

SECTION TWO Changing Lifestyles

Welcome To Your New Way Of Life

■ **Pearl W. Bartelt, Ph.D.**
Provost and Vice President for
Academic Affairs
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania

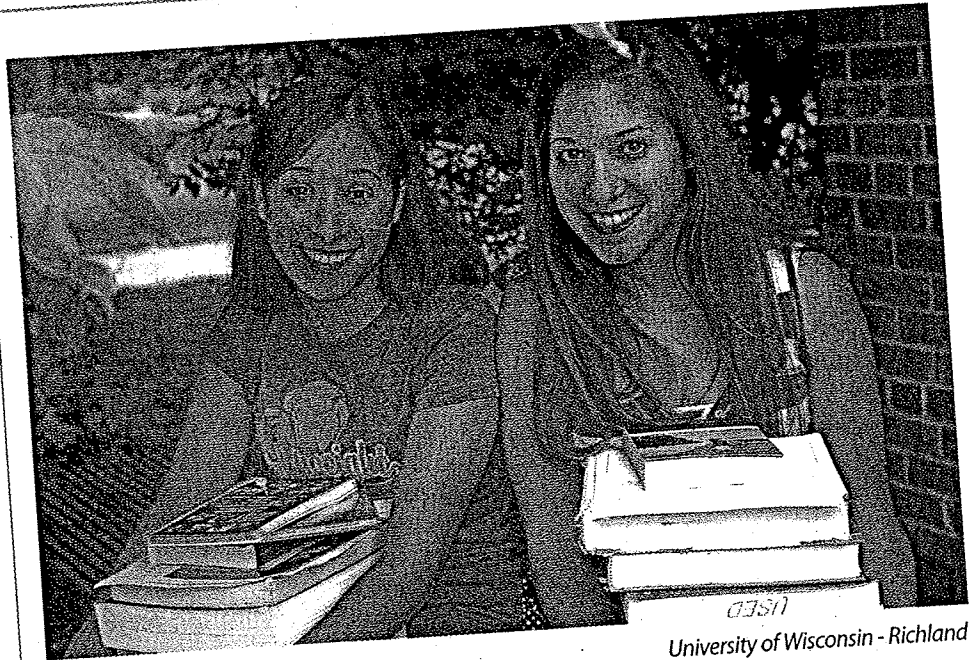
Congratulations! You are off to college. This will be a wonderful, difficult, and special time in your life. Here are some suggestions to help you be successful. Most importantly, remember that colleges and universities accept students they are convinced will do well. The people who work there will help you when rough or confusing times occur, but you have to let them know when you need assistance.

It is important to become involved with the campus community. Wherever you are attending college, it will be tempting to go home on weekends. Your family may even encourage you to do so... but you will not want to miss out on campus activities during the weekend. If you need to see your family or they need to see you, invite them to the campus. Let them take you out to dinner. Go to a football game or a play with them. Show them the campus.

If you are a commuter student, you have a greater challenge to become involved in campus life. The college experience is more than just classes. Look for a club or activity that interests you. Check the school newspaper or the web for athletic events, concerts, plays, movies and recreational activities. You will have to make the effort to make the college yours.

Work on campus

If you need a job while you are in school, most colleges have opportunities for students to work on the campus. Student workers are treated well by faculty and staff, who understand the



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rhythm of the campus. They know when you have midterms or finals. It is another "home" for you on the campus. Work hours are usually restricted for a very good reason. Fifteen to twenty hours is the maximum you should be working, because your most important job at college is your academic work. Do not sacrifice this — You are preparing for your future.

Picking a major

Do not be concerned if you are undecided about your major. There are people on the campus who can assist you with this decision. It may be your professor or advisor, someone in the advising center, the counseling center, or the career office. Many students come to college thinking they know just what they want for a major, and many change their minds. Colleges expect this. As long as you do not change your major too many times, your graduation time should not be affected.

