

# **The Study Skills Handbook**

The University at Albany  
State University of New York

---

# **Building a Solid Foundation**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This booklet is a special project conducted for University at Albany students. It was financed through a grant received from the University President's Affirmative Action Grant Program and published by the Office of Academic Support Services (LIB B94).

*“In oneself lies the whole world, and if you know how to look and learn, then the door is there and the key is in your hand. Nobody on earth can give you either that key or the door to open, except yourself.”*

*J. Krishnamurti*

## **TO THE STUDENT**

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with some basic strategies necessary to succeed in this educational environment. Hopefully, it will encourage you to build on more individual strengths as you work toward a college degree. If you need more information or clarification, feel free to contact the booklet author, Dr. Carson Carr, Jr., for a study group session. To set up an appointment, please call (518)442-5180.

*“If there is no struggle, there is no progress.”*  
*Frederick Douglass*

## **CONTENTS**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Page 4</b>
<b>Managing Your Time Productively</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Studying for Success</b>	<b>Pages 6 &amp; 7</b>
<b>Maximizing Class Lectures</b>	<b>Pages 8 &amp; 9</b>
<b>Training Your Memory</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<b>Mastering the University Textbook</b>	<b>Pages 11 &amp; 12</b>
<b>Writing a Winning Essay</b>	<b>Pages 13 – 15</b>
<b>Preparing for an “A” Examination</b>	<b>Pages 16 &amp; 17</b>
<b>Utilizing Your Professors</b>	<b>Page 18</b>
<b>Using the Library</b>	<b>Page 19</b>
<b>Speaking with Ease</b>	<b>Pages 20 &amp; 21</b>
<b>Top Nine Reasons Freshmen Fail</b>	<b>Page 22</b>

## INTRODUCTION: The Keys to Success

The transition from high school to college will affect you emotionally, socially, and academically. The initial exposure to a new environment, academic competitiveness, a personal independence and large campus can be overwhelming. In addition, if you do not enter this university from a superior high school you may face another adjustment obstacle – lack of adequate study skills.

Keep in mind the fact that students have entered the University at Albany from various academic backgrounds and have succeeded here. The successful college student either enters the university with proper study skills or secures them from the many advisors, professors and administrators willing to offer assistance.

In addition to good study skills, a successful college student has four other distinguishing characteristics:

1. A successful student is eager to explore the educational opportunities that will develop his/her career interests.
2. A successful student has an educational goal.
3. A successful student has the ability to be stimulated intellectually and is willing to maintain this as a priority throughout his/her collegiate experience.
4. A successful student has the persistence to do whatever hard, honest effort is necessary to succeed.

It is essential for students to have specific educational goals. You may have general goals at first, but strive to direct them towards your career objectives. Without direction, you will waste a great deal of time and effort. Talk often with university counselors/advisors, faculty members, Career Development Center staff, and your parents because they can assist in establishing your goals or to answer questions about your current focus.

	The purpose of this manual is to provide you with essential study skills which open the doors to success.
--	---

## MANAGING YOUR TIME PRODUCTIVELY

- Develop a weekly study schedule

- Be consistent

- Avoid study distractions

- Study when you are most alert

- Find a wholesome balance between your academic and personal lives.

The key to being a successful student depends largely on how you manage your time. Managing time must become a habit. If you can effectively balance your schedule, productivity undoubtedly will increase. College requires an ample allotment of study time, usually set apart and maintained on your schedule, while allowing time for personal, social, and career related activities.

It can be very helpful to establish a detailed weekly study schedule. This can provide you with an idea of how much time you actually need and will show you how effectively you are using your free time. Your plan must fit your personality and needs. Construct a realistic and flexible schedule, one that can be used for the entire semester.

