**. **Subsidized loans** are interest free until the loan goes into repayment. That means that while you are in school you will not have to make any payments or pay any interest. After you graduate you have six months before any payments are due. **Unsubsidized loans** will accrue interest from the time you take out the loan. While you do not have to make any payments on the loan or the interest while you are in school, you are being charged interest every month and it is being added to the amount you owe.

A **Parent PLUS Loan** may be available to dependent students who don’t have enough money to meet their cost of attendance after all of their other aid has been offered. This is a loan for the parent and the parent is responsible for paying it back. There is a credit check required in order to qualify for this loan.

Federal Grants

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) offers a variety of federal grants to students attending

four-year colleges or universities, community colleges, and career schools. These grants are listed in the table below, and you can select each link for more details.

Federal Grant Program	Eligibility	Annual Award
Federal Pell Grant	Undergraduate students with exceptional financial need and who haven't earned a bachelor's, graduate, or professional degree*.	Up to \$7,395 for the 2024–25 award year
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)	Undergraduate students who have exceptional financial need and who haven't earned a bachelor's graduate, or professional degree*.	Up to \$4,000 a year
Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant	Undergraduate, post baccalaureate, or graduate students who are enrolled in programs that prepare them to teach in a high-need field at the elementary or secondary school level.	Up to \$4,000 for grants first disbursed on or after Oct. 1, 2022, and before Oct. 1, 2024

When You May Have to Repay a Grant

Here are some examples of why you might have to repay all or part of a federal grant:

- You withdrew early from the program for which the grant was given to you.
- Your enrollment status changed in a way that reduced your eligibility for your grant (for instance, if you switch from full-time enrollment to part-time, your grant amount will be reduced).
- You received outside scholarships or grants that reduced your need for federal student aid.
- You received a TEACH Grant, but you did not meet the requirements of your TEACH Grant service obligation.
- You received Federal Pell Grant funds from more than one school at a time.

Federal Scholarships

Scholarships are gifts. They don't need to be repaid.

To start exploring federal and other scholarships, visit: [Scholarship Finder | CareerOneStop.](#)

Federal Work Study

Student employment is a great way to earn money for personal expenses. The federal work-study program pays the student an hourly wage for working on campus. It is important to note that federal work-study money goes directly to the student and not to the amount the student owes the University for tuition and other charges. The program is designed to help students with the personal expenses component of their cost of attendance budget.

To find a federal work study job, visit [EKU Careers](#).

Kentucky Financial Aid

Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarships

If you are eligible for the (Kentucky Educational Excellence) KEES Scholarship award, you will be notified by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA). To learn more about KEES, visit [KHEAA](#).

- Your high school grades and your highest ACT score determines the amount of the KEES award.
- Once you have graduated from high school, your KEES money cannot be increased.
- Eastern Kentucky University will request funds for all students who may be eligible, as determined by their high school graduation date. Make sure that you include your Social Security Number (SSN) on your ECU Admissions Application to ensure that we can request your KEES.
- ECU reports to KHEAA the hours these students are enrolled approximately two weeks after classes begin in the fall and spring semesters.
- Once KHEAA receives the above information, KHEAA notifies ECU of eligible students and the actual award amounts.
- KEES money is typically placed in your student account one month after the first day of class.
- The KEES Scholarship is awarded for the fall and spring semesters, one academic year at a time. If you ever lose your KEES money due to GPA and then regain the 2.5 overall ECU GPA, please contact the ECU Scholarship Office to see if you have regained eligibility. It is the student's responsibility to self-disclose if the student may be eligible for funds again.

If you have questions regarding your KEES award, you can review your status on the KHEAA website or call the KHEAA office at 800-928-8926.

Eastern Kentucky University Financial Aid

Merit Scholarships

Merit scholarships make ECU even more affordable for first time students. ECU recognizes the hard work and dedication needed to achieve at a high level. Get rewarded for your high school accomplishments with merit scholarships. If you meet the following criteria, merit scholarships will automatically be applied to your account. No application needed!

Foundation Scholarships

ECU has made a difference in thousands of lives. Donors who have experienced the life-changing effect an ECU education can have, now want to make a difference in your life. Thanks to their generosity, there are hundreds of scholarships available for ECU students.

Eligibility criteria ranges from GPA to county of residence to degree program and more. Simply fill out the foundation scholarship application at [Apply for Foundations Scholarships](#) to you'll learn which scholarships you may be eligible for.

Private Student Loans

There are a few loan companies that offer private student loans. These loans are not made through the federal government and require the borrower to apply directly through the lending institution offering the loan. Private loans can be helpful for independent students who need to fill the gap between federal aid and cost of attendance and for dependent students whose parents do not want to take out the parent loan. Private student loans are credit dependent. Students without enough credit history to qualify on their own will need a co-signer who can pass the credit check. A co-signer is someone who guarantees that if you default on the loan (i.e., fail to repay) that they will pay it back on your behalf. There are fewer protections available for borrowers via private student loan programs.

Other Financial Aid Resources

- [TheDream.US](#): supports undocumented students achieve their college and career dreams
- [Five Ways To Find College Money on TikTok | FAFSA: The How-To Guide for High School Students](#): guide for FAFSA and informs on TikTokers who note other scholarships
- [SHC Scholarship Program](#): scholarship programs for housing insecure students
- [HRC | Scholarship Database](#): database for scholarships including LGBTQIA+ students
- [College Board](#): comprehensive, secure, broad

- [Scholarship Owl](#): secure, trustworthy, efficient
- [Fastweb](#): one-stop-shop, has helpful guides
- [Scholarships.com](#): abundant options, but lots of ads
- [Bold.org](#): informative, great idea, but caters to donors
- [Cappex](#): gives the lay of the land, but tracks information heavily
- [Going Merry](#): useful, but beware of tracking

Navigating Financial aid with ECU's Big E Central

[Big E Central](#) is your primary resource for navigating financial aid, scholarships, billing, payment plans, and registration assistance.

Registration Resources

Walk-In Availability:

OPEN Mon-Thurs

8:00 am – 4:00 pm Eastern

Whitlock 210

- [Records & Transcripts](#)
- [Find Your Advisor](#)
- [University Catalog](#)
- [Add/Drop/Withdraw Dates](#)
- [How to Register for Courses](#)
- [Common Registration Errors](#)
- [Course Overrides](#)
- [Change Your Major](#)
- [Academic Standing](#)

Financial Aid Resources

Phone Availability:

OPEN Mon-Fri

9:00 am – 4:00 pm Eastern

Click to Call: 859-622-2361

- [How-To: Apply for Aid](#)
- [How-To: Accept Aid](#)
- [Satisfactory Academic Progress](#)
- [Guide: Federal Loans](#)
- [Guide: Private Education Loans](#)
- [Guide: KEES](#)
- [VA Benefits](#)
- [Important Deadlines](#)

Billing Resources

- [How-To: Pay My Bill](#)

- [Billing Dates](#)
- [Payment Plans](#)
- [Guide: Refunds](#)
- [1098-T Tax Information](#)
- [Return of Title IV Funds](#)

Your Own Financial journey

Cost of Attendance

You've arrived on campus, settled into your residence hall, attended Big E Welcome, and even found your way to your first class. But have you stopped to consider what it actually costs to be here?

Now that you're enrolled, it's important to understand where your money is going. The term **cost of attendance** refers to the total annual cost of being a student. It includes not just tuition and fees, but also books, housing, meals, and everyday personal expenses. Knowing this full picture can help you make smarter financial decisions throughout your college journey.

BookSmart

The ECU BookSmart program provides all degree-seeking students with all required textbooks for the semester, before classes start, for free. ECU is the only college in Kentucky to offer degree-seeking students free textbooks. Here is how to use this program:

- Register for classes
- Pick up your Big E Box filled with your required books from the ECU Bookstore or have it delivered to your doorstep at no cost to you
- Study hard, then return your books at the end of the semester using the provided pre-paid return label.

Visit the [ECU BookSmart website](#) for additional information as well as a helpful FAQ.

Tuition

Let's break down two of the biggest costs you'll face in college: **tuition** and **fees**.

Tuition is the price you pay for instruction—essentially, it covers the cost of learning in the classroom. Whether you're attending lectures, labs, or online classes, tuition is what allows you to

access course content and faculty expertise. For most students, it's the largest single expense in college.

Fees, on the other hand, are additional charges that support your overall college experience. These might fund things like campus renovations, technology upgrades, student health services, or access to recreation centers. While they're not directly tied to your classes, fees help keep the campus running and enhance student life.

Understanding these costs early on can help you better manage your budget—and get the most out of what you're paying for.

Housing

All single, full-time, undergraduate students under the age of 21, having fewer than 60 hours, or less than four academic semesters living on campus, are required to live in university residence hall facilities. An exception is made for students residing with their parents in the parents' primary residence within 50 miles of the Richmond campus as determined by an official state map. Full-time students must be 21 years of age, have completed 59 hours prior to the first day of class of any given semester or lived in campus housing for four academic semesters to live off-campus for that semester. Students failing to meet this requirement will be assessed the lowest-price residence hall fee and board fees where appropriate.

For students who need access to alternative housing options, such as living with parents as their principle residence, please utilize the Housing Portal found on [EKU's Housing website](#).

As you continue on your ECU journey, you may want to explore alternatives to housing that are applicable for upperclassmen, non-traditional students, and graduate students, to name a few groups. Renting can offer more independence, but comes with its own costs and extra responsibilities.

If you are thinking about moving off campus in the future, make sure you understand the full cost. Rent is just one piece of the puzzle that is housing costs. Here are other types of expenses you will encounter:

- **Security deposits:** Most landlords require this up front to cover potential damages.
- **Utility setup fees:** You may need to pay deposits to activate electricity, water, internet, and other services.
- **Furniture:** Unless you're okay with lawn chairs and a cot, you'll need to invest in basic furniture like a bed, table, and seating.

These costs stack up quick, so budgeting and planning are the key to being successful. If off-campus living is part of your college plan, set a goal, research your options, and start saving early.

That way, when the time comes, you'll be ready—with a real dinner table and not just an upside down milk crate.

On Campus Food

As a first-year student at ECU, you'll use a **meal plan** to help manage food costs while making sure you have access to healthy, convenient meals throughout the semester. ECU's meal plans have two components, and both begin on the first day of **Big E Welcome Week** in the fall (or **move-in weekend** in the spring). You'll access your meal plan using your **Colonel Card**—your student ID and key to campus services. If you haven't already, download the phone app that can serve as your Colonel Card. [Use this website to help with that process.](#)

If you're living in a residence hall or are an approved commuter freshman, you're required to purchase a meal plan. The university offers several meal plan options consisting of two possible components:

- **Meal swipes** for all-you-care-to-eat meals at campus dining halls such as Upper Case and Stratton.
- **Flex dollars**, which work like a prepaid debit card at other on-campus dining locations such as Colonel Grill, Starbucks, or other spots on campus. [You can find the full list here.](#)

When choosing a meal plan, pick one that fits your lifestyle and eating habits. You don't want to pay for more meals than you'll actually use.

Learning to monitor your **meal swipes** and **Flex balance** is also a great introduction to budgeting. It's an easy way to start thinking about spending habits and making smart financial choices—skills that will benefit you throughout college and beyond.

Budgeting for Financial Goals

It's expensive to go to college. College tuition has risen for decades at virtually all schools, and very few students are fortunate enough to not be concerned with this reality. Still, there are things you can do to help control costs and manage your finances while in college. Begin by thinking about your financial goals.

Taking control of your personal finances begins with thinking about your goals and deciding what really matters to you. Here are some things to think about:

- Is it important for you to graduate from college with minimal debt?
- What are your priorities for summers and other "free time"? Working to earn money? Taking non-paying internships or volunteering to gain experience in your field? Enjoying social

activities and time with friends?

- How important is it to live in a nice place, or drive a nice car, or wear nice clothes, or eat in nice restaurants? How important in comparison to your educational goals?

Budgeting involves analyzing your income and expenses so you can see where your money is going and making adjustments when needed to avoid debt. At first budgeting can seem complex or time consuming, but once you've gone through the basics, you'll find it easy and a very valuable tool for optimizing your personal finances.

Why create and manage a budget? Going to college changes your financial situation. There are many new expenses, and you likely don't know yet how your spending needs and habits will work out over the long term. Without a budget, it's just human nature to spend more than you have coming in, as evidenced by the fact that most North Americans today are in debt. Debt is a major reason many students drop out of college. So it's worth it to create and manage a budget.

Managing a budget involves three steps:

1. Listing all your sources of income on a monthly basis.
2. Calculating all your expenses on a monthly basis.
3. Making adjustments in your budget (and lifestyle if needed) to ensure the money isn't going out faster than it's coming in.



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Summary

- Budgets are key for financial planning and wellness.
- You need to fill out your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) every year.
- There are multiple ways to apply for and receive financial aid at federal, state, and private

levels.

- Big E Central is your ECU student one-stop-shop for all things financial aid, billing, and transcripts.
- The cost of attendance isn't just tuition but a group of items to budget and prepare for.
- We aren't just budgeting for the "now", but for the future as well. Learning to handle a budget while in college will transfer to future employment and life goals.

References

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CHAPTER 8: REFLECTION, MINDFULNESS, + GOAL SETTING

Reflection Provides Direction

Whether we are conscious of this or not, we all undertake activities to think about our experiences, learn from them, and develop a plan for what we will continue to do (or stop doing). Can you think of a time when you came home at the end of a week where everything had gone wrong? Or maybe when everything had gone well? What are your next steps? Are you able to answer the question, “Why am I doing what I am doing?”

In order to continue to develop a reflective practice that will serve us in college and in the workplace, we need to examine and understand the reasons for our reactions, our feelings, and our interactions with others. Creating a formal practice of reflection leads us to become a reflective practitioner.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will...

- Describe what a reflective practice is and why it's important to reflect
- Introduce mindfulness and how you can develop a mindfulness practice
- Introduce goal setting and how you can make a plan to reach your goals

Reflective practices

Reflective practice has developed across many academic disciplines to help us intentionally learn from our experiences. There was a time when reflective practice would have been considered an

optional skill, but over the past few years, reflective practice is no longer considered merely a desired disposition—it's now essential to success.

