NSCC College 101 3e

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STUDY, STRATEGIZE, AND SUCCEED

NOVA SCOTIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND KPU LEARNING CENTRES

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Nova Scotia Community College
Nova Scotia

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Contents

Acknowledgements ix

PART I. **LEARNING AT COLLEGE**

1. How to Use This Book 3

2. Get Ready for College Learning 5

3. The Learning Cycle 7

PART II. **PLAN FOR SUCCESS**

4. Evaluate Your Learning Skills and Strengths 13

5. Skills for Success 18

6. Setting SMART Goals 25

PART III. **FINDING COLLEGE SUPPORTS**

7. Get to Know Your College Supports 31

8. Technology Supports 34

9. Understand Your Course Outline 37

10. Connect With Your Instructor 41

PART IV. **MANAGE YOUR TIME**

11. Your Semester Schedule at a Glance 47

12. Create a Weekly Schedule 50

13. Create Daily To-Do Lists 53

14. Escape the Procrastination Trap 56

PART V. **LEARN FROM LECTURES AND TEXTBOOKS**

15. Reading Textbooks 63

16. Read with a Purpose 67

17. Take Better Class Notes 71

18. Vocabulary Building Strategies 75

PART VI. **STUDY SMART**

19. Choose Strategies for Active Learning 79

20. Master Your Memory 81

21. Effective Self-Testing Strategies 86

22. Explore the 4 Levels of Questioning 90

PART VII. **GET READY FOR QUIZZES AND TESTS**

23. Getting Ready for Review Sessions 97

24. Answering Test Questions 103

25. Managing Test Anxiety 109

PART VIII. **GET ASSIGNMENTS AND RESEARCH DONE**

26. Manage Your Assignments 115

27. Make an Assignment Plan 119

28. Move Beyond Writer's Block 122
29. The Research Process 126
30. Create an Outline 130
31. Write Your First Draft 134
32. Self-Edit Your Work 138
33. Academic Integrity and APA Citation 142

PART IX. **EVALUATE AND MOVE AHEAD**

34. Evaluate Your Learning 149
35. Develop a Growth Mindset 152
36. Put the Growth Mindset into Practice 155

PART X. **APPENDIX**

Exercises and Worksheets 161
Long Descriptions 169
Glossary List 171
References 174
Versioning History 177

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PART I

LEARNING AT COLLEGE

Plan-Monitor-Evaluate Connection

This chapter introduces you to the learning cycle's 3 steps: **planning**, **monitoring**, and **evaluation**.

Understanding this cycle is connected to developing learning skills.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you'll be able to:

- Identify ways that the information in this book will support your learning journey.
- Describe the learning cycle steps of planning-monitoring-evaluation.
- Apply the planning-monitoring-evaluation steps to your learning by asking key questions at each stage.

CHAPTER 1

How to Use This Book

Photo Credit: Emily Tan

This resource will help you transition into college and can be used throughout the academic year as you build your learning skills. Take time to get familiar with the material in these chapters.

If you're a returning student, there maybe some areas where you want to strengthen your learning and study skills. Dive into the chapters that are most relevant to you.

How is this book organized?

In each chapter, you'll see the following features to guide you:

- *Plan-Monitor-Evaluate Connection* helps you to identify where each skill fits into your learning.
- **Learning***Objectives* guide you through what you can expect to learn in each chapter.

- ***Try it!*** activities give you opportunities to put new information into practice. You'll benefit most from this book if you take time to try the new skills and see how they work for you.
- ***Extend Your Learning*** sections provide you with opportunities to continue exploring concepts about learning.

Let's get started!

CHAPTER 2

Get Ready for College Learning

Welcome to college! Whether this is your first time in **post-secondary** education, or you're returning to studies, you'll have some goals you want to achieve. Wherever you are in your journey, you've found yourself in a college learning environment.

A good foundation for college is learning how to learn. By reading this book and completing the exercises, you're building skills that will support you in your classes and future learning.

Successful students share a set of skills and habits. Anyone can learn the skills that support successful learning. Taking the time to learn proven study **strategies** will help as you pursue your learning goals and avoid pitfalls that can take you off-track. In this chapter, you'll focus on how you learn.

Who is this book for?

This book focuses on skills needed to be successful in college. If you are:

- new to college studies.
- returning to college after some time away.
- a mature student.

- an international student.
- or a continuing student who wants to improve their skills and strategies; this book is meant to support you in your journey.

CHAPTER 3

The Learning Cycle

Understanding how you learn can help make learning and studying easier. Skills like planning your learning and thinking about your learning strategies can help you evaluate whether your learning is progressing and if it is effective. Understanding the learning process is connected to success.

The Learning Cycle[1]

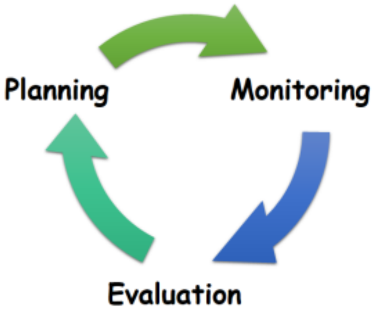
Understanding how you learn is achieved by planning, monitoring, and evaluating your learning.

---

[1] Chick, N. (2013). *Metacognition.* Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/metacognition/.

Planning involves 3 key tasks:

1. deciding *what* you need to learn,
2. deciding *how* you're going to learn it,
3. and deciding *when* you're going to study.



The Learning Cycle. Image Credit: Christina Page

Monitoring is when you ask yourself "how well am I learning?". In monitoring, you're tracking and thinking about:

- what you've learned,
- what you don't know yet,
- and whether your study strategies are helping you to learn effectively.

Evaluation involves reflecting on how well you met your learning objectives after completing and receiving feedback on an assignment or quiz.

Remember: if you have questions about your learning, assignment or quizzes, contact your instructor.

Key Questions to Improve Your Learning[2]

At each stage of the learning cycle, there are key questions you should ask yourself. The chart below lists key questions to think about.

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[2] Ibid.

Key question	Other questions to ask yourself
What do I need to learn? (Planning)	• What are the learning objectives? • What do I already know about this topic? • What are the **concepts** I need to understand? • How do I separate important information from the details? • What questions do I already have about this topic?
How am I going to learn the material? (Planning)	• How can I combine textbook reading with class notes? • What active learning strategies will support my learning? • Will I study alone or with a study group? • Are there charts or visuals the will help me understand this material? • What memory strategies can I use to remember key words and concepts? • How can I connect with my instructor if I have questions?
How am I doing at learning this material? (Monitoring)	• What concepts do I understand well? • What concepts are still confusing for me? • What questions should I ask for clarification? • Is there a study group available for me to join? • Should I start a study group? • Can I explain the material to someone else without referring to notes? • Can I create and answer self-testing questions about these concepts? • Am I using the learning supports available to me (e.g., instructor office hours, tutors, library, Writing Centre, English as Additional Language supports)?
Did I learn the material effectively? (Evaluation)	• How well did I meet the learning objectives for this unit? • What in my test preparation worked well? • If my test preparation didn't go well, what do I want to change? • Did I use the strategies in the quiz and test taking section of this book? • How will what I have learned help me in my next courses?

Try it!