Here are some important points about a weekly study schedule:

- 1) plan to spend at least two hours of study time for each hour of class time; 2) be consistent – study for each course at least two or three different times weekly; 3) schedule regular study time; 4) try to schedule study periods before and after classes; 5) study for the most demanding courses when you are most alert; 6) plan at least one hour blocks of study time; 7) schedule time for study breaks; 8) plan to study at least two or three subjects daily; 9) use weekdays and nights to schedule all of your studying – use weekends to make up time; 10) be aware of four great study distractions – laziness, sidetracks, procrastination, and day dreaming; 11) keep the schedule flexible for unexpected activities; 12) balance the schedule to include free time for other people and events; 13) select a study place that is well-lit, comfortable, quiet and without distractions; and 14) keep multiple copies of the study schedule – one should be carried around throughout the day.

*“One of the best lessons that anyone can learn in life is how to use time wisely.”*

*William A. Irwin*

## STUDYING FOR SUCCESS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Study during specific times each week</li><li>• Study alone for most subjects</li><li>• Use repetition to remember material</li><li>• Do not cram or procrastinate</li><li>• Go to class regularly</li><li>• Have a positive attitude</li><li>• Set a positive mood for yourself</li></ul>	<p>The difference between a successful student and an unsuccessful one may rest with their study habits. Incoming freshmen must realize that studying in college, due to varying class hours, individual teacher demands, and personal distractions is quite different from studying in high school.</p> <p>Plan to study during specific times each week and use a study schedule. Select a suitably quiet place to study that allows for concentration. This may be the library, residential hall or a study room. This choice of location really depends on you.</p> <p>Most studying should be done alone. This is the first step in understanding subject matter. In a wholesome study environment one could read assignments, do written assignments, etc.. Perhaps, once every two or three weeks, discussion or study groups could be formed to see if there is a common understanding among the discussion members. Study groups aid in the pooling of information, but a student should do his/her initial studying alone.</p> <p>Be aware that your attention span is not endless. Use repetition to increase remembering. Do not study your subject material for too long – make two hours a deadline. Break it up with other subjects. Cramming is sometimes caused by lack of classroom concentration, boredom in the class, and/or irregular attendance. Cramming does not help. Avoid it at any cost. Cramming will create additional tension. The results will not be favorable. Try to concentrate every class day and do not procrastinate. Think positively – study weekly.</p> <p>Maintain your cool. Have a positive attitude. Do not become overwhelmed when you fall behind or cannot complete all your assignments. The important thing is not to panic. Remember, no two persons study alike. Try to find a regimen that will work best for you.</p> <p>Effective studying begins with regular class attendance. Few</p>
--	--

	students can read the text, frequently attend class and <u>not</u> successfully pass the class. Regardless of the professor's attendance policy, go to class. One attends class: 1) to understand the course material; 2) to have the opportunity to ask questions;
--	---

**STUDYING FOR SUCCESS (continued)**

	<p>3) to receive clarification of professor's ideas and textbook information; 4) for the chance to participate in classroom notetaking; and 5) to establish rapport with your professor.</p> <p>“The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one.” Mark Twain</p>
--	---



	<p><i>“Consider the postal stamp. It secures success through its ability to stick to one thing until it gets there.”</i></p>
--	--

*Josh Billings*

## MAXIMIZING CLASS LECTURES

<p><b><u>Do's</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be a good listener</li> <li>• Take copious notes in class</li> <li>• Obtain any "optional" reading text</li> <li>• Read textbook assignments before class</li> <li>• Sit in the front of the class</li> <li>• Take notes in outline form</li> <li>• Record all information listed on the chalkboard and any definitions given.</li> </ul>	<p>A student must be a good listener. Hearing the professor is not enough. You must transfer a professor's ideas onto paper. Research shows that an average student remembers about <u>50</u> percent of an hour lecture when tested immediately and <u>30</u> percent when tested within 24 hours. Consequently, listening is a skill that can and should be developed.</p> <p>Although listening is the first step in notetaking, is it really necessary to write down everything that you hear at each college lecture? The answer is probably "no." You take college lecture notes for two purposes: 1) to understand the material and the professor's ideas better; and 2) to translate that understanding into high scores on examinations. Remember that students who take copious notes and then study them right after the lectures, as well as several other times, do better at remembering much of the material.</p> <p>Many professors consider their lectures more important than the textbooks. Some professors will say that a student need not purchase the text – just attend the class. Regardless of the professor's teaching style, the student should buy the books. Always, however, it is critical that the student attend classes regularly.</p> <p>When possible, preview the subject material; it can vastly improve retention of information and professor's ideas. Pre-reading the textbook chapter, especially in difficult courses, may make it easier to follow the sequences of the professor's lectures. Most students have trouble following a professor's lectures if they don't read assigned textbook materials until after a class is over. Use the course syllabus, which often defines the order of topics as well as the dates on which topics are to be discussed.</p> <p>To create a better learning environment, do not sit in the back of the classroom. Sitting near the front will keep you better in tune with the lectures, will give a better impression of you to the professor, and will keep your mind from wandering during the more detailed aspects of the material being presented.</p> <p>Try to copy your notes in an outline form. Do not attempt to record the lecture word for word. Start with the main points at the</p>
--	---

