

Success Factors For Freshmen

You will need to understand more than your curriculum to take advantage of all the many developmental experiences available in college life. For example, we know that students who live on campus become involved in campus organizations, seek help from career and counseling centers, exercise regularly, eat sensibly, work to improve their writing skills and study habits, learn how to manage stress and speak up for what they want, and follow other guidelines we'll be suggesting, tend to find college a more satisfying and rewarding experience than those who don't.

Here's what one major university discovered when it set about to determine factors that affected freshmen success:

€ Because some nonacademic factors may have as much to do with whether you stay or leave as academic factors, you should work as hard at your personal development outside the classroom as you do at your scholastic development inside the classroom.

€ Whether or not you work in your freshmen year won't affect your chances of survival, but how much you work does matter. The dropout rate of those who work more than 20 hours a week is five times that of those who work less than 20 hours a week.

€ Certain personal problems may affect your chances of returning for your sophomore year. If you have difficulty getting along with people, if you are lonely, if you are ill, you are more than likely to drop out. So deal with these problems before they become overwhelming.

€ Live on campus. Freshmen living off campus drop out at a rate nearly twice that of on-campus freshmen. Make a real effort to get along with your roommate, and try to stay with that person during your entire freshmen year. But if you have irresolvable differences request a room change, because prolonged incompatibility will increase your chances of dropping out.

€ Finally, be concerned if you run into academic difficulty. Students having trouble with their courses are more likely to drop out than others.

Factors that affect academic success:

€ Succeeding in college is more than simply a matter of studying hard and applying native intelligence.

€ If you have a job, don't overdo it. Going to college full time and working more than 20 hours a week is an open invitation to earning lower grades.

€ A good relationship with your parents, or other adults, such as faculty members, helps. Students who have very close relationships with parents earn significantly higher grades than those who are incompatible with their parents. Don't assume that just because you're away from home your parents don't matter anymore.

€ If you get sick or injure yourself, have financial problems, or have difficulty getting along with people, you are likely to earn lower grades.

Remember, these are generalizations from one study, but they should help you recognize the warning signals and thereby be better prepared to alter them.