

1 College Culture and the Campus

Chapter goals to help you **get in, get through, get out, and get paid:**

To meet those goals, **this chapter will help you:**

The purpose of this book is to help you get in, get through, get out, and get paid. If you're reading this book, it's likely that you already made it into college. Congratulations! Now the focus is on equipping you with both the world-class skillset (tools) and mindset (GRIT) to perform well in your classes, complete all of the requirements for your degree, and prepare you to get a great job when you get out. To accomplish these important achievements, you need to understand what college is like, how it's different from high school or work, and how to get access to the resources you'll need to be successful. That's the purpose of this first chapter.

- Transition successfully into college
- Meet the expectations of college
- Adjust to the rhythm of the college experience
- Find and use the resources on campus that are available to you
- Grow and show the **GRIT** it takes to dig deep and achieve your goals, no matter what

MyStudentSuccessLab™



Log in to [MyStudentSuccessLab.com](https://www.mystudentsuccesslab.com) to deepen your **GRIT** mindset and build the skills you'll need to get through the college experience.

Four Student Stories: Orientation



"Destination: Degree," the travel-themed orientation, is winding down after an afternoon of skits, presentations, and door prizes.

"If everyone will score their inventories, we will explain how learning style preference affects your study habits," says Jason, an orientation leader.

"Hey, I am 'kinesthetic.' That kind of makes sense. I teach kickboxing and learned how to do it by working out almost every day," Evan says.

"I thought I would be more of a social learner, but my learning style preference is 'individual,'" says Michael as he rubs his head. "I spent so much time leading troops when I was in the military."

"I am definitely 'auditory,'" Laura says to the group. "I got through all my classes in high school by listening to the lectures. I rarely took notes because I liked to listen."

“Yeah, I can see that. You talked during every presentation!” Evan jokes.

“Will you be able to do that in college, just listen?” Juanita, the youngest of the group, asks. “I mean, I have heard that the professors expect so much more of you when it comes to being in class.”

“I am sure you will,” says Michael. “My girlfriend graduated last year with a degree in nursing. All she did was read for class and then study her notes every night.”

“I know Laura is the talkative one, but give me a call if you ever need anything. Good luck to everyone!” Jason says.

Now, what do you think?

- How would you use information about yourself to connect to the expectations of college?
 - a. Not at all. I don't think I will need to do anything to meet college expectations.
 - b. Learn more about myself and how I can use that knowledge to help me meet college expectations.
 - c. Avoid challenges to understanding myself better and my environment better.
- Do you see college as an opportunity to learn more about yourself and those around you?
 - a. Most definitely. Knowing more about myself will help me learn and work with others more effectively.
 - b. Not really. I have a good understanding of who I am and don't need to change.
 - c. Only in certain circumstances when I feel most comfortable learning new things about myself.
- When you are unsure of the expectations of college, do you:
 - a. Suck it up and figure it out on your own
 - b. Complain to your peers about not understanding what you need to do to meet expectations
 - c. Make a plan to learn more about college expectations from your classmates and professors and put those ideas into practice

when you see . . . it means . . .

Academic integrity	Doing honest work on all assignments and tests
Core curriculum	Also called general education requirements or basic courses; the common courses that almost all students who earn a bachelor's degree complete
Corequisite	A course that can be taken at the same time as another course
Course content	The material that will be covered in a course
Course objectives	The goals of a course
Credit hour	The unit of measurement that colleges use that usually equals the amount of time you are in class each week during a 16-week semester
Degree plan	A list of classes that you must complete successfully in order to be awarded a degree

Disability accommodation policy	A policy that states how accommodations for documented disabilities will be handled
FERPA	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; federal law that regulates the communication and dissemination of your educational records
GPA	Grade point average; each grade that is earned is awarded grade points that are multiplied by the number of credit hours taken
Grading criteria	The standards by which an assignment is graded
Prerequisite	A course that must be taken <i>before</i> one can take a course
Quality points	The points determined by a grade point multiplied by the credit hours for a course; e.g., an A (4 grade points) in a writing class (3 credit hours) will equal 12 quality points; used to calculate grade point average
Syllabus	The contract between an instructor and a student; provides information about the course content, course objectives, grading criteria, and course schedule

As You Get into College, Be Prepared for Change

This is an exciting time for you as you transition into college life. The definition of *transition* means a change or a modification, and you will find that going to college will create a change in you—and not just in your schedule and your workload. You will find that your concept of yourself will change, your relationships will change, and your outlook on your future will change. All of these changes will require an investment of your time and reflection to make it happen. At the end of your college experience, you will find yourself *transformed* into a new person. You will most likely be more thoughtful and more confident about your abilities; most certainly, you will be more aware of the skillset and mindset (GRIT) it takes to earn a degree. However, this change or transformation won't be easy. The following section on transitioning from where you are now to where you want to be will give you a better understanding of what you need to do to make the change happen.

Transitioning from High School or Work Offers Distinct Challenges

For some students, the move from high school to college seems fairly simple—both require reading, writing, testing, and attending class. Students who are taking the step from work to school may also see some similarities



■ Making the transition to college from high school or work will mean learning what is expected of you academically and personally. TYLER OLSON/FOTOLIA



■ Getting familiar with library services and other services on campus and online will be essential to your transitioning smoothly. STEPHEN COBURN/FOTOLIA

between their jobs and their classroom work—both require working hard, keeping yourself motivated, and following the rules. If the realities of high school or work and college are that similar, then why do so many college students have difficulty making a successful transition?

The answer to that question can be given by the instructors who see smart, competent students have trouble adjusting to the climate and culture of college, because either they do not understand what is expected of them, or they lack the personal GRIT to persevere through all the uncertainty, frustrations, and challenges that are a rich part of the experience. In other words, in order to be successful, students must know what is expected of them beyond the questions on the next test.

Students need to know how college works and how to navigate through not only their courses, but also the common challenges that they will face as they work toward a degree.



Research clearly shows that students who develop the greatest GRIT get the best results. Period.

The Biggest Change Involves Personal Responsibility

Exhibit 1.1 illustrates some of the differences and similarities among high school, a full-time job, and college. As you take a look at the column labeled “college” in Exhibit 1.1, you’ll notice a pattern emerge—compared to their high school classes or full-time jobs, college stu-

dents experience a dramatic increase in the amount of personal responsibility they must handle. In high school, teachers, counselors, and coaches provide significant oversight and direction to students, and carefully manage everything from school lunches to study hall. In the workplace, employers oversee their employ-

ees using timesheets, employee policy manuals, and supervisors. High school teachers and supervisors provide clear guidance, both about expectations and how to achieve them. In college, however, the student is responsible for understanding the expectations for academic and career success and developing a strategy for meeting those expectations. In other words, you have to figure it out for yourself. You have to find a way to persevere, especially when it gets frustrating and difficult.