# MAXIMIZING CLASS LECTURES (continued)

<p><b><u>Do's</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take note of repeated information</li><li>• Ask questions</li><li>• Review lecture notes shortly after class</li></ul>	<p>margin. Indent sub-main points and other supporting data. Don't waste time trying to think of or record synonyms for the professor's precise words; paraphrase his/her remarks. Record what you think is the best information. Record everything that is written on the blackboard, and always write down definitions. If a professor says that the following is important you should write it down. If a professor continues to repeat a point, assume that is important – write it down. Also, observe the voice level of the professor. Usually, a louder voice level may mean that the information signals essential information.</p> <p>Some other important hints include leaving space between the main ideas of the professor's notes so that you can fill in the gaps at a later time. Additionally, don't hesitate to ask the professor questions. Be certain to copy the details that connect or explain the main points. Be neat when taking notes so that re-typing or re-copying won't be necessary.</p> <p>Lastly, the best time to review lecture notes is within one day after taking them. Because students tend to forget information, it is important to review study notes often. Periodically, you should get together with other students in the same lecture class and form a study group. A study group provides students with an opportunity to review the material, to examine class concepts which may or may not be important, and to lend encouragement for each student to keep up with the reviewing process. This study group approach, pursued on a regular basis, will aid each member with the learning and pre-exam process.</p> <p><i>"I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul." William E. Henley</i></p>
--	---

# TRAINING YOUR MEMORY

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Do's</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish key symbols or shortcuts to recalling facts/concepts.</li></ul>	<p>Undoubtedly, the basis for much learning is in the process of memory. Taking lecture notes, recalling information for an examination and giving a speech or writing a report depend on the student's ability to remember, organize and analyze information. In today's society a student is faced with an enormous amount of information. To recall facts and ideas easier, it is critical to organize the information given during the lecture in a hierarchical tree structure, with the most important information on the top.</p> <p>Remember, a student must learn a fact or concept with the idea of storing it in his/her memory. This implies that the fact or concept must be understood. Find or invent certain key symbols that will serve as clues for recalling facts and concepts. If information is learned, then it is placed in the permanent memory or long term memory. Any concept or idea needed to be remembered for more than a few seconds must be stored in one's permanent memory. Not all of this learned information in the long term memory need be easily recalled in the same form. Some information may be lost or forgotten; other information can be recalled.</p> <p>The short term memory contains information which eventually is either discarded, forgotten, or is transferred to permanent memory. Immediate or short term memory is unreliable and drastically impacts on permanent learning. Since learning may be defined as the process in which we remember data, it is essential that important information flow quickly from short term memory to long term memory. Often, lack of interest in course material creates a situation in which the student mentally blocks out learning the material and fails to place it in long term memory. One must demonstrate a sincere interest in all course material – it may be needed for the examination.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Give a person an idea, and you enrich their life. Teach a person how to learn, and they can enrich their own lives.”</i> <i>Author Unknown</i></p>
--	---

