



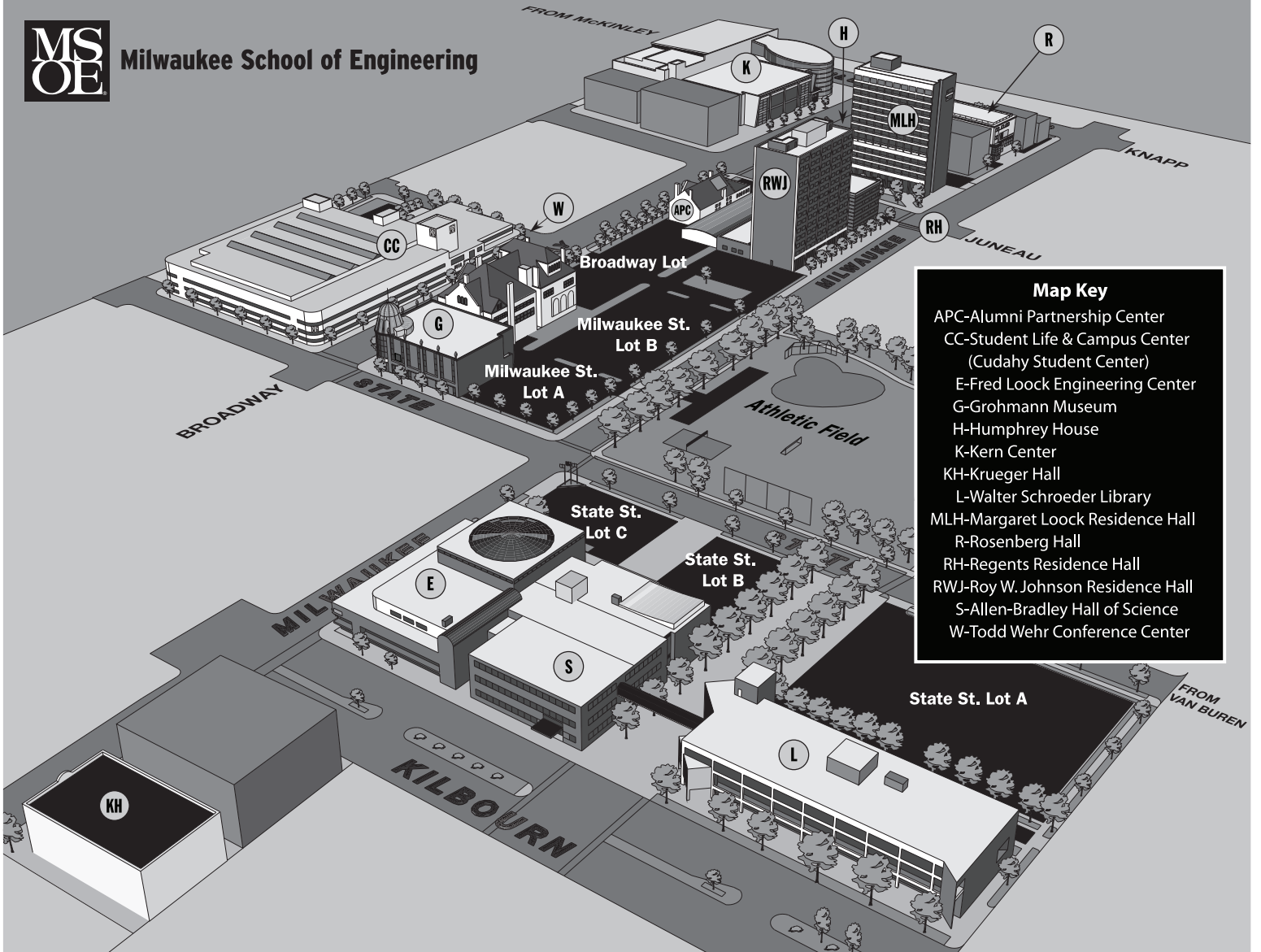
Milwaukee School of Engineering • Counseling Services

# *Keys to College Success*





Milwaukee School of Engineering



**Map Key**

- APC-Alumni Partnership Center
- CC-Student Life & Campus Center (Cudahy Student Center)
- E-Fred Looch Engineering Center
- G-Grohmann Museum
- H-Humphrey House
- K-Kern Center
- KH-Krueger Hall
- L-Walter Schroeder Library
- MLH-Margaret Looch Residence Hall
- R-Rosenberg Hall
- RH-Regents Residence Hall
- RWJ-Roy W. Johnson Residence Hall
- S-Allen-Bradley Hall of Science
- W-Todd Wehr Conference Center

[www.msOE.edu](http://www.msOE.edu)



# What's This All About?

*By choosing to attend MSOE you have said something good about yourself. You have decided to help yourself become all you are capable of being.*

Becoming a successful college student involves more than just studying and going to classes; it also means succeeding in the school of life. In addition to increased knowledge, you also will invariably gain greater personal self-understanding and awareness. Learning to be a college student is what this manual is all about.

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## Now It's Up to You

Will MSOE be difficult? *Sometimes.* Will it require hard work? *Yes.*

# A Matter of Attitude

In her book, *Passages*, Gail Sheehy asserts that life is a series of “passages” through which we must move, and that each passage involves its own tasks. As a new college student, you face three major developmental tasks that more formally identify some of the stated responsibilities:

## Developing Identity

This involves achieving independence, clarifying personal beliefs, interests and values, and building a sense of integrity. Challenges you might encounter here could involve redefining your relationship with your parents; dealing with your feelings involved in separation from your family, friends and home environment; making your actions consistent with your beliefs; learning to trust your feelings; reducing dependency upon others and increasing your own independence; learning to deal with stress, anxiety and disappointment; and developing self-confidence and self-esteem.

## Developing Meaningful Relationships

Building relationship skills, forming a sexual identity, and understanding and expressing feelings and emotions are the relevant tasks in this category. Challenges you will face might involve learning skills to initiate, maintain and end relationships; learning to express yourself clearly; developing intimacy with another; learning to give and receive in a relationship; conveying self-respect as well as respect for others; and learning to be yourself – preserving your independence while being close to another.

## Developing Purpose

Of importance here are the tasks of prioritizing interests, beliefs and values; determining career goals and lifestyle; defining your skills; and building competence. Challenges involved in developing purpose might include learning effective decision-making; developing skills and resources to reach competency in a chosen area; learning how to make the most of your abilities; and implementing your career choice.

Most assuredly, you will probably not run into all of these “passages” during your freshman year. You will, however, tackle many of them throughout your total college experience. Whether you casually toss some of these lessons aside or really catch hold of them and learn

about yourself is very much up to you. As you see some of these “passages” approach, it is our hope that you will time and time again choose to do the latter – learn about yourself – and utilize some of the ideas and resources presented in this manual to help you do so.

As you can see, college is going to challenge you. MSOE is going to require that you become responsible for your own development and well-being. Students who become personally responsible for the successes and failures in their own lives feel in control of their lives. Developing a healthy attitude about your new responsibilities will help you positively influence what happens to you.



