

Academic Excellence

The Academic Success
Center newsletter
geared toward student
success

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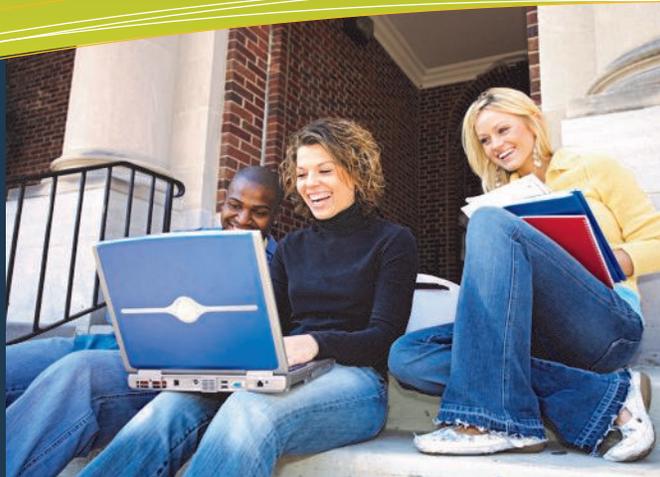
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Spring/Summer hours
Monday-Friday
8:30 am-5:00 pm



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Keeping it Hot: How to Score a Sizzling Summer GPA

By Angela Zanardelli, au1072@wayne.edu

Effective time-management can often be a real challenge for summer college students. The parties, barbecues, and vacations are the “must do” events of the season. But is it possible to attend these events and still end the semester with a high GPA? The answer is “yes”, and the following describes four tips to keep you motivated during the busy summer months.

Tip 1. Rank Your Priorities- Priorities often change with the seasons so rank your top five priorities for the Spring/Summer semester. After you do so, identify the activities that accompany each priority. Then you’ll want to reserve certain blocks of time for each activity in your calendar. This allows you to see available blocks of time to fill with extracurricular goings-on.

Tip 2. Be firm with your schedule- Postponing scheduled tasks will make them more difficult and will involve twice the time. Stick with your study schedule so that you are able to fit in the activities you enjoy. Remember to be realistic. Going to an all-night bonfire may not pair well with your 8 a.m. exam. Do both by stopping by the party for a while, but only after you’ve fully prepared for the exam.

Tip 3. Do not welcome interruption- Don’t allow your study session go into overtime because of unnecessary interruptions. Remember that you are in control of your lively cell phone, not vice versa. Also, avoid studying in places in which you know you’ll be distracted. The beach is a blast but not the best learning environment. With effective study in a conducive environment, you’ll be at the beach in no time.

Tip 4. Place a value on your semester- Frequently remind yourself why you are taking courses during the Spring/Summer semester. Write your purpose or motivation on an index card and use the card as a bookmark for your textbooks. Each time you open the book to read, you’ll be automatically reminded of your reason for learning the material.

When it all comes down to it, you want to do well in your courses. If you neglect to keep up with the material you will have major regrets at the end of the semester. Continue to refer to the above tips to stay on track and you’ll be sure to keep yourself stress-free and well balanced for your greatest summer yet.



Urban farmers sell produce at WSU Farmer's Market. Buy fresh fixings every Wednesday thru October 28, 2009. Photograph by Susan Sheiner

Food for Thought

By Angela Zanardelli, au1072@wayne.edu

Eating serves many purposes for college students. Students eat to fuel themselves for their busy schedules, they eat with friends to catch up, and they may even eat for comfort. More important than the why of student consumption is the what. What are students eating and how can it affect their academic success? We rarely think about what we eat until after the fact. What many students don't realize, however, is that what they eat has a great deal to do with their performance in lecture, study sessions, and on exams.

Eating fast food, foods high in sugar and in trans fats can lead to a sudden energy crash once the food begins the digestive process. Ever notice how eating a quarter pounder with cheese meal is so good while it lasts but afterwards, your body is begging for a nap? In many cases this "food coma" happens when you are in class or are trying to study. You are essentially unable to concentrate when you need to the most.

According to researchers at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, the after-effects of caffeine is similar to those of highly processed foods.

Moving from Confusion to Clarity in Choosing a Major

By: Helen Wilson, ai5620@wayne.edu

As an Academic Advisor in the University Advising Center, I advise students daily who are confused about choosing a major. I hear statements like, "How do I choose a major?" or "What can I do with a major in...?" When students are confused about their major, I encourage them to take general education requirements while exploring major options. I suggest the following steps:

Identify majors or academic programs that interest you and take classes in those areas. Students tend to excel in classes that they enjoy.