There have probably been some times during your high school or work experience when you wished that you had more freedom to make your own decisions and pursue your own interests. As you step into college, these wishes indeed come true. The range of opportunities and alternatives that lie before you is so broad and diverse that you’ll find yourself making important decisions every day.

Which general education (GE) courses will you take next term? Do you want to take classes primarily in the morning or later in the day? Where do you want to live and with whom? Do you want to join a student club or organization? Would you be able to participate in a study abroad program? What kind of career advice and support will there be? Do you attend all your classes?

And even if you do, to what extent do you do whatever it takes to learn what you need to learn and to achieve your goals?

The list of questions, decisions, and responsibilities that you face affords you tremendous freedom to chart your own course in college and your career. This broad range of personal responsibility is exciting, but it can also become overwhelming at times, and you can find yourself suffering significant consequences for poor decisions along the way. That’s why GRIT is so critical.



As you grow and apply your GRIT, you’ll find you get energized by challenges. You’ll expand your capacity, taking on more, even tougher courses and professors, with greater success. And most importantly, it will fuel you to get through, get out, and get paid.

EXHIBIT 1.1 Differences Among High School, Full-Time Work, and College

High School	Full-Time Work	College
Attendance is mandatory in order to meet requirements	Attendance is mandatory in order to stay employed	Attendance may not be mandatory
At least six continuous hours spent in class each day	At least eight continuous hours spent at work each day	Different amounts of time spent in class and between classes each day
Very little choice in what classes you take and when you take them	May have little choice in work assignments and when the work is to be completed	More flexibility in when you work on assignments and how soon you complete them before the due date
Moderate to no outside work necessary to be successful	Moderate to no overtime work necessary to complete job duties	Substantial amount of outside work to complete assignments and to be successful
Teachers check homework and keep you up to date on progress; they will inform you if you are not completing assignments and progressing well	Supervisors check completion and quality of work at regular intervals; they will inform you if you are not meeting the standards for the position	Professors may not check all homework or provide feedback on progress at regular intervals; they may not inform you if you are not meeting the standards of the course
Teachers go over material and expect you to remember facts and information	Employers provide basic information and expect you to use it to complete the job effectively	Professors provide concepts and theories and expect you to evaluate the ideas, synthesize the ideas with other concepts you have learned, and develop new theories
Frequent tests over small amounts of material allow for grades to be raised if needed	Supervisors create employee improvement plans to allow you to improve your ratings if needed	Professors provide the standards and grading criteria but often allow only a few chances (through infrequent testing/ assignments) to meet them
You may be able to skate by	Your boss determines how hard you work	It takes GRIT to succeed; you determine how hard you work, what approach to take, and how much you are willing to own your success

It's important, then, to develop your signature approach for stepping into and getting the most out of this amazing experience that offers so much personal responsibility and autonomy.

Make a Plan for Exercising Your New Freedom

Before you start making a lot of important decisions that affect your academics, social life, and physical and psychological health, take some time to consider how you want to approach these decisions so that you exercise good judgment. Consider whom you will consult when you encounter important decisions and personal freedoms. Who are your “go to” people that help you develop a more resilient approach? Identify individuals in your life who can help you think through important decisions and consider all the important factors. Specific family, friends, classmates, advisors, professors, and mentors may come to mind. Seek their counsel and input as you explore your alternatives in college.



A big part of being a gritty, successful student is becoming more resilient. Resilience is about more than bouncing back when you fall. It's also about having a safety or support network so you don't fall as far, and you can rebound and learn faster.

GRIT GAINER™

GET GOING WITH GRIT Remember: GRIT is your capacity to dig deep and do whatever it takes—even sacrifice, struggle, and suffer—to achieve your goals. Try these GRIT Gainers to enjoy the energizing upsides and avoid the dangerous downsides of personal freedom and responsibility.

1. Upperclassmen sometimes make fun of freshmen for their innocence, ignorance, and foolish mistakes. Accelerate your wisdom by picking two or three senior students you respect and asking them, “When you look back on your first year, what are the two or three specific things you wished you had done differently in order to be more successful?”
2. Whenever you get stuck, or when you think something is impossible, ask yourself, “What are the facets of the situation I can potentially influence to get what I want or need?”



Values are meaningless without GRIT. Who you are and what you say and do when something goes wrong, when you're tired and fed up, or when everything conspires against you reveals your true values. The stronger your GRIT, the more likely you are to show real moral fortitude, staying true to what matters most, no matter what. People respect that. And it will help you succeed.

Another consideration is what personal values or principles you want to uphold in your life. It's important to keep those values in your sights as you experience a range of new opportunities and diversions that might either reinforce your values or undermine them.

It therefore makes sense to give careful consideration to how your decisions will affect others. Although we refer to this topic as “personal” responsibility, it's important to recognize that every decision you make will affect not only your life, but others' as well. For example, a decision to miss a meeting for a group project in a class not only affects your performance in the class, but that of your team members also.

Having greater personal freedom is an exciting component of the college experience, and it's an important part of your transformation. The advice we've offered is intended to help you navigate this wider road with success, GRIT, and good judgment.

Higher Education Brings High Expectations

A marathon is a 26.2 mile run, and regardless of whether a participant runs full speed or walks, it's an event that is challenging for everyone. Similarly, college is a demanding experience. There is no way to avoid that reality. If it were easy, more people would complete their degrees. If it were easy, it would also be less meaningful and powerful to achieve. Regardless of the national or international reputation of your college, your college experience will challenge you mentally, physically, and emotionally. It will take a lot of GRIT not only to persevere, but ideally to flourish and grow in the process. We don't tell you this to intimidate or discourage you, but to help you get into the right mindset for success. New students can fall prey to rumors and suggestions that college is easy, or that one college is easier than another. Don't fall for these myths! If you start college with the expectation that it will be easy, you'll run the risk of stumbling during your very first semester in college, and you'll have to work even harder to recover. Doing well at anything requires serious effort. It's tough.

A typical associate's degree requires 60 semester credit hours, and most students take three, four, or even five years to finish their degree. Along the way, if you're a full-time student,

you'll be expected to attend four to five classes every semester, study several hours outside of class, meet with team members, participate in cocurricular and extracurricular events, and perhaps even work part-time or full-time to pay for school.

Even though your professors know that you face all of these responsibilities, each professor will expect you to give your very best effort and quality of work to her class.