# Making the Transition

*“What’s the difference between high school and college?”*

College is an exciting time, perhaps one of the most exciting times in your life. It also is a time of major adjustments, however, some of which can be very trying. As we consider some of the differences between high school and college, you’ll begin to understand more about the changes you will face in the following weeks, and, we hope, feel better equipped to deal with them in a positive manner.

The most immediate change you will discover is a new-found sense of freedom. The single greatest problem college students face is freedom – too much freedom. As an MSOE freshman, you will enjoy an enormous amount of personal freedom, probably more than you have ever had or will ever have in life. The problem of freedom and what you make of it and how well you use it will have an impact on all other aspects of your college career.

Let’s take a look at some of the responsibilities you suddenly have to consider as a result of this new-found college freedom:\*

- What kind of clothes you will wear
  - Eat breakfast or skip it
  - Attend classes or cut them
  - Study each day or only for exams
  - Start a paper two weeks before it is due, or do it the night before
  - Eat properly balanced meals or junk food
  - Use drugs or alcohol or not
  - Choosing friends
  - Join a fraternity or sorority or not
  - Exercise
  - Get 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10 hours of sleep per night
- Keep your room clean or messy
  - Get romantically involved
  - Consider sexual involvement
  - See your academic advisor
  - See your professor for extra help
  - Drop a course or add a course
  - Choose a major
  - Choose your classes for the next quarter
  - Figure out how to do your laundry
  - Figure out what to do with the rest of your life

## On Campus

- Remember how many car loads it took to get all your stuff to your dorm or apartment, because it will take more trips to move it all out.
- Open door policy is the best way to floor unity.
- Set basic rules and agreements on day one with your roommate(s). It’ll help to alleviate the future disputes with set ground rules.
- If something is broken, report it right away without delay so that it can be replaced faster.
- Make sure to find out day one if your roommate(s) drink, smoke, or do drugs, especially underage, and work out the ground rules for that right away.
- Floors have quiet hours but also set a time frame when loud noise in the room would be unacceptable for sleep or studying purposes.
- Find out what your roommate does for clubs and fun cause it’ll make the transition into living together easier if you can at least try to enjoy similar things.
- Buy some Febreze\* because your room will smell eventually.

- Everyone shares so don’t bring your entire house thinking you’re going to need it.
- Create an atmosphere in your room that’s conducive to studying as well as chilling out with friends.
- Don’t be afraid to drop by other people’s rooms. Be sensitive and considerate (aka don’t overstay your welcome), but it’s safe to assume that if you like having people drop by to say hi, then other people probably enjoy it when you return the favor.
- If you’re in your room a lot, leave your door open for at least an hour every day. Make an effort to get to know your roommates.
- Be a peacemaker on your floor—don’t take sides in squabbles.
- Keep the door open when in your room which allows you to meet others.
- Don’t be afraid to walk around and meet others on your floor and other floors.
- Be considerate of others (aka don’t have music loud at night when others are sleeping).

## Off Campus

- Whether or not the previous tenants cleaned their apartment, clean it again when you arrive just to be sure.

## Commuting

- When commuting, set the amount of time you think it will take you to get to school and give yourself an extra 15 minutes or so based on how far away you are coming from.
- Get involved in a club or organization to get connected with other students.

\* From: *College is only the Beginning*, John N. Gardner and A. Jerome Jewler

# Motivation and You

*“How can I motivate myself to do well in my classes?”*

**Y**ou are responsible for making up your own mind about the value of college and what you want to get out of it. Knowing what you want will help you succeed.

There are three major ingredients to success in college:

## **Basic Intelligence**

This is rarely enough by itself. Good grades in high school are no guarantee of high grades in college. Remember – it’s not the IQ, it’s the I WILL.

## **Ability to Work Constructively**

Working constructively is different from simply working hard, and often makes the difference between passing and failing grades. Effective study habits are essential to using study time constructively; these skills can be learned and developed like any other behavior.

## **Will to Succeed**

The major difference between success and failure in college is a well-defined and realistic goal. It is nearly impossible to work constructively without a goal. If you can establish goals, even temporary and provisional ones, your motivation to attain these goals will encourage you to gain the skills essential to success in college.

You can set up goals by evaluating yourself, and your needs, interests and aptitudes. Assistance in this process can be obtained through Counseling Services. Establishing goals today does not have to mean a final commitment, but it can provide you with direction.



# Planning + Goal Setting = Success

*“How do I go about setting realistic goals for myself?”*

“When a person does not know what harbor one is making, no wind is right.”

(Source unknown)

**E**ach accomplishment actually is the successful attainment of a goal. We need goals to illustrate to ourselves and others where we are going. Setting goals and charting the necessary steps to reach them are important elements in the success of most endeavors. Once definite goals have been established, specific plans should be made to reach them. The goal is the target; the plan is the path taken to reach it. If a goal cannot be attained, a new plan should be adopted rather than setting a lower goal. Many people aim too low when goal-setting – few aim too high.

Be honest and do some soul-searching as you set goals. Think about what you really want to accomplish, rather than what you think others would want for you. Once these goals have been selected, commit to a carefully developed plan that will help you achieve them. Be diligent in following the plan. Do not undertake more than you can reasonably accomplish at one time. Goals and plans should be challenging yet realistic.

When you are thinking about goal-setting, consider all the different areas in your life: school, family, personal recreation, church, friendships and self-development. Try not to let one area of your daily life dominate to the exclusion of other areas. You need to keep your life in balance to be happy.

Your planning should cover different time spans, such as one hour, one week, one year or 10 years. Categorize your goals roughly as follows:\*

## Long-Range Goals

These are concerned with the overall style of life you wish to live, such as the type of job you want, whether or not you wish to be married, etc. Although you should develop some overall idea of what you are after, don't try to plan long-range goals in detail as too many changes will come along. Have an overall plan, but keep it flexible.

## Medium-Range Goals

These goals cover the next four to five years, including the particular kind of training or education you are seeking. You have more control over these goals, and you can tell along the way whether you are going to achieve them and modify your plan accordingly.

## Short-Range Goals

These goals cover approximately one quarter to one academic year. You can set these goals quite realistically by following the programs laid out in the *Undergraduate Academic Catalog* or by consulting with your academic advisor.

## Mini-Goals

These goals cover about one day to one month. You can plan a study schedule for the next week or a fitness program for the next month. While you always want to stretch yourself, don't set impossible goals or you will become discouraged. Aim realistically, but try hard to achieve your goals.

## Micro-Goals

These goals cover the next 15 minutes to an hour. Realistically, these are the only goals that you have direct control over. Because of this direct control, micro-goals, even though they are modest in impact, are extraordinarily



important. It is only through these goals that you can attain your larger goals.