Reflective practice has been explored and defined by many scholars including Bolton (2010), Moon (2001), Rodgers (2002), and Schön (1983). Reflective practice is a systematic, rigorous, self-directed meaning-making process where a person moves from one experience to another through the development of insights and practice with the intention of coming to a deeper understanding of one's personal values and intellectual growth. Schön (1983) suggests that in practice, reflection often begins when a routine response produces a surprise or an unexpected outcome. The surprise gets our attention, which may begin a process of reflection. Reflective practice is “a dialogue of thinking and doing through which one becomes more skillful” (Schön, 1983, p. 56).

Notwithstanding the definitions given above, it's important to remember that reflection is a highly personal skill or disposition, and different people will define it in different ways. There is no one “right” way of defining what reflection is or how it should be done. Your ability to develop an effective reflective practice will depend on your own personal circumstances and school or work environment.

For this reason, this chapter will explore elements of reflective practice that will help you develop your own reflective practice unique to you. In describing reflective practice, you might notice it is interchangeably referred to in this chapter and in other resources you might encounter as a skill and/or a disposition. In the workplace, a skill is something that can be acquired, while a disposition is a way of being or a mindset. Current thinking suggests that reflection is not a skill but rather a way of being or disposition. Reflection involves an evaluation of our ethics, values, and feelings around our experiences, both positive and negative.

To learn more about reflective practice, watch the video “Understanding Reflective Practice by Lifetime Training”:



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Mindfulness

Basically, mindfulness is about awareness. Specifically, it is about being aware of the present moment, or bringing our attention to the present moment. It's being aware of what is happening right now in your present-moment experience in a way that is curious, accepting, and non-

judgmental. Learning to observe your present-moment experiences in this way, learning to bring your mind to the present, whatever is happening, can be very helpful in dealing with challenges and stress. With practice, you can act with more intentionality—or choice—and less reactivity. But, as with any art or skill, consistent practice is the key—aim for every day (but don't be self-critical if you sometimes miss). You can try the body scan and/or breath awareness meditation in the video below (under the “Let's Practice: Mindfulness” section) if you'd like; each is under five minutes. There are more meditations on free apps, or across different YouTube videos.

Benefits of Mindfulness

Research studies have highlighted the benefits of mindfulness practice in areas such as depression, anxiety, sleep disturbances, self-compassion, life satisfaction, and burnout (Mackenzie et al., 2006; Shapiro et al., 2005). In particular, college students can greatly benefit from mindfulness practice for both psychological and physical well-being, as well as academic achievement.

Research studies have consistently shown that college students who practiced mindfulness demonstrated enhanced self-regulation skills (MacDonald, 2021), an increase in self-efficacy and resilience (Vidic & Cherup, 2019), improved attention (Lindsay & Creswell, 2017), better adjustment to college life, and improved academic performance (Britt, 2011). They also experienced increased productivity (Kerrigan et al., 2017). Additionally, mindfulness has been shown to help college students reduce performance anxiety and general anxiety (Diaz, 2018; Stein, 2017), alleviate both overall and academic-related stress, depression (Deckro et al., 2002; Oman et al., 2008; Shapiro et al., 1998), as well as reduce psychological distress (Deckro et al., 2002).

Let's Practice: Mindfulness

Hard to find time to add mindfulness? No worries! You can practice mindfulness anytime, anywhere. Whether between classes, standing in line at a cafeteria, on a bus, during a break at work, or even while walking across campus. While you stand in line, for instance, focus on your present surroundings, observe the sensation of your feet on the ground, the sound and sights around you, and the rhythm of your breath. During a break, observe your in and out breath, acknowledging any thoughts without judgment and letting them pass. Mindfulness practice does not require special equipment or settings. It only requires your presence!

Resources

EKU's Counseling Center (Whitlock Building, 5th Floor)

To help you with the stressors of college life you can visit ECU's Counseling Center. The Counseling Center not only focuses on mental health, but motivation, academic performance, and strategies for improving overall happiness. The office is staffed by trained mental health clinicians. Anything you share is held in the strictest confidence, and there is no charge for care. Whether you wish to better your mental health or need help with working through past or current challenges, the Counseling Center is here to help.

- Free to ECU students
- Walk-in and scheduled appointments available between 8 am – 4:30 pm Monday through Friday

Counseling Center Services

Individual and group therapy

Couples therapy

Outreach programs and workshops

24/7 on-call counselor line:
859-622-1303

EKU's Psychology Clinic

ECU's Psychology Clinic is another resource that is free for ECU students. The ECU Psychology Clinic is an outpatient integrated behavioral health care facility operated by the Department of Psychology at Eastern Kentucky University. ECU Psychology Clinic Services include:

- Individual Therapy
- Assessment, Evaluation, or Testing Services for different behavioral health diagnoses and disorders
- Consultation Services
- Couples & Family Therapy
- Therapy, Processing, & Support Groups such as the the Autism Clinic and the Trauma and Suicide Prevention Clinic
- Outreach Services
- Telepsychological Services

Services are provided by doctoral students working on graduate degrees in clinical psychology. All clinicians have received specialized graduate training and are closely supervised by a licensed psychologist faculty member.

Wellness Rooms & Sensory Spaces

- ECU Counseling Center Relaxation Room – Whitlock 567
- Student Stress Management Center (interactive space for sensory support & a place to rest) Rowlett 145
- El Centro's Decompression Room – McCreary 219

Navigate Goals and Expectations Your Way

Succeeding in college is rather like succeeding in life. It's really much more about you than it is about college. So the most important place to start is to consider why you're here, what matters to you, and what you expect to get out of it. Even if you have already thought about these questions, it's good to reaffirm your commitment to your plan as we begin to consider what's really involved in being a college student.



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Goal Setting Techniques



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You should physically write your goals down, because the act of finding the best words to describe your goals helps you think more clearly about them.

Follow these guidelines:

Goals should be realistic. It's good to dream and to challenge yourself, but your goals should relate to your personal strengths and abilities.

Goals should be specific. Don't write, "I will become a great musician;" instead, write, "I will finish my music degree and be employed in a symphony orchestra."

Goals should have a time frame. You won't feel very motivated if your goal is vaguely "to finish

college someday.” If you’re realistic and specific in your goals, you should also be able to project a time frame for reaching the goal.

You should really want to reach the goal. We’re willing to work hard to reach goals we really care about, but we’re likely to give up when we encounter obstacles if we don’t feel strongly about a goal. If you’re doing something only because your parents or someone else wants you to, then it’s not your own personal goal – and you may have some more thinking to do about your life.



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Write SMART goals

Unclear goals can be difficult to achieve since you may not know HOW to accomplish them. SMART goals take away this confusion.

SMART Goals are...

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Results-Oriented
Time-Based



Figure 8.1: SMART Goals

For example:

Unclear goal: "Work out more."

This unclear goal is difficult to achieve since you haven't yet identified how to accomplish it. What does "more" mean to you? What does "work out" mean to you?

SMART goal: "Run 3 kilometres on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday each week to improve my mood, energy, and cardiovascular health."

The SMART goal, on the other hand, lays out an action plan. You don't need to make the decision every day of how to work out, and tracking your progress will be easy since you've assigned yourself a timeline and hopeful outcome.

Set long-term goals

Long-term goals are goals that take a long time to accomplish – perhaps several years, or even decades. Examples of long-term goals are things like becoming a carpenter, learning French, or starting a family. These goals can be intimidating, so it can help to break them down into a series of short-term goals. This can make challenging long-term goals seem more doable. One helpful strategy is to work backward, creating short-term goals that will help you to get you closer to these long-term, lifetime goals.

Set short-term goals

Short-term goals are things that you can accomplish in the near future – maybe in the next year, month, week, day, or hour. These goals can help you achieve your long-term goals, working as stepping stones to bigger accomplishments.

Sometimes, though, you will have short-term goals that don't clearly fit into your long-term plans: for example, having a clean apartment. These goals aren't exciting, but they're a necessary part of life. When you feel overwhelmed, defeated, or motivated about daily tasks, a to-do list can help you break down these goals and develop an action plan.



Student Spotlight

"I was around fifteen when I had the realization that I wanted to pursue psychology because of the inspiration my own therapist at the time ignited in me. I graduated in December with plans to apply for graduate school. I started writing and sending applications all throughout the Fall 2024 semester, and it is with great excitement that I can say that I will be returning to ECU for graduate school."

– Rosario "Ross" Gomez,
Psychology Graduate, Class of 2024

How can I motivate myself to achieve my goals?

There are two types of consequences:

Immediate consequences: Results of your goal that happen immediately. This can be natural (like when someone claps for your presentation), or a reward that you've created for yourself (like getting a treat after you go to the gym).

Delayed consequences: Results that may take days, weeks, months, or even years to happen, like graduating from a program. It can be difficult to persist when you aren't seeing the daily benefits of all your hard work. In fact, studies have shown that immediate consequences are better motivators than delayed consequences.

If you find that you're struggling to stay motivated, try tricking your brain by creating some immediate consequences for your goals:

- Buy a fancy coffee and share it with a friend. Take this time to also share your goals and thoughts.
- Take a hike with a friend. The fresh air will immediately feel good and you will be more

energized in your day.

- Take a break or do something just for yourself. Give yourself permission to read a novel, go to the movies, or get a massage.
- Think of other rewards that are meaningful to you. How do they bring value to you?

How can I overcome other barriers in achieving my goals?

Sometimes the reasons students aren't achieving their goals are multiple and complex. Sometimes they're simple and straightforward. Regardless of the reason, in order to move towards achieving the goal requires some reflection. Below are some terms that help you frame and think through what you may be motivated by and how you set goals:

Extrinsic motivator: A reason for achieving your goal that comes from outside of yourself. These might be things like pressure from your family, or money.

Intrinsic motivator: A reason for achieving your goal that comes from within yourself. These might be things like enjoyment, interest, or sense of accomplishment.

Approach goal: A goal that focuses on a good outcome, like exercising regularly to have more stamina.

Avoidance goal: A goal that is focused on avoiding a bad outcome, like doing tasks at your job regularly to avoid getting fired.

Immediate consequence: A result that happens immediately. This can be natural (like when someone claps at your presentation), or a reward that you've created for yourself (like a treat after you go to the gym).

Delayed consequence: A result that may take days, weeks, months, or even years to happen, like graduating a program.

Preparing for Advising

To set goals for your academic and career path, you must first have an understanding of the options available for you to pursue and the requirements you will need to meet. Some students enter college knowing exactly what they want to major in. They may not only have their major planned out, but they may have an idea about next steps after graduation, further education, and even where exactly they want to work in the future. That's great, but it is by no means typical.

What should you do if you are not sure what to major in and don't feel called to anything in particular? Or if you are interested in multiple majors? It's helpful to revisit your reasons for applying to college in the first place. Were you hoping to get a higher earning job? Looking for a meaningful career? Were you interested in learning for the sake of learning? Or some combination of all of those?

Part of your GSD class may include exploring these questions. But it is also important for you to be connected with your advisor.

What is academic advising?

Academic advising guides and supports undergraduate students by monitoring progress toward graduation, connecting students to resources on campus, and engaging students in discussions about their academic goals. You **must** meet with your academic advisor to receive your RAC number. Your RAC number is a unique identifier for you that allows you to register for classes.

Who is your academic advisor?

Find your academic advisor on your myEKU: go to the [myEKU homepage](#) and navigate to the appropriate card to send them an email.

How to prepare for my academic advising appointment?

1. **Prepare a list of your questions:** you might think of additional questions come up while you're talking with your advisor, so it is important to bring a list of topics you would like to discuss with your advisor. You should also visit [DegreeWorks: How-To For Students](#) before your appointment.
2. **Prepare to take notes:** your advisor may recommend you take certain actions or ask you to complete a form for them, so we recommend bringing a note-taking device with you, whether that is paper and pencil or some form of technology.
3. **If your appointment is virtual:** you'll need to use a laptop or another device that can connect to the internet so you can log into the video conferencing platform.
4. **Schedule your appointment before any major academic deadlines:** you should meet with your advisor **before** your registration window opens. This will give you time to discuss any degree requirement questions, identify other holds that will impact registration, and think about your course options to optimize your class schedule. Your advisor may recommend that you contact other offices (Financial Aid, Student Accounts, etc.) before you register for courses, so give yourself enough time to meet with those offices.

Summary

- Developing a reflective practice helps you understand where you have been and where you are going.
- Being reflective is critical to learning and processing information.

- Mindfulness is a way to stay present when things are overwhelming.
- EKU's [Counseling Center](#) and [Psychology Clinic](#) can help you with optimize your mental health.
- Having a vision for your future helps you feel connected to the work you are asked to do in your personal, academic and professional worlds.
- A vision needs to be broken down into smaller, achievable goals.
- Your academic advisor can help you with your academic goals.
- The [Office of Advising and Career Services](#) can help you with your advising needs.

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UNIT III

UNIT 3: MAJOR AND CAREERS

CHAPTER 9: ESSENTIAL EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Eastern Kentucky University is a public, four-year higher education institution. This means the curriculums, programs, and initiatives developed at ECU are partially influenced and informed by regulations mandated by Kentucky state leaders and legislators. Broadly speaking, the regulations are implemented to ensure that all graduates of postsecondary institutions leave with the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in the career and life choices they make.

Students enter ECU seeking wisdom and knowledge. They leave with the passion and purpose to make a difference in their lives, their communities, and the professions they discover.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will...

- Introduce the purpose of Essential Employability Skills
- Define the different Essential Employability skills

Kentucky Graduate Profile

The Kentucky Graduate Profile is Kentucky state's postsecondary learning framework. It is an

effort to align the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students gain in college with the skills needed for success in the workforce and in life.

All students graduating from public postsecondary institutions in Kentucky should have multiple, intentional opportunities to develop these 10 Essential Skills through the institution's curriculum and co-curricular offerings.

Student Spotlight



"I want to be a video game writer, and Eastern Kentucky actually has one of the Top 50 multimedia courses in the US, though very few know it. I couldn't afford to go anywhere out of state, and the certificate of game design offered here is exactly what I wanted from college- a certification that focused on the actual study of game design instead of also teaching programming. So, this ended up being the perfect place for me, and it's worked out great!"