# MASTERING THE UNIVERSITY TEXTBOOK

<p><b>Use the SQ3R Method</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Survey</li><li>• Question</li><li>• Read</li><li>• Recite</li><li>• Review</li></ul>	<p>One technique to improve understanding of textbook chapters is to use the SQ3R Method of Reading.</p> <p><b>Survey the Chapter</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Read the chapter summary, even before reading the chapter. If the chapter has an introduction – read that too; this kind of orientation will aid you in organizing the information.</li><li>- Look over the major section headings.</li><li>- Skim questions and key words. Glance at the figures, tables, charts, etc..</li><li>- Create a mechanism to remember the information.</li></ul> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Look for chapter questions so you can identify main points.</li><li>- Turn the chapter headings into questions – this may arouse your curiosity and comprehensiveness.</li><li>- Examine how this chapter relates to the book, the world, the course, etc..</li></ul> <p><b>Read</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Read each entire chapter, then answer the questions.</li><li>- Search for the answers to the questions.</li><li>- Highlight or underline the main points that you read. Do this after reading the entire paragraph or section – do not underline as you are reading.</li><li>- When appropriate, make notes in the margin of the chapter. This will aid in organizing information.</li></ul> <p><b>Recite</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Having read each section, the student should recite the main points, jot them down – then check them over.</li></ul>
--	--

# MASTERING THE UNIVERSITY TEXTBOOK (continued)

- Talk out loud and listen to the answers. You are reciting to remember.

## **Review**

- Go back over your textbook to see if effective highlighting or underlining has taken place.
- Check your memory by reciting out loud the answers to chapter questions – cover your notes, then check to see if your answer is correct.
- Add more notes in the text and margin, if necessary.

These five steps in the SQ3R system – survey, question, read, recite, and review – should result in long term memory – and positive results.

*“Reading furnishes our mind only with materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what we read ours.”*

*John Locke*

# WRITING A WINNING ESSAY

<p><b><u>The Five Basic Steps</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choose a specific topic</li> <li>2. Gather materials</li> <li>3. Organize supportive evidence</li> <li>4. Construct a draft and proofread</li> <li>5. Prepare your final draft</li> </ol> <p><u>Do's:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give yourself enough time to have another proofread</li> </ul>	<p>During a college career, a student must frequently write papers. Professors request essays to see if students understand course material and can express themselves in writing. A few helpful techniques can make what initially seems a gloomy task an enjoyable learning experience. Writing essay papers should be looked upon as a test. You must convince the professor that your interpretation of some aspect of the assignment is valid by way of an analytical argument. You must be clear and specific. There are five basic steps to writing an effective essay.</p> <p>The first step is to choose a topic. Whenever possible select a topic that is familiar and specific. Try to avoid topics that are trite. After finalizing a decision on the topic, stick to the point. In the introduction you may, in fact, express the main idea of the topic. Throughout the essay, it is important to discuss and to develop this main idea. This will provide a unified essay. If the writer needs to select an essay topic, ideas can be retrieved from discussions with the professor or by listening carefully in lectures for thoughts expressed by students.</p> <p>Gathering materials is the second essential step in writing an essay. This will provide an opportunity to support the point or the main idea. Libraries (on campus), books in the professors' offices, city libraries, and the internet, are excellent resources for data collection. As you examine books and articles, take systematic notes on the findings. Make certain to note the sources: title, author, publisher, date of publishing, and page number. Some students use 3 by 5 cards for each source. Utilize the library staff personnel – they are there to help. <b>DO NOT</b> hesitate to ask the professor, other professors or anyone else for assistance. Be certain to provide specific evidence in supporting the main idea. Without this evidence, you cannot show your understanding of the topic, nor can you convince the professor that your points are valid. Be sure to clarify with the professor which type of source documentation is appropriate: MLA, APA, etc..</p> <p>Deciding on a main idea and collecting the specific data needed to support it are the first two steps in writing a good paper. The third step is to organize the supportive evidence. One good way to organize ideas is to make an outline. An outline can help in assisting with linking together evidence. Create a hierarchical</p>
---	--