Because of their experience in teaching hundreds if not thousands of students over time, professors know that students can succeed when they are challenged. Most won't teach you GRIT, but they will require you to have and show it. Here, we offer some tips for getting yourself in shape, so to speak, for a successful and challenging college experience. We build our recommendations around the four Cs:

1. Computers and supplies
2. Classroom preparation, attendance, and behavior
3. Constructive criticism
4. Controversial content



Professors don't appreciate excuses for why things don't or can't get done. They simply grade (and respect) you for what you do get done and how well you do it. That's why GRIT earns you results and respect.

Computers and Supplies

In high school, books and course materials are provided for each student, but in college, you will be responsible for obtaining and purchasing your own materials—and you will need to do that before or at the very beginning of the semester. Here's a quick list of "the right stuff" that you will likely need:

- Access to a computer and a working knowledge of how to use one. Most colleges provide computer labs, email accounts, and printers for student use, but their hours may be limited; they may be crowded at busy times during the semester; and you may have to pay for the pages that you print. Thus, having the necessary computer skills as well as regular access to a computer will be integral to your success, and if you need some help honing those skills, your college may offer computer classes.
- Textbooks and course materials. Usually an exact list of course materials is included in your syllabus. If not, the bookstore may have this information. If you find yourself unable to acquire or buy your materials, then you will need to talk to your professor immediately to ask about alternative arrangements. For example, some professors put a copy of the textbook on reserve in the library, which means that students can borrow the book for limited periods of time.
- Access to online course materials. Most colleges have a website or "portal" that has special links to specific courses where professors will post the syllabus, assignments, class notes, and, in some cases, quizzes and tests. To gain access to these materials, you'll need to be officially enrolled in the class and you'll need to have access to your college's web portal, which requires a user name and password. Make sure you have all of this covered before the first day of class.
- Writing materials, including notebooks (one for each class), printer paper, pens, highlighters, and #2 pencils.
- Depending on the type of math, engineering, or science classes, you will probably need a scientific calculator. Check with your professor first for any requirements or recommendations before purchasing one.
- A good, sturdy backpack that allows you to carry all your books and notebooks. Because you will not have a locker or place to store your things between classes, you will have to find a bag that holds up to the task of carrying heavy materials over a period of weeks.

- A portable storage device that will hold your computer files and allow you to access them at any computer. Thumb drives, also known as flash drives and pin drives, are increasingly popular because they hold a large number of files and are easy to carry. Use a permanent marker or tape to put your name on the drive, save a Word file on the drive labeled “If found, please contact,” and include your contact information. College computer labs have hundreds of these thumb drives that were misplaced by students in just one semester.

Classroom Preparation, Attendance, and Behavior

In addition to your supplies, knowing and meeting your professor’s expectations in the classroom will make a great foundation for success. One essential expectation that professors have is preparation—yours. You should be prepared *before* you get to class by reading the assigned pages or completing the homework. Professors who assign reading or homework expect students to prepare—they may even administer quizzes—and to ask questions about anything they did not understand. Professors assume that if you don’t ask questions or participate in a discussion, you understand the assignment. They may also hold you accountable for the assigned reading on exams even if it was not discussed in class.

Another expectation is that out-of-class assignments must be typed; in fact, unless otherwise stated, assume that all outside assignments should be typed, because they are easier to read and they look more professional. If you don’t know how to create written documents on a computer, now is the time to learn; relying on others to create these documents will put you at a disadvantage. You may not be able to control when the person can complete the work, which can make you miss important due dates.



Gritty students take the most advantage of the resources available and are least likely to let any lack of resources prevent them from getting what they need. They show up for their professors’ office hours when they need to, so they can better accomplish their goals.

Professors also expect that college students are able to access technology regularly and use it competently. What this means is that your professor will assume and expect that you have consistent access to a computer and the Internet. She will also believe that you have an email account and can send emails—even messages with attachments—successfully. If these are skills and equipment that you do not have, you will need to find out where you can access a computer on or off campus and make sure that you have the ability to use it properly.

Finally, instructors expect you to use their office hours—the time when they are formally available to meet with students—to meet with them. This is a time not only to address any questions or concerns you may have about your progress, but it is also a wonderful time to get to know your professors better. Professors typically post their office hours in their syllabi, on their course websites, and on the doors of their offices.

Regular attendance in your classes is crucial so that you can obtain information and guidance about assignments, tests, and grading. Especially in courses that build on concepts (such as math, foreign languages, and writing), regular attendance is essential to help you overcome problems with challenging assignments and prepare for tests. If you are receiving financial aid through grants or loans, your attendance may be important to your continuing to receive funds in the future.

If you miss a class or intend to miss a class, you should contact your professor in writing. You may need a doctor’s excuse if you missed an exam or assignment, and if your absence wasn’t due to a medical situation, you should be prepared to justify your absence. Most professors, though, may not care why you were absent or may not distinguish between excused or unexcused absences. Instead, they use your attendance as an indication of your effort and contribution to the class. Many professors base a portion of their grades on attendance and/or class participation. Because you can’t participate in a class discussion while absent, your attendance will likely have a direct impact on your grades.

Attending class is just part of the effort you will put forth; you will also need to produce quality work. Writing a paper and turning it in is only part of the requirement. You also have to adhere to the standards of the course. If your professor asks for a 10-page paper that argues a contemporary topic and uses five sources, you must follow those guidelines. In some instances, you may receive no credit for completing an assignment if you have not followed these requirements.

The more time you work to complete an assignment *usually* translates to better quality, but this is not always the case. For example, someone who types 40 words a minute will need less time to produce the same typographical-error-free assignments as someone who “hunts and pecks” at the keyboard. The quality of your work is what you will be graded on, not the number of hours you spend doing it.

No doubt you already juggle numerous responsibilities, and going to class and studying are just more tasks that you must complete each week. Handling your responsibilities skillfully will take the right mindset, respect for yourself, and some basic maturity. Laura knows how important being responsible for herself and her son is. She has had many years of relying on herself and a few family members to meet her responsibilities. Obviously, as a student she has the responsibility to take notes, study for tests, and attend classes regularly. But she also has the responsibility to ask questions when she doesn’t understand or to resolve any conflict that may occur.

With responsibility also comes maturity, which is the foundation for many of the other components of college culture. Without a mature and gritty mindset, the other parts are unattainable. There are, however, less obvious actions that can help you present yourself as a dedicated, mature student. The first one is paying attention during lectures, presentations, talks by guest speakers, and videos. Although this sounds obvious, it is sometimes forgotten after the first few weeks of the semester. Work on looking at the front of the room and avoiding distractions. A common barrier to paying attention, besides staring out the window, is doing homework in class. Instructors frown on students who use class time to study for other classes or complete assignments that were due at the beginning of class. Students are often amazed at how visible everything is from the front of class. Just remember that the instructor sees that you are not paying attention and will make note of it.