Characteristics of a well-chosen goal:

- *It's exciting: you can hardly wait to get started on it*
- *It's definite: you know exactly what it is you are aiming for*
- *It fits you well: it enables you to mesh your interests, personality and skills*
- *It's challenging: it is not easy to reach, but it is reasonable and achievable in the amount of time available*
- *It's satisfying: it will be personally satisfying to reach, regardless of what others may think*

The final step in goal-setting is evaluation. You can determine whether or not your goal has been achieved by identifying tangible evidence of the goal's completion, such as a completed lab or a 3.10 on your grade report.

Setting goals, taking action and evaluating progress are ongoing processes. As you move through the year, take time to realistically reevaluate changing goals and the steps you're taking to achieve them to ensure that you are accomplishing what it is you set out to do.

\* From: *If You Don't Know Where You're Going, You'll Probably End Up Somewhere Else*, David Campbell

# Sample Goals

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## Four- to Five-Year Goals (Medium Range)

Task	Timetable
Graduate with BSEE degree	In four to five years
Work two summers (one in my field)	After sophomore and junior years
Join two clubs	Join one in sophomore and junior years
Keep a 3.10 GPA	Obtain a 3.40 my freshman year and 3.00 each year after

## First-Quarter Goals (Short Range)

Task	Timetable
Obtain a 3.40 GPA	After one quarter
Learn about downtown area	Over the quarter
Look for part-time job	After first quarter
Attend a Student Activities event	During the first quarter
Attend a student club meeting	During the first quarter

## One-Week Goals (Mini)

Task	Timetable
Complete physics lab report	Wednesday
Call home	Sunday
Work out at the Kern Center	Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday
Play basketball	Wednesday
Visit Drop-in Center at the Learning Resource Center	As needed weekly

## Daily Goals (Micro)

Task	Timetable
Go to class	9 a.m.-Noon, 2-6 p.m.
Read math, chapter 2	Noon-1:30 p.m.
Have lunch with someone new	At lunch
Pick up notebook from Bookstore	1:30-2 p.m.
Review class notes	7-7:45 p.m.
Watch TV	10:30-11 p.m.
Get adequate sleep	Midnight

# Managing Time

*“Where does all my time go?”*

**L**earning to manage your time is a major goal in itself. Because it requires constant daily attention, effective time management is a crucial part of your experience as an MSOE student, from your first week of class as a new freshman until your graduation. Tackling this major task head-on from the start can help to develop a pattern for success that will last throughout your college career. Your main goal is to complete your assignments on time and not let yourself fall behind.

such as classes, labs and meetings. Next, develop a rough idea of when you intend to study, trying to schedule this work for the hours when you are at your best. Some people are sharpest and most efficient first thing in the morning, while others concentrate best in the evening. Be sure to plan enough time to do justice to each subject. Follow this by listing essentials such as meals and sleep, and finally, divide your remaining time among other activities such as socializing or exercise.

In addition to using a weekly schedule, you also might wish to use a term calendar to assist you in your planning and preparation. This calendar allows you some perspective on work due in all your classes simultaneously over an entire quarter.

Using a day planner or Microsoft Outlook, copy important test or due dates from your class syllabi into the corresponding spaces on your calendar (you may wish to color code tasks listed by class) as soon as possible in the new

*One of the most dangerous threats to reaching goals is procrastination.*

If you have never planned study time, you have probably had the uncomfortable experience of falling behind in one or more subjects. Because there always is new work to be done, it is difficult to catch up. You struggle along, and just before exam time, you try to make up back assignments and cram by staying up nights. Exam week finds you exhausted, and you take your tests fatigued and nervous.

Probably everyone has experienced this type of disappointment to a certain degree. However, it can be avoided by a little time spent planning a study schedule. In the beginning, this planning may seem difficult, but after your first efforts, it will become easier and more natural with each succeeding quarter. You will discover through careful planning you can finish your daily work and still have leisure time.

Use the chart on page 10 to start budgeting your time. Begin by listing, hour by hour, your daily obligations,



quarter. Continue to fill in the calendar as the quarter progresses. When planning for the writing of a paper, for example, set one date for having the research completed, another date for completion of the rough draft and a

## Procrastination: What is it?\*

One of the most dangerous threats to reaching goals is procrastination. You can procrastinate in many ways; the most obvious is going to the movies

actually may help you complete projects or tasks more satisfactorily. Rarely is this the case, however. Most procrastination is a deliberate, often habitual postponement of some task that should

*When you complete a goal or project on time, be sure to reward yourself.*

third date for the completed paper. Watch for times when many tasks fall due on or about the same date, and do some special planning for preparation or study time accordingly to avoid cramming and all-nighters. Often hanging these calendar pages side by side in some prominent place can provide you with an important visual sense of your quarter's obligations.

Some other helpful tips for successful time management:

- *Leave some free hours each week to provide for the extra study time that may be required in a particular subject.*
- *When you complete a goal or project on time, be sure to reward yourself.*
- *Utilize odd hours during the day for studying; scattered hours between classes easily are wasted and could add up to free time at other times in the week.*
- *Revise your schedule during mid-term and final exam periods to allow time for planned review sessions.*
- *Practice using your schedule just as you practice any other habit you want to acquire. If it does not work well, revise it. Its purpose is to provide you with efficient use of study time as well as leisure time.*

So, is managing your time as simple as all that? Of course not! If it were, we would all accomplish a lot more than we do. You will often fail as you try to live up to your plan, but if you look at the things that make you fail, you will learn something valuable about yourself, the distractions in your life and your real priorities. You can then use this information to help make a better schedule and stick to it in the future.

instead of working out those chemistry equations. A subtler form of procrastination, however, is when you don't carefully consider the real importance of various tasks. For example, you could spend a whole day working on a challenging extra credit problem given by your calculus professor instead of getting started on that term paper for psychology that's due next week. You would have been better off to have spent some time on the extra credit after you had spent at least two hours working on the paper.

Some procrastination may fall into the "normal" or healthy category, consisting of a legitimate delay that

be done. Problems arise when we let the tasks become so overwhelming that we can do nothing at all. Procrastination has distinct self-defeating aspects, and can lead to feelings of anxiety, guilt and even depression.

The first step involved in climbing out of a procrastination rut is to admit that you're in one. Simply put, procrastination is an unpleasant routine that is keeping you from reaching your goals. Make up your mind that you're going to stop.

\* Adapted from: *Stop Procrastinating – Do It!*, James R. Sherman





Next, find out as much as you can about why you procrastinate. Take a close look at why you avoid certain tasks; does a pattern develop? Once you have a general idea of what might be keeping you from achieving your goals, you'll know better how to confront the problem with a fitting solution. Listed below are some common reasons why many people procrastinate.

## Confusion

Sometimes people procrastinate because they're confused and uncertain about what to do next. They're usually overwhelmed by the size and complexity of a task. People who are confused usually fail to analyze the things they have to do well enough to know where to begin.

## Priorities

Lack of priorities is one of the most common causes of procrastination. If people fail to attach priorities to their work, they have a tendency to jump from task to task without getting anything done. These people also find it difficult to say "no" if they cannot set priorities; it is difficult for them to know what is important and what is not.

