BASIC STUDY SKILLS FOR SUCCESS IN COLLEGE

ATTITUDE—Above all else, your success in your studies will be determined by your attitude toward them. If you approach your courses with interest and a positive mind set, with your goals clearly defined, you are well on your way to success.

TIME MANAGEMENT—Start with very specific goals. Then organize yourself so that you are physically and mentally prepared to pursue those goals. Prioritize all the tasks you have to accomplish and then schedule your time so that you can achieve your goals. Remember that most college courses require the student to do at least two hours of homework for each hour of class time. Some subjects, such as math, require more time because you must practice solving problems on your own. Allow time not only to complete assignments but also to prepare for the next class and to review and memorize.

STUDY METHOD—It is very helpful to use a study method, such as SQ3R (survey, question, read, recite, review), to help you organize your approach to reading and studying textbooks. This particular method requires that you look over the assignment and formulate questions before reading. After reading, you should be sure that you can answer all the questions, take notes, and then review them.

TAKING NOTES—You must be an "active" listener in order to take good notes in class. You must concentrate on what the instructor is saying. Write down concepts and main ideas. Record the main points as headings and then write complete and meaningful statements about them. Wait to hear what the speaker says and then write the statement in your own words. Be prepared to ask questions if you do not understand. Go over your notes as soon as possible after class in order to expand on them and fill in the details, if necessary.

MEMORIZING—First, make an actual intention to remember the information. Review your notes as soon after the class as possible and on a continuing basis thereafter, although you can space the review sessions further and further apart as you become familiar with the material. Understand the information and try to relate it to other things you know. Try to apply the information in a concrete way. Discuss it with some one else. Use mnemonic, or memory devices, to help you remember lists and other things in a series.

TEST-TAKING
Preparation
Begin to prepare for tests as early as possible. Schedule your review time at the end of your study schedule. Study your notes. Use your textbook to review material that you are unclear about, chapter summaries, review exercises and practice tests. Go over terminology, definitions and properties. Go over old tests for previous mistakes and error patterns. Find out what format the test will take. Make up sample tests.

Taking the Test
If you suffer from test anxiety, do a few stress-reducing exercises. Jot down any information you may need for the test. Preview the test. Answer the easy questions first and allocate your time according to the value of each question. Be sure to read directions carefully. Briefly outline essay answers. Do not spend too much time on one math problem. Show your scratch work. Check your paper for mistakes, being careful not to change answers unless you are sure they are incorrect. Use all the available time and attempt to answer all questions.