-Maggie Abner,
English with Game Design Certificate,
Class of 2025

The 10 Essential Skills Framework

Specifying the skills gained through the college experience gives faculty, staff, students and employers a way to talk about the value of higher education. Students gain these 10 Essential Skills that help them be successful in their first job, throughout their career, and in their personal, social and civic lives.

The 10 Essential Skills framework helps provide structure and coherence to the college experience. It allows students to better understand the purpose of general education, how general education connects to their majors, and how their majors connect to life after college.

 Communicate effectively.	 Perform professionally.
 Think critically to solve problems and create new ideas and solutions.	 Engage in civic life to improve society.
 Apply quantitative reasoning skills to analyze and solve numerical problems.	 Collaborate and work in teams.
 Interact effectively with people from different backgrounds.	 Apply academic knowledge, skills and abilities.
 Adapt to changing circumstances while leading and supporting others.	 Use information for decision making.

Figure 9.1 The Essential Employability Skills

The 10 Essential Employability Skills Defined

Communicate effectively	Graduates will communicate effectively by listening, weighing influencing factors, and responding accurately and professionally. They will express their thoughts coherently through writing, speech, and presenting.
Think critically to solve problems and create new ideas and solutions	Graduates will think critically by evaluating assumptions and assessing information to make informed conclusions. They will also think creatively by combining ideas in original ways or developing new ways of addressing issues.
Apply quantitative reasoning skills to analyze and solve numerical problems	Graduates will hone their ability to provide solutions guided by data and choose the best methodologies for arriving at informed conclusions.
Interact effectively with people from different backgrounds	Graduates will reflect on their own cultural identities, appreciate cultural and intellectual differences, and effectively interact with people from different backgrounds. They will collaborate, communicate, and work respectfully with people with different perspectives, ideas, and cultural beliefs.
Adapt to changing circumstances while leading and supporting others	Graduates will accept change and find effective ways to work and thrive in different settings. They will motivate others in the pursuit of a common goal and coach others in the pursuit of this goal.
Perform professionally	Graduates will adhere to the code of ethics in their chosen profession and act with honesty and fairness. They will prioritize their tasks, manage their time, take initiative, and demonstrate accountability and reliability.
Engage in civic life to improve society	Graduates will engage in political, social, and other activities to address issues that benefit society.
Collaborate and work in teams	Graduates will collaborate with colleagues, become effective team members, and manage conflict.
Apply academic knowledge, skills, and abilities	Graduates will articulate and apply the theoretical content of their academic preparation with relevant knowledge and abilities essential to their chosen career.

Use information for decision making	Graduates will identify, evaluate, and responsibly use information needed for decision making.
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Building Skills in the Classroom Helps in the Workforce

Sometimes in the classroom it can feel like you’re not making progress towards your career goals. For example, you might wonder what does completing a discussion board post have to do with being a forensic scientist or maybe you’re unsure why having to take a public speaking course has anything to do with training to be a nurse. Well, a lot of the skills you’re building through course assignments translate to the job you hope to get after graduation. The discussion board posts ensure you’re distilling information and communicating it in ways that make sense to your peers. The group presentations make sure you collaborate with people who are different from you. Scroll through the infographics below to see how building workforce skills are critical to your success on the other side of college.



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=380#h5p-15>

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CHAPTER 10: MAJOR PLANNING AND EXPLORATION

Whether you have a major in mind or you're open to exploring the possibilities, there are many factors to consider.

Some students enter college knowing exactly what they want to major in. They may not only have their major planned out, but they may have an idea about next steps after graduation, further education, and even where exactly they want to work in the future. That's great, but it is by no means typical.

What should a student do if they are not sure what to major in and don't feel called to anything in particular? Or if they are interested in multiple majors? It's helpful to revisit your reasons for applying to college in the first place. Were you hoping to get a higher earning job? Looking for a meaningful career? Were you interested in learning for the sake of learning? Or maybe some combination of all of those?

Part of your GSD class includes exploring these questions. But it is also helpful to explore on your own, and these are questions that you may want to mull over during a long period of time.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will...

- Define the different types of degrees you can obtain at ECU
- Provide guidance for your degree planning

- Highlight resources at ECU to support your progress towards degree completion

University Terms and Definitions

Types of Universities and Colleges

Understanding the different types of colleges and universities can help you make more informed decisions about your education. Here are some key categories to know:

Public vs. Private Colleges

- **Public colleges** are funded by state and local governments. Because of this, they usually offer **lower tuition rates**, especially for students who live in the same state.
- **Private colleges** rely on tuition, donations, and other private sources of funding. Tuition is often higher, but these schools may offer **generous financial aid** packages to help cover costs.

Four-Year vs. Two-Year Institutions

- **Four-year institutions** offer programs that lead to a **bachelor's degree**. These include large universities and smaller liberal arts colleges, and they're often referred to as "undergraduate colleges."
- **Two-year colleges** offer **associate degrees** and shorter **certificate programs**, many of which can be completed in less than two years. These include **community colleges**, **technical schools**, and **career colleges** which are great options for students looking to enter the workforce quickly or transfer to a four-year school later on.

University vs. College

- A **university** is a larger institution that offers both **undergraduate and graduate degrees**; for example, bachelor's, master's, and doctorates. Universities are often divided into specialized schools or **colleges** (like a College of Business or College of Education), each focusing on

a different area of study. With more academic programs and research opportunities, universities prepare students for a broad range of careers or advanced study.

- A **college** is typically smaller, with a focus on **undergraduate education**. Colleges often offer more personalized attention, **smaller class sizes**, and a strong sense of community. Some colleges are independent, while others are part of larger universities.

Planning Your Degree Path

To set goals for your academic and career path, you need to know the options available for you to pursue and the requirements you will need to meet. The next section provides an overview of academic programs and college degrees that are common among many colleges and universities in the United States. The intention of this section is both to help you understand your opportunities and to familiarize you with language that colleges typically use to describe these opportunities. After reviewing this section, you should be better able to formulate specific questions to ask advisors and instructors or be better prepared to navigate and search ECU's websites.

Types of Degrees

In most states high school attendance through the 12th grade is compulsory, a college degree, however, may be pursued voluntarily. There are fields that do not require a degree. Bookkeeping, computer repair, massage therapy, and childcare are all fields where certification programs — tracks to study a specific subject or career without need of a complete degree — may be enough.

Yet, many individuals will find that an associate's or bachelor's degree is a requirement to enter their desired career field. According to United States Census data published in 2017, more than one-third of the adult population in the country has completed at least a bachelor's degree, so this may be the degree that is most familiar to you.

Not every job requires a bachelor's degree, and some require even higher degrees or additional specialized certifications. As you develop your academic plan, it is important to research your field of interest to see what requirements might be necessary or most desirable.

Require Associate's Degrees	Require Bachelor's Degrees	Require Additional Certifications	Require Graduate Degrees
Radiology Technician	Nurse	Public School Teacher	Lawyer
Dental Hygienist	Computer/Information Systems Manager	Accountant	College or University Professor
Web Developer	Airline Pilot	Financial Advisor	Pharmacist
Graphic Designer	Electrical Engineer		Marriage and Family Therapist
Automotive Technician	Construction Manager		Occupational Therapist

To distinguish between the types of degrees, it is useful to understand that courses are often assigned a number of **credits**, sometimes called **semester hours** as well. Credits relate to the calculated hours during a course that a student spends interacting with the instructor and/or the course material through class time, laboratory time, online discussions, homework, etc. Courses at all degree levels are typically assigned a value of one to six credits, although students often need to complete a developmental education course or two, often in English or math. These requirements, which cost as much as typical college courses but do not grant college credit, are meant to provide some basic information students may have missed in high school but that will be necessary to keep up in college-level coursework.

The minimum or maximum number of credits required to graduate with different degrees varies by state or institution, but approximate minimum numbers of credits are explained below. Keep in mind that although a minimum number of credits must be completed to get a certain degree, total credits completed is not the only consideration for graduation—you must take your credits or courses in particular subjects as indicated by your college.

To determine your best degree option, it might make sense to do some research to determine what kind of career you're most interested in pursuing. Visit ECU's [Office of Advising & Career Services](#) (OACS) to meet with an advisor or counselor to guide you through this process. These services are free to students—similar services can be pricey once you've graduated, so take advantage. There are other tools online you can investigate. For example, developed by the University of Tennessee, [Visit What Can I Do With This Major](#) provides info on majors, career opportunities, and strategies for success.

Associate's Degrees

To enter an associate's degree program, students must have a high school diploma or its equivalent. **Associate's degree** programs may be intended to help students enter a technical career field, such as automotive technology or graphic design. Such technical programs may be considered an Associate of Applied Arts (AAA) or Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees, though there are other titles as well.

Other associate's degree programs are intended to prepare a student with the necessary coursework to transfer into a bachelor's degree program upon graduation. These transfer-focused programs usually require similar general education and foundational courses that a student would need in the first half of a bachelor's degree program. Transfer-focused associate's degrees may be called Associate of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS), or other titles, depending on the focus of study.

An associate's degree is typically awarded when a student has completed a minimum of 60 credits, approximately 20 courses, meeting the requirements of a specific degree. Some technical associate's degrees, such as nursing, may require additional credits in order to meet requirements for special certifications. You may find that your college or university does not offer associate's degrees. Most associate's degrees are offered by community or junior colleges, or by career and technical colleges.

Bachelor's Degrees

When someone generally mentions "a college degree," they are often referring to the bachelor's degree, or **baccalaureate degree**. Because it takes a total of four years of full-time attendance to complete a bachelor's degree, this degree is also referred to as a "four-year degree." Similar to an associate's degree, to enter a bachelor's degree program a student must have completed a high school diploma or its equivalent. Both associate's degrees and bachelor's degrees are considered undergraduate degrees, thus students working toward these degrees are often called undergraduates. A student with an associate's degree may transfer that degree to meet some (usually half) of the requirements of a bachelor's degree; however, completion of an associate's degree is not necessary for entry into a bachelor's degree program.

A bachelor's degree is usually completed with a minimum of 120 credits, or approximately 40 courses. Some specialized degree programs may require more credits. (If an associate's degree has been transferred, the number of credits from that degree usually counts toward the 120 credits. For example, if an associate's degree was 60 credits, then a student must take 60 additional credits to achieve their bachelor's degree.)

Bachelor of Arts (BA), Bachelor of Science (BS), Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), and Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) are the most popular degree titles at this level and differ primarily in

their focus on exploring a broader range of subject areas, as with a BA, versus focusing in more depth on a particular subject, as with a BS, BSN, or BFA. Regardless of whether a student is pursuing a BA, BS, BSN, or BFA, each of these programs requires a balance of credits or courses in different subject areas. In the United States, a bachelor's degree comprises courses from three categories: general education courses, major courses, and electives. A fourth category of courses would be those required for a minor, which we will discuss in more detail in the section on majors and minors.

General education, also called core curriculum, is a group of courses that are often set as requirements by your state or by your individual college. These courses provide you with a foundation of knowledge across a breadth of fields and are also intended to help you further develop college-level critical-thinking and problem-solving abilities. You may be able to select courses from a general education menu of courses available at your institution. One-third to one-half of your bachelor's degree program is likely made up of general education courses.

Majors and Minors

One of the most common questions an undergraduate college student will be asked is “What’s your major?” Your major is only one part of your undergraduate (associate’s or bachelor’s) degree, but it is the part that most demonstrates your interests and possible future goals. At some point during your studies you will be asked to decide on, or declare, a major. You may also be able to select a minor or additional concentration. Whereas a major comprises approximately 10–12 courses of a bachelor’s degree program and is required, a minor is usually 5–8 courses, is often optional, and may count toward or contribute to exceeding the total number of credits required for graduation. Rather than take elective courses, some students will select courses that meet the requirements for a minor. When selecting a major and possibly a minor, you’ll want to consider how the knowledge and skills you gain through those fields of study prepare you for a particular career. Majors and minors can be complementary. For example, a major in business might be well-matched with a minor in a foreign language, thus allowing the student to pursue a career in business with a company that hires bilingual employees. It is important to research careers of interest to you when selecting your major and/or minor to determine what will best help you to meet your goals.

At ECU, students who are declared majors will be assigned an advisor that is housed within

the corresponding college. Exploratory students are assigned an advisor who is in the [Office of Advising and Career Services \(OACS\)](#).

Electives

Electives are free-choice courses. Though you may have a choice to select from a menu of options to meet general education and major requirements, electives are even less restricted. Some students may be able to take more electives than others due to their choice of major or if they are able to take courses that meet more than one requirement (for example, a sociology course may be both a major requirement and a general education social science course). Some colleges intentionally allow room for electives in a program to ensure that students, particularly those students who are undecided about their major, are able to explore different programs without exceeding the total number of credits required to graduate with a bachelor's degree. In other cases, students may have taken all of their major courses and fulfilled their general education requirements but still need additional credits to fulfill the minimum to graduate. The additional courses taken to meet the total credit requirement (if necessary) are considered electives.

Special Requirements of Majors

Undergraduate majors involve special requirements beyond the usual courses and classroom experience to prepare students for entrance to their career. Such requirements provide students practical experience or prerequisites for licensure necessary for a particular job. When requirements are major-specific, it is often because the requirement is state-mandated for that job. Majors that often include state-mandated special requirements are education, social work, and nursing. Some colleges and universities may require all students to participate in additional experiences beyond their regular coursework. You will want to ask your college about details specific to your major or institution. In this section we will generally discuss four such special requirements and experiences: fieldwork and internships, clinicals, student teaching, and service learning.

Fieldwork and Internships

Fieldwork and internships may also be referred to as practicums and field experience. These requirements provide hands-on work experience in a career, or field. When fieldwork or internships are required for your major, such as with a social work major, it is often listed as a course requirement among your major requirements. In other words, you usually receive credits for your fieldwork as you would for a lab or lecture course. Your fieldwork instructor will likely ask

you to reflect on and report on your experiences. They will likely confer with a supervisor at your fieldwork site, the place where you are working, to help assess your hands-on learning. Fieldwork and internships provide students with opportunities to practice the skills they've learned in the classroom while also introducing them to the values and culture of the organizations and communities in which they hope to be employed. It is important to note that fieldwork and internship experiences are often available to students even if they are not required for their major. You may want to inquire with your academic advisors, faculty, or career services office to determine what opportunities might be available for you to gain this type of experience in your field of interest.