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=26#h5p-1

PART II

PLAN FOR SUCCESS

Plan-Monitor-Evaluate Connection

Before moving to the ***planning*** stage of the learning cycle, it's important to do some self-evaluation. This chapter begins with the ***evaluation*** part of the learning cycle. Getting to know yourself through self-evaluation will help with goal setting. Before you begin, consider:

- Where am I now?
- What strategies do I already know how to use?
- What *Skills for Success* do I have?
- What *Skills for Success* will I need in the workplace?
- What do I hope to improve?

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you'll be able to:

- Evaluate your current learning skills and strengths using the *Multiple Intelligences framework*.
- Discover *Skills for Success*.
- Set SMART learning goals.

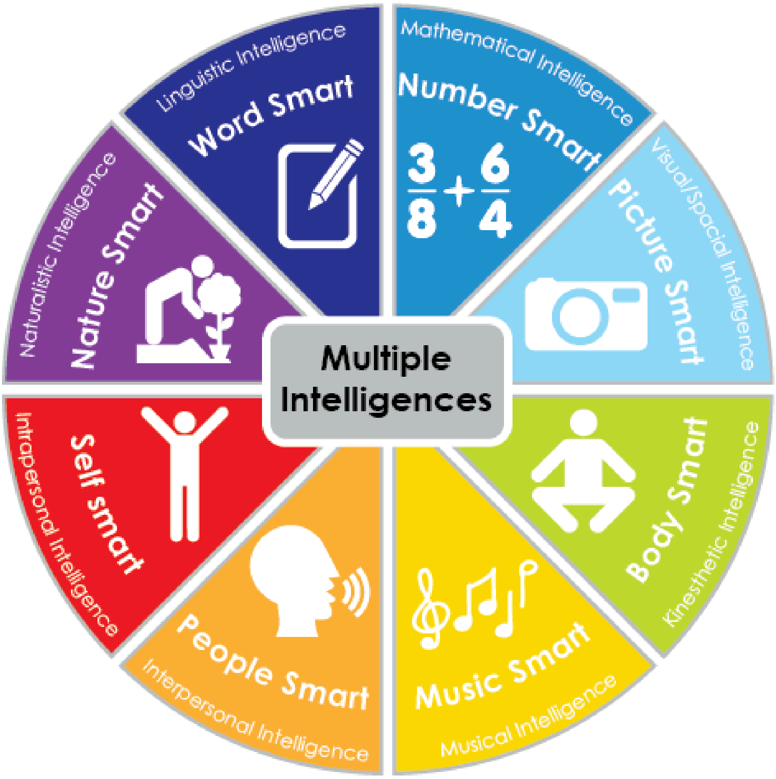
CHAPTER 4

Evaluate Your Learning Skills and Strengths

Even if the college environment is new to you, you already come with a set of learning skills, strengths, and strategies that can help you succeed. Reflect on the following:

Consider a learning experience in the past that was successful for you.

1. What were you able to learn?
2. What did you do that helped you succeed in your learning?


Multiple Intelligences
Word Smart
Linguistic Intelligence
Number Smart
Mathematical Intelligence
3/8 + 6/4
Picture Smart
Visual/Spacial Intelligence
Body Smart
Kinesthetic Intelligence
Music Smart
Musical Intelligence
People Smart
Interpersonal Intelligence
Self smart
Intrapersonal Intelligence
Nature Smart
Naturalistic Intelligence

Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. Image Credit: Graeme Robinson-Clogg

We often associate learning in college with reading and writing. Though it's true those skills are important, you can also apply other learning strengths to help you succeed.

One **framework** for evaluating your personal strengths is *Multiple Intelligences*, based on research by Howard Gardner.

Gardner suggested there are 8 different ways of learning, creating things, and solving problems. Everyone uses all 8 of these **intelligences** at some point; however, in each person, some intelligences are stronger, while others may be weaker. This is why we have different preferences in learning activities.

Multiple I*ntelligences* Table[12]

Intelligence	**Description**
Word Smart – *Linguistic Intelligence*	• The ability to use language to express what's on your mind and to understand other people. • People who are high in this intelligence are sensitive to language, meanings, and the relationship of words. They engage easily with vocabulary activities, grammar, poetry, essays, and plays.
Number Smart – *Mathematical Intelligence*	• People with a highly developed logical-mathematical intelligence understand or can manipulate numbers, quantities, and operations. • People high in this intelligence prefer abstract thinking, counting, organizing and logical structures.
Picture Smart – *Visual/spatial Intelligence*	• The ability to represent the spatial world internally in your mind. • Spatial intelligence can be used in the arts or in the trades and sciences. • These people tend to be keen observers. • Learning materials that work well for them include: graphs, charts, colour codes, guided imagery, pictures, and mind maps.
Body Smart – *Kinesthetic Intelligence*	• The ability to use your whole body or parts of your body to solve a problem, make something, or put on a production. • These people have good body control and fine motor skills; and are often active and animated. • They need "hands-on" learning opportunities, like shop, labs, games, and plays.
Music Smart – *Musical Intelligence*	• The ability to think in music, to be able to hear, recognize and remember patterns. • People who have a strong musical intelligence don't just remember music easily – they can't get it out of their minds. People can be sensitive to rhythm, pitch, and intonation. • They tend to like poems, songs, and musically guided imagery.
People Smart – *Interpersonal Intelligence*	• Understanding other people. Anybody who deals with other people must be skilled in interpersonal communication. • This is a social intelligence and those who are high in this area are outgoing and interactive; sensitive to others' moods, feelings, and motivations.

Self Smart – *Intrapersonal Intelligence*	• Understanding yourself, knowing who you are, what you can do, what you want to do, how you react to things, which things to avoid, and which things to gravitate toward. • These people tend to know where to go if they need help.
Nature Smart – *Naturalistic Intelligence*	• The ability to discriminate among living things (plants, animals), sensitivity to other features of nature (clouds, rock configurations) and a good sense of their surroundings and environment. • These people can be sensitive to changes around them, both outdoors and indoors.

It's important to know that we can continue to develop our intelligence, and use multiple intelligence to learn. Your brain continues to grow and develop over time, even into adulthood.

Try it!

Consider how you could use the Multiple Intelligences theory to understand your strengths when learning new course material.

1. What did you discover about your learning strengths?
2. What are your 2 to 3 strongest intelligences.
3. How will you use these intelligences in class?
4. How could you use all 8 of the intelligence to learn in one of your courses.

Enter your answers in the activity below.