Small actions, but equally important ones, that convey maturity and readiness to meet college expectations include staying for the duration of the class, limiting off-topic conversations with classmates, refraining from eating or participating in distracting activities, and getting ready to exit class only after the instructor has dismissed everyone.

One small activity that causes big problems in class is the use of phones or other personal electronics. Professors generally view it as rude and disruptive, unless they are having you intentionally use a device as a learning tool. In some classes, such as a chemistry lab, the distraction can be dangerous. Some colleges have strict policies forbidding the use of personal electronics in class. There may be exceptions, however. For example, if you work in a field that requires your immediate attention in the event of an emergency or if you have a gravely ill family member, ask if you may leave these electronic devices turned on. If your college does not have a policy, turn off your cell phone in class anyway. Students who answer social calls in class appear immature and unconcerned about their education.



Do whatever it takes to get what you need from a class. With tough subjects, set aside some prime time—when your mind is sharpest—to review, prepare, and stay on top. Strive to exceed professors’ expectations, and build in a buffer, in case anything goes wrong. Like Laura, the tougher it gets, the deeper you dig to do well.

Constructive Criticism

Another important way to demonstrate maturity in college is to understand and appreciate, even seek and welcome, constructive criticism from your professor. Your professors will provide feedback on your assignments, exams, projects, and presentations both in writing and verbally, and



Here's where you can show some real GRIT. If you get this kind of feedback, don't take it personally, and don't jump to the conclusion that your work was poor. Clarify to make sure you understand. Take it in the spirit of improving yourself and consider it a compliment. Use it to fuel your determination to earn more positive feedback next time.

sometimes the feedback will be challenging. Because professors are busy, because they work with a lot of students each semester, and because they have high expectations for student work, they may deliver feedback in a way that can be tough to hear. For example, your professor might return your term paper covered in red ink with comments and corrections throughout the document.

Getting a lot of feedback and response from your professor is actually a really positive opportunity. No matter how much you may dislike how the feedback is delivered, your professor's intention is to help you learn and improve your performance. Read the professor's feedback carefully and identify the lessons you can learn from the feedback to improve the quality of future assignments. Gritty learners use feedback like a GPS, helping them reroute to get to their goal even better and faster.

The more GRIT you grow, the quicker, better, and more positively you will respond to any feedback. But if the feedback triggers an emotional response, give yourself a day or two before you respond. Even better, share the professor's feedback with a trusted classmate or friend and invite their advice on how you can best learn from it. Some of you may have experienced athletic coaches or high school teachers who were tough on their students, but in a well-intentioned manner that brought out the best in student performance. Professors who provide challenging feedback are similarly effective at facilitating high performance among students, especially for students who are open to constructive criticism and who view it as an opportunity to learn and grow.



Years later, you may look back on your toughest professors as your favorite, because they helped you grow the most. They made you stick it out and show some GRIT.

Even better, share the professor's feedback with a trusted classmate or friend and invite their advice on how you can best learn from it. Some of you may have experienced athletic coaches or high school teachers who were tough on their students, but in a well-intentioned manner that brought out the best in student performance. Professors who provide challenging feedback are similarly effective at facilitating high performance among students, especially for students who are open to constructive criticism and who view it as an opportunity to learn and grow.

Controversial Content

For the most part, college will be a straightforward experience—you will learn the expectations and when you meet them, you will be successful. There are, though, other aspects of college culture that may be uncomfortable or even shocking to you. All colleges value diversity, whether it is in the student body population or in the backgrounds of its faculty. Most definitely, you will find diversity in ideas and theories among the subjects that are offered, which may challenge your beliefs and values. Still other subjects may contain material that you find disrespectful, offensive, distasteful, or disturbing. Besides the reading and discussion of controversial issues, your college may produce student and faculty work that contains language, images, or situations that you find offensive.

What should you do if you encounter college "culture shock"? First, remember that the purpose of college is to provide you with a wider worldview and understanding of diversity—even if that diversity involves different ideas and theories. Second, remember that you have the right to opinions and feelings about what you encounter in college. There is no reason you should hide your feelings or attitudes about what you are learning and encountering. With this said, the third point to remember is that with your right to an opinion, you also have an obligation as a college student to examine your previously held beliefs and evaluate how they are being challenged in your courses or as you participate in college activities. You also have the obligation to appreciate that there is more than one way to view an "offensive" idea or image. Exhibit 1.2 provides a list of possible subjects that could be controversial to you or other students.

You will learn about diversity and relationships in depth in another chapter, but it is worth mentioning here that dealing with diversity,

It's in the syllabus

What are your instructors' expectations? Look at your syllabus for each class you are taking and determine what each one expects of you.

- Are you supposed to do the majority of your work outside of class?
- Are you expected to be responsible for completing a group project?
- What kinds of supplies are you required to have for each class?
- Will you need computer access to complete assignments?
- How will you purchase or access the required supplies?

EXHIBIT 1.2 A Sample of Possible Controversial Subjects

The existence of God, higher being	The theory of extraterrestrial life
Conservatism and liberalism	Evolution
Nudity in art, photography	The beginning of life
Sexuality, including homosexuality and adultery	Scientific investigation and experimentation (stem cells, cloning)
The creation of the universe	Socioeconomic theory

conflict, and controversy takes a certain level of maturity. Effectively meeting any challenge to your belief system or values will demand that you act with integrity and openness. Because the purpose of getting an education is to stretch your mind and expand your ideas, you will need maturity to help you put all that new information into perspective.

The College Experience Has a Rhythm

Now you know what to expect and what is expected of you in college, but understanding a few other customary practices will help you go from being a “tourist” to a “native.” One of the characteristics of a college environment that you’ll start to notice over time is that there’s a rhythm that drives the pace and intensity of the college experience. In the same way that a 24-hour period in your life tends to have variations in what you’re doing and how intense your schedule is, the college experience has predictable variations that you can expect and anticipate.

Schedules

First, it is helpful to note that universities organize their annual calendar around semesters, terms, or quarters, which can be as short as four weeks, usually during the summer, or as long as 16 weeks. Many universities have at least four semesters: fall, spring, first summer term, and second summer term, with the summer terms being shorter than the fall and spring terms. Other colleges organize the academic calendar around 10- or 11-week quarters. If you are unsure how many weeks the semester is, count the number of weeks from the first day of class until the last day of finals. You can find the information in the college catalog or in the course outline of your syllabus.

GRIT GAINER™

GRITTY MINDSET Right from the start, you have to decide if you are going to be the kind of student who owns and takes full responsibility for your achievement and success. Are you going to claim it or blame it when you fall short or things go wrong? Are you going to be one of those students who does the bare minimum? Or are you going to strive to do and become more? Try these GRIT Gainers to become unstoppable.