Clinicals

Clinicals are a type of fieldwork specifically required of nursing students. Clinicals may take place in hospitals, nursing homes, or mental health facilities. They provide nursing students who are nearing the end of their degree programs with the opportunity to practice nursing skills that cannot be learned in a regular classroom. During clinicals, students will interact with real patients to conduct physical examinations, draw blood, administer medicine, and provide other care as necessary. Because of the risk to patients, students participating in clinicals are more closely supervised by experienced professionals than those in other types of fieldwork experiences. Thus, clinicals function very much like a real-world classroom and progress to more independent work through the semester. Before undertaking clinicals, nursing students will need to complete certain coursework and pass a physical examination and background check. Because clinicals are often much longer than a class meeting, students will need to work with staff from the program to plan their schedule. It may not be feasible to work at another job while completing clinicals, so if you must work while you're in college, it's important to discuss this with nursing staff or academic advisors and to plan ahead.

Student Teaching

Student teaching is a specific type of fieldwork undertaken by students who plan to teach at the preschool, elementary, or middle and high school levels. Education students are often required to complete a student teaching experience in order to obtain a teaching license in their state. Students must often complete core education coursework prior to student teaching and must complete a background check prior to placement in a school setting. During their student teaching experience, students are usually paired one-on-one with an experienced teacher and have the opportunity to observe that teacher, get to know the students, understand the classroom culture, and participate in lessons as a teaching assistant as needed or appropriate. Much like nursing clinicals, this highly supervised fieldwork experience usually progresses to

more independent work when the student teacher is asked to deliver and reflect on a lesson plan of their own design. Keep in mind as you plan for student teaching that unlike other fieldwork experiences, student teaching is limited to fall or spring semesters and cannot be completed in the summer because most schools are closed during the summer terms. Also, it may not be feasible to work at another job while completing your student teaching experience, so if you must work while you're in college, it's important to discuss this with your program staff or academic advisors and to plan ahead.

Education Abroad Office (Crabbe Library Atrium, Room 225)

The Education Abroad office at Eastern Kentucky University helps students explore opportunities to study in other countries. Located in Crabbe Library Atrium (Room 225), the office is open Monday through Friday and offers weekly info sessions on Fridays at 3 p.m. Students can meet one-on-one with an advisor to learn about programs that fit their major, interests, and schedule. Whether you want to go abroad for a few weeks in the summer or a whole semester, the office can help you find the right program.

The office supports students every step of the way as they prepare to study abroad. They can help with things like applying for a passport or visa, and helping you book your flight. Advisors also help you figure out how the credits you earn abroad will integrate into your degree program, from general education requirements to major coursework, and even internships or student teaching abroad.

Worried about the cost? The Education Abroad office offers guidance on scholarships and financial aid that can help cover the cost of your program. They also help students apply for national scholarships and can share creative ideas for raising money, like fundraising. From start to finish, the Education Abroad Office is there to support you every step of the way so you can have a successful and enriching international educational experience.

Study Abroad Resources

[Book an Advising Appointment](#)

[Spin the Wheel Scholarship](#)

[Study Abroad Programs](#)

[Study Abroad Scholarship Resources](#)

[Register to Attend Information Sessions through Engage](#)

Choosing your Major or Minor

- Do some fact-finding. Browse through the [EKU Academic Programs](#) or [EKU Undergraduate/Graduate Catalogs](#) to learn about degree options, admission requirements, and coursework.
- Explore ECU DegreeWorks. Conduct a “What If” audit for a potential timeline for graduation with each major, as well as specific courses you need for degree completion.
- Visit the department. Schedule an appointment with a department chair, adviser, or faculty member to get your questions answered.
- Network. Talk to upperclassmen or alumni about majors of interest.



Student Spotlight

“I’m an out-of-state student, originally from Alabama! At first, I was nervous about moving five hours away from home, however, it was the best decision I could’ve made for myself! I’ve made so many friends and have since become more immersed in deaf culture. I even work on campus as an ARA for the admissions office as well!”

*-Emma Parker,
Pre-ASL Interpreting,
Class of 2028*

Academic Advising

What is academic advising?

Academic advising guides and supports undergraduate students by monitoring progress toward

graduation, connecting students to resources on campus, and engaging students in discussions about their academic goals. You must meet with your academic advisor to receive your RAC number. Your RAC number is a unique identifier for you that allows you to register for classes.

The Role of Your Academic Advisor

Class and Degree Planning: One of the primary roles of your Academic Advisor is to help you plan your classes and create a roadmap for achieving your academic goals. They will work with you to develop a personalized plan that takes into account your interests, strengths, and any specific requirements of your chosen program. This plan will help you stay on track, avoid unnecessary courses, and ensure that you're taking classes in the optimal sequence for your degree.

Student Success Strategies and Resources: College life can present various challenges, from managing your time effectively to navigating online courses. Your Academic Advisor is a wealth of knowledge when it comes to student success strategies and can provide you with tips, techniques, and resources to help you thrive. They can also connect you with additional support services on campus, making them an excellent first point of contact for any questions or concerns you may have.

How often you should meet with your advisor: At ECU, we believe in the importance of regular communication between students and their advisors. As a degree-seeking student, you are required to meet with your advisor during your first semester, before registering for your second semester. This initial meeting is an opportunity to co-create your academic plan, discuss any challenges or successes you've experienced, and ensure that you're on the right path to achieving your goals. Beyond this mandatory first meeting, we recommend connecting with your advisor at least once per semester. These check-ins allow you to review your progress, make any necessary adjustments to your plan, and discuss your next steps. You should also reach out to your advisor anytime you need to make changes to your plan, are experiencing difficulties in your classes, or have questions about your future beyond ECU.

Transfer Support: If your goal is to transfer to another institution, your advisor can provide invaluable assistance. They can help you research potential transfer schools, understand transfer requirements, and navigate the process of sending transcripts and other necessary documents. Whether you have a quick question or need more in-depth guidance, your advisor is here to help demystify the transfer process.

Connecting with Your Advisor

Find your academic advisor by logging into [myECU](#), then navigate to the appropriate card to send them an email.

Connect with the Office of Advising and Career Services (OACS)

The journey to a successful and fulfilling college journey is supported by OACS. They use a personalized approach, and their staff can help you clarify your preferences, explore your options, and make meaningful decisions.

Major and Career Exploration typically consists of 3-5 appointments each appointment lasting about an hour. The major and career exploration process can take anywhere from a couple of weeks or longer, depending on your availability. [Schedule an appointment with the Office of Advising and Career Services.](#)

Summary

- Not everyone knows what they want to do exactly when they enroll at EKU.
- Students who plan their academic journey succeed at higher rates than those who do not.
- There are different requirements for different majors and minors.
- Academic advising is crucial to making your journey towards completion faster and smoother.
- You must connect with your academic advisor once per semester to register for the following semester's courses.

References

Choosing A Major. (2025, March 4). Eastern Kentucky University. <https://www.eku.edu/in/guides/choosing-a-major/>

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System. (2008, March 24). Bls.gov. <https://www.bls.gov/soc/>

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CHAPTER 11: CAREER PLANNING

Do what you love and you'll never work a day in your life.

A **job**: yes, it's something you would like to have, especially if you want to pay your bills. A job lets you enjoy a—at the very least—minimal level of financial security. A job requires you to show up and do what is required of you; in exchange, you get paid. A **career** involves holding jobs, but it is more a means of achieving personal fulfillment. In a career, your jobs follow a sequence that leads to increasing mastery, professional development, and personal and financial satisfaction. A career requires planning, knowledge, and skills. If it is to be a fulfilling career, it requires that you bring into play your full set of analytical, critical, and creative thinking skills to make informed decisions that will affect your life in both the short term and the long term.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will...

- Provide context for your interests related to your potential career
- Suggest resources to help you make progress towards your goals

What Do You Want to Do When You “Grow Up”?

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2008) defines 867 occupations in its Standard Occupation Classification system—and new occupations are being created at an ever-faster rate. Just thirty years ago, would anyone have imagined the job of a social media marketing specialist? How about the concept of a competitive chef? As new careers develop and old careers morph into almost unrecognizable versions of their original, it's OK if you aren't able to pinpoint exactly what occupation or career will be your lifetime passion. However, it is important to define as best you

can what field you will want to develop your career in, because that will help dictate your major and your course selections.

The process of career exploration can be a lot of fun, as it allows you to discover a world of possibilities. Even those students who have a pretty clear idea of what they want to do should go through this process because they will discover new options as backups and occasionally a new direction even more attractive than their original choice. The career exploration process involves four phases.



Student Spotlight

"Growing up, I was very curious about the world around me and as I entered high school, I realized my science classes helped satisfy that curiosity. At the same time, I also enjoyed my school's mock government club and my government classes. As it came time to choose a major for college, I considered law school but realized my true passion lay in science. I discovered ECU's Forensic Science program and realized it would be the perfect blend of science and the court of law."

-Ally Palumbo,
Forensic Science,
Class of 2026

Phase A: Who Am I?

Getting to know who you are—who you really are—is the first step. Be careful to base your self-discovery on what *you* think, not what others think of you or expect you to do. For example, don't just believe what your friends have said about you for years or immediately join the family business simply out of obligation. This is all about you.

You are a unique individual with a distinct combination of likes, dislikes, personality traits, and

skills. But you are not so different that you can't be identified with certain personality types, and those types may help you narrow your career choices. Consider, for example, the career theory developed by Dr. John Holland. Holland defined six categories of people based on personality, interests, and skills:

Realistic. These people describe themselves as honest, loyal, and practical. They are doers more than thinkers. They have strong mechanical, motor, and athletic abilities; like the outdoors; and prefer working with machines, tools, plants, and animals.

Investigative. These people love problem solving and analytical skills. They are intellectually stimulated and often mathematically or scientifically inclined; like to observe, learn, and evaluate; prefer working alone; and are reserved.

Artistic. These people are the “free spirits.” They are creative, emotional, intuitive, and idealistic; have a flair for communicating ideas; dislike structure and prefer working independently; and like to sing, write, act, paint, and think creatively. They are similar to the investigative type but are interested in the artistic and aesthetic aspects of things more than the scientific.

Social. These are “people” people. They are friendly and outgoing; love to help others, make a difference, or both; have strong verbal and personal skills and teaching abilities; and are less likely to engage in intellectual or physical activity.

Enterprising. These people are confident, assertive risk takers. They are sociable; enjoy speaking and leadership; like to persuade rather than guide; like to use their influence; have strong interpersonal skills; and are status conscious.

Conventional. These people are dependable, detail oriented, disciplined, precise, persistent, and practical; value order; and are good at clerical and numerical tasks. They work well with people and data, so they are good organizers, schedulers, and project managers.



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<https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=384#h5p-20>

Phase B: What's Out There?

Holland studied people who were successful and happy in many occupations and matched their occupations to their occupational type, creating a description of the types of occupations that are best suited to each personality type. Just as many individuals are more than one personality type, many jobs show a strong correlation to more than one occupational type.

	Ideal Environments	Sample Occupations
Realistic	Structured Clear lines of authority Work with things and tools Casual dress Focus on tangible results or well-thought-out goals	Contractor Emergency medical technician (EMT) Mechanic Military career Packaging engineer
Investigative	Nonstructured Research oriented Intellectual Work with ideas and data	Pharmacist Lab technician Nanotechnologist Geologist College professor
Artistic	Nonstructured Creative Rewards unconventional and aesthetic approaches Creation of products and ideas	Advertising career Architect Animator Musician Journalist
Social	Collaborative Collegial Work with people and on people-related problems/issues Work as a team or community	Teacher Geriatric counselor Correctional officer Coach Nurse
Enterprising	Typical business environment Results oriented Driven Work with people and data Entrepreneurial Power focused	Sales manager Banker Lawyer Business owner Restaurant manager
Conventional	Orderly Clear rules and policies Consistent processes Work with systems to manipulate and organize data Control and handling of money	Auditor Insurance underwriter Bank teller Office manager Database manager

Phase C: What Factors Might Affect My Choice?

You may now have an idea of careers you want to explore. But there are other factors you will need to take into consideration as well. It is important to use your creative thinking skills to come

up with alternative “right” answers to factors that may present an obstacle to pursuing the right career.

Timing. How much time must I invest before I actually start making money in this career? Will I need to spend additional time in school? Is there a certification process that requires a specific amount of experience? If so, can I afford to wait?

Finances. Will this career provide me with the kind of income I need in the short term and the security I’ll want in the longer term? What investment will I need to make to be successful in this field (education, tools, franchise fees, etc.)?

Location. Does this career require me to relocate? Is the ideal location for this career somewhere I would like to live? Is it somewhere my family would like to live?

Family/Personal. How will this career affect my personal and family life? Do friends and family members who know me well feel strongly (for or against) about this career choice? How important is their input?

Phase D: Where Do I Go from Here?

It may seem odd to be thinking about life after school if you are just getting started, but you will soon be making decisions about your future; regardless of the direction you may choose, there is a lot you can do while still in college. You will need to focus your studies by choosing a major. You should find opportunities to explore the careers that interest you. You can ensure that you are building the right kind of experience on which to base a successful career. These steps will make your dreams come to life and make them achievable.

Start by developing a relationship with the advisors and counselors in EKU’s Office of Advising & Career Services (OACS). All too often students engage these advisors and counselors only near the end of their college days, when the pressure is just on getting a job—any job—after having completed a degree; however, they can be of great help in matching your interests to a career and in ensuring you are gathering the right kind of experience to put you at the top of the recruiting heap.

Keep in mind that deciding on and pursuing a career is an ongoing process. The more you learn about yourself and the career options that best suit you, the more you will need to fine-tune your career plan. Don’t be afraid to consider new ideas, but don’t make changes without careful consideration. Career planning is exciting: learning about yourself and about career opportunities, and considering the factors that can affect your decision, should be a core part of your thoughts while in college.

Working while in College

Federal or Institutional Work Study

Student employment is a great way to earn money for personal expenses. The federal and institutional work-study program pays the student an hourly wage for working on campus. It is important to note that federal work-study money goes directly to the student and not to the amount the student owes the University for tuition and other charges. This is potentially provided through your financial aid package. The work study program is designed to help students with the personal expenses component of their cost of attendance budget.

