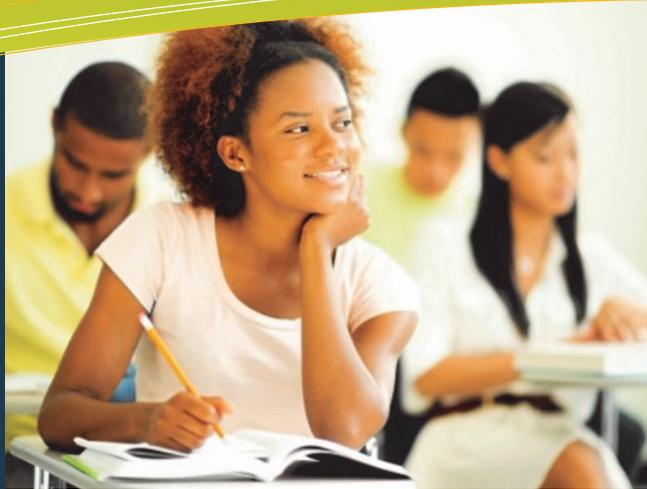


Academic Excellence

Fall 2013 Issue

The Academic Success Center's newsletter geared toward student success



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Fall Workshop Series Receives Upgrade

By Angela Sickler, Learning Specialist– Academic Success Center, au1072@wayne.edu

The What-The Academic Success Center's (ASC) Fall workshop series has received an upgrade. Each semester, the ASC offers free study skills workshops to all WSU OneCard holders. The topics generally include time-management, test-preparation, textbook reading, and procrastination elimination. This year, the workshop series has taken an all-inclusive route to success including the following new topics:

- Math anxiety reduction
- The correlation between food choices and your GPA
- Smartphone apps to help you succeed
- Learning vs. Studying

With these additions plus the original topics, this semester's series has a session to fit the needs of all students.

The Why- Countless benefits can be reaped from taking advantage of the workshop series. Think of it as a small investment of a one-hour block of time. From that one hour you can gain strategies that can save you a great deal of time in the days and months ahead. By understanding how you as an individual comprehend material best, your time in both lecture and study sessions will be increasingly more effective. With your new-found effectiveness, cramming for exams or assignments will be a thing of the past. Not only will the processing of course material come easier, but your levels of stress will remain low, which can keep any looming anxiety at bay.

The When- There will be a total of 20 sessions from September to December. Many of the workshops take place between the hours of 1:00pm and 4:00pm, however, four of the sessions will be held after 5:00pm to accommodate a broader range of students. To view the schedule and register online, visit http://success.wayne.edu/workshop_list.php.

A reminder email will be sent to registrants the morning of each workshop, and all sessions will be held in Lab A, located on the first floor of the Undergraduate Library.

Check out our new and improved workshop schedule online at success.wayne.edu Just click on a session title to register and a reminder email will be sent to you the morning of the workshop. See you there!

WAYNE STATE
UNIVERSITY
Academic Success Center

Director
Michelle Bruner

ad8105@wayne.edu

Mathematics Coordinator
Lenuel Hernandez
dp0963@wayne.edu

Supplemental Instruction
Coordinator
Christine Huang
ff4494@wayne.edu

Comerica Scholars
Project Manager
Jazmine Wesley
ec3736@wayne.edu

Study Skills Coordinator
Angela Sickler
au1072@wayne.edu

Academic Success Center
Wayne State University
1600 Undergraduate
Library
Detroit, MI 48202
(313) 577-3165

Fall hours:
Monday and Thursday
8:30am-7:00pm
Tuesday, Wednesday,
Friday
8:30am-5:00pm

NEW: Math Success Services at the Academic Success Center

By Zsa-Zsa Booker, Study Skills Specialist– Academic Success Center, at0811@wayne.edu

The Academic Success Center (ASC) has welcomed Lenuel Hernandez, a new staff member, to its team. Lenuel serves as the Math Coordinator for the ASC and has a great deal of new and interesting approaches to Mathematics. Be sure to visit the new Math Success page on the ASC website at success.wayne.edu/math-success. The following interview with Lenuel highlights what students can expect from the new Math Success services.

