Success in ARTS: Making the Transition

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University Experience Shows

- Understanding the difference between high school and university is critical
- Knowing what to expect increases likelihood of student success
- The first six weeks are critical for students developing habits and routines
- Study strategies need to be re-evaluated
You get through high school by being intelligent

You get through university by being organized

_UW Student Success Office_
Success at University

• The key period is the first 6 weeks of class. This is a time of transition.

• The first six weeks are characterized by:
  • Enforced separation
  • Flexibility and anonymity
  • Inaccurate expectations
  • Problematic work habits
At the University of Waterloo...

- Instructors provide you with a course outline
- They expect you to come prepared each day
- The volume of work is higher than you expect
- Your first classes will tend to be much larger than in high school
- Instructors will assume you understand the material until you tell them otherwise
A Formula for Success

• Success flows from **persistence**
• Persistence requires:

  **Engagement**
  (knowing what to do and being ready to do it)
  +

  **Organization**
  (knowing how to do it and having the resources to follow through - remember the course outline)
  +

  **Resilience**
  (sticking with it when it gets tough – and it will)
Tips for Success

• Get organized
  • Read your course outline
  • Develop a plan to meet all your requirements
  • Go to class
• You need to see material a minimum of three times to be successful in your tests
  • Going to class takes one of those times out of the equation, and provides you with supplemental material
Tips for Success

• When Going to Class
  • Sit down front
  • Sit in the same spot each day
  • The instructor will come to know you. This will help a great deal if and when you interact with the instructor
  • Take notes in writing by hand unless this is not possible for you
    • Research indicates a clear positive correlation between cursive note-taking and retention of content
Tips for Success

• Get Connected
  • Students with higher levels of contact with instructors and fellow students demonstrate higher levels of learning too
  • Review lecture notes after the lecture and visit the TA or instructor during their office hours if you have questions (your second interaction with course material)
Tips for Success

• Deal with Adversity
  • You will experience a rough patch from time to time.
  • Working through your problem and reaching out for support is a key part of your learning experience.
  • When you are facing an ‘academic emergency’ like sickness, being unable to attend a test, or falling behind on an assignment etc.
    • Check your course outline first! It should direct you on what to do!
    • When in doubt, contact your instructor or other informed support immediately. Don’t wait until after the due date.
    • Don’t rely on what your peers tell you.
Tips for Success

• More work does not always create better results
  • The creativity researchers tell us that some of your best thinking comes during breaks in work
  • Create “planned breathers” - they reduce stress and help you think more clearly

• Seek life balance
• Explore those things you enjoy
Tips for Success

Resources:

• Making Your Mark workbook (distributed at Orientation in September)

• New Student Handbook (in the mail)

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