---

1. Adapted from: Armstrong, T. (2017, May). *Multiple intelligences in the higher education classroom*. Keynote presentation presented at the Learning Specialists Association of Canada National Conference, Montreal, QC.
2. Kwantlen Polytechnic University Learning Centres. (n.d.). *Learning with your multiple intelligences*. Retrieved from https://www.kpu.ca/sites/default/files/Learning%20Centres/Study_MultipleIntelligences_LA.pdf

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=30#h5p-2

CHAPTER 5

Skills for Success

There are 9 Skills for Success, or essential skills, needed to participate and thrive in learning, working, and life. No matter your profession, these skills are required to be effective and successful in today's workplace. They "overlap and interact with each other, and with other technical and life skills. They are inclusive and can be adapted to different contexts."[1]

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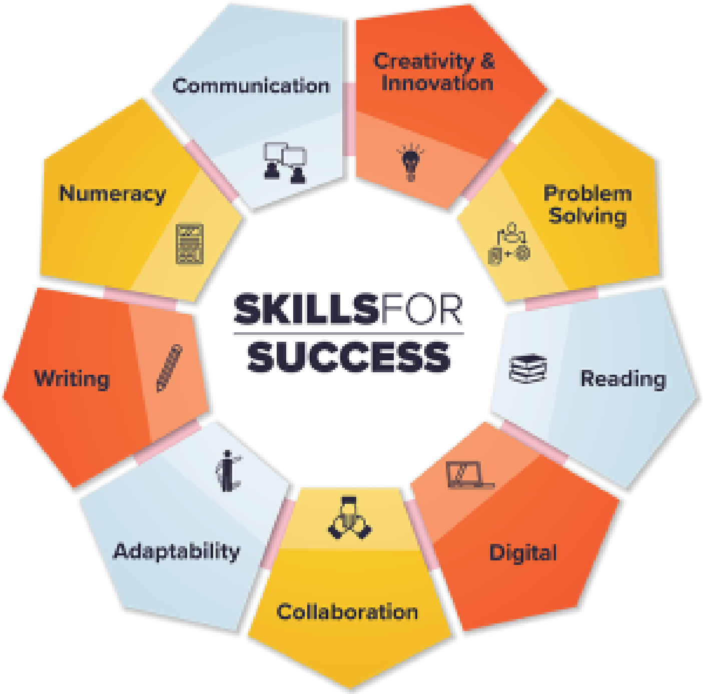
[1] Employment and Social Development Canada. (2023, June 2). *Learn about the Skills*. https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/initiatives/skills-success/understanding-individuals.html


SKILLS FOR SUCCESS
Communication
Creativity & Innovation
Problem Solving
Reading
Digital
Collaboration
Adaptability
Writing
Numeracy

Skills for Success. Image Credit: Employment and Social Development Canada[1]

Skills Description[2]

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[2] Employment and Social Development Canada. (2023, June 2). *Learn about the Skills*. https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/initiatives/skills-success/understanding-individuals.html

Skill	Description and Resources
Creativity & Innovation	• We use this skill to develop, design, and think of new ways of accomplishing tasks. • It's important in our ever-changing environments both while studying and working. • It's related to: critical thinking, reflection, evaluation, initiative, and continuous learning. • Visit these training tools to improve your creativity and innovation skills.
Problem Solving	• We use this skill when identifying, exploring, making recommendations and decisions. • It's important when gathering information, doing research, and finding solutions to problems. • It's related to: critical thinking, research, analysis, decision-making, and adaptability. • Visit these training tools to improve your problem-solving skills.
Reading	• We use this skill to understand and find information as well as to learn about new topics and information. • We read symbols, text, images, graphs, emails, reports, etc. • It's related to: critical thinking, language development, vocabulary development, and analysis. • Visit these training tools to improve your reading skills. • Also visit the NSCC Learning Supports page for more supports or explore the Learn from Lectures and Textbooks chapters in this book.
Digital	• We use this skill when we're using computer programs (e.g., Word, Excel, Sage50), Brightspace, social media, etc. • This is an important skill at NSCC when engaging in your courses, writing essays, creating PowerPoint presentations, and when using program-specific software. • It's also an important skill in the workplace for emails, software used for specific professions, and working with clients/customers. • Visit these training tools • Also, visit the Online Tools at NSCC Subject Guide for help navigating online tools at NSCC.

Collaboration	• We use this skill to work with others, be effective team members, and to maintain positive relationships at school and at work. • It's related to: building relationships, problem-solving, communication, and managing interactions. • Visit these training tools to improve your collaboration skills. • Visit the Study Skills: Study Groups and Group Work Subject Guide to learn about the benefits of study groups and how to create one.
Adaptability	• We use this skill to adjust our goals, plans and the way you approach challenges and deadlines. • It's related to: persistence, planning, organization, and re-evaluation. • Visit these training tools to improve your adaptability skills.
Writing	• We use this skill to communicate information in many settings • We use writing skills for emails, texts, reports, recipes, warranty reports, logbooks, estimates, to request information, and to negotiate. • We also write using many different digital platforms (e.g., Brightspace, email programs, smart phones, social media, etc.). • It's related to: language development, vocabulary development, reading, organization, and critical thinking. • Visit these training tools to improve your writing skills. • For help, you can visit the Writing Centre, English as an Additional Language (EAL) supports, and explore the Get Assignments and Research Done chapters in this book.
Numeracy	• We use this skill to find, use, and report mathematical information, to create and manage personal and professional budgets, report on usage data, take measurements, and make estimates. • This can be in the form of symbols, numbers, graphs, and equations. • It's related to: critical thinking, mathematical calculations, understanding digital information, and statistics. • Visit these training tools to improve your numeracy skills. • If you need help with math tutoring, supports are available through Peer Assisted Learning Supports (PALS) or Pear Deck Tutor. Check out the Math Subject Guide and visit the NSCC Financial Literacy Connect Page for additional resources.

Communication	• We use this skill to give and receive information when we speak, listen, and interact with others. • It's essential for group and team environments, understanding perspectives, and sharing information effectively. • It's related to: writing, reading, negotiation, self-reflection, and problem-solving. • Visit these training tools to improve your communication skills. • You can also visit the NSCC Learning Supports for more resources and supports.

When you're studying and learning at NSCC, talk to an Advisor to learn more about the skills for success that are needed for your profession or visit the Government of Canada Job Bank to explore careers by essential skills.

Thinking about Your Skills for Success

We all have skills we feel most comfortable with. As we learn, we continue to develop and expand our skills and abilities. It's common to need extra help in some skill areas more than others. For example, you may enjoy reading, but find writing challenging.

NSCC has a wide variety of Learning Supports available to help you with your skills development.

Also, working with other students in your program can help you share information, learn together, and build your strengths. Visit the Study Skills: Study Groups and Group Work Subject Guide for tips and strategies for starting and running a study group, or join a PALS study group in your area of study.

Try it!

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=33#h5p-14

Extend Your Learning

- Government of Canada Skills for Success Videos

CHAPTER ATTRIBUTION

This chapter is adapted under fair dealing from: Employment and Social Development Canada. (2023, June 2). *Learn about the Skills*. In Jobs and the workplace. https://www.canada.ca/en/services/jobs/training/initiatives/skills-success/understanding-individuals.html

CHAPTER 6

Setting SMART Goals

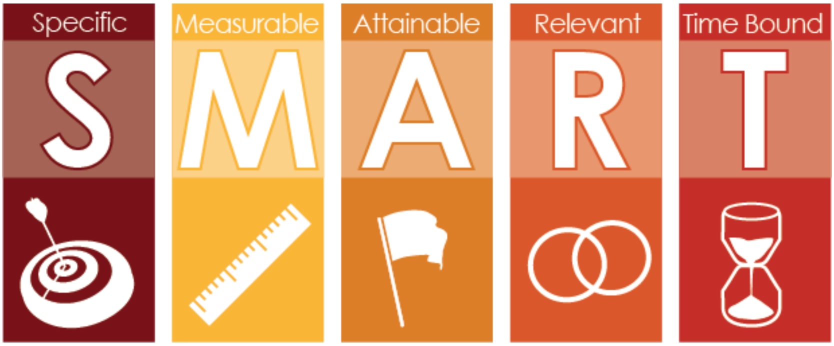

Specific
S
Measurable
M
Attainable
A
Relevant
R
Time Bound
T

Image Credit: Graeme Robinson-Clogg

A common tool for effective goal setting is developing SMART goals. SMART goals encourage you to create goals in a way that inspires you to make them happen.