# WRITING A WINNING ESSAY

## (continued)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do Not Plagiarize</li></ul>	<p>organization of major points and deal with each point separately, one point per paragraph in the essay. To assist with clarity provide smooth transitions between paragraphs and ideas, and back up statements with evidence and concrete relevant detail obtained from your notes. Also use direct words and write in a single tense. Use standard English. Do not write with the same slang you might use in common speech. Remember, papers are supposed to be formal.</p> <p>The next step in effective essay writing is to construct the first draft. Once you have organized your ideas, get something down on paper. Remember, it helps to write an appealing introduction stating the purpose of the essay. Be sure your purpose/topic relates directly to the evidence collected. Many authors revise their stated topic often while writing to keep the paper coherent. Draft your main points and conclude with a paragraph that summarizes your research. Always plan on revising, so use a word processor. Never plan on the first draft being the last draft. Utilize the outline as the guide. One major fault that professors find with student essays is they lack detail. Try to research thoroughly to find examples, reasons, descriptions, the supportive information. Do not hesitate to make changes while proceeding through this process. When appropriate, put the first draft aside and come back to it a few days later. A refreshed mind may come up with more brilliant thoughts. Take <u>time</u> to revise. This is a step which makes a good paper a better one. Revision includes rereading, rewriting, and making changes to improve the content and organization of the essay. Ask a friend to read and criticize your revised essay to see if the ideas are clearly expressed. Also, have him/her examine the coherence of the essay. Often, revision <u>substantially</u> changes a paper.</p> <p>Proofreading your work is also a key step in essay writing. This editing process includes reading in order to detect any errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar and usage. It is often helpful to get another person to examine your final draft. He or she can often spot an error that the writer has overlooked.</p> <p>Lastly, in typing the final draft, use a word processor. Double space your paper and follow all the directives of your professor. Leave at least a one and one-half inch margin on the side and at</p>
---	--



# WRITING A WINNING ESSAY

## (continued)

the bottom of each page. Number the pages and proofread the final draft. Submit the essay on time. **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE** – penalties include failing the course and/or suspension/expulsion from college. Remember all college papers must be documented.

*“Little by little, does the trick.”*  
*Aesop*

# PREPARING FOR AN “A” EXAMINATION

The most vital aspects to college courses are tests, quizzes, and examinations. They are important to students and professors because they determine understanding and, of course, grades. Students should view tests as worthwhile learning experiences. They often force you to review materials and lectures, and this review and study can cause information to be learned and stored in long-term memory. Preparing and taking exams requires that the student master various ways to achieve high scores.

1. The best preparation for an exam is not to fall behind in your coursework. Studying is the most critical thing a student can do to perform well on exams. For every hour in class, you should study two hours weekly. (A three credit course, therefore, requires at least six study hours weekly.) Keep this up every week. Other factors helpful in preparing for an exam include what you study, where you study, and how you study.
2. Review class notes, concentrate on areas that the professor has spent a great deal of time discussing. Also review textbook information covered in class. Many students find comparing class notes to be helpful.
3. Ask your professors what kinds of test items will be on the exam. Address the areas the professors have advised you to study. Sometimes professors hold review sessions; during that time they tell students what topics to study for the upcoming exam.
4. Review questions on past exams as well as study questions at the end of the textbook.
5. Develop a practice test. Additionally, have a practice test review session with other students.
6. Eat a good, nourishing meal or snack before the test.
7. The day of the exam, be early for the test; chat with others; bring all necessary supplies; sit in a quiet spot. Read over all exam directions before you begin. Also, listen for all verbal directions. Budget the test time effectively.

