

150 Suggestions for Academic Success

Attitude

1. Keep your sense of humor.
2. Be optimistic, even if you do not like a task or a class.
3. Be patient. It all works out.
4. Be pleasant and polite.
5. Work hard.
6. Be realistic.
7. Approach each semester as a fresh beginning.
8. Avoid complaining.
9. Resist taking the easy way out.
10. Demonstrate a sense of confidence.
11. Keep things in proper perspective.
12. Understand that the university is not against you.
13. Expand your horizons.
14. Aim for the best grades you can get.
15. Try and risk failing, but never fail to try.
16. Do your best; always give more than the rest.
17. Avoid procrastination.
18. Do more than just survive your first semester—thrive!

Physical Health

19. Get plenty of sleep.
20. Make water your first drink of choice.
21. Exercise regularly.
22. Walk to class.
23. Snack on healthier food.
24. Visit the health center when you first believe you are ill.

Mental Health

25. Balance school work with recreation and pleasure.
26. Face your anxieties.
27. Practice good listening skills.
28. Take time to relax your mind.
29. If all else fails to work, pray.

Memory

30. Study for long-term memory.
31. Study to remember details.
32. Use mnemonics to help you recall information.
33. Carry notes with you and review whenever you have time.
34. Ask questions repeatedly until you understand.

Organization

35. Use an electronic organizer or planner to track your responsibilities.
36. Find a method that works for you and stick to it.
37. Take responsibility for where you need to be—do not leave it up to someone else to remind you.
38. Establish a routine.
39. Evaluate how you spend your time.
40. Put all your major assignments, projects, and exams on a wall calendar
41. Put inflexible commitments in your planner/calendar first.
42. Keep track of your grades in each class. Be in charge of your achievements.
43. Learn how the system works.
44. Put all your commitments in writing.

Support

45. Try all the resources at NMC.
46. If you cannot find what you need, ask.
47. Get a tutor before it's too late.
48. Be accountable for yourself.
49. Use all the resources of the library.
50. Apply for at least one scholarship each year.

Study Habits

51. Study even when you do not have specific homework.
52. Find a listening friend.
53. Find quiet places to study.
54. Try different study locations.
55. Study with a partner.
56. Give yourself short breaks while studying.
57. Extra time studying pays off in the end.
58. Never study on an empty stomach; never snack too much while studying.
59. Start studying before midnight.
60. Study as if you are the instructor who will be giving the lecture.

Reading

61. Read ahead.
62. Re-read after classes.
63. Do more reading than is required.
64. Read every assignment.
65. Use SQ3R to organize your reading effectiveness.
66. Use leisure reading to improve the quality of your academic reading and to practice speed reading.

67. Read out loud difficult information.

Notes Taking and Review

- 68. Review your notes right after class.
- 69. Take lots of notes.
- 70. Listen for new ideas and transitions for important information.
- 71. If you cannot read your handwriting, type your notes.

Test-Preparation

- 72. Use flash cards to help you remember and rehearse retrieval of information.
- 73. Ask professors to give a test study guide.
- 74. Pretend the professor is going to give you a daily quiz.
- 75. Make up essay questions; write the answers.
- 76. Practice making up test questions.
- 77. Look up your finals schedule before finals.
- 78. Try Supplemental Instruction.
- 79. Request a tutor before you need one.

Test-Taking

- 80. Take all the time you are allowed for tests.
- 81. Take tests backwards.
- 82. Read the instructions.
- 83. Understand the differences between types of questions.
- 84. Look for key words.
- 85. Memory dump key words or formulas before you begin.

Writing

- 86. Start research papers early.
- 87. Create a strong thesis.
- 88. Develop an outline before you begin writing.
- 89. Never turn in a first draft.
- 90. Have other people review your writing and provide feedback.
- 91. Use reference citations for everything.
- 92. Always use the format (ex: APA, MLA, Chicago) expected by your instructors.
- 93. Treat short papers just as important as long papers.

Homework and Projects

- 94. Complete assignments to understand.
- 95. Divide large projects into small steps.
- 96. Reward yourself after completing homework or projects.
- 97. Give yourself due dates before the actual due date.
- 98. Review instructions to ensure you completed the entire assignment.
- 99. Staple papers. Do not use paperclips or folded edges.

Activities

100. Place academics before social experiences.
101. Choose extracurricular activities which will enhance your career potential.
102. Be a leader.
103. Perform community service.
104. Attend university events and seminars.
105. Plan activities that fit around your study schedule.
106. Get work experience in your major field.
107. Use summer and winter breaks for internships or field experiences.
108. Read information on university bulletin boards.
109. Make real friends, not just virtual friends.
110. Travel abroad and get a global perspective.
111. Read the university newspaper, but not in class.

Peer Relationships

112. Introduce yourself to other students in classes.
113. Get to know other students in all of your classes.
114. Emulate good role models.
115. Learn from other students who do well.
116. Support others' learning—it will come back to you.
117. Help other students learn from your mistakes.
118. Organize a study group among your peers.
119. Resolve past hurts. They interfere with learning.
120. Discuss study habits with your roommate(s).

Relationships with Faculty

121. Be sure your professors know you by name.
122. Get to know your instructors.
123. Go to your instructors' office hours.

Relationships with University Administration

124. Expect people will want to help you.
125. Read and understand the details of your financial aid.
126. Try calling your academic advisor before e-mailing him/her.
127. Make positive choices, and keep yourself out of the judicial system.

Learning Styles

128. Know your learning styles and preferences.
129. Take aptitude and interest tests and apply what you learn about yourself.
130. Be confident in your abilities.
131. Remember that learning is a process. Enjoy the journey.
132. Use multi-sensory learning strategies.
133. If you have or believe you might have a learning disability, contact the Coordinator of Academic Success early in the semester.
134. Recognize your limitations.
135. Try to stretch your limitations.

Class Participation

- 136. Attend all classes.
- 137. Be resourceful.
- 138. Sit where the professor can see you.
- 139. Remove distractions (i.e., noisy people, newspapers, iPods, etc.)
- 140. Ask questions.
- 141. Never pack up early. Summary information often is last minute.

Technology

- 142. Embrace technology for learning and resources.
- 143. Understand the risks of using online resources for references.

Goals

- 144. Set goals for each semester, month, week, day, course, etc.
- 145. Understand how your GPA is calculated, and set a GPA goal for each semester.
- 146. Give all your goals a specific time frame and specific measurable component.
- 147. Share your goals with friends, roommates, family, etc.
- 148. Remember why you are in school – keep an eye on your goals.

Concluding Ideas

- 149. Read this handout.
- 150. Go get 'em!