Advice from Your Registrar

You are entering a new academic arena. You mastered the skills required for high school; -- that's why you're here. No doubt you will learn the skills needed in this new world eventually. However, you will achieve greater success sooner and with less strain if you assess your skills early and then work on them deliberately.

These new skills, or advanced versions or earlier skills, take two forms: hard-core academic skills and necessary attitudinal shifts.

Note-Taking: The mode of instruction changes drastically when you enter university. Much of your learning will be from lectures and textbooks. You are expected to do this on your own.

The lecture, formal or informal, is the common method of transferring information here, and note-taking skills are crucial for capturing and retaining that information. You needn't write down everything. Grasp the structure of the lecture so you can see how the ideas fit together. The point is to understand and remember what's being said, not to transcribe it.

Textbooks or extensive readings will be another challenge. You'll have more reading to do than you can possibly imagine. Learn to scan and note down the essentials without recopying or wasting time poring over needless details.

Test-Taking: You'll have regular formal tests and very large exams in your First Year courses. Many will be multiple choice; some will be essay-style. Like a concert pianist or Olympic athlete, you'll be expected to perform -- no excuses. Good preparation is most of it, but well-developed skills help. Come to the sessions we offer on this.

Review: Everyone does this before tests, but not everyone knows that regular review makes studying for tests much more manageable. After each lecture go over your notes briefly to fix the material in your mind. If things are unclear, clarify them immediately. Then review the whole week's notes at a regularly set time to bring it all together. When tests come, you'll be ready.

Yours,

Glenn A. Loney, Registrar
University College, 1983-2006

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(1) Choosing Your Courses
(3) Financial Planning