How will the Math Coordinator support students?

The position of Math Coordinator at the Academic Success Center was created to assist undergraduate students in areas dealing with math anxiety, math study strategies, and general content comprehension. Math courses require a different study skills set than most other courses. The math services can work with students on study habits and test-taking skills which, in turn, will help them be more successful in their math courses.

What new things can we expect to see from ASC Math Success services?

There are three workshops that are scheduled for the Fall 2013 semester. The first workshop assists students in understanding math anxiety and provides strategies to help them conquer and cope. The second workshop focuses on how to be more successful in the math course. The content revolves around note-taking tips, study tips, time-management, and test-taking. The last workshop covers final exam preparation. I am also looking into creating study sessions focused on math topics which are not considered part of the course curriculum. This will allow professors to continue with the class without having to spend time reviewing material that has already been taught.

Who can benefit from your services?

The main focus is on students who are struggling in the following mathematics courses: MAT 0900, 0993, 1000, 1050, 1500, 1800, and 1900. However, our services are available to both lower and upper-level courses, including the entire undergraduate population.

Do you have any advice to offer students?

I have a lot of advice to offer. Still, I would narrow it down to these three imperative tips:

Stay positive! The more that you put yourself down (especially your math skills) the harder it is to overcome it.

Be persistent. Don't give up on math just because you don't understand it right now. Even the best athletes started somewhere. If they would have given up, they wouldn't be the superstars we hear about today. Do the same for math!

Ask questions! Asking questions is not a sign of ignorance. It is a sign that there is a gap in your knowledge and you need something to fill that gap.

What would you like students to know about you?

I grew up in the Detroit area and I am an alumnus of Wayne State University. I have taught both high school and middle school math for 14 years. I also love to play volleyball and currently I am the varsity volleyball coach at Center Line High School.

Finding Balance on your Wellness Wheel

By Theresa Perlman, University Counselor II– Counseling and Psychological Services, am3164@wayne.edu

As a new academic year begins, students often find themselves feeling a little overwhelmed. There are a lot of potential new stressors to consider: a new schedule, new routine, new living situation, and new expectations. Students may be exhausted by these changes, and may find they lose focus over other areas of their life. Think about your life as a college student: are you considering your whole self and all of your needs or just taking care of some parts, hoping the rest will catch on? If the latter sounds familiar, you may want to consider overall wellness. Wellness is a positive approach to living that increases resiliency toward stress by promoting life balance.

Think of your life as a “wheel” with “spokes” which all need equal attention: emotional, spiritual, financial, intellectual, social, physical, and environmental. When your “wheel” is balanced, you may find it's easier to maneuver more effectively around obstacles. When your wheel is unbalanced, you may have to “pull over” from life's track to deal with issues. Your wheel may become deflated, with hardly any energy left to move ahead.

Look at the components of your wellness wheel and identify possible imbalances: Are you skimping on sleep to study, thereby feeling more tired and less able to focus? Is your social life overtaking your academics?

All the components of your life should be as balanced as possible in order to reduce stress and support your ride through college. It's important to set realistic goals and evaluate lifestyle choices that help both your mind and body achieve wellness.

To find balance in your personal and academic life, you may benefit from the Academic Success Center's Study Skills Counseling, or their various workshops. You can also visit Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), located in the Student Center Building, to assist in both developing overall wellness and learning to cope with issues that are effecting your wellness balance.

Stop by the CAPS office Monday-Friday, from 9am-4pm, to speak with the counselor on duty about how CAPS can help you find your balance!