To find a federal or institutional work study job visit [EKU Careers](#).

Handshake

Handshake is the nation's #1 college-to-career network and student-centered jobs board. With a community of over 17 million students, alumni, employers, and career educators, Handshake's network is where career advice and discovery turn into first, second, and third jobs. Nearly 1 million companies use Handshake to build their future workforce—from Fortune 500 to federal agencies, school districts to startups, healthcare systems to small businesses. Handshake is built for where you're going, not where you've been. To create a profile, visit ECU's [Handshake portal](#).

Co-Ops & Internships

Co-Ops and internships provide meaningful, hands-on, practical application of classroom knowledge, allowing students to gain skills and experience needed to become employable in their field of study through appropriate opportunities that maintain the integrity of their academic degree.

Requirements differ depending on your program of study. Be sure to check with your Academic Advisor and [Faculty Coordinator](#) to make sure you're doing everything you need to do to complete the credit for your program. If you are unsure of who your advisor is, be sure to visit the Office of Advising and Career Services (OACS) and click the "Find My Advisor" button.

Off Campus Employment

National Resources & Job Boards

- [LinkedIn](#)

- [Indeed](#)
- [Simply Hired](#)
- [ZipRecruiter](#)

Local Resources and Job Boards

- [Help Wanted Lexington](#)
- [Kentucky Works](#)
- [KY Career Center](#)
- [UK Cooperative Extension Job Club](#)

Non-Profit

- [Idealist.org](#)
- [Kynonprofits.com](#)
- [Center for Non-Profit Excellence](#)

For more information or help finding part-time, off-campus employment contact ECU's Job Location & Development Coordinator, through the OACS office.

Office of Advising & Career Services (Whitlock Building 468)

The [Office of Advising and Career Services](#) assists students in achieving their academic and career-related goals, from navigating their first year of college and choosing an inspiring major/career to pursuing experiential learning and preparing to target a variety of job opportunities. Services include academic advising, career counseling, co-op/internship search and assistance, job search preparation, employer events and a Part-Time Job Program.

Summary

- The right career for you depends on your interests, your personality, and your skills.
- Defining your occupational type may confirm career choices you have already made and open entirely new options for you.
- Career planning is an ongoing process involving knowing yourself, knowing about career options, and understanding the context in which your decisions will be made.

References

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2008, March 24). *Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System*. Bls.gov. <https://www.bls.gov/soc/>

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CHAPTER 12: PROFESSIONALISM

Professionalism is not perfection, but progression.

Whether you're on the job or in the classroom, there are spoken and unspoken rules and standards that we need to abide by. For example, when we're young we learn that there is such a thing as an "inside voice." This approach teaches young people that when we're talking we should be speaking at a decibel level appropriate to that situation. Similarly, we learn that punctuality, or the process of arriving on time for meetings and hitting deadlines, is expected, even if there might be different degrees of flexibility.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will...

- Discuss different ways professionalism shows up in the classroom and workforce
- Explore how to engage in professional ways with peers, professors, and employers

What is professionalism?

Professionalism is the concept that there are standards of conduct, behavior, and attitude expected from a person in their specific setting. Namely, professionalism describes the qualities someone is expected to have and adhere to in academic and professional settings. What can be tricky about professionalism is that even though there are things expected of us, they are not universal. Rather, the standards and expectations are often dependent on one's geographic location, chosen career, university culture, and even something like generation. And so, having an understanding of professionalism more broadly will help you figure out what standards of behavior your courses and your future career path require from you. For instance, as a therapist

you will be expected to adhere to a professional code of conduct of not discussing your patients' experiences with others.

Professionalism in the Classroom

Guidelines for Communicating with Professors

Getting along with professors and communicating well begins with attitude. As experts in their field, professors deserve your respect. Remember that a college education is a collaborative process that works best when students and professors communicate freely in an exchange of ideas, information, and perspectives. So while you should respect your professors, you shouldn't fear them. As you get to know them better, you'll learn their personalities and find appropriate ways to communicate.

Here are some guidelines for getting along with and communicating with your professors:

- **Prepare before going to the professor's office.** Go over your notes on readings and lectures and write down your specific questions. You'll feel more comfortable, and the professor will appreciate your being organized.
- **Don't forget to introduce yourself.** Especially near the beginning of the term, don't assume your professor has learned everyone's names yet and don't make him or her have to ask you.
- **Respect the professor's time.** In addition to teaching, college professors sit on committees, do research and other professional work, and have personal lives. Don't show up two minutes before the end of an office hour and expect the professor to stay late to talk with you.
- **Realize that the professor will recognize you from class – even in a large lecture hall.** If you spent a lecture class joking around with friends in the back row, don't think you can show up during office hours to find out what you missed while you weren't paying attention.
- **Don't try to fool a professor.** Insincere praise or making excuses for not doing an assignment won't make it in college. To earn your professor's respect, come to class prepared, do the work, participate genuinely in class, and show respect—and the professor will be happy to see you when you come to office hours or need some extra help.
- **Try to see things from the professor's point of view.** Imagine that you spent a couple of hours preparing PowerPoint slides and a class lecture on something you find very stimulating and exciting. Standing in front of a full room, you are gratified to see faces smiling and heads nodding as people understand what you're saying – they really get it! And then a student after class asks, "Is this going to be on the test?" How would you feel?
- **Be professional when talking to a professor.** You can be cordial and friendly, but keep it

professional and on an adult level. Come to office hours prepared with your questions – not just to chat or joke around. Be prepared to accept criticism in a professional way, without taking it personally or complaining.

- **Use your best communication skills.** Learn the difference between assertive communication and passive or aggressive communication.

Email Best Practices

We talked about emailing etiquette in Chapter 2: Wellness. However, it's always good form to return to things you've learned as a refresher:

- Use your ECU college email for all communications with ECU college staff and faculty.
- Consider setting up a professional email outside of your school account to use for future work endeavors. Be sure to use a professional email name; some version of your full real name is a great starting point.
- Use the subject line to label your message effectively at a glance. "May I make an appointment?" says something; "In your office?" doesn't. Putting your class number in the subject line is helpful for your professor as well.
- Address email messages as you do a letter, beginning "Dear Professor ____."
- Include your full name, your class number, and/or your class time, especially at the start of the semester when professors are still getting to know you.
- Get to your point quickly and concisely. Don't make the reader scroll down a long email to see what it is you want to say.
- Because email is a written communication, it does not express emotion the way a voice message does. Don't attempt to be funny, ironic, or sarcastic. Write as you would in a paper for class. In a large lecture class or an online course, your e-mail voice may be the primary way your instructor knows you, and emotionally charged messages can be confusing or give a poor impression.
- Don't use capital letters to emphasize. All caps look like SHOUTING.
- Avoid abbreviations, nonstandard spelling, slang, and emoticons like smiley faces. These do not convey a professional tone. Acronyms are fine if you are sure the professor knows what they stand for.
- Don't make demands or state expectations such as "I'll expect to hear from you soon" or "If I haven't heard by 4 p.m., I'll assume you'll accept my paper late."
- When you reply to a message, leave the original message within yours. Your reader may need to recall what he or she said in the original message.
- Be polite. End the message with a "Thank you", "Sincerely," or something similar.
- Proofread your message before sending it.

- With any important message to a work supervisor or instructor, it's a good idea to wait and review the message later before sending it. You may have expressed an emotion or thought that you will think better about later. Many problems have resulted when people send messages too quickly without thinking.

Resolving a Problem with Your Professor

The most common issue students experience with a professor involves receiving a grade lower than they think they deserve – especially new students not yet used to the higher standards of college. It's depressing to get a low grade, but it's not the end of the world. Don't be too hard on yourself – or on the professor.

Take a good look at what happened on the test or paper and make sure you know what to do better next time. Review the chapters on studying habits, time management, and taking tests. If you genuinely believe you deserved a higher grade, you can talk with your professor.

How you communicate in that conversation, however, is very important. Professors are used to hearing students complain about grades and patiently explaining their standards for grading. Most professors seldom change grades. Yet it can still be worthwhile to talk with the professor because of what you will learn from the experience.

Follow these guidelines to talk about a grade or resolve any other problem or disagreement with a professor:

- First go over the requirements for the paper or test and the professor's comments. Be sure you actually have a reason for discussing the grade – not just that you didn't do well. Be prepared with specific points you want to go over.
- Make an appointment with your professor during their office hours or another time. Don't try to talk about this before or after class or with email or the telephone.
- Begin by politely explaining that you thought you did better on the assignment or test (not simply that you think you deserve a better grade) and that you'd like to go over it to better understand the result.
- Allow the professor to explain their comments on the assignment or grading of the test. Don't complain or whine; instead, show your appreciation for the explanation. Raise any specific questions or make comments at this time. For example, you might say, "I really thought I was being clear here when I wrote...."
- Use good listening skills. Whatever you do, don't argue!
- Ask the professor for advice on what you might do on the next assignment or when preparing for the next test. You may be offered some individual help or receive good study advice, and your professor will respect your willingness to make the effort as long as it's clear that you're more interested in learning than simply getting the grade.

Controlling Anger over Grades

If you're going to talk with a professor about your grade or any other problem, control any anger you may be feeling. The GPS Life Plan project of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System offers some insights into this process:

- Being upset about a grade is good because it shows you care and that you have passion about your education. But anger prevents clear thinking, so rein it in first.
- Since anger involves bodily reactions, physical actions can help you control anger: try some deep breathing first.
- Try putting yourself in your professor's shoes and seeing the situation from their point of view. Try to understand how grading is not a personal issue of "liking" you — that they are really doing something for your educational benefit.
- It's not your life that's being graded. Things outside your control can result in not doing well on a test or assignment, but the professor can grade only on what you actually did on that test or assignment — not what you could have done or are capable of doing. Understanding this can help you accept what happened and not take a grade personally.

Working with Classmates

Do you dread group projects? Maybe you've had a bad experience with one in the past, or you are concerned that you may have to do all the work. But in fact, group projects (also called project-based learning) model the real-world environment of the workplace and help you to practice a variety of durable skills including communication, conflict management, collaboration, leadership, and time management

In fact, studies have shown that group projects can have a positive impact on student success in college. Here are just a few of the benefits researchers have found for students who participate in group projects or project-based learning:

Improved learning outcomes: Research has shown that group projects can lead to better learning outcomes compared to individual assignments. In group projects, students are more likely to engage in deeper learning, engage in meaningful discussions, and retain information better (Brindley et al., 2009).

Development of transferable skills: Group projects can help students develop transferable skills, such as communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills, which are valuable in both personal and professional life (Ornellas et al, 2019; Garnjost & Lawter, 2019).

Increased motivation and engagement: Group projects can increase student motivation and

engagement, as students are more likely to be invested in the project when they feel that their contributions matter (Hira & Anderson, 2021).

Higher student satisfaction: Students who participate in group projects tend to report higher levels of satisfaction with their course and the learning experience (Lee et al., 2014).

Improved grades: Studies have shown that students who participate in group projects tend to perform better academically compared to those who do individual assignments (Shimazoe & Aldrich, 2010).

As you can see, group projects can be an effective teaching strategy in college because group work can lead to improved learning outcomes, development of transferable skills, increased motivation and engagement, higher student satisfaction, and improved grades.



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Emotional Intelligence

We've talked about emotional intelligence when it comes to listening. Recognizing your own emotions and those of others will help you avoid miscommunication as well. When you are aware of your own emotional state and you have the skills to address and adjust, your communication with others will improve. You're less likely to blurt out an angry retort to a perceived criticism, for example.

You're better able to manage communication when you recognize someone else's emotions, as well. A conversation can veer into hostile territory if someone feels attacked, or perhaps simply because they've had an emotional experience related to the conversation that you don't understand. Taking note of other people's emotional responses during a conversation and listening and speaking with empathy will help you manage the situation.

When conversations begin to feel heated, it's a good idea to pause and ask yourself why. If it's you who are feeling defensive and angry, make an effort to recognize the source of your frustration and try to take a step back, perhaps leaving the conversation until you're better able to control your emotions and communicate in a way that's more clearheaded and calm.

If it's someone else who's emotional, again, ask yourself why. Can you see reasons that this person may feel attacked, belittled, or usurped? If you can recognize their emotion and address it, you may be able to get the communication back on solid footing.

Tips for Group Work

Communication is Key

- Reach out to your group members as soon as you can, the earlier the better.
- Determine early on what everyone's main preferences are around communicating. Default to the easiest method. If everyone texts, set up a group message. If everyone prefers to use a particular platform (e.g., Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, Discord), use that. Get all group members contact info up front.
- Collectively communicate your availability for the next days/weeks working backwards from the project deadline date.
- Get to know the members in your group, their strengths and preferred ways of working. Try to recognize that everyone has an opinion and that individuals have different methods of working and learning. Consider building in an icebreaker activity to get everyone comfortable with knowing each other and sharing with one another.
- Ideally, start off with one face-to-face meeting. The remainder of your collaboration can be online/virtual, but the in-person meeting will help foster trust and familiarity with your group members.

Decide what Collaborative Tools your Group will use

Group projects benefit from the use of collaborative tools that facilitate the ability for all group members to be able to access and work on planning and development docs and files in real time. Both Microsoft and Google applications provide this ability (through Office 365 and G-Suite for Education) and can also help with version control in case of any hiccups along the way! They also can be used to build in a peer review loop – evaluating and providing feedback on project assets along the way. Find out at the outset what tools everyone is familiar and comfortable with using.

Assign Roles and Tasks

Split the work to be done into different tasks that make use of individual strengths. Having roles both in the execution of your tasks and in meetings / discussions (e.g. Arani is responsible for summarizing discussions, Joseph for ensuring everybody has a say and accepts resolutions etc.) can help to make a happy, effective team. Distribute work between members can also make it less overwhelming and easier to complete because group members can work independently on their sections.

