

Academic Excellence

A Newsletter of the Academic Success Center

Interim Director

Michelle Bruner

mbruner@wayne.edu

Comerica Scholars Project
Manager

Lisa Dillon

dillon@wayne.edu

Reading and Study Skills

Coordinator

Angela Zanardelli

au1072@wayne.edu

Research Coordinator

Laura Woodward

laurawoodward@wayne.edu

Supplemental Instruction

Coordinator

Theresa Lindsey

av4760@wayne.edu

Tutoring Coordinator

Chardin Claybourne-Bey

claybourne@wayne.edu

Academic Success Center

Wayne State University

1600 Adamany

Undergraduate Library

Detroit, MI 48202-3967

<http://success.wayne.edu/>

313.577.3165

Autumn Hours:

Monday and Thursday

8:30 am - 7:00 pm

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

8:30 am - 5:00 pm

Preparing for Placement Exams Can Be Easier Than You Think

By Kim Clexton, k.clexton@wayne.edu

"Placement test." Few terms strike as much fear into the hearts of freshmen (or procrastinating upperclassmen) as this one. What is it about placement tests that cause students such stress? What can be done to alleviate this stress and help students approach placement tests with confidence?

First, before you sign-up for any placement exam, be sure you are required to take it. In many instances, your ACT scores can determine your placement. Make an appointment with your Academic Advisor to verify which exams you need before you sign-up!

English Qualifying Examination. To prepare, visit the WSU Writing Center, either online at <http://www.clas.wayne.edu/writing> or in person on the second floor of the Undergraduate Library. Review the "5-Paragraph Essay Structure" link found on the website. If there are other areas you find routinely troublesome, check the other links to find help.

Chemistry Qualifying Examination. The Department of Chemistry provides review information at http://www.chem.wayne.edu/undergrad_matters/exams.html#study. The website includes the basis for the exam, an outline *continued on page 2.*

Academic Success In A Stressful World

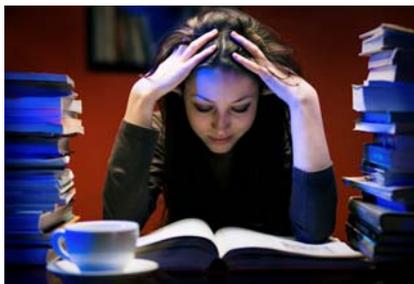
By Michelle D. Taylor, as2788@wayne.edu

For the average university student, stress may seem unbearable at times. Stress is a normal part of life but, if not controlled, it can impact your overall academic success. The following are just a few ways stress, if allowed to, can influence your academic performance:

Health— Stomach aches and headaches can come from stress. If you're sick you won't be 100% in class or when you study.

Memory— When you're stressed you have a tendency to forget information like facts and figures, particularly during exams.

Focus— As things pile up around you (i.e. test on Tuesday, paper due on Wednesday, presentation on Thursday, job...) stress can give even the most ambitious student a bleak perspective.



So, how can stress be relieved? One way is through exercise, which has been proven to be a great stress reliever. Wayne State University's Fitness Center (<http://rfc.wayne.edu>) offers many resources to help

students melt away the stress including group fitness classes, an on-staff nutritionist and massage therapy. The Counseling and Psychological Services (<http://www.caps.wayne.edu>) also has useful resources on how students can overcome stress.

The bottom line is, stress is a natural part of student life, but it doesn't have to control your academic performance. You can gain control, but you must take care of yourself. By utilizing WSU's resources, you will soon find your stress levels lowered, your overall mood elevated and your academic success at your personal highest.

(More tips are posted on page 4.)

Staying Motivated

By *Angela Zanardelli*,
au1072@wayne.edu

Every semester starts the same, your goals are set: Your GPA won't dip below a 4.0, you'll manage your time perfectly, and so on. But then something happens, you stumble on your first exam or you can't seem to find the time to study since you've met so many new friends. You become frustrated and put school lower on your priority list.

Sound familiar? It's common. How do you keep your motivation levels up?