SMART Goals Are

“S” – Specific

Your goal should clearly define what you’re going to accomplish. You’ll ask and answer **what** you’re working toward and **why**.

“M” – Measurable

Identify and define **how** you will measure your progress.

- How will you know when you’ve achieved your goal?
- When will your goal be finished? What is the due date?

“A” – Attainable / Action-Oriented

Your goal needs to be realistic and attainable within the time and resources that you have available.

- Is it possible for you to achieve your desired goal?
- Are you inspired to take action towards reaching your goal?

“R” – Relevant

Relevant and realistic goals are ones you’re willing to complete. Identify **where** this goal will take you. A goal can be both ambitious and realistic; you’re the only one who can decide just how high your goal should be.

"T" – Time Bound

Create a sense of personal obligation by setting due dates for each step along the way. Knowing **when** you must finish a task keeps you on track and accountable. [1][2]

- When does something need to be done?

SMART Goal Example

Consider this example. You could say that your goal is to become a better runner. This goal is undefined, and you will not be able to tell when you've achieved it.

A SMART goal would be, "You will train with a running group twice weekly and complete a ten-kilometer run in under one hour by the end of June". This goal is **time-bound** and includes **specific** and **measurable** criteria that will help you know when you've reached your goal.

Try it!

Begin to set your learning goals for this semester. Choose 1 goal, and use the SMART goal system to make your goal relevant and achievable.

---

1. Doran, G.T. (1981) There's a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management's goals and objectives. *Management Review* 70 (11): 35–36.
2. Locke, E. A. (1968) Toward a theory of task motivation and incentives. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance* 3 (2): 157

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=36#h5p-3

PART III

FINDING COLLEGE SUPPORTS

Plan-Monitor-Evaluate Connection

This chapter provides you with supports available to you at the college and helps you understand how to read your course outlines. Understanding your course outline and knowing where to go for supports is key to planning and learning success.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you'll be able to:

- Find and use the college supports available to you.
- Understand your course outline to plan your learning.
- Connect with your instructor by using office hours and e-mail effectively.

CHAPTER 7

Get to Know Your College Supports

As an NSCC student, you have access to a wide variety of supports and services designed to help you make the most of your learning experience.

Supports available to students include:

- Advisors are knowledgeable about your program and about how you can take advantage of a range of college resources to help you succeed. (NSCC Office 365 login required)
- African Canadian Support Advisors offer culturally responsive support, guidance on funding opportunities, and connects you with other Black and African Canadian learners. (NSCC Office 365 login required)
- Mi’kmaw and Indigenous Support Advisors offer culturally responsive support, guidance on funding opportunities, and connects you with other Mi’kmaw and Indigenous learners. (NSCC Office 365 login required)
- International Advisors provide guidance, support and resources specific to international students. (NSCC Office

365 login required)

- Learning Supports offer lots of resources to support your learning. Use your NSCC Office 365 login to explore more about:
    - Tutoring,
    - Peer Assisted Learning Supports (PALS),
    - Writing Centre,
    - English as an Additional Language (EAL) supports, and
    - Testing Centres.
- Libraries provide research and assignment support, help with academic integrity, citing sources, study rooms, technology troubleshooting, laptop loans and more. You have access to a range of resources including print and electronic books, electronic journals and streaming videos.
- Student Accessibility Specialists support students with disabilities by arranging academic accommodations to reduce barriers to education, assist in the exploration of grants and funding opportunities, and help with assistive technology.
- Wellness and Counselling Services provide a range of services supporting well-being and mental health.
- Digital Innovation & Technology provides technology support including help with computers, password resets, accessing and using software, Brightspace and more. Request help through the Technology Service Desk (NSCC Office 365 login required).
- Student Awards and Financial Assistance provides information on scholarships and bursaries available to

students.

- Student Association organizes activities and events, provides programs to encourage your growth as a student, and offers services to make your learning environment more supportive and enjoyable.
- Career Services offer a variety employment supports.

NSCC's Student Support Hub (NSCC Office 365 login required) contains more information about services available and how to access them.

Try it!

Take some time to get to know your college supports.

- Check out the Student Advising Handbook,
- Explore the NSCC and Me student orientation course in Brightspace and
- Visit Student Supports on CONNECT to find out how our services can help you. Your NSCC Office 365 login will be required.

CHAPTER 8

Technology Supports

Brightspace

Brightspace is where you access your NSCC course online. If you need help navigating Brightspace, check out the Brightspace Toolkit for how-to get started, accessing course content, submitting assignments, and Finding Grades.

You also have access to a Brightspace Practice Course. Here you can practice using some of the basic features. Self-register and join the course by logging into Brightspace and scrolling down to Self-Registration.

Technology Service Desk

To request help, visit the Technology Service Desk, go to **Technology Services** (NSCC Office 365 login required) and click on "View services". You'll see the hours of operation and the service options. Help is available through telephone, live chat, or by submitting a self-service ticket.

Online Tools at NSCC Subject Guide

We've created a resource to help you navigate some of the common NSCC online tools. Check out the Online Tools at NSCC Subject Guide to get started.

Peer Assisted Learning Supports (PALS)

Peer Assisted Learning Supports (PALS) offers individualized sessions to help with Microsoft Office 365, software installation and tasks such as navigating Brightspace. PALS computer application support is available September-April.

LinkedIn Learning

As an NSCC student, you have access to free online video courses through LinkedIn Learning. Topics include:

- Advanced features in Microsoft Office365 Word, Excel, Outlook and PowerPoint;
- Adobe Creative Cloud apps like Photoshop and Illustrator;
- Computer programming languages; and much more.

The LinkedIn Learning Subject Guide will show you how to access and navigate LinkedIn Learning.

Assistive Technology

NSCC provides free text to speech/literacy software for all students.

- ReadSpeaker is fully integrated for use in all Brightspace courses.

- You can also download TextHelp Read&Write which includes the ability to highlight and read text aloud.

For more information on other Assistive Technology options for writing, studying, organization, math, and more, explore the Assistive Technology Guide .

If you’re a student with a disability, connect with Student Accessibility Services to learn how our team can support you.

CHAPTER 9

Understand Your Course Outline

A *Course Outline* is prepared by your instructor and is a roadmap for your learning journey. When the course starts, look on Brightspace (NSCC Office 365 login required) for your course outline. Sometimes, instructors will email it or share it in-person.

Parts of a Course Outline

Course Description

The course outline gives you a general overview of what you'll be learning and doing in the course, plus anything else the instructor would like you to know.

Instructor Contact Information

Your instructor will provide their contact information such as name, email address, and office hours, so you know how to reach them when you have questions, want to meet, or share information with them.

