

The Starting Line for College Success

After Registration:

Get prepared now for the first day!

- Get familiar with SWIC technology by logging into E-Storm, Blackboard, and activating your student email. Success Center staff can assist with technology.
- Get required **textbooks** before classes begin. Borrow? Rent? Buy?
- **Check your SWIC e-mail** account regularly. Consider forwarding this to your personal email account for your convenience.
- **Meet with services departments** such as Financial Aid, Disability and Access, Veterans Services, etc. to complete required paperwork.
- Identify and **obtain a planner** you will use (traditional, Word template, cell phone, Outlook, etc.).



3-7 Days BEFORE Classes Begin:

Using the **SWIC College Calendar** <https://www.swic.edu/students/academic-resources/calendar/> fill in important dates (final exams, holidays, etc.) in a **planner or phone calendar**.

Change your sleep and waking hours to adjust to your new schedule.

Purchase school supplies.

Check Blackboard to see if a **course syllabus** is available.

Skim and scan your textbooks to become familiar with the content and organization.



1 Day BEFORE Classes Begin

Organize the materials and books you are taking to class.

- Include a copy of your daily schedule with building and classroom numbers and start/end times
- Pack syllabi, textbooks, planner, folders, spiral notebooks, pens/pencils, etc. for each class.

Sources:

School Supplies jpg. www.thelocalbrand.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Office-Supplies.jpg. Accessed 15 May, 2017

Shushan, Jamie. *The Pocket Guide to College Success*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2014.

Weekly Planner jpg. s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/46/30/e8/4630e8e07adaf343e6274e23846d331d.jpg Accessed 15 May, 2017.

DAY 1 of Each Course: Arrive 5-10 minutes early for each class.

During Class: Get the name and number of one or more classmates

Listen attentively, take notes by hand – especially anything the instructor writes on the board or emphasizes. At the end of every class, write down from memory everything you can remember, including information about assignments; then double check against notes and book.

After Each First Class:



Carefully Read Your Syllabus

Read and study the syllabus. This is your job, not your instructor's.

Read carefully, then:

- **Add all assignments and due dates** for the semester in your planner/calendar. You may benefit from color-coding assignment due dates and reminders
- Work back from the due-date and schedule tasks needed to complete the project.
- Become familiar with each instructors' requirements and expectations.
- Highlight the number of allowed absences.
- Does the instructor give daily quizzes at the beginning of class?
- What are the drop-dates?
- How do you reach your instructor? What are his or her office hours?

Write in all assignments and due dates for the coming months in your planner.

Work backward from the due-date and schedule time to study each day.

Complete a **Time Management Grid** to include each class, hours of employment, and other commitments and responsibilities. Then, fill in your study times. Set phone reminders to alert you.

- Get help setting up your assignment planner by **meeting with a Learning Specialist or tutor at the Success Center.**

Start memorizing key information during and after the first class and regularly test yourself.

Some instructors use the online program, Blackboard, to communicate class expectations, including assignments and due dates. **Attend a Blackboard orientation** to become familiar with this important tool.

During Every Class

Attend every class. Be in your seat 5-10 minutes before class starts

- Choose to **engage in the class** lecture and learning activities. Adopt a **positive mindset**
- **Ask questions.** If you still don't understand, write them down to ask after class. **The Success Center may also be able to help.**
- **Take notes by hand** and respond to the information – is it new? Confusing? Awesome? Boring? Acknowledge your feelings and opinions, but stay involved despite how you think or feel about it.

After Every Class

- Record assignments and any changes in your planner. Add due dates and reminders.
- Schedule **two-three hours outside of class for every hour in class** doing homework, reading, studying, writing, etc. **REALLY!**
- **Review your notes** and create 10-15 flashcards from that day's lecture identifying potential test questions.
- Before leaving campus, **visit the Success Center** for help getting started on homework. **There are copies of many textbooks available to use in the Success Center.**
- **Find a good place to study.** Minimize the distractions and let others know this is your study time and place. Turn off your phone and concentrate.
- **Start memorizing** after each class and regularly test yourself with flashcards or study questions. **Visit with a Success Center Learning Specialist or tutor to learn engaging and effective strategies for memorizing information.**
- **Be proactive!** As soon as you begin to struggle in a class, visit your instructor or come to the Success Center.
- **Do your best work** on all assignments and **turn them in on time!**



Student working with a tutor at the Success Center

At the Beginning of Each Week

- Review the week's responsibilities and events then create a plan for the week.
- What are the next steps for your long-term projects?

Your hard work early in the semester will pay dividends in the coming weeks!

Sources:

Brown, Peter C., Roediger, Mark A., & McDaniel Henry L. *Make it Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*. Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014.

Grant, Heidi. "How to Make Yourself Work When You Just Don't Want To." *Harvard Business Review*, 14 Feb, 2014, hbr.org/2014/02/how-to-make-yourself-work-when-you-just-dont-want-to. Accessed 11 Apr, 2017.

Shushan, Jamie. *The Pocket Guide to College Success*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2014.

Stop Sign clipart. www.sweetclipart.com/red-stop-sign-clipart-2105. Accessed 16 May, 2017.