Read about specific majors in the undergraduate bulletin and/or WSU website. Schedule appointments with

the advisor in departments that interest you. Ask questions about particular majors

Think about a career you wish to pursue and then choose a major that relates to moving in that particular career direction. For example, if you wish to be a newspaper writer, you could pursue a journalism major.

Look on the UAC advising website www.advising.wayne.edu. Under quicklinks, see Choosing Your Career. Click and see the following links: Career Services, What can I do with a major in?, and Declaring or Changing Your Major.

Visit Career Services and meet with a Career Counselor to identify careers that are well suited to your interests, skills and values. Take UCS 0991 – Designing

Caffeine can be very effective in reasonable amounts. It's when students ignore their caffeine boundaries and surpass their personal limit that caffeine becomes an issue. Heart-pounding. Jittery. On edge. Sound familiar? Know your limits with caffeine and don't allow a beverage to become a distraction.

On the other hand, when you eat a balanced meal that your body finds easy to process, rarely does it come back to haunt you. So, where can you find such a meal around Wayne's campus? To name a few: Subway, Jimmy Johns, Einstein Bros, La Pita, Byblos, Blimpies, Cass Café, the Towers Café, and the weekly WSU farmer's market (pictured above). If eating out is not in your budget, brown bag it. Sandwiches, leftovers, and soups brought from home are an economic and easy way to eat lunch on the go. If you have trouble finding time for breakfast, carry granola bars, or yogurt and fruit along with you in your book bag.

Students interested in a further exploration of diet and nutrition can take advantage of the free nutritional services offered at the Mort Harris Recreation and Fitness Center. On-site nutritional specialists offer personalized guidance on a variety of issues including diet tips, sports nutrition, and weight loss. Learn more at <http://rfc.wayne.edu/nutrition.php>.

Keep in mind that you control what you consume and you also control what distracts you. Make good choices during mealtimes on campus or, better yet, save money and bring your lunch from home. You do have options when it comes to eating healthy on campus. Be smart about how you treat your brain and body.

Your Future. This is a class offered fall and winter terms and taught by the Career Services staff. The course guides students through the major selection and career planning process in eight weeks. There is no charge for this non-credit course.

After you have taken the above six steps, meet with your advisor again to discuss ideas about a major or academic program. Sometimes, you may need to further explore a major; at other times, you may be ready to move in a particular direction. During the first two years of college, you can explore a major while working towards making a decision. In working with an Academic Advisor, you gain specific steps to follow toward choosing a major and discovering resources that can make a difference in taking you from confusion to clarity.

Networking: Success in Academia

By Tanya Bishop, ay7631@wayne.edu

Sometimes as students, we assume that in order to be successful all we need to do is go to class, complete our homework, and ace the exams. However, there is one key element missing in this formula for success: Networking! According to the Academic Support Center at Cuesta College, “[Successful students] go out of their way to find the instructor and engage in meaningful conversation. These students demonstrate to the instructor that they are active participants in the learning process.” Networking with professors is crucial to not only be a successful undergraduate student but to also ease your way into graduate school.

One of the easiest ways to network with professors is to introduce yourself during the first week of classes, either during office hours or at the end of class. “Okay,” you say. “I can do this, but what do I say?” First, tell the professor your name and which course of his or hers you are taking. This will give the professor the ability to put your name and face together. Most importantly, discuss what you expect to learn from the class. You might also

mention your class standing, major, and your educational and/or career goals. Never forget: Sitting in the front of the lecture hall will ensure that you are memorable to your professors.

You may be thinking, “Now that I’ve introduced myself, what comes next?”



You must continue to network. Continue to visit during the professor’s office hours to clarify course content. By continuing to build a positive rapport with your professor, you are beginning to build a relationship. Relationship building is the essence of networking. If this leads to mentoring, keep the professor updated with your academic progress, even after the class has ended.

So, why should you follow through with all of this extra work? Keep in mind that when applying to graduate schools, for scholarships, or for internships, you will need recommendation letters. An additional reason is that professors conduct research, and you may be interested in participating in his or her research endeavors.

“When should I start?” Now! Yesterday! Years ago! Networking should begin during your freshman year of college. Unfortunately, most freshmen are not told the importance of making connections with faculty early—but it is never too late to start. Go out today and talk with your professors. It’s not scary. They are people too!