## Forgetfulness

If a task is really forgotten, a person won't remember anything about it – even if it's right in front of them. Procrastination in this case, however, is more typically a case of subconscious disregard. Instead of being completed, these tasks are intentionally shoved into low priority corners where they are more easily forgotten.

## Escape

Sometimes people will try to escape from unpleasant tasks so they can get their thoughts in order, but they cannot escape from their deadlines. Their stress, tension and fatigue will continue to grow until their tasks are completed and the deadlines are gone. Those who have tried to escape must continue to search for ways to finish their tasks, otherwise they'll just compound the conditions that made them escape in the first place.

With some of these ideas in mind, take a look at what you can do to stop procrastinating. Find a suitable solution based on your own personal reasons for your habit:

## Study Your Task

Get involved with your task. The search for information can serve as the momentum you need to get off to a good start. Your interest will increase as you learn more. You'll be able to finish your task more quickly and easily by applying your new knowledge.

## Analyze

Try to thoroughly analyze everything you have to do. On one side of a sheet of paper, list all the reasons you have for finishing a task. On the other side, list all the reasons you have for postponing it. Then, compare the two lists. You'll come up with more reasons for doing than delaying if it's really important.

## Be Decisive

Start working on a task as soon as you have everything you need, making adjustments as you go. If you discover later that you'd like to make revisions to your original work, do so and go on. Come to terms with your task. Make your decision to go ahead or leave it alone. Whatever you decide, it will at least help you avoid the anxiety and indecision that would come from procrastination.

## Set Priorities

Arrange your tasks in order of importance. In his book, *Getting Things Done: The ABC's of Time Management*, Edwin Bliss provides these excellent guidelines:

- *Important and Urgent - you've got to do these tasks right away or you will suffer serious consequences.*
- *Important But Not Urgent - these tasks are easily ignored because they can be postponed.*
- *Urgent But Not Important – these tasks are high on other peoples' lists.*
- *Busy Work - these tasks provide a welcome relief from difficult tasks if you control them.*
- *Wasted Time - this group of tasks should be excluded from your list of priorities.*

## Know Yourself

Think about your capabilities and limitations, and the levels of achievement that are open to you. Examine your goals and objectives to see if they're really attainable. Recall your history of successes and failures. Learn to recognize and understand your moods. As you learn more about yourself, you'll probably discover some things that can be improved upon and help you avoid a pattern of procrastination.

The final step is to decide on an appropriate plan of action based on the above information, and to make a conscious decision to carry out that plan. If you find yourself struggling regularly with procrastination, you may wish to seek assistance through Counseling Services. Oftentimes, talking with another individual can help you analyze more objectively your reasons for procrastinating, or help you commit more firmly to doing something about this problem.

# Weekly Schedule

Week # \_\_\_\_\_

Date:							
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7:00 a.m.							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00 p.m.							
1:00							
2:00							
3:00							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00 a.m.							

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Healthy Financial Planning

*“What do I need to know about managing my money?”*

**W**orrying about money can use up a lot of energy. Even worse, mismanagement of your money could easily lead to an abrupt end to your college career. Like effective time management, managing your finances takes some serious attention at the beginning of your college experience as well as a conscientious attitude throughout. Whether or not you're footing the bills yourself or receiving some type of assistance, developing a healthy respect for money and good spending habits in college will help you lay some important groundwork for yourself in the future.

Attending college costs serious money today. Tuition, residence hall living, meals, books, and even pencils and pens enter into the total picture. In order for you to meet your financial need, you are probably receiving some financial assistance – through MSOE, a federal grant, a private loan, from your parents,

your own resources, college work-study or some combination of these. Recognizing your anticipated costs and budgeting your money accordingly will ensure successful financial management.

Begin budgeting your money by listing known expenses. Do this first for the academic year, then break these figures down further by quarter.

Figure in whatever type of aid you might be receiving to offset some of these costs, and use the remaining balance as an adjusted listing of your annual and quarterly expenses.

Anticipating fixed expenses is only half the budget battle. Estimating and controlling your personal spending is the real test. For at least the first quarter, try keeping a record of all your types of expenses; this will help you to literally see how efficiently or inefficiently you are spending your cash. Based on your record, you will then know how much

you may need to temper your spending habits, as well as how much money to budget for such expenses each quarter.

Should your personal expenses tend to run consistently over budget, or if you'd just like to have some extra pocket change, you may want to consider a part-time job. The Human Resources Department and the Placement Office can assist you with several good leads for employment. We recommend, however, not to jump right into a new job your first quarter at MSOE.

Remember why you're here; your classes need to take precedence over a work commitment. Many students who carry a full academic load work up to 10 hours a week at the most. Students who try to work more in addition to a full course load can find themselves burned out by mid-quarter. Use your best judgment when considering this option.



*get involved ...*



*Become A Part of Things!*

**MSOE**



# Academic Skills for Success

*If you are going to be successful, there is hardly any career that doesn't involve continued learning.*

**A**lthough the facts and theories you are learning in college are significant, of equal importance are the insights you should gain about the learning process itself. This is perhaps the single most valuable thing you can get from your college experience. This is what makes you more intelligent, rather than simply being better informed. This ability to learn, if learned well, will last you a lifetime.

## The Art of Concentration

One of the most common problems reported by college students is concentration. You should first be aware that concentration means different things to different people. Some students mean they are unable to stick with a subject or assignment long enough to master it; others think first of one thing, then another, but rarely the content of what they are studying; still others do not comprehend the material despite persistence and the prevention of mind-wandering. Like procrastination, it is important to discover just what causes your lack of concentration so you can attempt to decrease the difficulty with a suitable strategy.

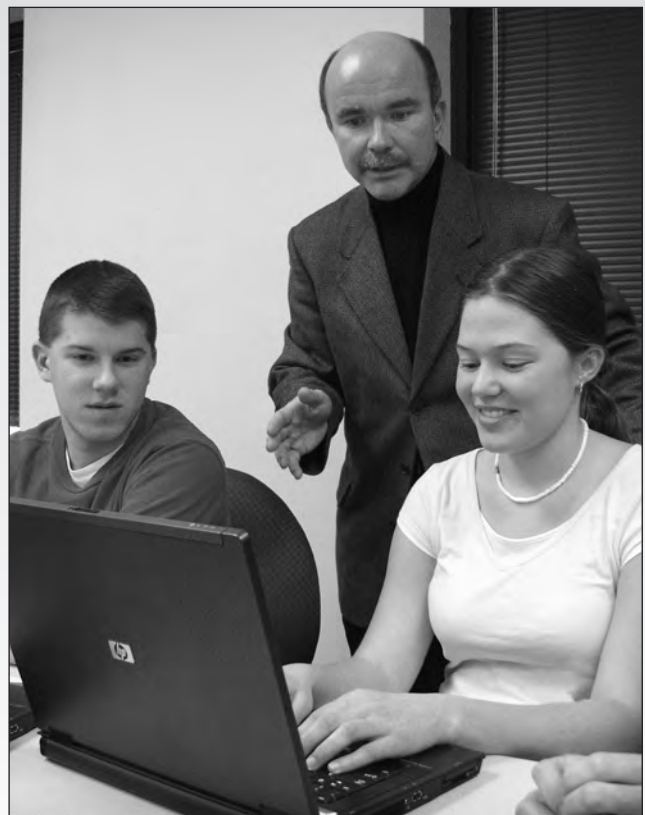
More frequently than not, lack of concentration represents some form of conflict between other desires and academic goals. You might want to be watching a favorite television program rather than completing a lengthy lab report; or you might be worried about roommate problems while trying to study for an exam. If such a conflict exists, you can try to remedy the situation by looking at one problem at a time, or by deferring attention to at least one of the problems to a more opportune time.

