

## FIRST CLASS

1. **Get a calendar**—electronic, checkbook size, in an agenda; carry it with you to note changes in syllabi, meetings, conferences with professors, etc. As soon as you get your syllabi, highlight all due dates for papers and projects, dates for tests, etc. Transfer these dates to your calendar so that you can see your really heavy weeks in advance and plan ahead.
2. **Practice good classroom etiquette**—Do not talk to your classmates when the instructor is speaking.
3. **Learn what constitutes plagiarism and make sure that you do not plagiarize.** You can fail a course or be expelled from the university if you plagiarize. Please read “The Correct Use of Borrowed Information” on the English Department Webpage at [www.winthrop.edu/english/](http://www.winthrop.edu/english/).
4. **Study outside class.** Experts in preparing students for success in college indicate that students should spend 2-3 hours outside class in preparation for every hour spent in class. This suggestion means that if you are taking 16 hours of course work, the minimum you should spend outside class is 32 hours per week. Some weeks you may need to spend less; some more.
5. **Treat your college career as a 9 to 5 job.** Even if you don’t have early classes, get up, eat breakfast, go to work. Use time between classes to review notes, review assignments for the next class. If you follow this schedule, you will have much of your work done before dinner; and you can socialize with a clear conscience and no negative ramifications.
6. **Get enough sleep and exercise.** Both activities keep your brain in top working condition. Your brain is like a machine; it requires maintenance to function well.
7. **Read your syllabi.** Note every professor’s absence policy, late paper policy, attendance policy, plagiarism policy, tardy policy. If these are not on the syllabi, **ASK**.
8. **Don’t cut class unless you are sick.** Even if a professor doesn’t take attendance, you are responsible for what takes place in class. Many times the lecture covers material not in your texts.
9. **Use your textbooks.** Write in them—take notes in the margin, underline, prepare questions to ask in class the next day.
10. **Pay attention in class.** Even if the professor or class is boring by your standards, pay attention. Professors can tell who is “drifting,” and your class participation grade will suffer. If you get sleepy, take water to drink.
11. **Do not procrastinate.** Stay current with your readings and other assignments. Do not wait until the night before a paper is due to begin it.
12. **Get to know your professors.** Visit them during their office hours, or make an appointment. Let them know that you are an interested student. If you are having trouble in the class, ask for advice. (Don’t ask if you have not been doing your best work, however). Learning is your responsibility.
13. **Grades earned reflect the quality of the product, not the amount of effort.** If you spend 20 hours on an essay and your friend spends 5, do not expect your grade to be based on the amount of time and effort you expended.
14. **Become familiar with your *Undergraduate Catalog*.** Study your degree requirements. They are your responsibility, not your advisor’s. Ignorance can be costly.
15. **A social life is also necessary.** If you follow the preceding suggestions, you’ll have time for one and still earn acceptable grades.

**EDUCATION IS NO PLACE FOR MODEST AMBITIONS.**

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