



GET A

GREAT START

TO YOUR SEMESTER



When the semester starts, it's practically a race to the finish. Make sure you're ready with these 10 Great Tips to get your semester off to a Great Start.

- 1. TEXTBOOKS.** Buy your textbooks before the first day of class. In many courses, the instructor will assign reading or homework out of the textbook that's due the second session. A sub-tip? Don't actually unwrap it until the first day is through. Some teachers don't use them even if they're listed.
- 2. FIX REGISTRATION PROBLEMS.** Registration deadlines are swift and take no prisoners. Make sure you take care of enrollment in your class before the first day of class, or on the first day of class if you needed a permission number to join. The longer you wait, the further you get behind or risk missing a deadline.
- 3. PUT YOUR SYLLABUS IN A SAFE, ACCESSIBLE PLACE.** Syllabi usually contain important due dates, dates when the class doesn't meet, grading policies, and other important information. Most of the time, you can answer your questions about course functions with the syllabus instead of wasting the class's time when the answer is already at your fingertips.
- 4. PLAN YOUR TIME.** Coming up with a study schedule using the due dates for assignments in your syllabus can be important. If you manage when you're going to study, you'll have more stress-free time to have fun. Most syllabi include set due dates. If not, ask your instructor for a best estimate.
- 5. PARTICIPATE.** Most classes have a portion of the grade set out for participation. Find out what constitutes participation in your class and start off by the second session. The more time passes, the harder it is for most people to join in. When you participate in class, it turns your learning experience into "active learning," which tends to help most people remember the material more effectively.
- 6. FIND YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE.** Office hours are a great chance to ask questions about returned assignments so you can learn from any mistakes you might have made, but they are also a chance to improve your relationship with the instructor. Don't forget, instructors are key resources for information and potential references when trying to get a job or transfer to a university.
- 7. GET A CALENDAR/PLANNER.** Keeping track of due dates in a frequently checked place can help you keep organized. You can also divide larger projects into small chunks so that you don't get stressed out because you procrastinated on huge projects! Quality work requires more than a day.
- 8. CHECK YOURSELF BEFORE YOU WRECK YOURSELF.** Complete the first week? Get your syllabi together and look at your workload for school, your job if you have one, and other commitments. Make sure that you're not overloading yourself and prioritize what's important to you. Burning out is one of the most dangerous things a student can face, as motivation is one of the key factors in success.
- 9. GET CONTACTS.** Exchange your phone number and/or e-mail address with at least 1-2 other students in your class. If you miss a class or don't understand an assignment, you'll have someone to ask to borrow notes, help you catch up, or help you break down a concept you don't get yet.
- 10. GET YOUR MATERIALS.** Some classes require materials other than the textbook for projects later in the semester. Get these materials at the start of the semester. There's nothing worse than realizing that you need something the night before you need it in class and the store is already closed!