Syllabus

In most classes you will be given a syllabus, which lists when readings need to be done, when tests are given and when papers are due. This is your guide to success in the course. Keep this syllabus and refer to it often. You may want to staple the syllabus in the front of the notebook you use for the course. If it is online, make a folder for the course and keep it easily accessible on your computer too. Make sure your work is turned in ON TIME. Many professors will not accept late work or will automatically reduce your grade for each day an assignment is late.

Classes

Go to every class, even if you do not feel like going. Make sure you go to class before an exam. This is when a professor will often give you a hint of what will be on the exam. Not every class will entertain you, but every class will give you information. Take notes to help you stay focused. Reviewing your notes

before the next class will help you maintain the rhythm of the course.

Buy your books and READ them. Read the summary of a chapter first to understand what the author thinks is the most important part of the chapter. Underline, but do not underline everything. When you study for an exam, you can review your underlinings. If you are having trouble reading an entire chapter, read standing up, or read in 15-minute blocks. Eventually you will be able to concentrate enough to read entire chapters.

Papers

A good writer always rewrites a paper. Professional writers never turn in a first draft. Write your first draft days before it is due, put the paper aside, and let it percolate a bit. Then revise. Make sure to re-read your paper after you have used spell check. Always save a copy of your paper, in case there is ever a question.

Be smart. Always turn in your own work. Buying a paper on the internet (yes, they are available) can get you thrown out of school. It is never worth it. Make sure to turn in your work on the day it is due. There is often a penalty on late papers or projects. Sometimes they are not accepted at all. Get in the habit of having things done on time.

Exam days

When you are waiting in the hall or the classroom before an exam, keep your own counsel. There are students who reduce their stress by increasing yours, by saying they did not study at all, or that they have studied for days. Often these are tall tales. You are not obligated to tell anyone your grade on a test, paper, or project. However, if you do not do well, talk with the professor for ideas on how you can improve.

Getting help

Every college offers tutoring. Take advantage of this. Most schools have a writing center. The staff in the writing center will not write your paper for you, but they will help you refine your writing and teach you strategies for improving your work.

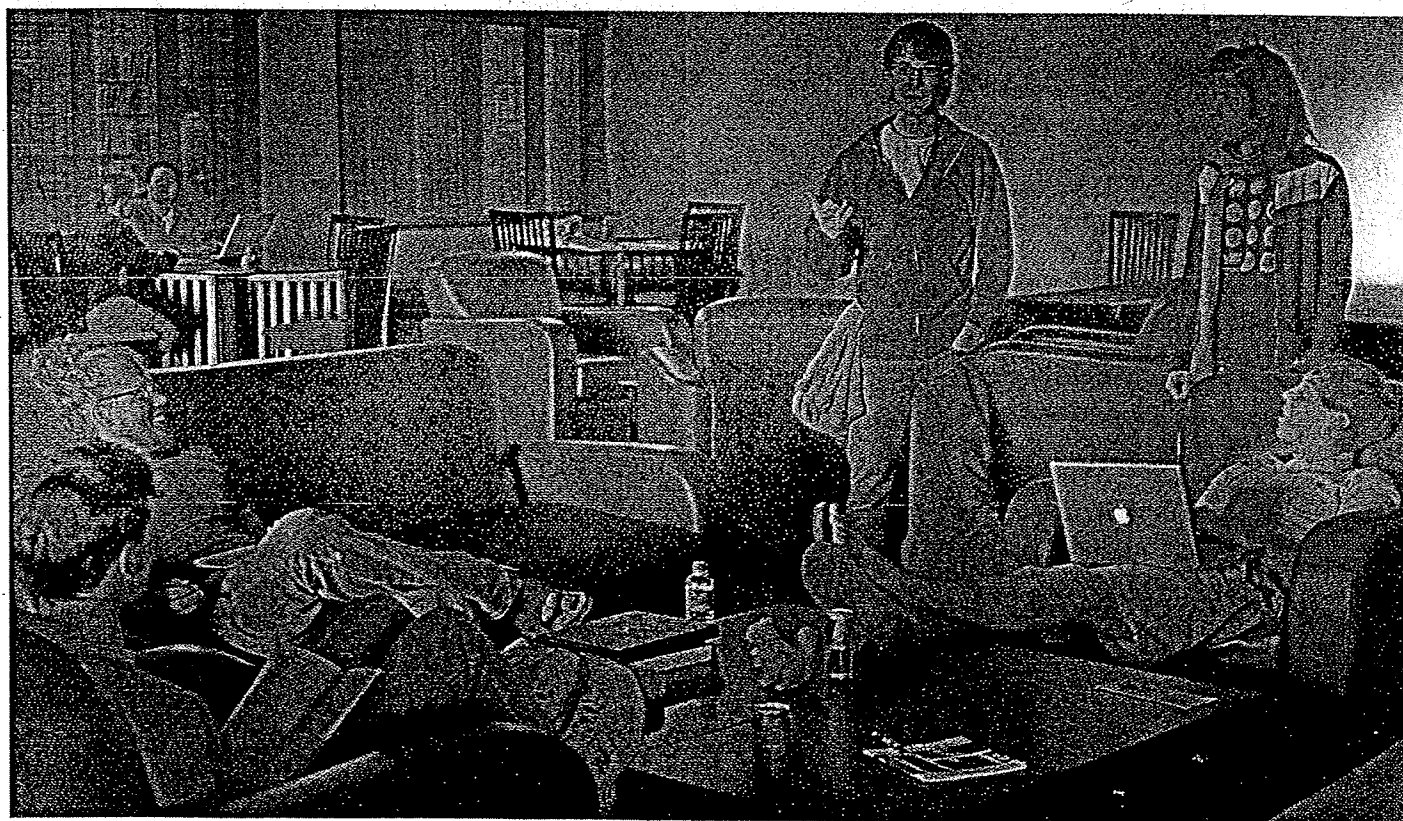
If you are having problems in a class GO SEE THE PROFESSOR. Faculty all have office hours. If you do not know what to ask, say so to start the conversation. Your professor will know what to ask you. Most faculty like students. They particularly like students who are interested and want to improve.