What factors decrease academic motivation for you? It could be difficulty adjusting to college, homesickness, peer pressure, personal issues, or intimidation from course material.

How do you keep these common motivation busters at bay?

Be aware of which strategies work for you and which ones do not.

Review before you take any placement exam.

continued from page 1 of the subject matter to be tested, and some sample questions.

Mathematics Placement Examination. Math is a subject requiring regular review to keep the information current. The math "muscle", when not "exercised", atrophies quickly. Therefore, it is recommended that you spend some time reviewing concepts before sitting for the exam. On the University Advising Center website, we provide links to help to assist in this area (<http://www.advising.wayne.edu/math.php>). This site presents sample exams at

1. Start your semester off realistically. Create goals that are attainable and that you find desirable. If you set unrealistic goals you will most likely be disappointed in the end.

2. Be honest with yourself. If you know that cramming for an exam is going to leave you unprepared and anxious, create a study plan that paces out your learning. If you know that you aren't comfortable in a social situation or have a bad feeling about something, don't do it.

3. At the very beginning of every semester, you rank your top five priorities. After you've done so, identify the activities that accompany these

priorities (e.g. study time for classes, family time, etc.) and block off the necessary parts of your schedule to accommodate these activities. Try to always stick to your schedule so that you avoid falling behind or missing something important.

College is a great time to get to know yourself. Be aware of which strategies work for you and which ones do not. Throughout the semester, be aware of your personal goals, make choices that reflect your values and beliefs, and manage your time effectively for maximum success. In the end, you'll see that your motivation levels will remain consistent and that your final grades will reap the benefits.

Jumpstart your academic success

Check out our list of free workshops with strategies which can boost your grades at www.success.wayne.edu/workshop_list.php

Preparing for Placement Exams

progressive levels and will connect you to sites to review a variety of math concepts.

Remember, the goal of any placement exam is to ensure you are placed in the appropriate level so you can be successful in your coursework—now and in the future! Remember: As preparation, you should review before you take any placement exam. When studying for a placement exam, you should not attempt to learn new concepts. Sometimes your



results place you in a preparatory class. If this happens, take comfort in knowing that you are getting the foundation you need so you can achieve a stronger knowledge base and better grades as you go forward.

Getting Ahead with Supplemental Instruction

By *Lucas Korte,*
ak3938@wayne.edu

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a free service offered through the Academic Success Center consisting of group study sessions targeted for specific courses. SI leaders are undergraduate students who have received an A in the course they are supporting. They also attend each lecture.

Attending SI regularly has been shown to increase a student's performance up to a full letter grade. Here are some tips students can use to maximize the effectiveness of SI:

Attend SI regularly—Students who attend frequently do better than students who do not. Try to make it to an SI session at least once a week. Always

attend prepared—read any assigned readings, keep up with the book, and take some time to review your notes.

Participate—The benefits of SI come from group interaction and a cooperative spirit—working together to learn and teach your fellow students, answering questions, presenting your findings, and going to the board to do work.

Use your handouts as study tools, not busy work—SI leaders spend a

lot of time preparing practice exams, quizzes, and handouts. If you go to get a handout, stay for the whole session, otherwise, you will probably miss information that will help you use the handout most effectively.

Take practice exams and quizzes as though they were real tests—Find a quiet place to take the exam, allot yourself time to take the test, grade your performance and focus your study on the material which you need to master.

Come to SI with

questions you want answered—but expect to be guided in finding the answer. SI leaders are not simply Q&A experts. They are there to help you learn. Be prepared to learn the best ways to find the answers to your own questions.



For a current schedule of SI sessions and leaders visit www.success.wayne.edu.

Interested in sharing your academic success tips with WSU?