1. Any time you face a challenge, get stuck, feel frustrated, or are disappointed, ask yourself, “Ultimately, what do I really want to get out of this class (or degree)?” The clearer you are on your goals and the more compelling your goals are, the grittier you become.
2. Whenever you feel like giving up or compromising your standards for success, ask yourself, “If my life depended on my getting a good grade in this class (or achieving this goal), what would I do (that I haven’t yet done) to make sure that happened?”

No matter how many weeks you spend taking a course, classes are scheduled at different days during the week. This arrangement may differ significantly from your high school schedule. In college, you may take classes once a week, as is the case in evening or night classes, or you may take them on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays or just Tuesdays and Thursdays. Usually, colleges do not offer classes on Friday nights, so if you take classes in the evening, you will take them either once a week or twice a week, Mondays through Thursdays.

Exceptions to this schedule occur during shortened terms such as summer semesters or intersession terms in which you may go every day during the week. Also, you may have a lab or special class that meets only once a week, but is tied to another class such as biology or chemistry. The best advice for new students is to read the schedule of classes carefully before registering, and as always, ask an advisor, counselor, professor, or fellow student if you have trouble reading your schedule.

Colleges award credit hours based on how many hours a week you are in class during a regular semester (summer or intersession terms will double or quadruple the number of hours a week as compared to a regular semester). Thus, a three-credit-hour class will require that you spend about three hours in class per week—some classes may last only 50 minutes three times a week. Exceptions do exist: Labs are often worth one credit hour, but they may meet for more than one hour one day a week.

Exhibit 1.3 shows a typical schedule of a full-time student. Notice the “TR” under the “Days” column; “T” stands for Tuesday and “R” stands for Thursday. Thus, the biology class meets both Tuesday and Thursday while the lab meets on Thursday only. Labs and other special classes may meet for more than one hour a week, but they are usually worth only one credit hour. Although the classes in this schedule meet two and a half hours each week, they are given three credit hours. Three hours is often an approximation of the time spent in class.

If the schedule in Exhibit 1.3 reflects a 16-week semester, this student will spend over 40 hours in class for the semester. During summer or intersession terms, you will spend about the same number of hours in class, but you will attend class more often and for a longer period of time.

Because Exhibit 1.4 is a schedule for a four-week term, the classes meet for more than three hours a week. In this case, students meet for 10 hours a week for four weeks, which will equal 40 hours or the equivalent of the total number of hours a three-credit-hour class will meet during a 16-week term.

EXHIBIT 1.3 Sixteen-Week Class Schedule

FALL 2016 (16-WEEK) SCHEDULE				
COURSE ID	COURSE NAME	DAYS	TIME	CREDIT HOURS
Engl 030	Composition 1	M W F	8:00–8:50 A.M.	3.0
Biol 110	Biology	T R	8:00–9:15 A.M.	3.0
Biol 112	Biology Lab	R	9:25–11:25 A.M.	1.0
Math 034	College Algebra	M W F	10:00–10:50 A.M.	3.0
Coll 101	Freshman Seminar	T R	12:15–1:30 P.M.	3.0
TOTAL HOURS				13.0

EXHIBIT 1.4 Four-Week Class Schedule

SUMMER 2016 (4-WEEK) CLASS SCHEDULE				
COURSE ID	COURSE NAME	DAYS	TIME	CREDIT HOURS
MATH 101	College Algebra	M T W R F	8:00–10:00 A.M.	3.0
Engl 101	Composition I	M T W R F	10:10–12:10 P.M.	3.0
TOTAL HOURS				6.0

As you build your schedule each semester, here are a few tips to consider:

- To get through, identify the courses you need to make progress toward your degree. Meet with your advisor well in advance of when you need to formally enroll in the next semester, and make sure you know what general education (GE) courses you should take next and what required and elective courses you should be taking for your major. Don't build your schedule around classes that are interesting or fit the time of day when you want to attend class—focus on the courses you need to move closer toward graduation.
- Have a contingency plan or alternative courses in mind. Depending on the balance between student demand and the supply of courses at your college, you may encounter situations in which the classes you want to take are either not being offered next term (not every class listed in the college catalog is offered every term) or are already full by the time you register for classes. For that reason, identify courses that could be appropriate second options for you. For example, some GE requirements provide several options. Your top choice might be a popular culture class that you know you would really enjoy, but it's a good idea to identify another suitable GE course that you could take if that class is full or not scheduled.
- Don't make your schedule a popularity contest. If you rely on fellow classmates to tell you when you should take class and which professor you should choose, you'll find yourself competing against everyone else for the same classes. This doesn't always work in your favor. Sometimes an "unpopular" 7 A.M. class may be your best option because it fits your schedule well, and you may discover that you think most clearly in the morning. You might also discover that a professor is "unpopular" simply because he challenges his students to work hard, and you actually learn a lot in his course. Select courses for the right reasons, not the popular reasons.
- Build in time for individual study and to meet with study groups. As you build your schedule, insert blocks of time when you can go to the library or other study space to review lecture notes, read the textbook, and complete homework and assignments. Also, set time aside for study group meetings and team projects.



Think beyond. Imagine the career you'd like to pursue once you complete your degree. If you were to dig deep and do whatever it takes *now* to enhance your chances of making it happen, what courses (or other learning) beyond your requirements might you go after to help fulfill your ambitions?



Being denied admission to a specific class doesn't always mean you can't get it. Exercise some GRIT, approach the professor, express your enthusiasm for the subject, and see if there is a way to make it happen.

There are other factors you'll want to consider when you build your schedule—such as your part- or full-time job, eating, exercising, sleeping, and social activities—so take time to build a complete schedule before you have to officially enroll in the next term. The schedule you build will determine the rhythm of each term, and you want that rhythm to fit you well.

Grades

What is a discussion about college expectations without mentioning grades? For sure, grades are an important part of your education, but they aren't the only measure of your learning and success. Grades are important because they reflect your level of achievement on an assignment or in a course, they are often used for obtaining and maintaining scholarships and financial aid, and they are a relevant piece of news to family, friends, and employers who may be supporting you financially and emotionally. Many people view grades as a reflection of a level of success. For instance, most of the people you ask would view a student who has straight A's as someone who is smart and successful. Earning good grades can motivate you to do your best and give you more confidence as you earn them.

Although good grades feel great when you earn them, grades are not always an indication of your success or lack of success in mastering a subject. Grades are important because they are a way to describe the work you have done in a class, and you'll have to earn a certain level of grades in your classes to officially pass and move on. However, grades alone are not the magic

carpet to success in college; they are only part of the story of your achievements. Your goal should be to strike a balance between caring about your grades and caring about improving your skills and increasing your knowledge.