Do not pull all-nighters to write papers, and never pull all-nighters before an exam. Something happens when you sleep that helps you integrate the material. If you want to brag about pulling an all-nighter, do it when you have nothing due the next day.

Balance

One of the most important words for you to remember is balance. Balance your course work and your fun. If you plan your time to study, you will be free to do other things you enjoy. If you are always worrying about what you "should" do, you will never be free to participate in the social occasions that are a part of college life.

College is a safe place to try out new ideas, and thoughts. It is a place to take a course in a subject that is totally new for you. It is a place to meet people from different backgrounds and to learn from them. Most of all, make sure you laugh hard at least once a day. You will make friends who will last a lifetime. You will gain skills that will be the building blocks of all you do.



A major obstacle that can prevent you from practicing good time management skills is **PROCRASTINATION**. Procrastination is the constant pushing aside of tasks that need to be completed and is the archenemy of all students. If you feel procrastination knocking at your door, here are some ways to overcome getting pulled into its grasp:

1. Make the task meaningful.

Ask yourself why the task is important to you and how it relates to your long-term goal. Since a college degree is four or five years away, we often lose sight of our goal. We forget the reason we decided to enroll in college in the first place. A reminder every so often is a good idea, especially when procrastination is about to attack.

2. Take the task apart.

Often college assignments appear overwhelming. Breaking large assignments into manageable parts will help. Set dates to work on each of the pieces. Once you have started, the task will not seem so overwhelming.

3. Keep yourself organized.

A lot of time can be saved by having the right materials with you when you are ready to work on a project.

4. Be positive.

Avoid speaking negatively about the task and your ability to move toward completion. Be positive. Tell yourself, "I know that I can finish this work."

5. Plan a reward.

After the task is complete, do something for yourself that you would not normally do, and withhold the reward if the task remains incomplete.

6. Just do it – complete the task.

The moment you find yourself procrastinating, complete the task; then, you will not have to think about it anymore.

You are now ready to begin your first semester as a college freshman. Manage your time, even if it appears that you have all the time in the world. Stop procrastination before it begins!

Good Luck!