Gaining and Maintaining Academic Momentum

By Angela Sickler, Learning Specialist– Academic Success Center, au1072@wayne.edu

Fall is a season for both physical and personal change. You're presented with new classes, new professors, new information, and a clean slate. At this point in the game, it's likely that your academic motivation is high and your levels of stress are low. However, many students begin each semester with a similar positive mindset only to be frazzled with fear by the time midterms arrive. Sound familiar? It's important to understand that this eventual turn-for-the worse can be avoided entirely with proper planning and self-management. The following are three strategies to keep you on the right track at the beginning of the semester and beyond:



Maintain a practical school/life balance. Think of your life as a teeter-totter. At one end sits school and its weight is made up of textbooks and class notes. At the opposite end sits your personal life with friends and family as the weight. Much like the traditional teeter-totter, you want each side to have its turn being raised to the top of your proverbial priority list (just work with me here). In other words, work hard-play hard. You'll enjoy your personal time much more when you're on point in school and vice-versa.

Avoid self-deception. You, like all humans, have the innate ability to convince yourself of anything. Have you ever caught yourself thinking, "Of course I can study for my Physics exam while watching the Tigers game" or "I won't miss anything important in this lecture if I answer this one text?" Eliminating this type of faulty thinking can save you a lot of time and extra effort in the end. Remember your priorities and honor them continuously.

Set and follow goals. It is imperative

Eliminating faulty thinking can save you a lot of time and extra effort in the end.

to set specific and measurable goals at the beginning of the semester. Without goals, it's easy to stray off-track and settle for a lower GPA than you know you're capable of. Once your goals are set, create a corresponding action plan that can help you along the way. For additional assistance with study skills or self-management, register for our study skills workshops or meet with a study skills specialist one-on-one. All of the Academic Success Center's services are FREE and can be found at www.success.wayne.edu.



There's an App for That!

By Zeina Ghoul, Study Skills Specialist– Academic Success Center, al0644@wayne.edu

Do you struggle to remember when assignments are due? Are you easily distracted from your studies? There's an app for that! Use technology to enhance your college career by checking out these 10 apps below (*=FREE):

***1. Evernote:** Stay organized, save ideas, improve productivity

- Sync all your notes across the computers and devices you use

- Create and edit text notes, to-do and task lists

- Organize notes by "notebooks" and "tags"

***2. Flashcards+:** Learn and retain new information with ease

- Sync flashcard decks across devices and online

- Keep track of cards you know/don't know

- Access to millions of pre-made flashcards or make your own

3. IStudiez Pro: Take charge of your schedule

- Follow up with your homework

- Track your grade/GPA

- Built-in planner

***4. Khan Academy:** Learn almost anything for free

- Over 4,200+ videos in a wide variety of subjects

- Track your progress

***5. Trello:** Work on group projects with efficiency

6. Ambiance: Enhance your study environment

- Increase your focus or help yourself relax

- Over 2,500 free sounds such as "thunderstorm"

- Record your own sounds

7. Brain Wave Sharp Mind: 30 Advanced Binaural Programs for Mental Performance

- Sequences of Binaural Tones combined with soothing sounds to induce specific states of mind

- Programs for focus, study concentration, memory, anxiety, and many more!

8. Finish: Overcome procrastination

- Multiple view modes: see everything at once or collapse

- Simple to-do entry

- Notifications to help you stay focused

***9. HealthyOut:** Stay nutritionally conscious

- Find healthy restaurant meals

- Filter by cuisine, ingredients, and dietary restrictions

- See nutritional information for your dish

***10. WSU Mobile:** Official Wayne State University app

- Keep updated on events, check grades/course schedule, parking structure availability

- Campus map, Southend Newspaper, contact information

By Zsa-Zsa Booker, Study Skills Specialist– Academic Success Center, at0811@wayne.edu

Myth # 1 – “Getting good grades means that I must devote all of my free time to studying.”

Not true. A good study regimen means that students have good time management skills. Perfecting these skills is as easy as designing a plan that allows you to complete assignments for class in order to reach your academic goals. This plan should include a semester calendar, which allows you to write down all assignments and their due dates. Knowing is half of the battle. Using your academic calendar to plan ahead will allow you to get your studying done, reach your optimal level of academic success, and still have plenty of time left for fun.