As stated earlier, college professors grade a student on his or her ability to meet the standards of the course or of a particular assignment. Effort is definitely a necessary part of earning good grades—and you will earn the respect of your professor and fellow students by demonstrating an intense effort to master the concepts of a class—but it is only one part of achieving success in a course. College professors

expect that you also meet the standards, sometimes called grading criteria, of the course. Exhibit 1.5 shows a potential set of criteria for a college-level paper. In this case, the criteria are for an A paper.

Knowing how your college assesses student performance is a start to improving your overall outlook on grading. The following is a typical grading scale in college:

90–100 A 80–89 B 70–79 C 60–69 D 0–59 F

Some colleges may use a + or – next to a letter grade, such as A– or C+. Usually, colleges that allow for +'s and –'s will also alter the grading scale to designate the different grades. Here is an example of a grading scale that includes +'s and –'s:

94–100 A 90–93 A– 89–87 B+ 86–84 B 80–83 B–



Employers value GRIT. When asked, 98 percent would rather hire a graduate who did reasonably well taking tough courses while working their way through school and shouldering a lot of responsibilities over the graduate with an easy life and perfect grades in easy courses. Don't get seduced by easy, when at times the tougher path may pay off in the long run.

EXHIBIT 1.5 Grading Criteria for an A Paper

An excellent introduction with engaging hooks, setup, plan for essay, and/or main idea

An original significant thesis that offers insightful interpretation or thought

An inventive and logical organizational plan

Smooth and varied transitional expressions, phrases, and sentences that provide unity and coherence

Strong conclusion that ends the essay effectively

Expressive, clear style with sophisticated sentence structure and word choice

No more than three major grammatical errors

Each semester, the Registrar's Office, which maintains your official academic records, will calculate your grade point average (GPA) and post it to your transcript, or your list of classes and grades. Because the calculation of your GPA requires a little mathematical skill, it is important to know how the registrar figures it. Hours are the number of hours you are in class each week. As discussed previously, classes are usually three credit hours. Science or specialized classes that have labs usually carry four credit hours. Depending on the course and the program, credit hours can be as many as six or as few as one. To know how many hours a course carries, check the description in the college catalog, because some classes meet for more hours a week than they are worth in terms of credit.

Letter grades carry a point value called *quality points*. Exhibit 1.6 shows how many quality points each letter grade is worth.

Courses that are designated developmental or remedial usually do not figure into your grade point average, so they do not carry any quality points. If you audit a course or receive AP or CLEP credit for a course, you will not receive quality points either. In other words, although you receive credit on your transcript for taking the course or taking an equivalent of the course, the course will not factor into your grade point average. Before you figure your GPA, you will need to figure your grade points for each class (see Exhibit 1.6). You arrive at your grade points by multiplying the quality points for the grade you received by the number of hours the class is worth. For instance, if you took a four-hour class and you made a B, then you will multiply 4 (hours) by 3 (quality points for a B).

Evan is taking 15 hours (5 three-hour courses) this semester; if he receives an A, B, and three Cs, then his grade would be calculated as shown in Exhibit 1.7.

Finally, divide the total grade points by the total hours (39/15). Evan's GPA would be 2.6.

Building your schedule every term and tracking your grades will establish a regular rhythm for your college experience. Other activities may be part of this rhythm as well, such as club or Greek life responsibilities, intramural sports, academic competitions, career fairs and workshops, and on-campus events like concerts and sporting events. Over time, you'll adapt to the ebbs and flows of these activities and the intensity of your work to meet all of the expectations and responsibilities that you face. As you learn to anticipate these variations in intensity and pace, you'll be able to prepare for them and succeed.

EXHIBIT 1.6 Grades and Quality Points

Letter Grade	Quality Points
A	4
B	3
C	2
D	1
F	0

EXHIBIT 1.7 GPA Calculation Table

Hours	Grade (Quality Points)	Grade Points (Hours × Quality Points)
3	A (4)	$3 \times 4 = 12$
3	B (3)	$3 \times 3 = 9$
3	C (2)	$3 \times 2 = 6$
3	C (2)	$3 \times 2 = 6$
3	C (2)	$3 \times 2 = 6$
15 Hours		39 Grade Points

integrity matters

Your college transcript, which includes your grade point average, can reveal more than just the grades you earned in courses. For example, some colleges make notations on students' transcripts if they have failed a class because of plagiarism or cheating. These marks can be evidence that a student did not follow academic integrity policies.

In some cases, these marks can be deleted from transcripts if the student successfully completes an academic integrity workshop.

YOUR TURN

In 250 words, discuss the specifics of your college's academic integrity policy. Describe how your college records failing grades that are due to academic integrity violations. Also include in your discussion whether there are any programs at your college to help students understand and follow the academic integrity policy.

There Are Helpful Resources on Your Campus to Help You Succeed

Now that you have a better understanding of college culture and what is expected of you, it is time to examine how your college looks. Getting to know the layout of the campus and the people who work there is important to understanding the culture and getting the help you need to support your success. A big part of being a gritty learner is proactively and creatively tapping the resources around you to fill in any gaps and to get what you need to accelerate and fortify your success both inside and outside the classroom.

For example, knowing where to go when you need to use a computer will make your ability to complete an assignment a little easier. Finding your professor's office may save you time and stress when you need to talk to him about an upcoming test. Going out of your way to take advantage of these resources can make a huge difference. The more you are on campus, the better able you will be to find people and places that will help you no matter what you need, but it will help if you take some time to study your campus so you know where to look.

GRIT GAINER™

THE GRITTY GAMEPLAN Fewer and fewer employers are fooled by graduates with great grades in easy courses. More value the hardship, struggle, and adversity you face to achieve your goals. Build a Gritty GamePlan using these simple tips:

1. Is your schedule challenging enough? Does it stretch you to learn, grow, adapt, and perform? What adjustments can you make so it does?
2. Add something new to your schedule every term, or at least every year. Take on new challenges and new pursuits that expand your capacity and capabilities. College is the perfect time to do it.

the unwritten rules

of College Culture and the Campus

- **The unwritten rules are just that—unwritten.** Learning the unwritten rules will take time and trial and error, but everyone feels as if he is in a different country when he first enrolls at college. This feeling will pass as you begin to learn more about how the college works.
- **Upperclassmen, also known as students who are further ahead of you in their degree completion, can help you learn the rules more quickly.** Find someone who is a second-year or third-year student who can show you the ropes. Maybe you need to know where the best place to park is or how to sign up for a campus organization; a student who has been at your college for over a year can speed up your mastery of the unwritten rules. A big part of GRIT is learning from others and adjusting your approach along the way.
- **The campus has people who can help you.** No matter what you need, there is most likely an office or person that handles it. Get to know your campus early and well by finding out what each building houses and what the office or position can do for you if you need it.

