Everyone wants to be successful in accomplishing their goals. Your goals at this college may be to pass a certain number of courses, to get a degree, to eventually get a job, or to get a job that is better. Your goal may be to improve yourself intellectually. Whatever your goal is, you WANT to succeed. The following pages represent the lessons of experience of one individual who has been and still is a student, your instructor. These suggestions cannot guarantee success (there are no guarantees in life), but they will improve the probability of success if applied. In the following pages, let's explore the following topics:

- Time Management
- Stress Management
- Note Taking Skills
- Reading a Text
- Study Habits - Preparing for an Exam.
- Taking Exams.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Some people stack the deck against themselves because they have taken on more activities than they have time for or they fail to manage the time of each activity of the day or week. The first step to time management is to decide how much time it will take to:

1. Go to school (including Lab Time)
2. Job Time
3. Family or Social Time
4. Time for rest or sleep

After deciding how much time is spent on each of these, you should have a better idea if you use more than 24 hours in a day. If you exceed 24 hours something has to give -- your activities or your sanity!! CUT BACK ON SOMETHING!!

Secondly, you must SET PRIORITIES. What is most important to you? Some school activities have deadlines. What is more important at this time -- school or social life? school or job? These questions are often difficult to answer. Some individuals will schedule classes that conflict with job. You can't be in two places at the same time!! Do you reduce school time or job time? Do you reduce social time or school time? SETTING PRIORITIES IS A KEY TO SUCCESS.

Thirdly, don't put off things that must be done. Procrastination is common human trait that can be disastrous. Don't put things off until the last moment. This is called managing your activities by continual crisis which will put you under continual high stress. PLANNING AHEAD IS A KEY TO SUCCESS.
STRESS MANAGEMENT

A little stress is really a good thing. Some stress can be a stimulus for higher achievement. If you were not under some stress, you probably wouldn't do your best. Look at athletes as an example. Stress gets the adrenaline working. The problem comes when we put ourselves under too much stress. Everyone has a certain level of stress. Above this level an individual will defeat their purposes. Don't eliminate stress, but learn to manage it!! It has been shown that unduly high stress produces high blood pressure and aggravates other stress related diseases such as arthritis. So who needs that much stress?!?! This life is short enough as it is. If a person procrastinates until the last moment on an activity, they put themselves under a great deal of stress which can adversely affect the quality of the finished product of their activity. LEARNING TO MANAGE YOUR OWN STRESS LEVEL IS A KEY TO SUCCESS.

Anxiety (fear of the unknown) tends to increase stress. So don't worry about things excessively. THINK POSITIVE. A person who expects the worst will be under a great deal more stress than one who has high REALISTIC expectations that are positive. A person who thinks or acts negatively will reap negative results. A person who thinks or acts positively will reap more positive results. Don't set unrealistically high goals or expectations for yourself because not being able to attain these goals will result in high stress. Continue to reevaluate your goals (for a course or career), and don't be reluctant to reduce those goals so that success is more assured. Once the limited goals are attained, you can always raise your sights!!

LEARN TO RELAX!! This will reduce stress. Meditation, physical activity, social entertainment, all are important stress reducers. If you have a problem with another individual (fellow student, teacher, administrator, family member), try to go to that individual and work out the problem with them. Allowing a nagging problem to fester like a sore will only raise your stress level. Talk it out with them. The problem may not be solved, but at least it is out in the open and will cease to increase your stress level. There are other ways to reduce and manage your level of stress, but these will be discussed later.

NOTE TAKING

Note taking is an important part of most college classes. It is a rare individual who can sit in a class and collect all the information passed about and then be able to have nearly full recall of that information at some future date. Most of us have to WRITE IT DOWN. In taking notes for several classes, it is important to remember to take all notes of a single class together in one part of the notebook. Use a loose leaf notebook that has dividers so this can be accomplished. When taking notes, write down only necessary words, and don't worry about correct spelling or punctuation. The only criteria for a good set of notes is their ability to convey information to the reader in the future. If you can't understand the notes, they are not very useful to anyone. A useful suggestion is to spend five minutes as soon after the class session as possible reading over the notes for that day. If something doesn't make sense
at the time, it probably won't make sense later. Clear up any questions that arise as soon as possible.