- **Leader:** Leads discussion with open-ended questions, Encourages all group members; Facilitates brainstorming by summarizing and clarifying group comments; Helps guide

conversation and focuses on positive statements; Checks for consensus or questions from group members

- Organizer: Schedules meetings; Keeps the project on track; Thinks about the 'big picture'; Ensures meetings follow a timeline/agenda; Takes notes at meetings to send to everyone afterwards
- Editors: Edits completed work; Compiles different pieces of reports/presentations from different group members to create 'flow' and consistency
- Researchers: Researches topics for the project; Presents information to the group; Provides the group members with sources and information
- Writers: Writes the project/report/presentation; Responsible to follow guideline so that editor(s) have time to review and compile information
- Trouble-shooter/Brainstormer: Thinks about positive/negatives of ideas presented by the group; Thinks about possible solutions to problems; Critiques project based on assignment expectations/rubric to ensure success
- Presenter: Works with group members to compile and create presentation; Presents information to class

Create a Timeline

Now that you have landed on how you will communicate, collaborate and who will do what, it's time to map out your project plan timeline. It's important to start at the project due date and work backwards to make sure you have enough time to not only complete each task/activity but also build in time for review and feedback. Sticking to a predetermined timeline ensures items are left until the dreaded last minute!

Leading Effective Group Meetings

Effective group meetings involve deliberate and planned effort. Following these steps will help you and your group to meet and work more effectively together.

Set ground rules. Meetings can become disorderly and can discourage shyer group members from participating if you don't have procedures in place for encouraging discussion, coming to resolution without becoming repetitive, and resolving differences of opinion. Set rules at the outset and revisit or modify them as necessary along the way.

Build consensus. People work together most effectively when they are working toward a goal that they have agreed to. Ensure that everyone has a say, even if you have to take time to get more withdrawn members to say something. Make sure you listen to everyone's ideas and then try to come to an agreement that everyone shares and has contributed to.

Clarify. When a decision is made, this must be clarified in such a way that everyone is absolutely clear on what has been agreed, including deadlines.

Keep good notes and records. Assign a notetaker for each meeting and include a summary of discussions and decisions. Share them with all group members afterward so all are in the know and also to refer back to. This includes clear indication of who has agreed to do what.

Revisit your timeline to monitor progress and stick to deadlines. As a group, discuss progress in relation to your timetable and deadlines. Make sure that you personally meet deadlines to avoid letting your group down.

Why Attend Classes at All?

Among the student freedoms in college is the choice not to attend classes. Most college instructors do not “grade” attendance, and some college students soon develop an attitude that if you can get class notes from someone else, or watch a podcast of a lecture, there's no reason to go to every class at all. What's wrong with that?

It is in fact true that you don't have to attend every single class of every course to get a good grade. But thinking only in terms of grades and how much one can get away with is a dangerous attitude toward college education. The real issue is whether you're trying to get the most out of your education.

Make it your goal to attend every class—don't even think about not going. Going to class is the first step in engaging in your education by interacting with the instructor and other students. Here are some reasons why it's important to attend every class:

- Miss a class and you'll miss *something*, even if you never know it. Even if a friend gives you notes for the class, they cannot contain *everything* said or shown by the instructor or written on the board for emphasis or questioned or commented on by other students. What you miss might affect your grade or your enthusiasm for the course. Why go to college at all if

you're not going to go to college?

- While some students may say that you don't have to go to every class to do well on a test, that is very often a myth. Do you want to take that risk?
- Your final grade often reflects how you think about course concepts, and you will think more often and more clearly when engaged in class discussions and hearing the comments of other students. You can't get this by borrowing class notes from a friend.
- Research shows there is a correlation between absences from class and lower grades. It may be that missing classes causes lower grades or that students with lower grades miss more classes. Either way, missing classes and lower grades can be intertwined in a downward spiral of achievement.
- Your instructor will note your absences—even in a large class. In addition to making a poor impression, you reduce your opportunities for future interactions. You might not ask a question the next class because of the potential embarrassment of the instructor saying that was covered in the last class, which you apparently missed. Nothing is more insulting to an instructor than when you skip a class and then show up to ask, "Did I miss anything important?"
- You might be tempted to skip a class because the instructor is "boring," but it's more likely that you found the class boring because you weren't very attentive or didn't appreciate how the instructor was teaching.
- You paid a lot of money for your tuition. Get your money's worth!

If You Must Miss a Class...

If you know that you will miss a class, take steps in advance. Tell your instructor and ask if he or she teaches another section of the course that you might attend instead. Ask about any handouts or special announcements.

Ask another student whose judgment you trust if you can copy his or her notes. Then talk to them after you've read their notes to go over things that may be unclear to you.

It may not be necessary to see your instructor after missing a lecture class, and no instructor wants to give you fifty minutes of office time to repeat what was said in class. But if you are having difficulty after the *next* class because of something you missed earlier, stop and see your instructor and ask what you can do to get caught up. But

remember the worst thing you can say to an instructor: “I missed class—did you talk about anything important?”

Summary

- Professionalism is not just in the workplace. You are building the skills in these classroom as well.
- Clear, direct, and professional communication is key when speaking with professors and peers
- Your mindset plays a critical role in working with others
- The benefits of attending every class include not missing important material, thinking more clearly about course topics, developing a better relationship with the instructor, and being better prepared for tests.
- When possible, prepare in advance for missing a class by speaking with your instructor and arranging to borrow and discuss someone’s notes.
- Professionalism in the workplace looks different for everyone so it’s important to ask questions, pay attention, and do your best.

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UNIT IV

UNIT 4: PATHS TO SUCCESS

CHAPTER 13: ETHICS, CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Platinum Rule: Treat others the way they want to be treated.

Life is full of decisions. From small ones, like what shoes you're going to wear to go on a walk, to large ones, like potentially moving to a different state to get a job. What makes things a bit more complicated about decision-making is that so many of the consequences—whether good, bad, and neutral—of the decisions you are asked to make are not isolated to just you. Rather, the consequences of your decisions are wrapped up in interdependent, or, multiply connected, relationships to other people, ideas about yourself, and frameworks for how society functions. For instance, if you decide to go on a walk and wear flip-flops but it's snowing out, your feet are going to get really, really cold. Now, at first, this seemingly impacts just you and your feet. However, let's say you rent an apartment with your friends. And your decision to wear flip flops for a walk in the snow means your feet hurt, impacting your ability to work your job at Fazoli's. You now have to take two weeks off of work. This two-week break means you don't have enough rent money. Not being able to pay your share of rent means you and your roommates are at risk of being evicted. So, at first, a personal decision can seem isolated; however, sometimes the decisions you make have broader consequences than originally imagined.

Many people make decisions based on their personal circumstances, histories, and views of the world. Infused into decision-making processes are ethics. Ethics is concerned with evaluation of human actions as right and wrong. Understanding ethics involves understanding and comparing theories, or ways of thinking, that describe and justify right and wrong actions and ethical claims. As you just read, an individual's actions do not occur in isolation but within a social context. Specifically, no individual is outside of a relationship with society. So, there is a fuzzy boundary between ethics and social and political codes of conduct. Thinking about social and political codes of conduct means exploring the values related to groups of individuals, from small communities to larger nations. What makes a society good, what makes a government legitimate, what is the relationship between the individual and society/government? Many of these questions, which include evaluating fairness, justice, human rights, and the responsibilities of government, have no easy answers. Engaging with these types of questions is about arguments;

it is about thinking and reasoning; it is about human conduct and how humans do or do not want to show up to support one another.

Because people have many different reasons for attending college, college is a time where you will be introduced to ideas, concepts, ways of thinking, and ways of being that may or may not differ from what you experienced prior to attending college. And so, a large part of the college experience is not just going to class to learn important skills for your chosen career, but also figuring out your ethical compass. While ethics never promises to provide an individual with the absolute truth about moral matters, it can help you evaluate ethical ideas by comparing them with others to see if they align. Philosophical thinking, what you're doing in this chapter in relation to ethics, can help you uncover and discover contradictions and tensions in and among your ideas. Pinpointing contradictions and tensions in and among your ideas helps you think strategically, problem solve, and be better informed.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will...

- Define ethics and why it's important to think about ethics
- Suggest ways to get civically engaged

What is Ethics?

Ethics is the study of the standards of right and wrong that inform us as to how we ought to behave. These standards relate to unwritten rules that are necessary for humans to live among each other, such as “don’t hurt others.” We function better as a society when we treat each other well.

Ethics, or moral philosophy, is also the branch of philosophy concerned with the evaluation of human actions. Even though you may not be a philosophy major, it's important to understand that knowing about ethics—the study of morality, right and wrong—impacts you and your future careers. This branch of philosophy is concerned not only with theories for characterizing right

and wrong actions but also with understanding and analyzing the meaning of and justification for ethical claims. That is, just because you can does it mean you should?

In order to better understand what ethics is, we need to distinguish ethics from what it is not:

Ethics is not what's legal. The law often puts into writing our ethical standards (don't hurt others=don't commit homicide) but it also usually reflects our cultural beliefs at the time. For example, hunting is legal in Kentucky, but it would be difficult to say that everyone agrees that it is ethical to hunt. Some people will argue that hunting is ethical because it manages the wildlife population, while others will argue that it is never ethical because it creates pain and suffering.

Ethics is not what you feel. In fact, most times our feelings are very egocentric: what's best for me and my nearest and dearest? But making judgments based on these sentiments could be detrimental to society as a whole,

Ethics is not religion. Religions may teach ethical standards, and you may personally use religion to guide your beliefs, but people can have ethics without necessarily belonging to a religion. Therefore, ethics and religion are connected but not interchangeable.

Ethics is not a political ideology. A political party may share your values and offer ethical arguments to support its policies, but your decisions aren't automatically ethical just because you belong to one political party or another. In fact, many, if not most, political debates are built from arguments that claim one aspect of an ethical dilemma is more significant than another.

What is the purpose of ethics?

The main goal of ethics is to help people make moral decisions, and the key tool it uses is reason. Ethical thinking involves using logic to examine moral beliefs, judgments, and behaviors. At its best, ethics encourages people to support and live by ideas and actions that are supported with "good" reasons.

"Good" reasons hinge on ideas that are true or, at the very least, make sense and align with the other beliefs society regards as acceptable. On the other hand, reasons considered "less than good" include ideas that are false, unacceptable, unreasonable to believe, or in conflict with the other beliefs society holds as true or, at least, "acceptable."

Most people see ourselves as moral agents, and furthermore, we often evaluate the behavior of others, especially when we regard behavior as particularly good or bad. It is important to keep in mind, though, that this discussion of the philosophical study of ethics does not advocate particular theories or standards; it seeks to understand the meaning of ethical concepts and the ethical theories that help define right and wrong. Our actions and behavior, after all, do not occur in isolation but rather in the context of society.

How does ethics impact me?

What does it mean to be a member of a community, to “belong” to the society in which you live? In response to such questions, philosophers propose theories about what ought to be; in contrast, social scientists (like anthropologists, sociologists, historians, psychologists and others) describe what is. Ethics explores what makes up moral actions for individuals and it is integral to how an individual relates to the community (the larger social group) to which they belong. A conception of “the good” is central to understanding what makes a society just, or fair, for its members.

One way people who study ethics view the relationship of the individual to society is the social contract theory. **Social contract theory** is the view that political structure and legitimacy of the state stem from explicit or implicit agreement by individuals to surrender specified rights in exchange for the stability of social order and/or for the protection of government. Social contract theory is “theoretical.” The “idea” of a contract is offered as an explanation or justification of a relationship between the individual and the larger society or government. Social contract theories demonstrate why members of a society would rationally find it in their best interests to comply with and uphold the principles and regulations of their society. A social contract theory attempts to justify a particular political system (a currently existing one or an ideal one) by showing why members of society would consent to it. Members of society freely relinquish something they value (for example, aspects of their freedom) in exchange for something else they also value (for example, a sense of security).

Human reason is a key element in social contract theories. First, the underlying view of human nature includes that we are rational beings and therefore can understand why and how regulations and principles make life better. Further, given that humans are rational, the contract itself needs to express what a rational person would agree to.

Social contract theories put forth by philosophers typically refer to contracts between a nation and its citizens. Consent to such contracts is meant to occur tacitly, or implicitly, by virtue of being a citizen of the state. (An exception to this might be the case of an immigrant becoming a naturalized citizen, and here, there would be an actual oath of compliance, or consent.) The social principles and political structure of a society that are established by its members’ consent come to represent that society’s standard for what is good, or just.

A Framework for Ethical Decision Making

The following [framework](#) was also designed by the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University. They note, “making good ethical decisions requires a trained sensitivity to ethical issues and a practiced method for exploring the ethical aspects of a decision and weighing the

considerations that should impact our choice of a course of action. Having a method for ethical decision-making is essential. When practiced regularly, the method becomes so familiar that we work through it automatically without consulting the specific steps” (Velasquez et al 2021).

Identify the Ethical Issue

- Could this decision or situation be damaging to someone or to some group, or unevenly beneficial to people? Does this decision involve a choice between a good and bad alternative, or perhaps between two “goods” or between two “bads”?
- Is this issue about more than solely what is legal or what is most efficient? If so, how?

Get the Facts

- What are the relevant facts of the case? What facts are not known? Can I learn more about the situation? Do I know enough to make a decision?
- What individuals and groups have an important stake in the outcome? Are the concerns of some of those individuals or groups more important? Why?
- What are the options for acting? Have all the relevant persons and groups been consulted? Have I identified creative options?

Evaluate Alternative Actions

Evaluate the options by asking the following questions:

- Which option best respects the rights of all who have a stake? (The Rights Lens)
- Which option treats people fairly, giving them each what they are due? (The Justice Lens)
- Which option will produce the most good and do the least harm for as many stakeholders as possible? (The Utilitarian Lens)
- Which option best serves the community as a whole, not just some members? (The Common Good Lens)
- Which option leads me to act as the sort of person I want to be? (The Virtue Lens)
- Which option appropriately takes into account the relationships, concerns, and feelings of all stakeholders? (The Care Ethics Lens)

Choose an Option for Action and Test It

- After an evaluation using all of these lenses, which option best addresses the situation?

- If I told someone I respect (or a public audience) which option I have chosen, what would they say?
- How can my decision be implemented with the greatest care and attention to the concerns of all stakeholders?

Implement Your Decision and Reflect on the Outcome

- How did my decision turn out, and what have I learned from this specific situation? What (if any) follow-up actions should I take?

How do I know if I'm right or wrong?

Several potential outcomes emerge when important ethical questions are asked. The questions don't always result in a clear answer. They also can cause people to come to certain conclusions that may be unnerving. Additionally, the answers that people often struggle with produce actions and outcomes that create obstacles to moving along with better ethical thinking and problem-solving.