Course Materials

This is a list of material required like textbooks, library materials, or other items such as safety gear. You can buy required textbooks online through the NSCC Bookstore or in-person at your Campus Bookstore.

If you buy your textbooks before class, do not remove the wrapper until you speak with your instructor in case they have selected a free Open Educational Resource (OER).

Tentative Schedule of Topics, Classes, and Assignments (may change)

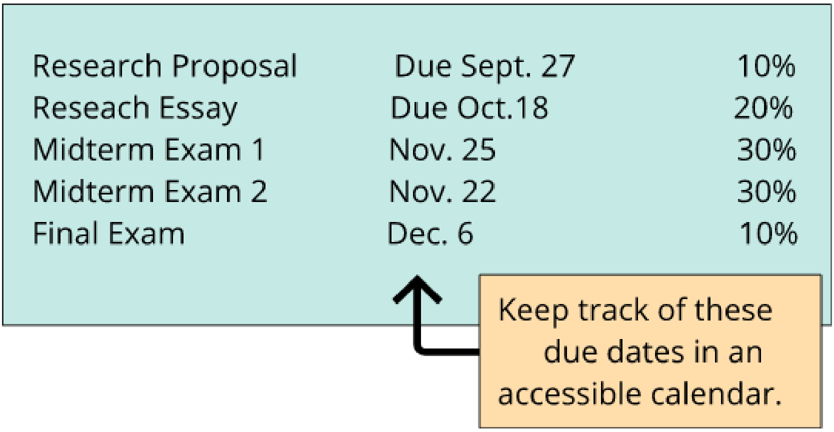
Add information, such as class times, assignment due dates, tests, etc. to your scheduling device (planner, calendar, online schedule). In the next chapter, you'll learn strategies to create a weekly and semester based schedule to keep track of important deadlines.

Assignments

Assignment topics and due dates are scheduled in advance so you can plan your work, research, and study. Your course outline may also include some guidelines that indicate what's required for each assignment, and how the assignments will be graded. **Rubrics** and checklists must be referenced for assignments and projects to ensure that you meet the required criteria.

Tests and Exams

Put your test dates in your calendar as soon as you receive them. Use this information to plan your study times so you're prepared for any tests and can avoid cramming at the last minute.



Research Proposal	Due Sept. 27	10%
Reseach Essay	Due Oct.18	20%
Midterm Exam 1	Nov. 25	30%
Midterm Exam 2	Nov. 22	30%
Final Exam	Dec. 6	10%

Keep track of these due dates in an accessible calendar.

Image Credit: Rawia Inaim

Policies

It's important to be aware of NSCC's policies regarding class conduct, late assignments, and plagiarism. Make sure you understand the policies mentioned in your course outline.

- NSCC Policies and Procedures can be read or downloaded on CONNECT. (NSCC Office 365 login required.)

Try it!

Using a course outline for 1 of your classes, try to find the following information:

1. What textbook(s) or course material(s) you'll need for class.
2. What assignments you'll need to complete and what will be required.
3. When your tests are scheduled.
4. Your instructor's contact information.

CHAPTER 10

Connect With Your Instructor

A key part of your college success is knowing your instructors. Developing good relationships with your instructors involves good communication in and outside of the classroom. Instructors are available to meet and talk with you, but you must know how to connect with them during their available times.

In-Class Communication

To build a positive relationship with your instructor in-class, consider these ways that you can show your engaged in the course material:

- Listen actively during class to identify what's most important to the instructor.
- Read your textbook or class materials before class.
- Prepare questions to ask.

Communicating in Office Hours

Most successful learners take advantage of an instructor's office hours. You can visit them during office hours to discuss problems or concerns, ask questions about the course material, and get clarification about the requirements for an assignment.

Some tips for using Instructor office hours effectively:

- Arrive on time to be respectful of your instructor's and other student's time.
- Come prepared by bringing your textbook or other course materials.
- Prepare questions ahead of time.
- Take notes and summarize key points to make sure you understand.

Communicating By Email

Instructors receive many e-mails from students. To write an effective e-mail, consider the following:

- When possible, use your college e-mail account.
- In the subject line, write the course name and topic of your email (e.g. *BIOL 1100 Lab Report 2).*
- Use a professional greeting ("Hello" vs. "Hey!").
- Clearly write your question or concern in short, clear sentences.
- End your e-mail with an appropriate conclusion (e.g. "Thank you for your help").
- Allow time for your instructor to respond – don't expect an instant reply.

SAMPLE EMAIL

From: W0123456@nscc.ca
To: Instructor Name
Subject: Communications 1001 Research proposal

Hello [insert name],

This is John Smith from your Communications 1001 class. I have a question about our research proposal assignment that is due October 6th. How many sources are we required to include in our proposal?

Thanks in advance for your help.

John Smith

By communicating with your instructor when you have questions, and using e-mail effectively, you'll build a good relationship with your instructor. [1]

Try it!

Find how to contact your instructor within your course outline. Ask them a question about the course, or consider having a brief conversation about one of the following topics:

1. What is one thing I can do to be successful in this course?
2. How will the course concepts connect with other courses in the program?

---

[1] Study Guides and Strategies. (n.d.). *Influencing teachers and improving classroom communication skills*. http://www.studygs.net/attmot2.html

3. What can I do to improve my class participation/writing/presentation skills?

PART IV

MANAGE YOUR TIME

Plan-Monitor-Evaluate Connection

Time management is a critical skill in the **planning** process. In this chapter, you'll learn how to budget your time through daily-to-do lists, weekly and semester schedules. These will also help you to **evaluate** what is working well and what should be changed.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you'll be able to:

- Use your course outlines to create a semester schedule.
- Create a balanced weekly schedule that includes time for independent study.
- Organize your day for maximum productivity using daily task lists.

- Apply strategies to escape that procrastination trap.

CHAPTER 11

Your Semester Schedule at a Glance

Your semester schedule lets you see when your assignments, projects, tests and labs need to be done. Using different colours to indicate different classes, or to distinguish between school and personal events will help when making a schedule.

Watch the video *How to create a weekly schedule* by Academic Algonquin.[1]

