

## *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](http://www.thelocalbrand.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Office-Supplies.jpg). Accessed 15 May, 2017

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Weekly Planner jpg. [s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/46/30/e8/4630e8e07adaf343e6274e23846d331d.jpg](http://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](http://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.

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