What’s Your Success Strategy? Finding Career Opportunities in Tough Times

By Nannette McCleary Shaw, ab7639@wayne.edu

Are you concerned about your career prospects after graduation? In today’s tough economy, it certainly seems reasonable. The answer is to be competitive by utilizing opportunities such as study-abroad, part-time jobs, and internships throughout your education. You can take advantage of resources including Career Services and Study Abroad and Global Programs www.studyabroad.wayne.edu to expand your knowledge and skills.

While these programs offer much diversity, it can be difficult sometimes to find just the right experiences that help your career goals. So here are three additional strategies to uncover “hidden” possibilities:

Informational Interviewing - This is the opposite of a job interview in that you are the interviewer asking questions like, “How did you get into this career?” and “What is a typical work day like?” to professionals and experts in your field(s) of interest. It is a great way to explore possible careers, learn about employment trends, and network for future work opportunities.

Share Your Hobby - Eight years ago, Michigander Davy Rothbert turned his hobby of collecting other people’s lost notes into FOUND Magazine, a nationally popular phenomenon. Business and government experts alike agree that the future of the U.S. economy depends on such entrepreneurial efforts. Plus, developing your personal passions from ideas into sustainable income can also result in very satisfying employment.

Volunteer- Volunteering is one of the best ways to combine developing professional networking skills while gaining valuable work experience – and it is not just for the arts or social sciences. Non-profit organizations need accounting and technology professionals as well to run successful operations. Check out your local community centers, libraries, churches, professional associations, or even small businesses in your area for ways you can contribute your unique talents.

To learn more about these career methods contact Career Services at www.careerservices.wayne.edu.

By Chardin Claybourne-Bey, ay1414@wayne.edu



While there is no magical panacea of wonderfulness to make you instantly smarter upon ingestion, researchers have been hard at work establishing relationships to the effects

nutrients have on brain functions. Below is a short list of foods that may help improve your thinking.

1. Water. Dehydration is a major cause of physical and mental fatigue. While technically not a food, water is an essential element necessary for life, and is far and away, the number one drink for helping you improve your concentration and focus. Remember: When you feel thirsty, you're already dehydrated—so drink up.

2. Blueberries. This small bluish-purple fruit can help improve your thinking and stave off the effects of Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's Disease. It's secret? Antioxidants.

3. Salmon. This fish is loaded with omega-3 fatty acids (one of the "good" fats) which help slow the degenerative effect of aging on our brains. If you're a vegetarian or vegan, try flax seeds, kiwi fruit, and walnuts to get your dose of omega-3.

4. Peppermint tea. Researchers in one study found links between improved focus and performance with exposure to the scent of peppermint. Peppermint candy is not a reasonable alternative, because the sugar will cause a sugar rush...and a sugar crash.

5. Citrus fruits. Oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit—these citrus fruits have been linked to an improvement in cognitive function. The flavonoids in these fruits are the key.

6. Mushrooms. Yes, fungus. Mushrooms contain vitamin D, a component which assists in maintaining the brain's thinking. If mushrooms aren't your cup of joe, try any of the many cereals, soy milk, or other foods fortified with vitamin D.

7. Nuts. Many nuts contain Selenium. A causal relationship has been found between a lack of this nutrient and reduced thinking ability in humans. As Mr. Peanut® says, "Go nuts!"

8. Lentils. The iron in lentils (and other beans) has been shown in treatments to help improve the cognitive functions of women. Plus, lentil soup is tasty.

9. Cacao beans. These are full of antioxidants and flavonoids, and are linked not only to improving your thinking, but also improving your moods.

10. Double bacon cheeseburger, chili-cheese fries, and chocolate shake. Just kidding. Eating foods high in fat, sugar, and salt will slow down your cognitive functions and make you feel sluggish, unfocused, and just plain blah. Add to it that, eating these kinds of foods fuels your addictions, and you can see how it is a recipe for disaster.

Keep these in mind when making food choices. Bon appétit!

Sources:

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Mission Statement

The mission of the Comerica Academic Success Center is for all Wayne State University undergraduate students to become self-determined, motivated, and independent learners. To support students' success in the University environment, the Academic Success Center provides individualized services and the tools to develop effective learning skills.

Free services of the Academic Success Center include:

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

Thank you to our editorial board:

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