

# KEYS TO COLLEGE SUCCESS

## Academic Keys

1. **Show up for class.** If you know you are going to miss class because of an appointment, sickness, or an emergency, contact your instructor as soon as possible.
2. **Have your work done on time.** Submitting work late won't lead to success in college or in your career after college. If your work must be late because of illness or an emergency, let your instructor know.
3. **Set up a daily schedule and stick to it.** Learning how to manage your time can make a difference between success and frustration.
4. **Assess and improve your study habits.** Find out about your preferred learning style. Visit your campus learning assistance center (SLAC) when having problems with your studies.
5. **Study with a group.** Research shows that students who collaborate in study groups often earn the highest grades and survive college with fewer problems. If your class offers SI sessions, attend as many of the sessions as possible.
6. **Choose instructors who actively involve you in learning.** The more you can participate in class, the more you'll enjoy learning. Ask upper-class students who these instructors are.
7. **See your instructors outside class.** Your instructors have office hours because they expect you to visit them.
8. **Learn from criticism.** If you get a low grade, ask to meet with your instructor to discuss what you should do to improve your work.
9. **Improve your critical thinking skills.** Ask why. Never accept something as fact simply because someone tells you it's true.
10. **Be the best writer you can be.** The more you write, the better you write. Practice daily.
11. **Know how to find and work with information on your campus.** Learn how to use the library and conduct computerized data searches.
12. **Find a great academic advisor or counselor.** This should be someone to whom you can and will turn for academic guidance and support.

13. **Learn what helping resources your campus offers and where they are.** Successful students use the free and confidential academic and personal support services on campus.
14. **Visit your campus career center.** A career counselor can help you learn more about your academic major or help you decide on one that will suit you better.
15. **Understand why you are in college.** Identify your goals and determine what strategies and resources you need to accomplish them.

## **Personal Keys**

16. **Get to know at least one person on campus who cares about your survival.** Find one of your teachers, some other instructor, your academic advisor, someone at the counseling or career center, an advisor to a student organization, or another student who cares about your being successful in college.
17. **If you are a full-time student, try not to work more than 20 hours a week.** If you must work, look for a job on campus. Research indicates you'll enjoy greater success in college when you work on campus. Visit the college career center for leads on jobs during and after college.
18. **Get involved in campus activities.** Visit the student activities office. Joining a group will raise your odds for success in college.
19. **Take your health seriously.** Be sure to get enough sleep, watch what you eat, exercise regularly, and make wise decisions about drugs, alcohol, and sex. Find healthy ways to deal with stress, too. The college counseling center can help.
20. **Try to have realistic expectations.** At first you may be disappointed in the grades you make, but remember that college is a new experience and things can improve. Hang on to that positive attitude. It makes a difference. Keep telling yourself, "I can do it."

Source: Jewler, A. J., & Gardner, J. N. (2000). Your college experience. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co.

Prepared by James C. Mathews and Lisa Cradit  
Fall 2003

**STUDENT LEARNING ASSISTANCE CENTER (SLAC)**  
Texas State University-San Marcos