Make use of margins of your notebook. For example, you might jot down any required text reading or homework assignments. If the instructor keys the notes to a set of objectives as I do in my classes, write the objective number in the margin so you can cross-reference the objectives with the contents of the notes.

There are at least two good reasons for taking notes. The most immediate reason is to provide a basis for reviewing material before an exam. But more about that later. A second long range reason is to provide review material for future use outside the immediate class. When I first began teaching, I began with an old set of lecture notes as a basis for my first year's lectures!! WRITING IT DOWN IS A KEY TO SUCCESS.

STUDY HABITS-PREPARING FOR AN EXAM

In studying for a class, it is important to determine what are the main sources of review. Some classes such as mine stress notes in class. Other classes stress outside reading material or handouts. Still other classes stress content in the text. Once the major sources of review have been identified, use those sources in studying for the course content.

In some classes, project papers or term papers constitute a large part of the final grade. In such cases, it is advisable to START EARLY. Don't put off until the last moment. This is equally true in preparing for a major exam. Prepare well ahead of the exam date. Whatever your sources of review are, you should break the review material up into smaller segments and begin 3-4 days before the exam date. Take 1-2 hours each night to study only one segment. On the night before the exam, use this study time to summarize all of the segments. This recap should not take more than an hour. NEVER WAIT UNTIL THE LAST NIGHT AND CRAM FOR AN EXAM!! It can't be done. You probably won't end up with a successful result in the exam as a result of cramming. You simply cause frustration which will result in anxiety which tends to raise your stress level sky high. In addition, cramming will leave you fatigued just before an exam. I have seen students take No Doz tablets the night before only to fall asleep during the exam!! PREPARATION IS A KEY TO SUCCESS.

TAKING AN EXAM

In taking an exam, you must prepare yourself academically AND psychologically or emotionally. Both are important to be successful. An individual who may be academically prepared and knows the material may be emotionally unprepared, and the results are likely to be unfavorably. Likewise, an individual may be "Cool Hand Luke" and as "loose as a goose", but be academically unprepared because of lack of study. This will also result in disaster time.

One can prepare themselves academically by using good study habits and prepare well ahead of the exam date. However, you must start on the eve of the exam in order to prepare yourself psychologically. GO
Succeeding in College

Ralph H. Logan

TO BED EARLY!! Don't stay up all night studying or worrying. It has been shown that fatigue can have a disastrous effect on exam results. In addition, worry or anxiety simply raises your stress level which will affect your performance. In the morning, try not to think about the exam, and don't try to review any of the material. If you haven't prepared by now, it's too late. Some people feel if they don't continue to review up to the final moment, they won't be prepared. The content in your head won't leak out!! It is still there for you to recall it upon the proper stimulus. You only raise your stress level above what it should be by thinking about the exam or last minute reviews. Have a cup of coffee and some breakfast. Have a conversation about anything except the exam. Refuse politely to discuss it with anyone.

Try to arrive early for the exam so that you can slowly settle down to take the exam. RELAX!! Take a deep breath or two, close your eyes, and prepare yourself emotionally. When the exam is given to you, check to make sure all the pages are there. If it is an objective multiple choice, matching, or true-false test, go through the exam and answer only those questions that you know immediately. If you don't know them, leave them until you have covered all test items for the first time. Then go back and answer ones later. It is human nature to want to answer one question at a time, but this could work against you. If you should get stuck on an early test item and use too much time on it, you might find it impossible to finish the test in the time limit set for the exam. Some of the last test items may have been easy to answer, but you never saw them, because you got hung up on an early test item. This is also good advise for essay questions. Answer the easy ones first, then return to the hard ones. If you should have time, scan over the exam a third time to be sure that you attempted every test item unless you are penalized for guesses. A word about the time for an exam. Most exams have a time limit. That can be good provided the time is sufficient for the given length of the exam. It will provide a tolerable stress level which should stimulate your mental processes. Life is full of deadlines!! When you have finished your exam, turn it in and DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE RESULTS!! Worry will only raise your stress level and take your mind off the next class. You can't change the result of your exam by worry, but you can adversely affect your performance in your next class. Take a positive attitude before and after the exam. If you go into or leave an exam with a negative attitude, this will produce negative results in future performance. If you did poorly in the exam, resolve to improve in future exams. Don't be moody over the results.

Three last thoughts I leave you --

Be positive, Prepare, and Succeed!!