Explore Your Campus

Find a map of your campus and study it for a few minutes. How many buildings does it have? How much parking space? How much “green” space or landscaping? Are there any unique features to your campus that make it an inviting and exciting place? Familiarizing yourself with your campus is probably the first activity you did when you enrolled in classes. If you have not taken a tour or simply walked around the campus, do so within the first few weeks of the semester. Locate the library, the student center, student parking, the bookstore, the business office, and the registrar’s office—just to name a few destinations.

The more you know about your campus’s layout, the easier it will be to find what you are looking for when you need it most. Using your map of the campus or your memory, check off in Exhibit 1.8 the types of buildings or departments within buildings that you know are present at your college.

If your college has more than one campus, familiarize yourself with the layout of other college property. You may have to travel to a satellite campus to take a test or to pick up materials for a class. If you have the time and the other campus is not too far away, ask for a tour. At the very least, familiarize yourself with any of the items you marked “not sure” in Exhibit 1.8.

Locate Information About Campus Resources

Knowing where to go to find services and people is only part of learning about your college. Another important aspect is finding and using the information that the college produces for students. College publications are a great place to find information about courses, programs, scholarships, activities, and policy changes. It is important that you regularly read these publications in order to stay up to date with what is going on.

EXHIBIT 1.8 Campus Layout Checklist

Building or Area	At My College	Not Sure
Student center or union		
Library		
Bookstore		
Administration building		
Theater or auditorium		
Snack bars, food courts, and other dining facilities		
Athletic training facilities (indoor or outdoor)		
Science labs		
Computer labs		
Individual colleges and departments (such as business, psychology, engineering, and graphic communication)		
Student parking		
Benches and tables for meeting outside		
Quiet study space inside		
Disability Resource Center		
Health Center		
Cashier's Office		
Housing Office		
Registrar's Office		

College Catalog

The college catalog is an essential document during your academic career. All the information that you need to apply for financial aid, choose courses, and complete a degree is contained in the catalog. The academic calendar is usually placed at the beginning of the catalog. There you will find the dates for registering, dropping courses, and taking final exams.

It is important to read and keep your college catalog because if the college changes any requirements of your degree program, you will be able to follow the guidelines that were published the year you began the program. For instance, if you are working on a psychology degree and you have taken three semesters of courses so far, you will not necessarily have to adhere to new requirements that are made at a later date.

Student Handbook

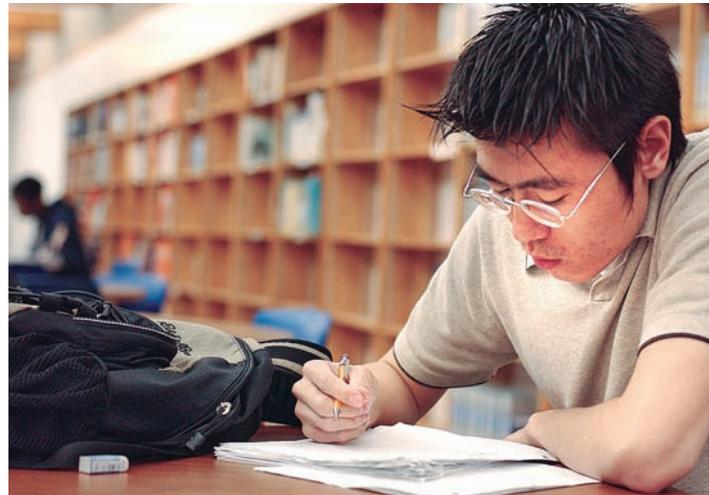
The student handbook, which provides you with specific information about student conduct, academic standards, and services, is another valuable publication. Usually, the handbook contains descriptions of career services, the bookstore, computer labs, and financial aid offices. Academic information such as terms for probation and suspension for misconduct and qualifications for

making the dean's list can also be found in the student handbook. Most schools view the student handbook as a legal document that outlines what students can do in certain situations, so be sure to read it closely and keep a copy at home or in your bookbag.

College Newspaper

College newspapers differ from the college catalog and student handbook in that students are usually the ones who are responsible for the content. Within a college newspaper, you will find articles about upcoming events, reports on changes on the college campus, editorials on important student issues, profiles of programs, and advertisements for used books, musical performances, and anything else that students want to announce. The college newspaper is also a forum to explore controversial topics and to discuss sensitive issues.

Newspapers always need students to interview, write, edit, and publish. If you are interested in working for the newspaper, contact the editor or visit a journalism or composition professor.



■ Students who have “the right stuff”—such as access to a computer, textbooks, and other materials and equipment that are required for classes—are much more likely to be successful.

PEARSON EDUCATION

Bulletin Boards

Even with the increased use of the Internet, the bulletin board is still an important way to get a message to students. Found all over campus, bulletin boards usually advertise used books, needs for roommates and part-time jobs, and upcoming campus events. Bulletin boards within academic buildings often announce study abroad opportunities, summer workshops, special events, and other types of notable activities.

It's in the Syllabus

Anything that professors hand out in class is a communication tool. The syllabus is one of the most important documents that you will receive in class, so be sure to read it carefully. In the syllabus you will usually find the following information:

- Instructor's name, office location, phone number, hours open to students, and email address
- Prerequisites for the course
- Course description from the catalog
- Textbook information
- Course objectives, or what you will accomplish by the time you finish the class
- Course content, or what topics will be covered throughout the semester
- Assignments and due dates
- Grading criteria
- Attendance and late-work policies
- Academic integrity statement (which also appears in the student handbook)
- Disability accommodations policy
- General policies for classroom conduct

The syllabus is considered a contract between the student and the instructor. This means that not only will the syllabus contain what is expected of you during class, but it will also contain what you can expect from the professor. Both of you—the student and the professor—will be bound by what is stated in the document. Reading the syllabus closely and following it regularly will keep you on top of the policies, expectations, and assignments.

Other essential information that is handed out in class includes directions to assignments, photocopied readings, study questions, and notes. Regard anything that is given to you by the instructor as important, even if you are told “This won’t be on the test.”

You should also consider the grades and written comments you receive as communication from your instructors. Be sure to read any comments or suggestions that are written on papers and exams, ask questions if you don’t understand them or they are illegible, and save all feedback until the semester is over.

Online Resources

The college’s website is where you can find the most current information about classes, academic programs, and contact information for professors. It is easier to update information on a website because it doesn’t involve printing and distribution, so it is more likely to provide the most accurate information. College websites usually list phone numbers and email addresses of professors and deans, which makes contacting them easier.

In addition to general information about degrees and departments, your college’s website may give you access to professors’ syllabi and assignments. This provides a good opportunity to investigate what courses you want to take based on the course objectives and activities and information about the professor.