Submit an article to ascnews@lists.wayne.edu

Keeping an Eye on the Bottom Line

By *Nannette McClary Shaw,*
n.shaw@wayne.edu

Are you new to Wayne State University? Congratulations! Graduation may seem a way off, but establishing yourself this year is first step toward your career goals. That's right, career planning is not just for seniors – it is a critical component throughout your education. To be competitive in today's job market, students will need a combination of academic excellence and professional work experience. Build career planning into your schedule to save yourself time and money by following these tips:

1 – Make Your Classes Relevant: If you're a business major, but enjoyed the anthropology course you took as a general education requirement, why not find out how anthropology is used in today's business environment?

2 – Get to Know Your Staff: Career counselors can give you encouragement to follow your goals. Contact Career Services at 1001 FAB, (313) 577-3390, www.careerservices.wayne.edu.

3 – Explore Leadership Opportunities: The professional work world rewards the individual who takes initiative and

coordinates others to complete projects. Get involved!

4 – Consider On-campus Student Employment: "The advantage of working on-campus is not having to go elsewhere before or after class. It saves money, gas, and time," said Vanessa Villarreal, a criminal justice major.

5 – Register with Career Services: Registering and maintaining a current resume through Career Services (online at www.careerservices.wayne.edu) will keep you posted on career opportunities.

Career planning is not just for seniors – it is a critical component throughout your education.

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Leading the way in evidence-based academic support and excellence.

WAYNE STATE
UNIVERSITY

Academic Success Center



Charitable
Foundation

1600 David Adamany
Undergraduate Library
Detroit, MI 48202
(313)577-3165
ascnews@lists.wayne.edu

We're on the web:
<http://www.success.wayne.edu/>

Mission Statement

The mission of the Academic Success Center is to help students become independent and motivated learners. To support students' success in the University environment, the Academic Success Center aims to provide individualized services and the tools to develop effective learning skills.

Free services that the office offers include:

- Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction
- Individual Support by a Learning Specialist
- Study Skill Enhancing Workshops

Thank you to our editorial board:

Chardin Claybourne-Bey, Robert Buentello, Latesha Bigford, Laura Woodward, Editor, Angela Zanardelli and Susan Sheiner, Associate Editors.

Top Ten Ways to Relieve Stress

By Shena Penn, au7669@wayne.edu

1. Campus Artwalk

Wayne State University's Artwalk contains 27 pieces of art from the university's art collection. The art can be found around campus. For a map of the locations visit www.alumni.wayne.edu.

2. Exercising

A great way to release stress and soothe muscles is through physical activity. Exercise increases the amount of blood flowing to the brain and pumps endorphins, which can improve your mood. The Mort Harris Recreation and Fitness Center on campus offers a full schedule of classes.

3. Healthy Diet

Try cutting fast foods and sugary food out of your diet; it'll boost your performance. Eating better will give you more energy to keep you going during times of stress.

4. Passive Reading

Try dropping that textbook and picking up a novel instead. Textbooks require active reading, while novels enlist passive reading, which is reading for enjoyment. To browse books, visit one of the libraries on campus, the Detroit Public Library, or a campus bookstore.

5. Movies

Catching a movie is a great way to escape the pressures of daily life. Wayne State offers free movies on campus periodically, and the Detroit Film Theatre at the Detroit

Institute of Arts is a great place to go for movies out of the mainstream.

6. Art Galleries

Visit the art galleries in midtown and downtown Detroit. Most galleries, such as C POP and the Detroit Artists Market, are located on Woodward within walking distance from WSU's main campus.

7. Classes for Enjoyment

If you think you'll have a particularly stressful semester, try taking a class for enjoyment. WSU offers exercise classes, music classes, or maybe even try a beginner's photography class.

8. Music Listening

If you're stressed, try listening to music. Music calms the mind, and takes tension out of your body. Studies show that classical music helps to relieve stress the most.

9. Sleeping

Lacking sleep can cause irritability and stress. A nap can really help you maintain your poise and temper. Studies show that power naps can help give you a boost to get through the day.

10. Riverwalk

The Riverwalk in downtown Detroit is a three and a half mile long strip of land running along the edge of the Detroit River. It's a serene place to gather your thoughts and let your worries float on the wind.