Another likely reason for lack of concentration has to do with poor definition of the task at hand, enough so that you might be unsure as to exactly what it is you should be concentrating on. Or, you may not be doing the most important thing on your priority list. If you are working on the least important thing on your list before the most important, chances are you will find it difficult to concentrate; in the back of your mind you will be worrying about that more important task. If you do more important things first, you will probably complete them more efficiently and with more energy than if you get to them later. Try to recognize when you are avoiding a difficult or important task by keeping busy at something that is less so.

Other reasons for poor concentration might be as simple as a noisy work environment, sleepiness or not enough to eat. A combination of common sense as well as some specific attempts at moderating your habits will provide some solutions in these situations. Try to work in a place where distractions are at a minimum; if the residence halls are too noisy find an empty classroom or campus lounge. The student center and library are always good options.

Studying in a well-lit and well-ventilated room can do much to alleviate feeling tired, but also try to give yourself some short breaks. A balanced diet is essential to maintaining energy, so make sure you are feeding yourself regularly. If you feel your stomach growling in the middle of your evening study session, find yourself a healthy snack and get back to work.

Making effective use of your study time by setting goals for each session also will go a long way toward enhancing your ability to concentrate. Plan ahead exactly what you wish to accomplish in a study session, focus on that goal specifically and work to achieve it.



# Learning to Listen

“When should I take notes, and when should I listen?”

There is a good deal more to listening than just hearing sounds. Good listening is an active process. The good listener is constantly thinking, evaluating and making connections. Good listening is an essential study skill; you can make a substantial improvement as a student by improving as a good listener.

When in class, you have to absorb everything that is said. Your instructors and classmates will present material and explanations that you may not find in your textbooks. You cannot always rely on the help of your friends for some point of information you have missed in class. No one else can listen for you.

Although good listening is very useful, it is not always easy. Good listening can be difficult for a variety of reasons. The speaker's pace may not be yours. When listening, you have to travel mentally at the speed of the person who is speaking, rather than at your own. The speaker may talk too rapidly for you to take in everything that is being said, or may speak too slowly for you to concentrate well enough on the subject. There may be distractions in the classroom.

You can train yourself to be a good listener by utilizing some of the following suggestions:\*

- 1. Prepare for listening.** When you know the subject of a lecture or discussion in advance, you can prepare to get the most out of it in two ways: review what you already know about the subject and read as much additional information about it as you can.
- 2. While listening, search for main ideas.** Try to determine from the very beginning of a lecture or discussion where the speaker is headed. What is the professor's purpose? What ideas is



he/she trying to develop? Any background you have acquired in preparation for the lecture will help you answer these questions. From the moment the speaker begins, concentrate on finding the main ideas.

- 3. While listening, take notes.** You should prepare for class by doing some reading and concentrating on everything the instructor says, and check out the main ideas. Now you should keep a record of those ideas you have worked so hard to obtain. Your notes will not be of much use to you if they are not as complete as you can make them. All the main points as well as important details should go into them. In order to take really usable notes, try to write down the following four items when listening to a talk: a) main ideas, b) key points under main ideas, c) specific words, names, equations, dates, and other data that seems important and d) any important words whose meanings you are unsure of.

It is not as easy to take orderly notes while listening as while reading. You need to do two things at once: you have to write down what has been said and at the same time listen to the

following points and comments. However, you can think faster than the speaker can talk; this gives you time to think back and ahead while listening. By taking full advantage of this time difference, you can learn to make each note a solid bridge between what was just said and what seems to be coming.

- 4. Revise notes later.** Unless the lecture is exceptionally well-organized, your notes will not be in ideal order. The sooner you can go over your notes after class and revise them, the easier and more quickly you can clarify them. There may be omissions in your notes that you can supply from memory if you don't wait until the cues are stale.

Some other helpful tips for note-taking:

- *Develop and apply a consistent method of note-taking.*
- *Store notes in a three-ring binder for greater mobility.*
- *Record everything written on the blackboard or an overhead projection.*
- *Record any assignments and their due dates accurately.*

\* Adapted From: *How to Study*, Ralph C. Preston and Morten Botel

# Reading is Necessary

*“Do I really have to read everything that’s assigned?”*

Successful reading of an assignment, like listening, requires active thinking. Your first job is to understand the material, and understanding frequently requires quite a bit of mental effort. It helps to do some of the following things.\*

## Get an Overview

When you first read a chapter, flip through it quickly, looking at all the headings and subheadings, pictures, and tables and graphs. Also glance quickly at the introduction and the summary. This will give you an overview or an idea of what the chapter is about, or what the author hopes to tell you. Spend a few minutes trying to figure out beforehand what the main point seems to be. These few minutes will help you develop some organization for the information you are about to read.

## Ask Questions

Try to come up with some questions that are directed specifically at what you are reading. There are several things the headings in the chapter can tell you, and several questions they might make you ask. Some headings are pretty straightforward, but others may be more complicated and have many subheadings. Try to relate all this information back to the original intent of the chapter.

## Take Notes

As you read, take notes and try to make the organization of what you read clear from the way you arrange your notes. Put the main topic at the top of the page, the major subtopics at the next level, ideas within each subtopic at the next and so on. Fill in more detail as you read.

## Put Things in Your Own Words

Stop after each section or difficult paragraph and try to put what the author says into your own words. This will help you see that complicated statements often contain simple ideas and will let you check out whether you have understood the material presented. Being able to repeat the same words back is not a true measure of comprehension.

## Sort Out Fact From Interpretation

Any chapter usually can be separated into two types of information: facts or evidence and interpretation or opinion. Sometimes, it’s not easy to sort out these two things, but you will be reading more intelligently and actively if you remember that both fact and interpretation are almost always there.

## Try to Solve it Yourself

If the text poses a question or problem, try to answer it before reading on. When you are told the method to apply or the answer to the problem, it often seems obvious. You may think you know how to do that kind of problem because you could easily follow the answer provided in the text. However, if you try to figure it out first, you get the opportunity to discover that you may not know the material well enough after all. Once you’ve struggled with something yourself for a while and then get the correct answer, you are more likely to remember the solution and to have real insight that can help you when solving similar problems.

## Use Your Dictionary

It isn’t always worth the time to look up every unfamiliar word you come across. Often, you can get the general idea from the rest of the sentence or the passage. However, there are times when you will miss something very important if you don’t find out what a word means. Have a dictionary handy to record meanings of words in the margin next to the text. You will gradually build a vocabulary that will make your reading easier as well.

