

## What You Can Do to Improve Your Academic Success

### Don't wait!

- As soon as you realize you are not doing as well as you'd like on quizzes, homeworks, etc., **it's probably time to enhance your study skills. Review the info below! Take advantage of the resources UF offers.** Generally, *doing more of the same thing* won't produce different results.

### Learn how to succeed from the instructor/TA

- Most instructors include **clear expectations and tips for success in the course syllabus.** Review them and try them out.
- When you come across something in class or in notes that you aren't clear about, **do you go to the instructor's/TA's office hours,** check the explanation in the text, talk with peers or otherwise try to clarify and deepen your understanding?
- Have you **met with the professor and/or TAs during office hours** to ask for their tips on how to succeed in the class, especially if you find you are struggling in a particular area?
- For papers, **did you talk your topic/thesis through with the instructor/TA** to make sure it was sound?

### Realistically assess how you study - If you are doing everything the instructor recommends, can you be more effective?

- Do you **prepare for class** (e.g., do the reading before class and go in with questions you want answered, etc.) so you get the most out of the lecture?
- Do you **take good, detailed notes** in class (or during online lectures) **and review them the same day** you take them (while it's in your short-term memory)?
- When you do the reading, do you find yourself thinking after you've finished a chapter, "Well, I don't really remember any of that"? Or **do you take notes to get a big picture idea of what's going on** as well as to grasp the details?
- Do you **compare the concepts/information in the text to what you've been doing in class**?
- Do you have a **study buddy/group to talk about the material with** (not just to swap answers, but to deepen everyone's understanding of the material)?
- When solving problems, **do you really reflect on what, conceptually, is going on in the problem before attempting to solve it?** Or do you look for problems that are similar and automatically use the same strategies for answering them?
- When writing a paper, **do you do the research to support your argument(s)?**
- **Do you give yourself enough time** to draft, edit, proof, and edit the paper again?
- **Do you know how to properly cite your sources?**

### Are you sabotaging your own learning/study time?

- **Do you study when you aren't productive?**
  - Are you studying at times of day when you aren't naturally productive, trying to study for long periods without a break, or "studying" when you are really also checking social media, messaging with a friend, etc.? *For many students, the actual focused time spent studying is a lot lower than the time set aside for studying.*
- **Are you studying between classes/during the day** or leaving everything to the night?
  - Studying during the day helps you break studying out into manageable bits and also makes starting classwork at night less overwhelming because some of it is already done.

### Is your brain function optimal?

- Do you get **basic exercise**? You don't have to be a gym rat - brisk walking is fine. How were you active in high school and are you continuing that?
- Are you **getting adequate sleep** (6-8 consecutive hours a night)?
- Are you **feeling overwhelmed, unhappy, or so stressed that you aren't able to focus on your schoolwork?** UF has resources to help!