The issue of blame:

At the root of blame is the shared realization that change is needed. Change is often scary and threatening. As individuals think about ethical issues, they are often confronted by their conscience or reason, prompting them to feel troubled by their thoughts or behaviors. When integrated with the need to enact some form of change, discomfort can cause people to feel unmotivated or agitated. It is probably safe to say that most humans do not like change, and this factor alone can cause uncomfortable situations or outcomes; when we add the topic of moral assessment, there is added pressure and stress.

The issue of obligation or duty:

Ethical issues naturally imply that the change required might dictate a strong sense of obligation that may cause people not to think and act unfairly. Think of a person who has a renewed view of an issue or problem and throws themselves completely into that new approach without realizing that that renewed perspective may not solve ethical issues. The complexities of obligation can create a crisis as people, in their new understanding, might be torn between loyalties to multiple viewpoints or viewpoints—thus causing even more potential dismay.

The issue of the emotional investment:

Ethical issues often carry with them inherent strong viewpoints and feelings that can surface and may cause individuals to avoid an accurate understanding of the outcomes present. This emotional investment may lead to false admiration for those involved in the decision or leaders who enact what is perceived to be the better moral decision or process. This can lead to an inaccurate result or view of the situation.

The ethical dilemma of not knowing the result that an ethical decision might produce:

How does one truly know that they are correct, or what we have come to think is the proper outcome will indeed yield that result? The prospect of this can be frightening for many people. The more we know how people react in circumstances linked to ethical tensions and outcomes, the better we identify these tendencies in ourselves and others and work to allay those fears. This is perhaps one of the most important factors to consider and why an ethics-based education is essential.

Ethics and Civic and Global Engagement

If ethics is about trying to understand what is right and wrong at individual and societal levels and determining actions within the decision making process, it is important to be plugged into what's going on in local, community, national, and international areas. That is, you have the opportunity to use your perspective, experiences, and problem-solving skills to suggest different ways for governments, organizations, and other individuals to engage with ethical dilemmas. Sometimes those ethical dilemmas are about putting others' needs and wants over your own self interest. Think back to the flip-flops and snowstorm decision where your decision impacts you and your roommates' ability to pay rent. By not thinking about the full consequences of wearing flip-flops in a snowstorm, you've impacted other people's ability to thrive.

One way to connect ethics and decision making to real life situations is through civic engagement. Many people think civic engagement just equates to voting. Civic engagement is so much more than that. It is about taking action to shape the present and future through being interested in the well-being of yourself, the local community, and the nation. Civic engagement is not just about the way you think about yourself in relation to others. It is also about getting involved through volunteering, advocacy, and/or community projects. Specifically, civic engagement is about social responsibility through caring for others, fairness, civility, teamwork, and figuring out what's right for the community.

Getting civically engaged improves college student's resilience and well-being, increases school engagement and success, helps with stress management, and promotes a sense of connectedness (*Civic Engagement*, 2025). All of these benefit development as a college student and as a future member of the workforce. Civic engagement promotes communication and problem-solving skills. It develops practical experience through collaborative projects and generates a network of people to support you throughout your personal and professional development.

Just like the individual does not exist outside of society, one society, or put differently, nation, does not exist outside its relationship to other nations. Therefore, getting civically engaged can also prepare you for the globalized world in which we live. With the advancement of technology, people more than ever have quicker access to information and products that come from all parts of the world. Moreover, many businesses are global. For example, Apple products are designed in California but are made in China, and there are Disney parks in Florida, Japan, France, and Hong Kong. And so, being aware of the different ways you as an individual are impacted by happenings all around the world assists you in your ability to thrive in your day-to-day life.

For instance, one day at college you may encounter a perspective or an experience that differs from yours. Encountering differing perspectives can be difficult, especially when they directly challenge your own beliefs and values; however, it's important not to become defensive when you are presented with different opinions. Being open to different perspectives not only makes everyone feel heard and understood, but also helps to broaden your worldview and makes you think outside the box. Being able to think outside the box allows you to connect new ideas and experiences that can help you in your chosen career field. You can see gaps in market research or design a new product or empathize with a patient, contributing to your value as a member of the workforce.



Student Spotlight

"I am an out of state student, I am from Pennsylvania. This experience has honestly been super culture shocking for the first year but my perspective on life and other matters has been widen and definitely changed from my first semester here. I will also note that Kentucky feels a part of my identity more than anything else ever has and I'm extremely thankful to have that experience."

-Holden VanDemark,
Broadcasting and Electronic Media,
Class of 2027

EKU Resources to get involved

Bobby Verdugo & Yoli Ríos Bilingual Peer Mentor and Tutoring Center aka "El Centro" (Library 106)

El Centro offers bilingual tutoring and mentoring for students interested in multilingual and multicultural community building and scholarship. Tutoring is offered in a variety of languages including Spanish, German, Japanese, etc. Additionally, El Centro offers tutoring in subject areas such as social work, public health, sciences, anthropology, sociology, etc. El Centro provides a space to apply the skills learned in language and culture classes in real-world settings through volunteering or service-learning community engagement.

El Centro also offers mentoring services where students meet once a week with a peer mentor. Each student is assigned a mentor based on major, academic, or personal needs. Within each mentoring session, students can receive help with navigating college, class advising, schedule building, networking, interview skills, email best practices, applications, essays, resumes, cover letters, scholarships, etc.

Center for Student Involvement (CSI)

The Center for Student Involvement (CSI) is your key to unlocking your own exceptional Eastern experience. Whether you are wanting to learn more about student organizations and events, develop your leadership skills, participate in community service, or meet new people and make friends, the Center for Student Involvement is there to help.

Located in the Powell Student Center, the Center for Student Involvement fosters connection, collaboration, and community for all students. This central hub for involvement houses the departments of Student Life & First-Year Experience (SL&FYE), Community & Global Engagement (CGE) and Fraternity & Sorority Life.

Office of Military and Veterans Affairs (Powell Middle Floor)

The Office of Military and Veterans Affairs (OMVA) offers a variety of services and opportunities for students who have served in the United States Military, including targeted tuition rates, priority registration, and adventure programming. OMVA also houses a VA certifying official who assists with the completion of important paperwork each semester. This office also facilitates a number of opportunities for Vets to connect with fellow Vets through peer-to-peer mentoring and tutoring, adventure programming, and special workshops designed to meet the needs of our Vets. The staff also serves as advocates for our valued service members and their families.

Education Abroad Office (Crabbe Library Atrium, Room 225)

Study Abroad Resources

[Book an Advising Appointment](#)

[Spin the Wheel Scholarship](#)

[Study Abroad Programs](#)

[Study Abroad Scholarship Resources](#)

[Register to Attend Information Sessions through Engage](#)

The Education Abroad office at Eastern Kentucky University helps students explore opportunities to study in other countries. Located in Crabbe Library Atrium (Room 225), the office is open Monday through Friday and offers weekly info sessions on Fridays at 3 p.m. Students can meet one-on-one with an advisor to learn about programs that fit their major, interests, and schedule. Whether you want to go abroad for a few weeks in the summer or a whole semester, the office can help you find the right program.

The office supports students every step of the way as they prepare to study abroad. They can help with things like applying for a passport or visa, and helping you book your flight. Advisors also help you figure out how the credits you earn abroad will integrate into your degree program, from general education requirements

to major coursework, and even internships or student teaching abroad.

Worried about the cost? The Education Abroad office offers guidance on scholarships and financial aid that can help cover the cost of your program. They also help students apply for national scholarships and can share creative ideas for raising money, like fundraising. From start

to finish, the Education Abroad Office is there to support you every step of the way so you can have a successful and enriching international educational experience.

EKU Registered Student Organizations

Find Registered Student Organizations who are involved in community service through [Engage](#).

RSO Spotlight: **Student Government Association**

The goal of the Student Government Association (SGA) is to be the voice of the students on campus! Our organization hosts Midnight Breakfast, Colonel Corn Roast, Safe Sex Bingo, Casino Night, Mental Health Week, Safety Week, and many more exciting events!

Goals of SGA:

- Develop Leadership Skills
- Increase Involvement on Campus
- Collaborate with Student Body and Administration
- Make Change on Campus
- Make Long- lasting Friendships

"Be a voice of the students on campus!"



Summary

- **Ethics** is concerned with evaluation of human actions as right and wrong.
- **Social contract theory** is the view that political structure and legitimacy of the state stem from explicit or implicit agreement by individuals to surrender specified rights in exchange for the stability of social order and/or for the protection of government.
- Part of being a mature, rational individual in a society is **being accountable** for your decisions and actions.
- Having a **method** for ethical decision-making is essential.

- Several potential outcomes emerge when important ethical questions are asked and they do not always have a clear answer.
- Specifically, **civic engagement** is about social responsibility through caring for others, fairness, civility, teamwork, and figuring out what's right for the community.

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CHAPTER 14: SOCIAL WORLD OF COLLEGE + REFLECTION

Successful students get involved and stay connected

You should be absurdly proud of yourself for making it to this point of the semester. No doubt you have hit several low points and high points. In an ideal world, you are completely and successfully adjusted to college life, but like anything else in life, “ideal” is something that we rarely attain. And that’s ok. Life is not always perfect. Life is messy and complicated, especially if you’re trying your hand at new things like attending college. Similarly, like we discussed in *Chapter 4: Time Management*, time flies and can get away from us. And so, this chapter is going to introduce some new suggestions and return to some key information to set you up for success as you move onwards to different parts of your college experience.

Learning Objectives

This chapter will discuss...

- How and why to get involved in different college organizations and groups
- Examine some obstacles and worries college students have
- Reflect on important strategies and skills to build as a college student

Navigating the Social World of College

As a new college student, you may not immediately realize that you’ve entered a whole new world at college, including a world of other people possibly very different from those you have known before. This is a very important dimension of college—almost as important as the learning that

goes on inside the classroom. How you deal with the social aspects and multitude of perspectives of the college world has a large impact on your academic success. Enter this new world with an open mind and you'll gain many benefits.

Registered Student Organizations

The college social experience also includes organized campus groups and activities. Participating in organized activities requires taking some initiative—you can't be passive and expect these opportunities to come knocking on your door—but is well worthwhile for fully enriching college interactions.

The active pursuit of a stimulating life on campus offers many benefits:

Organized groups and activities speed your transition into this new chapter of life. New students are often overwhelmed by their studies and every aspect of college, and may be slow to build a new life. Rather than waiting for it to come along on its own, you can immediately begin broadening your social contacts and experiences by joining groups that share your interests.

Organized groups and activities help you experience a much greater variety of social life than you might otherwise. New students often tend to interact more with other students their own age and with similar backgrounds—this is just natural. But if you simply go with the flow and don't actively reach out, you are much less likely to meet and interact with others from the broader campus: students who are older and may have a perspective you may otherwise miss, upper-level students who have much to share from their years on campus, and students of different heritages or cultures with whom you might otherwise be slow to interact.

Organized groups and activities help you gain new skills, whether technical, physical, intellectual, or social. Such skills may find their way into your résumé when you next seek a job or your application for a scholarship or other future educational opportunity. Employers and others like to see well-rounded students with a range of proficiencies and experiences.

Organized groups and activities are fun and a great way to stay healthy and relieve stress. Exercise and physical activity are essential for health and well-being, and many organized activities offer a good way to keep moving.

Whatever your interests, don't be shy about checking out a club or organization. Take chances and explore. Attending a meeting or gathering is not a commitment—you're just going the first time to see what it's like, and you have no obligation to join. Keep an open mind as you meet and observe other students in the group, especially if you don't feel at first like you fit in: remember that part of the benefit of the experience is to meet others who are not necessarily just like everyone you already know. You can explore unique opportunities at ECU through [Engage](#).

Making New Friends



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=394#oembed-1>

Have you ever wondered why we make friends? Is there a real need for friends in our lives, or can we thrive just fine in solitude? While occasional alone time is essential, most of us find that being alone for an extended period can lead to feelings of loneliness. As social creatures, humans derive a significant portion of their happiness from the relationships they build. Scientific studies have revealed that having good friends not only enriches our lives but also has profound effects on our well-being. In this article, we will explore the importance of friendship, the benefits it brings, and some practical tips for making new friends.

The Power of Good Friends:

Friendships go beyond casual interactions; they play a crucial role in our overall health and longevity. Researchers have found a strong correlation between having good friends and living longer, healthier lives. People with close social connections tend to experience lower stress levels, reduced blood pressure, and a decreased risk of depression. Sharing our experiences, thoughts, and feelings with friends can provide emotional support and a sense of belonging, which, in turn, contributes to our well-being.

Be Social – Step Out of Your Comfort Zone:

To make new friends, it's essential to be social and step out of our comfort zones. Staying isolated and confined to our familiar spaces won't lead to meaningful connections. Being social doesn't necessarily mean attending loud parties; it can involve joining clubs or organizations that cater to our interests. Engaging in activities we enjoy allows us to meet like-minded individuals who share our passions, providing a natural foundation for friendships to blossom.



Student Spotlight

"The community I've made here is irreplaceable. I've met people that have changed the course of my life simply by being at the same school as me. If I could give an incoming student any advice, I'd tell them to get involved! Go to the free events! Go to club meetings! Find what you love and try it out. If it doesn't work out, you can at least say you tried."

-Abigail Mabe,
Wildlife Management,
Class of 2027

Communicating with Old and New Friends

Communication is at the core of almost all social interactions, including those involved in friendships and relationships with your professors. Communication with others has a huge effect on our lives, what we think and feel, and what and how we learn. Communication is, many would say, what makes us human.

Oral communication involves not only speech and listening, of course, but also nonverbal communication: facial expressions, tone of voice, and many other body language signals that affect the messages sent and received. Many experts think that people pay more attention, often unconsciously, to how people say something than to what they are saying. When the nonverbal message is inconsistent with the verbal (spoken) message, just as when the verbal message itself is unclear because of poorly chosen words or vague explanations, then miscommunication may occur.

Miscommunication is at the root of many misunderstandings among people and makes it difficult to build relationships. Remember that communication is a two-way process. Listening

skills are critical for most college students simply because many of us may not have learned how to really listen to another person.