## What About Highlighting?

Highlighting the most important points while you are reading helps keep your attention on the page and allows you to read more actively. You have to separate out the points to highlight from those not to highlight. If you are highlighting too much, you’re not being selective enough. If you’re only highlighting a few things, either there isn’t enough information in the chapter, or you are missing the information that is there. In addition to highlighting, make notes in the margins to cue you to main ideas and to help you find points to review.

## When to Read

You cannot do active reading in a rush at the last minute before an exam. Therefore, read regularly as the material is covered in class or as the assignments are listed on the course outline. In addition, reading relevant information just after or just before it’s discussed in class makes both the lecture and the reading easier to understand.

\* From: *How to Succeed in College*, Marcia K. Johnson, Sally P. Springer and Sarah Hall Sternglanz

# Preparing for Exams

*“What should I be doing to get ready for a big test?”*



Your best preparation for examinations is regular day-to-day study. If you apply the skills described in the previous sections of this manual, you will find yourself well-prepared for exams as you go along. You will be reviewing a little at a time instead of waiting to begin until the night or even the week before the exam. You will have prepared for them all term as you study your daily assignments.

However, you will still have to solve the problem of recalling, late in a quarter, what was covered at the beginning. If you leave this material until exam time, you will have to relearn much of it. Instructors sometimes help with periodic reviews, but it is your job as a student to keep up with material presented throughout the course. Try to review your textbook and notes regularly.

In addition to these regular reviews, you will want to do some special review work immediately prior to exam time.

Take some of the following suggestions into consideration as you plan your preparation:\*

**1. Plan a definite examination study schedule and stick to it.** You should modify your typical study schedule for a week to two weeks preceding a major exam. This special preparation is very worthwhile in that it will save you from frenzied, last-minute cramming and help you to be more relaxed and confident at exam time.

**2. Prepare and study a master outline of the subject.** During your first review period for your exam, make a master outline of the material you have dealt with. This outline is a condensed version of all your notes, combining class notes on lectures and discussions, notes you made when reading your textbook and notes from any other supplementary reading. The act of making a master outline is in itself an excellent review.

**3. Make up a practice examination for yourself and then take it.** Find out from your instructor whether or not he or she plans to give an essay exam or an objective exam.

An essay exam is one that requires written discussion in answers to its questions. You have to supply the facts, organize them in logical fashion and write them up in a well-rounded essay. Creative thinking, ability to organize and careful writing are necessary in order to do well on an essay exam. You also have to understand main ideas and remember detail-related facts. When making and taking your own essay exam for practice, you do not need to write out the answers in full, rather outline the answers informally.

An objective exam asks for bare facts and is made up of different types of questions: true-false, multiple choice, matching and sentence completion. It requires little writing and mainly tests the ability to recognize true statements of facts and concepts. Draw ideas for your own sample test questions from main concepts and their related supporting information.

**4. Pay special attention to points that are troublesome for you.** Making a sample test will help you identify your weak spots. Make a list of these and work to commit the information to memory through constant repetition. Using flash cards or writing out the information are helpful tactics.

**5. Cram as the last step.** If you have ever crammed frantically most of the night or even the last few moments before an exam, you might have felt you made a mistake leaving your studying until the last minute. If you stay up later than usual or pull an all-nighter, you are probably not very fit to take the exam. Then why cram? Cramming before an exam can be helpful as a final review of material that you have studied and reviewed if you have followed the other tasks suggested in this manual. Cram the last day and evening before an exam to cinch the more troublesome points in the information you have been reviewing – then go to bed at your usual time so your mind will be clear and your body refreshed for the examination.

\* Adapted From: *How to Study*, Ralph C. Preston and Morten Botel

# The Day of the Exam

**A**void eating a large meal or drinking caffeinated beverages before an exam. A heavy meal can make you feel unusually sluggish. Too much caffeine can make you feel wired; the anxiety associated with taking exams should be enough to keep you sufficiently alert without much help.

- Stop all studying at least a half hour before test time. If you are not prepared by then, an extra half hour won't help you – it could actually heighten your anxiety level instead as you try to cram right up to the last minute.
- Have the materials you will need to take with you into the exam ready. Sharpen your pencils, clean your eraser, make sure your calculator is operating well and find some clean paper to use for scratch.

- Try to get to the location where your test is being given at least five minutes before the scheduled start time, and sit in your usual seat. Get out everything you will need for the exam and put everything else out of the way.
- Find a spot on the wall in front of you to be your memory-triggering spot. When you experience trouble remembering something, focus on this spot, and it may just come to mind.
- When the test is distributed, write your name on it right away. Then stretch, relax, take a few deep breaths and begin.



# Taking the Test

*“Are there some particular strategies that I should know about?”*

**K**nowing your subject is only part of your preparation for exams. You also will have to know how to write an exam. There are several things you can do that might make the difference between a fair mark and an excellent one. Some of these concern getting started, making a wise choice of questions, organizing your answers and catching careless errors.

It is extremely important to follow directions exactly. Before you write anything, read the whole exam carefully, making sure you understand every question, and underline key words in the directions and questions. This will direct your attention to important words, focus your thinking on the exam, clear your mind and get you off to a good start. It also will prevent your trying to write before you are settled and organized. If there is something you do not understand, ask the instructor to clarify it for you.

Before you begin writing an exam, decide how much time you can afford to give to answering each question. Usually

it is not wise to give equal time to all questions. Some questions can be answered quickly while others may take time to think out carefully. You may want to jot down beside each question the amount of time you have budgeted for it. Often questions will be weighted differently; you should budget more time for those questions weighted more heavily than others. Allow time at the beginning of the test to follow the above suggestions as well as time at the end of the exam to proofread your answers.

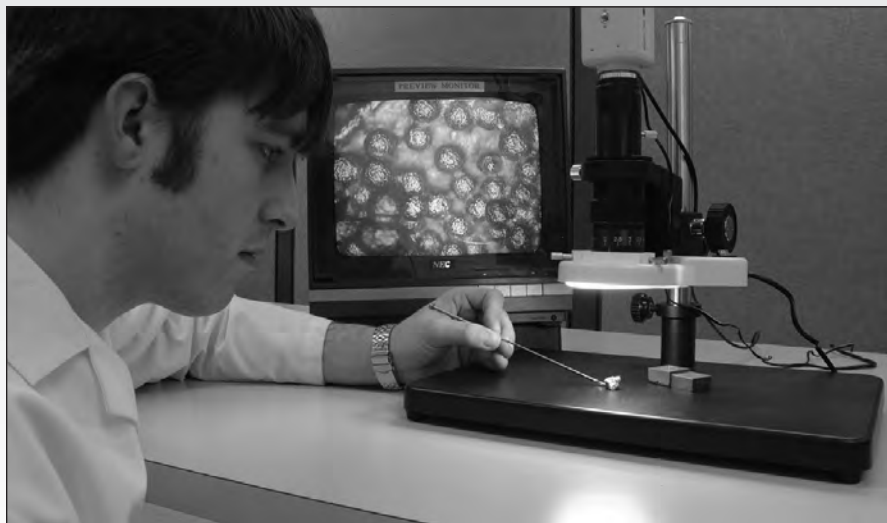
When writing an essay exam, begin by outlining your answer to each question. Answer the easiest question first. Write out key words and phrases to make an informal outline of your proposed answer. Use whatever scratch paper is available for this purpose. With your outline before you, begin writing your answers. Write as clearly and concisely as possible. Good organization is particularly important. Begin a new paragraph for each point; if a paragraph includes too many ideas, your instructor may think you have not bothered to take the time to think through the answers.