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=48#oembed-1

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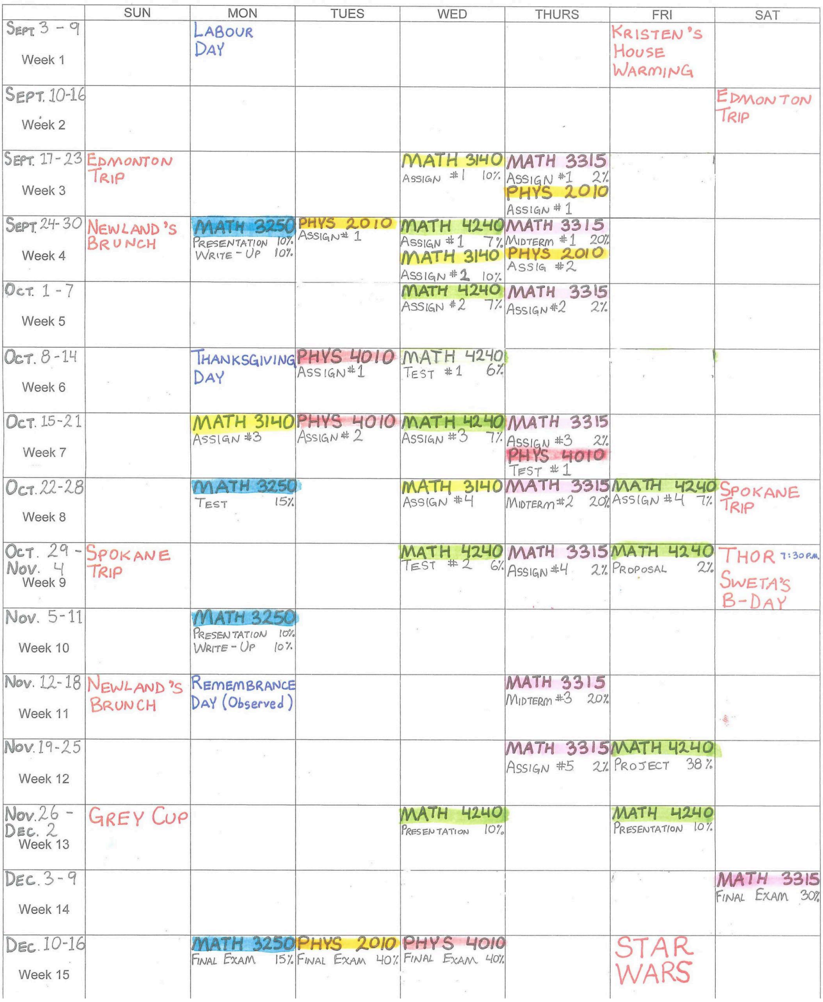
1. Academic Algonquin. (2015, Mar 18). How to create a weekly schedule. https://youtu.be/OtvxClxcrBE

An example semester schedule is below. What would you include on your semester schedule?



	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Sept. 3 - 9 Week 1		Labour Day				Kristen's House Warming	
Sept. 10-16 Week 2							Edmonton Trip
Sept. 17-23 Week 3	Edmonton Trip			MATH 3140 Assign #1 10%	MATH 3315 Assign #1 2% PHYS 2010 Assign #1		
Sept. 24-30 Week 4	Newland's Brunch	MATH 3250 Presentation 10% Write-Up 10%	PHYS 2010 Assign# 1	MATH 4240 Assign #1 7% MATH 3140 Assign #2 10%	MATH 3315 Midterm #1 20% PHYS 2010 Assig #2		
Oct. 1 - 7 Week 5				MATH 4240 Assign #2 7%	MATH 3315 Assign #2 2%		
Oct. 8 - 14 Week 6		Thanksgiving Day	PHYS 4010 Assign #1	MATH 4240 Test #1 6%			
Oct. 15-21 Week 7		MATH 3140 Assign #3	PHYS 4010 Assign # 2	MATH 4240 Assign #3 7%	MATH 3315 Assign #3 2% PHYS 4010 Test #1		
Oct. 22-28 Week 8		MATH 3250 Test 15%		MATH 3140 Assign #4	MATH 3315 Midterm #2 20%	MATH 4240 Assign #4 7%	Spokane Trip
Oct. 29 - Nov. 4 Week 9	Spokane Trip			MATH 4240 Test #2 6%	MATH 3315 Assign #4 2%	MATH 4240 Proposal 2%	Thor 7:30 P.M. Sweta's B-Day
Nov. 5-11 Week 10		MATH 3250 Presentation 10% Write-Up 10%					
Nov. 12-18 Week 11	Newland's Brunch	Remembrance Day (Observed)			MATH 3315 Midterm #3 20%		
Nov. 19-25 Week 12					MATH 3315 Assign #5 2%	MATH 4240 Project 38%	
Nov. 26 - Dec. 2 Week 13	Grey Cup			MATH 4240 Presentation 10%		MATH 4240 Presentation 10%	
Dec. 3 - 9 Week 14							MATH 3315 Final Exam 30%
Dec. 10-16 Week 15		MATH 3250 Final Exam 15%	PHYS 2010 Final Exam 40%	PHYS 4010 Final Exam 40%		Star Wars	

An Example Semester Schedule. Image Credit: Jarren Ralf.

Try it!

Create your semester schedule:

- Gather all your course outlines.
- Add all the dates of your tests and assignments to your semester schedule.
- If you want, use colour to distinguish different classes.
- Save and/or print out this schedule and keep it somewhere you'll see it often.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=48#h5p-4

CHAPTER 12

Create a Weekly Schedule

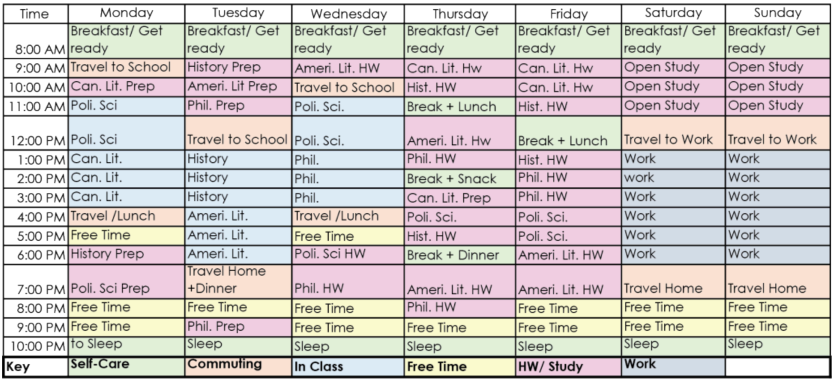
A weekly schedule helps you see how you're spending your time each week. Do you have enough time for study? Is there time to maintain a balanced lifestyle?

A weekly schedule should include your class times and regularly scheduled commitments, such as work. Here are some tips to help you create your weekly schedule:

1. **Add your class and lab times** in the right day/hour blocks.
2. If possible, **reserve time immediately after your classes**(30 minutes) for summarizing your notes while they are still fresh in your mind. You can also use this time to look over any assignments that were given to plan for them and see if there are any questions you need to ask your instructor.
3. **Schedule travel times** to and from the college and between classes.
4. **Include mealtimes, family time, physical activities,** etc. Regular exercise will give you a general sense of well-being and help reduce stress.

5. **Record personal activities** such as appointments or employment.
6. **Schedule time for course reading/study/review** for each class during times of the day when you are most alert. Learning is more effectively and efficiently accomplished when done in shorter regular sessions rather than longer irregular sessions.
7. **Plan for the next week.** At the end of the week, look ahead to determine how much reading you need to do, what projects are due, and if any tests are scheduled.
8. **Keep some empty blocks** for unexpected academic or personal needs.
9. **Schedule time for friends, relax ,**or do whatever you want to do! This is your reward for sticking to your schedule.