## PREPARING FOR AN “A” EXAMINATION (continued)

7. For the essay questions, read the questions at least twice; then spend some time organizing a strategy to answer questions, making up an informal outline to cover all important points. Make the first sentence a guide to the answer (or make the direction of your answer clear in the first sentence); then elaborate on the argument. Keep comments relevant to the question, and write clearly and neatly. Watch your time. Lastly, make the concluding sentence a strong one.
8. Before you look at the multiple-choice exam, read the directions carefully. For each multiple-choice test question, read the entire question carefully and scrutinize each choice before answering. Mark the best answer. If a question is unfamiliar, read the questions and the choices again, because one choice may provide a hint of the right answer. If you are unable to answer a question, then return to it later. Check to see if there is a penalty for guessing – if not, you should narrow down the choices and make an educated guess.
9. Remain confident. If you feel test anxiety, stop for a moment to relax; then continue.
10. More and more professors, especially ones who teach in large lecture halls, are using tests that can be marked by machines. These test items are usually true/false or multiple-choice questions. The task is to recall or recognize the correct choice. It is critical that the student use a study schedule early on in the semester so that it will be easier to recall answers.

*“The secret of a good memory is attention, and attention to a subject depends upon our interest to it. We rarely forget that which has made a deep impression on our minds.”*

*Tryon Edwards*

# UTILIZING YOUR PROFESSORS

## Helpful Tips:

- Be an active learner
- Make a good impression
- Take full advantage of a professor's office hours

In order to get the most from a professor's lectures, you must be an active learner. This means not being a class spectator, but an individual who instead comes to class prepared with all homework finished and the day's lecture previewed. Pay close attention to helpful cues, boardwork, repetition, emphasis and transitions.

All professors have office hours. Don't be passive. Approach them from time to time for clarification. Professors need to know that a student is looking to improve understanding, not for a re-teaching of an entire lecture or lectures. Many professors enjoy assisting students. Professors need to know the names of students. This one-to-one contact is a large part of the college socialization process. It provides students with necessary personalization and a meaningful dialogue. Professors want students to ask questions. If the professors are not available, seek out another professor or graduate assistant. One can also stop a professor after class and ask a question.

Again, it is important for the professor and student to know each other. What happens if the student is seriously ill and can't attend class? Let the professor know of this problem. Instruct a friend to relay a message to the professor and secure a system to get the homework.

Make a good impression with professors. They need a lasting impression – attend class regularly; be prepared; ask questions; be serious; and sit near the front of the class. Professors can also provide students with helpful advisement in academic and career matters. Don't feel that professors have little time for students. The university is not impersonal. Professors do show concern.

*"Dig a well before you are thirsty."  
Chinese Proverb*

# USING THE LIBRARY

Do:

- Visit the library frequently during each semester

The library is a vital learning center. It includes not only volumes of books, but reference materials, periodicals, tapes, cassettes, recordings, videos and filmstrips. It is filled with all kinds of useful material. The library has a computerized card catalog service, so a student can get help immediately. Make a point to become familiar with the library. Learn the set-up and look around. Ask for a tour. There are always librarians to assist students. Ask for help – they will be available.

In the library, there is a main desk across from the main door which is staffed by several library assistants. Ask them for brochures that describe the layout and the services of the library. The library provides the following services: an Inter-library loan system; copying machines; study carrels; record and film collections; a card catalog; microfilm and microfiche files; out-of-print newspapers; magazines; and the like.

Professors frequently place materials that many students will use on reserve. These materials usually remain in the library, although, at times, they may be taken out overnight. However, students should plan to do the bulk of their reserve readings within the library hours.

*“To sit alone in the lamplight with a book spread out before you and hold intimate converse with men of unseen generations – such is a pleasure beyond compare.”*