Here are some guidelines for how to listen effectively:

Talk less to listen more. Most people naturally like to share their thoughts and feelings, and some people almost seem unable to stop talking long enough to ever listen to another person. Try this: next time you're in a conversation with another student, deliberately try not to speak very much but give the other person a chance to speak fully. You may notice a big difference in how much you gain from the conversation.

Ask questions. To keep the conversational ball rolling, show your interest in the other person by asking them about things they are saying. This helps the other person feel that you are interested in them and helps build the relationship.

Watch and respond to the other person's body language. You'll learn much more about their feelings for what they're saying than if you listen only to their words.

Show the other person that you're really listening and that you care. Make eye contact and respond appropriately with nods and brief comments like "That's interesting!" or "I know what you mean" or "Really?" Be friendly, smile when appropriate, and encourage the person to keep speaking.

Give the other person feedback. Show you understand by saying things like "So you're saying that..." or asking a question that demonstrates you've been following what they're saying and want to know more. As you learn to improve your listening skills, think also about what you are saying yourself and how.

Here are additional guidelines for effective speaking:

Be honest, but don't be critical. Strongly disagreeing may only put the other person on the defensive—an emotion sure to disrupt the hope for good communication. You can disagree, but be respectful to keep the conversation from becoming emotional. Say "I don't know, I think that maybe it's..." instead of "That's crazy! What's really going on is...."

Look for common ground. Make sure that your side of a conversation relates to what the other person is saying and that it focuses on what you have in common. There's almost no better way to stop a conversation dead in its tracks than to ignore everything the other person has just said and launch into an unrelated story or idea of your own.

Avoid sarcasm and irony unless you know the person well. Sarcasm is easily misunderstood and may be interpreted as an attack on the other person's ideas or statements.

Don't try to talk like the other person, especially if the person is from a different ethnic or

cultural background or speaks with an accent or heavy slang. The other person will feel that you are imitating them and maybe even making fun of them. Be yourself and speak naturally.

While not imitating the other person, relate to their personality and style of thinking. We do not speak to our parents or professors the exact same way we speak to our closest friends, nor should we speak to someone we've just met the same way. Show your respect for the other person by keeping the conversation on an appropriate level.

Remember that assertive communication is better than passive or aggressive communication. Assertive in this context means you are honest and direct in stating your ideas and thoughts; you are confident and clear and willing to discuss your ideas while still respecting the thoughts and ideas of others. A passive communicator is reluctant to speak up, seems to agree with everything others say, hesitates to say anything that others might disagree with, and therefore seldom communicates much at all. Passive communication simply is not a real exchange in communication. Aggressive communication, at the other extreme, is often highly critical of the thoughts and ideas of others. This communication style may be sarcastic, emotional, and even insulting. Real communication is not occurring because others are not prompted to respond honestly and openly.

Choose your conversations wisely. Recognize that you don't have to engage in all conversations. Make it your goal to form relationships and engage in interactions that help you learn and grow as a person. College life offers plenty of opportunities for making relationships and interacting with others if you keep open to them, so you needn't try to participate in every social situation around you.

Roommate Issues

At many colleges students just out of high school must live in a campus residence hall. Other students may live in a shared apartment with new roommates. This is the first time many students have had to share a room, suite, or apartment with others who were not family members, and this situation may lead to conflicts and strong feelings that can even affect your academic success.

As in other interactions, the keys to forming a good relationship with a roommate are communication and attitude. From the beginning, you should talk about everyone's expectations of the other(s) and what matters most to you about where you live. Don't wait until problems happen before talking. It's often good to begin with the key practical issues: agreeing on quiet hours for study (limiting not only loud music but also visits from others), time for lights out, neatness and cleaning up, things shared and private things not to touch.

Show respect for the other's ideas and possessions, respect their privacy, and try to listen more than you talk. Even if your roommate does not become a close friend, you can have a harmonious, successful relationship that makes your residence a good home for both of you. Millions of college students before you have learned to work this out, and if both (or all) of you respect each other and

keep communication open and non-confrontational, you will easily get through the small bumps in the road ahead, too. Follow these guidelines to help ensure you get along well:

- Anticipate problems before they happen. Think about things that you consider essential in your living environment and talk with a new roommate about these essentials now.
- Deal with any problem promptly. Don't wait until a behavior is well established before speaking up, as if the other person will somehow catch on that it aggravates you. It may be as simple as a roommate using your coffee cup or borrowing your toothpaste without asking, but if you say nothing, trying to be polite, the habit may expand to other things.
- Be patient, flexible, and willing to compromise. It may take a while for each of you to get used to each other and to establish a communication pattern of openness so that you can be honest with each other about what really matters.
- Be warm, use humor, and be sensitive. Telling someone that they're doing something bothersome can be very difficult for many people. Think before speaking, looking for the best way to communicate what you feel. Remember, you'll be spending a lot of time around this person, so do you really want them to think of you as bossy or obsessive-compulsive?
- Get out more. Sometimes it helps to spend more time elsewhere on campus, studying in the library or another quiet place. You just might need a certain amount of time a day alone. That's fine, but don't expect your roommate to have to leave just to give you that time alone!

In some situations and with some people who will not compromise and do not respect you and your needs, a roommate can be a serious problem. In some circumstances, you may be able to move to a different room. Room changes usually are not granted simply because you "don't get along," but certain circumstances may justify a change. The following are some examples:

- Your roommate smokes in the room.
- Your roommate uses illegal drugs, drinks alcohol underage, or conducts other illegal activities in the room.
- Your roommate repeatedly refuses to limit activities at any hour to allow you to sleep.
- Your roommate does anything that threatens your physical well-being or safety.
- Your roommate denies you your rights to practice your religion or other basic rights.

If you have a problem like this, first talk with your resident advisor (RA) or other residence hall authority. They will explain the process for a room change, if warranted, or other ways for managing the problem.

Balancing Schoolwork and Social Life

If there's one thing true of virtually all college students, it's that you don't have enough time to do everything you want. Once you've developed friendships within the college community and have an active social life, you may feel you don't have enough time for your studies and other activities such as work. For many students, the numerous social opportunities of college become a distraction, and with less attention to one's studies, academic performance can drop. Here are some tips for balancing your social life with your studies:

Keep working on your time management skills. You can't just "go with the flow" and hope that, after spending time with friends, you have enough time (and energy) left over for studying. Make a study schedule that provides enough time for what you need to do. Study first; socialize after.

Keep working on your study skills. When you have only a limited amount of time for studying, be sure you're using that time as effectively as possible as you read assignments and prepare for class, organize your notes after class, and prepare for tests.

If you can't resist temptations, reduce them. If you are easily distracted by the opportunity to talk with your roommate, spouse, or family members because you study where you live, then go to the library to study.

Make studying a social experience. If studying keeps you so busy that you feel like you don't have much of a social life, form a study group. You will learn more than you would alone by gaining from the thoughts of others, and you can enjoy interacting with others without falling behind.

Keep your social life from affecting your studying. Simply scheduling study time doesn't mean you'll use it well. If you stayed up late the night before, you may not be able to concentrate well as you study for that big test. This is another reason for good time management and scheduling your time well, looking ahead.

Get help if you need it. If you're still having difficulty balancing your study time with other activities, talk with your academic advisor or staff in the [Student Success Center](#). Maybe something else is keeping you from doing your best. Maybe you need some additional study skills or you need to get some extra help from a tutor or campus study center. Remember, we want you to succeed and will try to help those who seek help.

When and How to Say No

For all the benefits of an active social and campus life, too much of any good thing can also cause trouble. If you join too many groups, or if you have limited time because of work and family commitments, you may spend less time with your studies—with negative results.

Don't join too many organizations or clubs. Most advisors suggest that two or three regular activities are the maximum that most students can handle.

Work on your time management skills. Plan ahead for study time when you don't have schedule conflicts. If you have a rich social life, study in the library or places where you won't be tempted by additional social interaction with a roommate, family member, or others passing by.

Don't be afraid to say no. You may be active in a club and have plenty of time for routine activities, but someone may ask you to spend extra time organizing an upcoming event just when you have a major paper deadline coming up. Sometimes you have to remember the main reason you're in college and just say you can't do it because you have to get your work done.

If you really can't resolve your time conflicts, seek help. Talk with your program coordinator, an academic advisor, or a counselor. They'll help you get back on track.

A Note on Greek Life

Fraternities and sororities appeal to many students on many campuses. You meet a lot of people quickly and have a social life provided for you almost automatically, with many events and parties as well as usually an active house life. Many people have formed lasting, even lifelong relationships with their fraternity and sorority friends. On the other hand, this living and social experience may limit the kinds of people you meet and present fewer opportunities to interact with others outside the Greek system. If there are frequent activities, it may be important to learn to say no at time when studying becomes a priority. If you are interested in but not yet committed to this life, it's worthwhile to find out what the houses at your school are really like, consider what your life would likely be like in a fraternity or sorority, and think about how it may impact your college goals.

Navigating Changing Relationships with Family and Friends Back Home

The college years are a time of many changes, including one's relationships with parents, siblings, and one's own children and partners. Any time there is change, issues may arise. As in other relationships, try to understand the other's perspective. Honesty is particularly important—but with tact and understanding. Here are some tips for getting along:

Understand that your parents may not change their attitudes toward you as quickly as you yourself may be changing. They may still think of you as a younger person in need of their continued guidance. They will worry about you and fear that you might fall in with the wrong crowd or engage in risky behavior. Be patient. Take the time to communicate, and don't close yourself

off. Let them gradually accept you as a more mature person who can make your own decisions wisely.

Stay in touch. You may be busier than ever and feel you haven't time for a phone call or email, but communication is very important for parents—especially if they are now empty nesters without other children at home. Even if they seem to want too much involvement in your life and to make decisions for you, realize that this at least in part is simply a desire to stay in touch with you—and to feel they still matter in your life.

Use your best listening skills. Understanding what they're really feeling, which is often simply a concern for you born of their love for you, will usually help you know best to respond.

Be assured that time itself often solves issues. Over time your parents and other family members will get used to your being on your own and will accept your ability to make your own decisions.

Pay special attention to ensuring you stay active in family relationships. With your own family, now that you are busier than ever with classes and work, you may need to schedule times for family outings and make room in your days for casual interactions. But remember, it's not how much time you spend together but the quality of that time, so give your family your full attention when you are together.

Stress and Returning to Reflection

As we discussed in *Chapter 2: Wellness*, we all live with occasional stress. Since college students often feel even more stress than most people, it's important to understand it and learn ways to deal with it so that it doesn't disrupt your life.

Stress is a natural response of the body and mind to a demand or challenge. The thing that causes stress, called a stressor, captures our attention and causes a physical and emotional reaction. Stressors include physical threats ; however, most of our stressors are not physical threats but situations or events like an upcoming test or an emotional break-up or long-lasting emotional and mental concerns such as worries about money or finding a job.

In *Chapter 8: Reflect and Mindfulness*, you learned about building a reflective practice that grounds you in the present. Being able to reflect on your learning, your experiences, and your physical and mental health aids in your ability to process information, apply learning strategies, and communicate your thoughts and ideas.

Progression to a more sophisticated reflection takes time and practice. Use the following self-assessment tool to determine your current stage of development in reflective practices and opportunities for growth. Here is the rubric:

Self-Assessment Rubric				
	Mastering (4)	Applying (3)	Developing (2)	Emerging (1)
	<i>Metacognitive:</i> Demonstrates profound learning by examining, appraising, and reflecting on the experience, and further adapting the learning to a broader context.	<i>Analytic:</i> Demonstrates profound learning by examining appraising, and reflecting on the experience, and further applying the learning to a broader context.	Empathetic: Demonstrates some learning by attempting to challenge beliefs, values, and attitudes, and by making limited connections between the experience and existing knowledge.	Descriptive: Attempts to make sense of new experiences but does not establish a meaningful connection between the experience and existing knowledge.
Self-Awareness	Questions own biases, preconceptions, and assumptions and demonstrates a developing sense of self by creating new ways of thinking.	Questions own biases, preconceptions, and assumptions.	Engages in limited exploration of personal beliefs, assumptions, and preconceptions but does not demonstrate awareness of personal biases.	States their position but makes no attempt at self-criticism and demonstrates little insights into their personal biases and preconceptions.
Clarity	Presents ideas in a clear, organized manner using expressive language such that a novice reader can visualize and make sense of the concepts discussed.	Presents ideas in a clear, organized manner.	Uses clear language with minimal use of slangs. Presents ideas in an organized manner with infrequent lapses in clarity and accuracy.	Ideas are not presented in a clear, organized manner; Unclear or inappropriate language is used (e.g., slang, undefined acronyms, etc.).
Relevance	Reflects on a meaningful experience that is relevant to student and course learning outcomes.	Reflects on a learning experience that is relevant to student and course learning objectives.	Attempts to demonstrate relevance of the experience being reflected upon to course learning outcomes but does not articulate it clearly.	Most of the reflection is irrelevant to the student or course learning outcome.

Analysis	Examines, appraises, and reflects on the learning experience. Elaborates on how the experience enhanced their understanding of self, others, and/or course concepts.	Examines, appraises, and reflects on the learning experience.	Attempts to reflect on the learning experience but fails to demonstrate depth of analysis.	Provides only description of the learning experience with no analysis.
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Figure 14.1: Self Assessment Rubric for the Self-Reflection Series

Assess Your Self-Reflection Skills



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://saalck.pressbooks.pub/foundationsoflearning/?p=394#h5p-18>

Summary

- You will have many opportunities to get involved in campus life; it is up to you to inquire and participate in these social activities, clubs and sports.
- Attending a meeting or gathering isn't a "forever" commitment. Feel free to explore. It will help transition you into your new college life, gain new skills, stay healthy and relieve stress.
- Once you've settled in at college, you may not have enough time for activities or work. Keep using your time management and study skills to help balance schoolwork and social life.
- Because social interactions frequently involve conflicting values, behaviors, or ideas, it's important to respect others, stay open minded, be open to compromise, and understand how to resolve conflicts.
- Acknowledge that family relationships will likely change after you enter college and work to ease the transition for everyone.
- Stress is natural, but loads of stress can lead to physical and mental obstacles.
- Creating a practice of reflection helps in mitigate current and future stress.

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