Example of a weekly schedule



Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
8:00 AM	Breakfast/ Get ready	Breakfast/ Get ready	Breakfast/ Get ready	Breakfast/ Get ready	Breakfast/ Get ready	Breakfast/ Get ready	Breakfast/ Get ready
9:00 AM	Travel to School	History Prep	Ameri. Lit. HW	Can. Lit. Hw	Can. Lit. Hw	Open Study	Open Study
10:00 AM	Can. Lit. Prep	Ameri. Lit Prep	Travel to School	Hist. HW	Can. Lit. Hw	Open Study	Open Study
11:00 AM	Poli. Sci	Phil. Prep	Poli. Sci.	Break + Lunch	Hist. HW	Open Study	Open Study
12:00 PM	Poli. Sci	Travel to School	Poli. Sci.	Ameri. Lit. Hw	Break + Lunch	Travel to Work	Travel to Work
1:00 PM	Can. Lit.	History	Phil.	Phil. HW	Hist. HW	Work	Work
2:00 PM	Can. Lit.	History	Phil.	Break + Snack	Phil. HW	work	Work
3:00 PM	Can. Lit.	History	Phil.	Can. Lit. Prep	Phil. HW	Work	Work
4:00 PM	Travel /Lunch	Ameri. Lit.	Travel /Lunch	Poli. Sci.	Poli. Sci.	Work	Work
5:00 PM	Free Time	Ameri. Lit.	Free Time	Hist. HW	Poli. Sci.	Work	Work
6:00 PM	History Prep	Ameri. Lit.	Poli. Sci HW	Break + Dinner	Ameri. Lit. HW	Work	Work
7:00 PM	Poli. Sci Prep	Travel Home +Dinner	Phil. HW	Ameri. Lit. HW	Ameri. Lit. HW	Travel Home	Travel Home
8:00 PM	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	Phil. HW	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time
9:00 PM	Free Time	Phil. Prep	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time
10:00 PM	to Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep
Key	**Self-Care**	**Commuting**	**In Class**	**Free Time**	**HW/ Study**	**Work**	

Example weekly schedule. Image credit: Rawia Inaim.

Try it!

Create a weekly schedule.

- Try following the schedule for 2 weeks.
- After 2 weeks, make any adjustments needed. Maybe you need more time to study or you need more downtime to maintain a good life balance.

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9:00-10:00							
10:00-11:00							
11:00-12:00							
12:00-1:00							
1:00-2:00							
2:00-3:00							
3:00-4:00							
4:00-5:00							
5:00-6:00							
6:00-7:00							
7:00-8:00							
8:00-9:00							

Download a printable weekly schedule.

CHAPTER 13

Create Daily To-Do Lists

Using your smartphone, a paper planner, or your Outlook account are great ways to track your tasks. Keep your daily **To-Do List** somewhere you check regularly.

Here are some tips when creating your to-do list:

1. At the end of the day, take some time to plan the following day.
2. Write down each task you want to accomplish and flag which are most important.
3. Break large tasks into smaller chunks. Consider what you'll accomplish in one work period (usually 1 hour).
4. Create tasks that are well-defined; you should know when the task is finished. For example, instead of "work on my research paper/assignment", change it to "find three academic articles for my research paper" or "create my paper/assignment outline".
5. Check off tasks when you complete them. This increases your sense of accomplishment and creates forward momentum.
6. If you can't complete a task today, move it to tomorrow's

to-do list.

Keep your To-Do List somewhere you check regularly, like your smartphone.

Today’s To-Do List

Goals	**Time**	**Priority**	**Done**
Read chapter 9 for biology	45 mins	High	√
Draft thesis for communication paper	1 hr	Low	
Find 3 peer reviewed sources for paper	1 hr	Moderate	√

Try it!

For the next week, make a to-do list each day.

- At the end of the week, reflect on what worked for you.
- What might you want to change?

Extend Your Learning

Want to explore further ways of managing your time? The following links have more information and helpful templates.

- Budget Your Time worksheet
- To-Do List template worksheet
- Manage your Day with a Smartphone App worksheet.

CHAPTER 14

Escape the Procrastination Trap

What is procrastination?

Definition: To delay an intended course of action despite expecting to be worse off for the delay.[1]

Why do we procrastinate?

We procrastinate for a variety of different reasons. The first step in tackling procrastination is to do some self reflection – without judgment – to figure out why you might procrastinate.

General Reasons for Procrastination

People procrastinate for a variety of different reasons:

1. Not being sure of how to do something. If a task seems difficult, or you're not sure how to complete it, it's natural to avoid it.

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[1] Steel, P. (2007). The nature of procrastination: A meta-analytic and theoretical review of quintessential self-regulatory failure. *Psychological Bulletin*, 133, 65-94

2. Lack of motivation. If a task doesn’t interest you, you might prefer to work on something else that’s more interesting.
3. Fear of not doing the task well. Trying hard at something and failing might seem worse than failing because you didn’t try. Often a root cause of this type of procrastination is perfectionism.
4. Fear of success. Some people fear being too successful, because the result of this success is that people will expect more of you the next time.

Identifying the reason(s) you procrastinate can help you find a solution. Here are some suggested solutions for the causes mentioned above:

Table: Procrastination Reasons.[2]

Reason	Strategies
I'm not sure I know how to do it	• Look for ways to develop your skillsl. For example: ◦ Ask your Instructor for help. ◦ Make an appointment with a tutor. (NSCC Office 365 login required) ◦ Make an appointment with the Writing Centre. (NSCC Office 365 login required) ◦ Make an appointment for English as Additional Language (EAL) supports. (NSCC Office 365 login required) ◦ Talk to library staff . You can visit your Campus Library or use our Live Chat service (look for the chat box on our Library Website). ◦ Explore our Library Subject Guides or Learning Supports Subject Guides for tips and resources.
I'm not interested / motivated	• Choose to "just do it", and treat yourself to guilt free time after it's done. • Consider how continuing to dread the task is taking away from future enjoyment of other things. • Consider if your attitude towards things that are uninteresting is preventing you from finding the motivation you need. • Consider how the task relates to your long-term goals. For example, maybe the course is not interesting to you, but you need to pass to finish your program and get a job in the area that interests you.
I'm afraid of failing/ I'm afraid of success	• Consider if you have unrealistic standards for yourself. • Set realistic goals. • If you need more support, consider talking to a Student Advisor or Counsellor. (NSCC Office 365 login required)

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[2] Adapted from: Oregon State University Academic Success Centre. (n.d.) *Six Reasons People Procrastinate*. Retrieved from success.oregonstate.edu/six-reasons-people-procrastinate

Getting Started

A key aspect of overcoming procrastination is developing strategies to get started. Often, committing to complete one small task can be enough to start moving ahead. For example, just taking out your laptop, creating a document, and typing the title can create some forward momentum.

A well-known technique for managing time and to help with procrastination is called the *Pomodoro Technique*. This technique breaks down your work periods into small, manageable units. Here's how it works:

Imaged Credit: Rawia Inaim

1. Choose the task you want to accomplish.
2. Set a timer for 25 minutes – no interruptions are allowed!
3. Work until the timer rings.
4. Take a short break.
5. Repeat up to 4 times and then take a longer break.

Why the Method Works

The Pomodoro technique can help you:

- Create forward momentum by committing to only a small, manageable period of work.
- Develop discipline, work without interruptions, and create awareness of how much time individual tasks take.
- Reward yourself with frequent breaks, which helps maintain motivation.

Try it!

Take some steps this week to defeat procrastination.

- Reflect on why you might procrastinate?
    - What is one step you'll take this week to move ahead with a project or assignment?
- Try the *Pomodoro technique*.
    - Did it help you get started and stay focused?

