

Suggestions from a Former professional student

1. Learn to budget your time.

The college experience is more than just sitting in a classroom or studying for tests. It's about meeting new people, experiencing new things, and growing up. Be sure to make time for yourself by becoming involved in extracurricular activities. But make sure that you are dedicated and disciplined enough to make good study habits, and not just the night before a major test!

2. Make as many professional contacts as possible.

Whether this includes fellow students from your major or actual industry experts, the more people you can bounce ideas off of, or have to mentor you during challenging times, the more knowledgeable you will become about your specific field.

3. Never turn down an opportunity.

Whether it is to travel to a foreign land, or simply meet new and interesting people. You might just be surprised at what you learned and who you come across.

4. Stay current on industry changes by becoming a habitual reader.

Become informed and stay ahead of other students by subscribing and reading industry publications. The more you know, the more likely you are to succeed.

5. Take on extra classroom work and assignments even if not assigned.

The more willing you are to show instructors that you're capable of going the extra mile; the better off you'll be when explaining to them that you need extra credit after bombing their last test.

6. Develop friendships with other students from your classes.

There's a pretty good chance that you might miss a class or two while at college. By having a friend's phone number or e-mail address, you can easily find out about upcoming assignments and things you missed.

7. Communicating via e-mail can be a quick and easy form of communication or a horrific nightmare.

When sending e-mails to instructors, remember that etiquette rules do exist. Never send demanding or abrasive messages. The tone of a message can greatly influence an instructor's impression of you. Avoid abbreviated messages and all caps letters at all cost (ex: c u in class, B CUZ, etc.). This isn't a text message; it's a form of professional communication that should be treated as such.

8. Take advantage of campus resources.

There is an endless array of resources available to you. The more familiar you become with the library, computer labs, writing center, and math lab, the easier difficult classes will become.

9. Arrive early and stay until dismissed.

Instructors realize that making it to every class or staying the entire period isn't always a possibility. But make sure you communicate your late arrivals or early departures prior to class time. Not only is it considered a common courtesy, you could also be counted absent.

10. There are no stupid questions.

Don't be shy about asking questions or asking instructors to repeat themselves. More than likely, someone else was thinking of doing the same.

11. Questioners beware.

If for some reason you miss a lecture, don't send your instructor an e-mail or approach them after class and ask, "what did I miss?" Fifty to 75 minutes of lecture cannot be explained in an e-mail or just a couple of minutes. You're more likely than not to get laughed at, this is where suggestion 7 comes into play.

12. Keep a student planner for important dates and deadlines.

Utilizing a planner for exams dates, assignments, and university deadlines is a great way of keeping informed and staying atop of what's expected from you.

13. Grades are not given at the end of the semester; they're earned throughout the semester.

The time to be concerned about your grade is now. Waiting until the end of the semester to approach an instructor about troublesome grades is asking for disaster. Be proactive. At the earliest sign of classroom difficulties, make an appointment to see your instructor. The earlier you can communicate your difficulties, the more options there are available to you.

14. Ignorance is not an excuse.

Becoming familiar with your undergraduate catalog is the quickest and easiest way to become informed of university rules and regulations. The more you know, the better off you'll be if a problem were to arise.

15. The all mighty Degree Audit.

A student's Degree Audit is the end all be all for degree requirements. No matter what any instructor or advisor says, your degree audit is the determining factor in deciding what classes you have to take, and when you'll graduate.

16. Take responsibility for yourself, your actions, and your experiences. No one else will.