Tips for a Successful Semester

Actively Attend Class—

☐ Be prepared. Read the assigned chapters as listed in your course syllabus. Review the previous chapter and your lecture notes so you can keep up with your professor.

☐ Attend class. This sounds very basic, but it is essential to your success as a college student.

☐ Sit up front. If at all possible, sit in the front. You’ll have less distractions during class and can make eye contact with your faculty member so they can tell if you’ve got it or not.

☐ Take notes. Whatever format you wish to use, take notes from the lecture. It helps keep you focused on the course material and gives you great information to review for your exams.

☐ Participate. Ask questions if you’re not understanding a point in the lecture. Answer questions asked by your professor or another student.

Visit Your Professor During Their Office Hours—

☐ When are the office hours? Your course syllabus should have this information on it. If not, ask your professor before or after class; you could also call the department that offers the class and ask for the information.

☐ What do you talk about? Ask about points in class or your textbook that you’re unsure about. Ask for more information on the homework. If it’s a course in your major, talk about research opportunities for students.

Manage Your Time—

☐ Use a planner. Take all your syllabi for this semester; look over the schedule for due dates. Put those due dates on your planner so you don’t miss them.

☐ Make a to-do list. For each day, write down your top five things you need to accomplish (e.g., read chapter 4 in Chemistry, determine topic for my research paper, etc.) Then use it to guide your day.

☐ Recognize your time wasters. We all have things that we do that end up taking longer than we thought—for example, searching the Internet. We thought it would only be a half-hour, but when we looked at the clock, it was two hours later. Oops! Use the timer on your phone so that time doesn’t slip away from you.

Take Advantage of Your Resources—

☐ Check out the Academic Resource Center. Supplemental Instruction ™ is offered in several courses; College Success Seminars will help you with your approach and technique for studying. The ARC also has a list of all tutoring available free of charge on the WMU campus on their website. (www.wmich.edu/tutoring)

☐ Visit the Writing Center. The Writing Center can help you at any stage of the writing process. You can make an appointment or drop in to work with a consultant. (www.wmich.edu/writingcenter)