Most professors establish their own course website, either as a standalone site or within a learning management system like Blackboard or Moodle. Once you’re enrolled in a course, you will gain special access to the course website, and you need to visit this site often. Professors use course websites to post announcements; distribute their syllabi, assignments, and reading materials; facilitate discussion boards; track grades; collect electronic versions of projects and assignments; and even administer online quizzes and tests.

Campus Organizations

Campus organizations or student groups are another part of college life you will want to learn more about. Depending on how large your college is and how involved the students are, you may find a variety of student organizations and clubs in which to participate. Even if your time is limited, consider getting involved in some way, because these activities can enhance your college experience, and employers value extracurricular leadership experience when they recruit potential employees. Campus organizations include, but are not limited to, student clubs, fraternities and sororities, student government, student leadership programs, and clubs focused on certain interests (e.g., gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered issues; political action; community service; academic honors and distinctions; religious or spiritual development; and career exploration). Getting involved will help you transition to the college and provide immediate connections with students, faculty, and staff. You can learn about these opportunities on the college website, through on-campus club fairs and information sessions, and by asking upperclassmen about their own experiences.

A college is an exciting place with a wide variety of activities and experiences that can enrich your life and help you succeed. Because there are many options for how you can get involved, you’ll need to gather information about them and carefully choose the best opportunities in which you’ll invest time



Surround yourself with and join the organizations full of students who get stuff done, make it happen, and set a high standard for themselves. GRIT is contagious.

GRIT GAINER™

GO GET WHAT YOU NEED Any professor can spot which students sit back versus those who step up. A big part of adopting a gritty mindset is actively seeking out, going after, and getting the information, wisdom, and resources you need to succeed. Try these simple GRIT Tips to come out ahead:

1. Ask your professors, “Excuse me, professor, but I’m curious, beyond the syllabus, what two or three pieces of advice would you offer me to increase my chances of success in your class?” Most will be impressed. Write/record what they say.
2. When you face a struggle or obstacle, don’t let it beat you down. Seek out and ask a few of the wisest people you can find where they would go to get resources or what they would do to deal with a situation like yours. Most will be happy to help.

and effort. It’s a common mistake among students to get excited about all these opportunities and then overcommit. This leads to avoidable disappointment and failure. As you begin your college career, carefully select only one or two extracurricular activities until you can gain experience with your academic responsibilities and determine how much capacity you have for commitments outside the classroom.

GET THROUGH—From College to University

To adjust to a new culture, revisit your strategy

If you are moving from your community college to a larger, more diverse university, you may experience a slight culture shock despite the semesters you already have under your belt. In addition to a bigger campus with more buildings to find and more students to meet, you may find that a university seems more impersonal. Transfer students also note that expectations are higher—and their grades are lower—especially as they move into their majors and begin working toward a career. As a general rule of thumb, the greater the differences between your community college and the university to which you plan to transfer, the more outside resources you’ll need to support your success. You gain no bonus points or recognition from trying to succeed on your own. Instead, it’s to your advantage to know where you can get help and information from people who are trained to provide it.

The methods you used to seek assistance and information from others while you were in community college may not work at a four-year university, so you may need to adjust your strategies. For example, at your community college it may have been possible for you to simply drop in at the advising center to get advice about the courses you should take next term. If you try a similar strategy at a four-year university, you might encounter long lines or meetings by appointment only. This means that you may have to contact the advising center at the four-year university weeks prior to the time period when you need to enroll in classes for next term in order to schedule an appointment with an advisor in time.

GET PAID from college to career

3

things future professionals need to know about college culture

your ability to adapt to change is a lifelong skill

Transitioning from high school or work to college requires you to change. Change isn't always easy, and it may not be fun, but it's a necessary and important part of life as you move through life in pursuit of your goals and your values. As you successfully transition to college, you're gaining experience in how to adapt to change, and that experience will help you adapt to the next big transition from college to career.

the college experience is a safe and supportive time for you to prepare for your career

Before a skydiver jumps out of an airplane, he puts on his goggles and gloves, double-checks all of his equipment, and prepares himself for the conditions he'll face when he jumps out. The airplane serves as a safe place for the skydiver where he can get the final advice from the instructor before making the leap. In some ways, college is like this. Your professors, advisors, and mentors are all there to help you prepare for the conditions you face after you graduate. They may even try to simulate those conditions for you to help you get ready. Eventually, however, you'll have to make that jump, and it's a thrilling and challenging experience.

the habits you establish in college can propel you into your career

The tools and methods you use to manage your time, money, assignments, projects, and other responsibilities while in college will lead to habits over time. You'll have a tendency to carry habits from college into your career. For example, if you habitually arrive to your classes late or with only a minute to spare, you'll have a tendency of doing the same when you attend meetings at work. Is that going to give you the best chance for success in your career? If not, you need to change your habits now so that you have successful habits when you graduate.

THE GRIT ADVANTAGE

Here's a simple, quick challenge for you to put this chapter into immediate action. Check the boxes (below) next to the actions you'd like to take. They are based on the four dimensions of GRIT. Pick the ones that would at least increase your chances of successfully and enjoyably getting through, getting out, and getting paid.

Growth

- Ask my professor when I'm stuck or confused
- Ask more senior students I respect for their advice
- Immediately get familiar with the campus resources, where they are, and what they offer me
- Look for fresh angles, approaches, and ideas for how I can succeed in class and at college

Resilience

- Focus on what I can influence and what can be done, rather than on what cannot
- Take ownership for my success, choices, learning, and behavior
- Get what I need in spite of whatever frustrations, limitations, or injustices I may face
- Work to minimize the downside of any setback
- Learn from every adversity, so I get stronger, smarter, and better

Instinct

- Step back and ask, "What do I really want to get out of this course (or degree)?"
- Ask, "How can I adjust my approach or strategy to at least increase the chances I get what I need and want?"
- Figure out ways to work smarter, rather than just harder, so I can make more efficient and effective use of both my energy and time

Tenacity

- Refuse to give up on my main goals
- Surround myself with more go-getters than quitters
- Don't take "no" for an answer on the stuff that matters
- Reroute or take a different approach if what I'm doing now, even with my best effort, is not getting me anywhere

HOW GRITTY ARE YOU?

Score yourself on each of these items. Be brutally honest.

Now that you've completed this chapter, how committed are you to:

1. Doing whatever it takes to get what you need from your professors and your courses?

Zero Commitment 0 ————— 10 Fully Committed

2. Getting to know and make good use of campus resources?

Zero Commitment 0 ————— 10 Fully Committed

3. Sticking to your values, especially in the moments of truth?

Zero Commitment 0 ————— 10 Fully Committed

4. Setting and living up to high expectations for yourself?

Zero Commitment 0 ————— 10 Fully Committed