In an objective exam, you have two goals: to answer as many questions as you can and to answer them correctly. Go through the exam quickly, marking the items where you are sure of the answers. Mark the more difficult items in the margins for easier spotting when you return to them. Try to interpret items with common sense. The more you labor over an objective item, the more likely you are to read something into it that your instructor did not intend.

You also can use easy items as clues to help you answer those items you find more difficult. Consider your hunches with caution.

When you have finished the entire examination, read over what you have written or answered to try to catch and correct careless mistakes. Errors on essay tests could include lack of clarity, misstatements, vagueness, various grammatical or punctuation errors, or illegibility. When proofing your answers to objective tests, make sure you answered all the questions completely, as you intended, and that your answers are clearly legible. Be sure to go back over some of the more troublesome items.



# Learning from Mentors

*“Who else can I turn to for advice?”*

**B**y now you are aware of the many challenges of starting college. While you have gotten some tips on how to handle these new responsibilities, you may still have a lot of questions. Should I join a professional organization or maybe a social fraternity or sorority? Where should I study? What if I don't get along with my roommate or don't like the food? How do I get some exercise? What if I'm not sure of my career choice or major? One way to help find answers to all these questions is to use a support network through mentoring.

Especially as a freshman, being mentored is a critical tool for student success. Sometimes students think of a mentor as a faculty advisor, but a mentor is much more than that. A mentoring relationship is a personal, as well as professional, relationship. In its broadest sense, anyone who takes an interest in helping another person be successful could be referred to as a mentor: a coach, a teacher, another student, a tutor and so on. If you want to have guidance and support throughout your academic journey, you will need to find and develop mentoring relationships.

Some of the benefits of mentoring include having someone to turn to for questions about school, career and adjustment issues; having a ready-made system of support; gaining knowledge from someone who's "been through it;" and making connections with people who can further your career. Especially in the engineering and science fields, a mentor can assist your socialization into that particular discipline.



An effective mentoring relationship involves mutual respect, trust, understanding and empathy. A mentor can give you advice, support and guidance. Someone who is able to share life experiences, listen well, and problem solve with you would make a good mentor. But how do you find such a person? At MSOE, you can join an already established program. Students can also take advantage of MentorNet, a networking Web-based program designed for women, that can be accessed at [www.mentornet.net](http://www.mentornet.net).

Take advantage of all the support you can get to make your journey a smooth and successful one!

## **MSOE Mentor Program**

The MSOE Mentor Program was established more than 10 years ago as a way to help incoming students adjust to college. Throughout the year, activities between mentors and mentees vary depending upon the interests of people in each mentee group. The underlying purpose of any activity is to help new students feel connected to the MSOE community, to develop special bonds

with MSOE faculty, staff and fellow students, and to make the first year of college a positive one.

Each mentor/peer mentor team is assigned several new student mentees. After your first meeting, you immediately have a new group of friends!

Mentors and peer mentors are friendly and helpful resources who can provide answers to the many questions you will have as you begin college.

In addition to the activities of individual mentor/mentee groups, the Mentor Program organizes educational and fun activities, events and programs that all mentees are encouraged to take part in. Participation in the Mentor Program can help you establish a very helpful network that you can maintain throughout your career at MSOE.

For additional information, including how to become a part of the MSOE Mentor Program, please send an e-mail to [burke@msoe.edu](mailto:burke@msoe.edu) or [kotlarek@msoe.edu](mailto:kotlarek@msoe.edu), or call Brian Burke at (414) 277-7266 or Cindy Kotlarek at (414) 277-7336.

# Some Significant Extras

*“Where can I get extra help?”*

## Health Development and Wellness Programs

Counseling Services sponsors a variety of workshops throughout the academic year designed to help students develop new skills or address issues prevalent in their lives. Many of the topics already presented in this manual, such as study skills or time management, are discussed in greater detail through these presentations. Additional programs are offered, however, and we encourage you to check these out as well: test anxiety, stress management, self-esteem, career development and many others. Contact the Counseling Services Office for more information about when and where these workshops will be presented throughout the year. Counselors also are available for you to speak with on an individual basis about these or any other concerns. See Counseling Services staff at K230 or call (414) 277-7590.

## TRIO Programs

Our nation has asserted a commitment to providing educational opportunities for all Americans regardless of race, ethnic background, or economic circumstance. In support of this commitment, Congress established a series of programs to help low-income Americans enter college and graduate. These programs are funded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and are referred to as the TRIO Programs (initially just three programs).

While student financial aid programs help students overcome financial barriers to higher education, TRIO Programs help students overcome class, social,



academic and cultural barriers to higher education. See the TRIO staff in CC-27, or call (414) 277-7265.

## Learning Resource Center

(LRC) offers a wide variety of services to students. The LRC gives students the opportunity to assess their academic needs by gaining an understanding of their learning styles and study habits. In order to help students build better reading and writing skills, the lab offers consultation with a specialist in each of these areas. Peer tutoring on a continuing or long-term basis is obtainable through the LRC, and faculty members teach support classes as a means to supplement your in-class instruction. See the LRC staff in CC-02 (ground floor), or call (414) 277-7266.

## University Disability Services

The Learning Resource Center (LRC) offers services for students with disabilities through the University Disability Services Center, located on the third floor of the Student Life and Campus Center. Students with disabilities can work with the coordinator or with other LRC staff to coordinate academic accommodations that they may need due to a documented disability, such as specific learning disabilities, Aspergers Syndrome, Attention Deficit Disorders, depression or anxiety, as well as all physical disabilities. Students seeking assistance will work with the program coordinator to develop an individual accommodation plan that will encompass all areas of their academic life. These accommodations may include assistance with note-taking, tests online or testing assistance. Each plan is designed around the individual student's needs.

# Another Type of Learning

*“What’s there to do besides going to class and studying?”*

**M**SOE encourages the development of the total person, including mental, emotional, physical and social well-being. To promote this, students can take advantage of the many types of co-curricular activities that are offered at MSOE.

While you are attending MSOE, there are many ways in which you will learn. The learning that takes place in the classroom and laboratories is very important. You will learn from your living environment, whether that is the residence halls, an apartment or home. You also will grow and learn from activities, student organizations and programs that are available to you. The Student Life Office strongly encourages you to take advantage of these opportunities!