Myth # 2 – “I usually wait until the last minute to finish my homework, procrastination does not affect my study skills.”

Whether you realize it or not, procrastination can be a hindrance to even the best student. According to Joseph Ferrari, Ph.D. and author of *Still Procrastinating?: The No-Regrets Guide to Getting It Done*, there are several types of procrastinators including the “academic procrastinator.” The academic procrastinator is known for getting all or most of their activities accomplished, with the exception of their homework. Ferrari notes that these students tend to spend much more time on their studies than the average student and can be more prone to participate in academic dishonesty such as plagiarism. It may be helpful to start using a daily to-do list to ensure that you know what you need to do and to help avoid procrastination.

Myth #3 - “Men are better at math than women.”

There is no research or other evidence that proves that men are better at math than women. There are, however, social and cultural pressures that deter women from going into math-related fields. Do not allow these social and cultural stigmas to stop you from achieving your goals. If math is your passion, then pursue it!

Myth # 4 – “I can practice effective study skills while watching T.V.”

This is definitely a myth! Watching T.V. while studying is an environmental distraction which leads to a lack of focus and comprehension. It eventually requires you to spend more time on your studies than is necessary. Other examples of environmental distractions include using furniture that is too comfortable, eating snacks, and associating with other people. If you find yourself having trouble with environmental distractions, find yourself a more productive study area.

Myth # 5 – “Cramming for exams always works for me.”

Cramming for your exam is the worst way to study! Cramming is ineffective because information learned last-minute in a “cram session” is only stored into your short term memory. In order to gather information into your long term memory your brain must be consistently reminded of the new material. The best way to accomplish this is to have short, frequent review sessions of new material. These study sessions will allow your brain the time it needs to properly store the information so that by the time final exams roll around you are ready to get an “A” without cramming.

Myth # 6 – “I’m the only one in my class with test anxiety.”

The truth is that more people have test anxiety than you think. In fact, everyone who cares about their grade has some level of anxiety, because if they didn’t they wouldn’t care! There are ways, however, to combat test anxiety. The best advice is to prepare well for your exam by starting your review early and by asking your professor follow-up questions.

MYTH #7 – “I’m not smart enough to get good grades in math and science, they’re just not my strongest subjects.”

Math and science take practice which is why it is important to frequently rework practice problems. Review homework, class notes, and other course material often to master material.

Myth # 8 – “It’s not important for me to read my textbook because the professor will go over the material in lecture.”

Many students try to get away with not completing their assigned reading assignments, but in the end students who do this end up creating more work for themselves. Failing to complete reading assignments means you do not have a full understanding of the course material and may miss vital information.

Myth # 9 – “As long as my cell phone is on vibrate in lecture I won’t interrupt others.”

Another myth! The truth is that vibrate can be just as distracting as having your phone on ring. Vibrate not only distracts the professor but is also distracting to classmates. Put your phone on silent and return any calls or texts after class. Be careful not to lose the respect of your professor and peers due to this inconsiderate, and easily avoidable, interruption.

Myth # 10 – “My professor is too busy to help me.”

It’s true that your professor may be busy, but that is why they hold office hours. Too often, students do not utilize office hours and miss out on one-on-one time they could have used with their professor. Take advantage of the availability they offer.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Academic Success Center (ASC) is to ensure that all Wayne State University undergraduate students become self-determined, motivated, and independent learners. We accomplish this through instruction and services that support students’ development of skills to achieve academic excellence.

Free services of the Academic Success Center include:

- Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction
- Individual Support with a Learning Specialist
- Study Skills Enhancing Workshops
- Math Success Workshops and Individual Services

Thank you to our editorial board:

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WAYNE STATE
UNIVERSITY

Academic Success Center

1600 David Adamany
Undergraduate Library
Detroit, MI 48202