*Yoshida Kenko*

# SPEAKING WITH EASE

<p><u>Three Components to a Speech</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Main ideas</li> <li>2. Supporting Materials</li> <li>3. Transitions</li> </ol>	<p>During a college career, a student must give numerous speeches and/or oral presentations. His/her ability to speak effectively before a group is often necessary and is a skill that can be utilized throughout his/her life. Rather than be apprehensive before a speech, you should organize yourself to be prepared for the presentation and, also, be enthusiastic and sincere while communicating with the audience. This means that you must know the subject, then take ample time to think about and plan what to present. Giving a speech is similar to writing a good essay – you must use standard English, and you must also be mindful of your audience.</p>
<p><b>Preparing a Speech</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select an interesting topic.</li> <li>• Utilize the library as a resource.</li> <li>• Be creative.</li> <li>• Practice.</li> </ul>	<p>After collecting the main ideas for a speech, a detailed outline must be developed, including at least 30 to 50% of the words to be used in the actual speech. You may have to write several outlines (as you would write several drafts) before it's all over. Some people write down every word to be delivered. The outline provides an opportunity to develop main ideas from supportive data. It should include an introductory statement. Also included should be the purpose of giving the speech. This comes after the introduction. The body or main part of the speech and the concluding remarks (summary) – complete the presentation.</p> <p>The three components to a speech are its main or key ideas; supporting materials; and transitions. A good speech maker gives plenty of attention to each of these components. Rather than offering an audience hundreds of details, the speaker concentrates on a few key ideas. Audiences are inclined to remember main points. Supportive evidence should be specific and include primary sources. Transitions help highlight the key ideas and provide the audience with a key to movement from one point to another. These transitions must be clear. In fact, one should make the transitions obvious and sometimes purposely repetitive. Be sure to offer a summary.</p> <p>In making the speech plan, one must select a topic that is specific and interesting. If the speaker is interested in the topic, then the audience may focus more clearly on the presentation knowing that the speaker is motivated about the topic. Use the library to collect necessary supportive evidence. Use your own experience and imagination as additional resources.</p>

## SPEAKING WITH EASE (continued)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Do</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be mindful of your audience.</li><li>• Use your own experiences when appropriate.</li><li>• Speak slowly and make good eye contact.</li></ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Don't</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read the speech word for word.</li></ul>	<p>Practice delivery. Go through the final speech from beginning to end. This practice may increase self-confidence. Ask a friend to listen to these practice speeches. At the actual presentation, make certain to face the audience. Speak slowly, loudly, and clearly so that everyone can hear and understand this message. Good speakers make eye contact with the audience. The speaker must be in a two-way relationship with the audience. Good speakers often pause to emphasize important points or to maintain uniform interest. Don't read your speech word for word. Make improvements here and there as you speak.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“The essence of communication is intention.” Werner Erhard</i></p>
---	---

# TOP NINE REASONS FRESHMEN FAIL

College students who perform poorly or drop out during their first year make the same kind of mistakes. The following is a list of situations to avoid:

**Error 1:** Some students lack self-motivation and are unwilling to commit themselves to self-improvement. They are unable to handle “independence.”

**Error 2:** Many who fail lack the will to persist because they have little or no career interest. Consequently, they do not have any idea of why they are in college.

**Error 3:** Some students have a negative attitude about themselves; their friends; their classes; their college; their neighborhood; etc.. They verbally express this attitude frequently.

**Error 4:** Priorities of some students do not include educational progress, but do include attending parties, dating, other outside activities, employment, participation in college clubs and activities, etc..

**Error 5:** Many poor performers do not attend classes or attend infrequently.

**Error 6:** Some students get lost in the largeness of the institution and do not seek out the many avenues of educational and personal support available to them on campus.

**Error 7:** Lack of time spent studying, procrastination and other factors take some students away from their studies far too often.

**Error 8:** Poor grades on exams and essays discourage students to regroup and to study.

**Error 9:** Not having a clear idea of what college life is like or how to study effectively. They are overwhelmed with the memorizations and the amount of work required.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

This booklet is the synthesis of numerous study skills books listed below. It is also the result of information collected from numerous conversations with students and professors here at the University at Albany.

Ellis, David, B. Becoming a Master Student. College Survival, Inc. 1984.

Ellis, David, B. Survival Tools for Students. College Survival, Inc. 1981.

Martin, Donald. How To Be a Successful Student. Martin Press, 1988.

McWhorter, Kathleen, T. College Reading and Study Skills. Little, Brown and Company, 1983.

Ott, John. How To Write and Deliver a Speech. Cornerstone Library, 1970.

Pauk, Walter. How To Study in College. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1984.

**NOTES:**