## How do You Get Involved?

You can join a student organization. There are service groups, social fraternities and sororities, honor societies, intramural and intercollegiate athletic teams, and groups with a common interest like MAGE (gaming, anime, sci-fi and chess club). There are professional societies to aid you in developing contacts within your academic department as well as for your future career. There are governmental groups that represent student viewpoints to the administration. In addition to the aspect of experiential learning, all of the organizations promise to offer FUN! For more information visit [www.msoc.edu/st\\_orgs/](http://www.msoc.edu/st_orgs/)

## Attend Seminars

Throughout the academic year, there is a wide variety of programs offered to you, including leadership development seminars, career information workshops, business and technical speakers, and wellness information. Take advantage of them.



## Attend Special Events

There are a wide variety of special events that occur on campus. MSOE offers fun-filled Raider Week festivities, St. Pat's week and SUB-Zero days, to name a few. Take part in these events – you are sure to enjoy them!

## Intranet and MyMSOE

As a student, you'll find much of the information you need on the Campus Intranet ([inside.msoc.edu](http://inside.msoc.edu)) or network. These resources provide the tools and information you need such as computer technology FAQ's, Webmail, technical support chat, an online student directory and information on all of our programs. Course registration, grades, student accounts payments and more is available on the campus information system called myMSOE ([my.msoc.edu](http://my.msoc.edu)).

## Campus E-mails

Each e-mail is an invitation to you to get involved, as well as an opportunity to keep up with current campus events. Take advantage of the opportunity to get the most out of your college experience. Be sure you are signed up for a variety of campus mailing lists.

## Servant-Leadership

An endowed chairmanship of servant-leadership (first in the country) exists to improve the caring and quality of MSOE through: effective leadership, increased service to others, a holistic approach to work, promoting a sense of community, and the sharing of power in decision-making. This position has been generously funded by the S&R Pieper Family Foundation. For more information visit [www.msoc.edu/s-lead](http://www.msoc.edu/s-lead).

# On-Campus Referrals

## On-Campus Referrals (Area Code 414)

### Academic Advising

Architectural Engineering and Building Construction Department	CC-69	277-7301
Architectural Engineering (BS)		
Construction Management (BS)		
Environmental Engineering (MS)		
Structural Engineering (MS)		
Rader School of Business	R-106	277-7279
Business Management (BS)		
Engineering Management (MS)		
International Business (BS)		
Management Information Systems (BS)		
Marketing and Export Management (MS)		
Medical Informatics (MS)		
New Product Management (MS)		
Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Department	L-350	277-7323
Biomedical Engineering (BS)		
Cardiovascular Studies (MS)		
Computer Engineering (BS)		
Electrical Engineering (BS)		
Electrical Engineering Technology (BS)		
Engineering (MS)		
Perfusion (MS)		
Software Engineering (BS)		
General Studies Department	GM-218	277-7351
Technical Communication (BS/BA)		
Mathematics Department	L-326	277-7454
Mechanical Engineering Department	S-110	277-7375
Engineering (BS)		
Industrial Engineering (BS)		
Mechanical Engineering (BS)		
Mechanical Engineering Technology (BS)		
School of Nursing	S-201	277-7158
Nursing (BS)		
Physics and Chemistry	S-236	277-7349
BioMolecular Engineering (BS)		
<b>Athletics</b>	K-344	277-4552
Intercollegiate, intramural and club sports, vans		
<b>Bookstore</b>	CC (third floor)	277-7173
Textbook sales, general merchandise, used books		
<b>Career Placement Office</b>	CC-370	277-7120
Student and alumni employment, internships, on-campus recruiting, resumes		

<b>Counseling Services</b>	K-230	277-7590
Personal, educational and career counseling on an individual or group basis		
<b>Dean of Students/ Vice President for Student Life</b>	CC-377	277-7226
Conflict resolution, student grievance process, discipline and judicial procedures		
<b>Enrollment Management</b>	CC-302	277-6763
Admission advising for all classes		
<b>Financial Aid Office</b>	CC-431 (mezzanine)	277-7223
Grants, scholarships, loans, work study		
<b>Health Services</b>	K-250	277-7590
Treatment of minor illnesses, first aid, referrals, diagnosis and treatment of urgent care needs, management of chronic illnesses and health care screenings.		
<b>Learning Resource Center (LRC)</b>	CC-02	277-7274
Academic tutoring, support classes		
<b>Library</b>	Walter Schroeder Library, second level	277-7180
Books, reference materials, periodicals, audio-visual resources, inter-library loan, electronic access to resources		
<b>Mentor Program</b>	CC-02 (LRC)	277-7266
Helping new students adjust to MSOE life		
<b>Public Safety</b>	MLH (ground floor)	277-7169
<b>EMERGENCY:</b>		<b>277-7159</b>
Campus security, parking, shuttle service		
<b>Registrar</b>	CC-365	277-7215
Scheduling, add/drop, student records, registration		
<b>Residence Life</b>	RWJ (ground floor)	277-7400
On-campus housing and food services		
<b>Servant-Leadership</b>	K-240	277-7373
<b>Student Accounts</b>	CC-437 (mezzanine)	277-7130
Financial records, payments		
<b>Student Activities</b>	CC-377	277-7225
Student organizations, activity programming, campus events, room reservations for student organizations		
<b>TRIO Programs</b>	CC-27	277-7264
Academic/personal support to eligible nontraditional students as well as those with disabilities and learning disorders		
<b>University Disability Services</b>	CC-341	277-2476
Support and accommodation for students with learning and other disabilities		

# Now It's Up to You

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**W**hat we've tried to accomplish with this manual is to offer you some basic suggestions for college success. We'd also like to grab you by the shoulders, look you straight in the eye and say, "Try some of these things, they really do work!" Unfortunately, we can't follow you around and make you do things – that much is up to you.

If there is one thing we'd like you to take away from this manual, it's the idea that you can do a lot to determine what's going to happen to you. We want you to believe that if things are not always going the way you want, you can almost always do something to change them. This is especially hard to remember when you find yourself in a complicated situation like college, and everything is coming at you at once. Even if you find yourself at the point where you're overwhelmed, it's almost always possible to pause and say, "Wait a minute," and then take a look around. Usually when you do, you will find some options to consider. Should things get beyond you, use your best survival instincts and grab a lifeline from Counseling Services.

**Counseling Services**  
**(414) 277-7590**

**For more information and helpful links visit:**  
**[inside.msoc.edu/counseling](http://inside.msoc.edu/counseling)**

*Be kind to yourself as you reach the end of this quarter. Don't be overly critical if you're not yet making the grades you want to make or believe you can make.*

*What's important is to make the best effort possible and to be persistent in that effort. Give yourself a little credit for the life lessons you've learned thus far, too – for learning to be a college student.*

*Meanwhile, good luck.*







**Student Life Office**  
**Milwaukee School of Engineering**  
**1025 N. Broadway**  
**Milwaukee, WI 53202-3109**  
**(414) 277-7225**  
**[www.msOE.edu](http://www.msOE.edu)**