PART V

LEARN FROM LECTURES AND TEXTBOOKS

Plan-Monitor-Evaluate Connection

Textbooks are different from other books – they're a key learning resource for your courses. Textbooks help you to **plan** and identify key learning objectives at the beginning of each chapter. They also also introduce you to new vocabulary. Textbooks help you to see what you need to learn. By readying your textbook, you'll be able to **plan** for mastering the material.

In this chapter you'll learn how to use a strategy called SQ4R, which includes creating questions to guide your reading. These questions become a tool to **monitor** how well you remember the concepts later.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you'll be able to:

- Describe the ways reading connects with your learning goals in your courses.
- Use the SQ4R Strategy to read purposefully.
- Identify ways note-taking supports your learning.
- Write effective notes that can be used for review and test preparation.
- Create a personal dictionary.

CHAPTER 15

Reading Textbooks

Textbooks are important resources. Textbooks help you plan ahead as you identify what you need to know at the beginning of each chapter. As you see what you need to learn when reading your textbook, you'll also be able to plan a strategy for understanding, remembering, and knowing the material better.

Photo credit: Emily Tan

Reasons for Reading your Textbooks

You probably already know that you *should* read your textbooks. However, if you're like many students, you might read your textbook only when you're studying. Have you ever read a page or a chapter in a textbook and then noticed soon after that you can't remember much or anything about what you just read? Committing time to read your textbooks weekly will help you achieve your learning goals. Consider the following reasons for committing to regular reading.

Reading Textbooks helps you get the most out of your class time.

This is true if you read your textbook before going to class. Why? Because if your instructor is talking about a lot of new material or concepts in class for the very first time, it can be difficult to take good notes and understand how all of the concepts fit together.

If you read your textbook before you go to class, you'll already have a general understanding of the most important topics in that unit. You'll already be familiar with some of the key words, and you'll have a good idea, like a "sneak peek", of what's coming up. This way, when you go to class, your instructor's lecture will strengthen the things that you're already starting to learn, and you'll be able to ask good questions and to participate well in class.

Most textbooks include some additional resources to help you study

These may include:

- ***Learning Objectives*:**listed at the beginning of the chapter. These help you to know right away what the most important things in the chapter are, and what you should focus on.
- ***Definitions and Glossaries***: *o*ften, textbooks will highlight new words. These might be at the side of a page, the words might be in bold, or the textbook might include a glossary of key terms. All of these are helpful with new vocabulary.

- *Study Questions and Practice Problems*: These are often found at the end of chapters and may include chapter summaries. If you put in extra time to work on these sections of the textbook, you'll be more prepared for tests.
- *Online Videos and Quizzes*: These can help you to review the key concepts in your class, and to strengthen your understanding of concepts that may be difficult for you.

Content from textbooks is often included on exams

In most programs at NSCC, you're expected to spend time outside of scheduled class time to do independent studying, homework, or work on projects, and assignments. Most instructors will include questions from the textbook on tests and exams, and these things might not have been covered in class. If you only rely on your class notes, you might miss key concepts that you'll need to know in your course.

You become a better reader by reading

It takes practice! Learning to read textbooks will prepare you to read other complex material that you'll probably encounter throughout your studies and possibly later in your career. Reading efficiently is a skill you'll use throughout your life – not just in your current classes.

Try it!

Complete the short quiz to understand how reading your textbook connects with the learning objective in your course.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=64#h5p-5

CHAPTER 16

Read with a Purpose

The SQ4R Strategy

Reading textbooks is not the same as reading a novel or a website for fun. To achieve your course goals, you'll want to read with an effective strategy. One helpful strategy is called *SQ4R*:

- **S** stands for Survey
- **Q** is Question
- **4R**s are: Read, Recite, Record, and Review.

SQ4R is a form of *active* reading which encourages you to also make study notes as you read your textbook, so get a pen and notebook ready when you are reading your textbook – the notes you take will help you study better!

Survey

- Survey means scanning the entire chapter or section of a textbook. Take notice of the headings of the section, and briefly read the introductory paragraphs and section summaries.

- Look over important graphics (pictures, charts and diagrams) and captions.
- Survey the summary and questions at the end. This will give you the key points in the chapter.
- List a few (less than 10) main ideas and concepts on what the chapter focuses on.

Question

- Take each section heading and make it into a question.
- The best questions will call on knowledge you may already have or puts the heading into dialogue with the other headings or main ideas that you found while “surveying.”
- Example: A heading in a Business Course on “Managerial Accounting,” might generate the following questions: “What is Managerial Accounting?” “How does Managerial Accounting compare to Accounting in general” “What has the instructor mentioned about Managerial Accounting?”

Read

- Read the section or chapter while attempting to answer your original question(s).
- Review pictures and captions.
- Take note of words/phrases that are underlined, in bold, or highlighted.
- Try to answer any review questions at the end of the chapter or section.
- Don’t skim through; if something is unclear, slow down

and re-read it.

Recite

- After each section, stop reading and review it out loud.
- Answer your original questions and re-read important parts or definitions out loud
- Try to summarize the main point of each heading.
- Try to provide definitions to key words.
- Continue to self-test until you feel confident that you can understand and remember the information on your own.

Record

- Translate the book's words into your own words.
- Use the structure of the text to create an outline for yourself.
- Be sure to note definitions, main ideas, and important details in the order of the text.

Review

- Use your notes to review for your tests.
- Read them out loud, rewrite them, or quiz yourself as tests approach.
- The more you review, the more the information will stick with you.

Try it!

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=67#h5p-6

Extend Your Learning

Not all courses use textbooks as primary resources and you might come across academic journals as part of your required reading list.

- Download How to Read an Academic Journal (1 page tip-sheet).
- This handout will help you identify the characteristics of academic articles and learn strategies for identifying important information.

Chapter Attribution

This chapter is adapted from Chapter 15 in University 101: Study, Strategize and Succeed CC BY-SA and content used under fair dealing from the University of Cincinnati. (n.d.). SQ4R: Getting the most from your textbooks. Learning Commons. https://www.uc.edu/campus-life/learning-commons/learning-resources/notetaking-resources/sq4r.html

CHAPTER 17

Take Better Class Notes

Your instructor might give you PowerPoint slides in addition to your textbook. Do you still need to take notes in class too?

YES! Taking notes in class is a very important learning strategy and skill. The way that you take notes matters, and not all note taking strategies are equal.

How Note taking Supports Learning

Taking notes during class supports your learning in several ways:

1. helps you to focus your attention and avoid distractions.
2. you'll be engaging your mind in identifying and organizing the main ideas (actively learning).
3. you'll have another resource for studying. Reviewing a set of well-organized notes is more efficient than re-reading longer textbook chapters or entire articles.

Effective Note taking Strategies

Don't take word-for-word notes. Write the lecture's most important points and consider how they fit together. Listen for other information that your instructor emphasizes, either verbally or with gestures, and add these key concepts to your notes.

Leave a wide margin on one side of the page to write down key words and questions after the lecture. At the bottom of each page of notes, leave room to write a short summary of the information on that page. This is called the "Cornell Method" of note taking.

Try it!

Click on the pencil to view and try the Cornell Notes system. Select the ⛶ icon to view the video and note taking fields in one screen.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=71#h5p-7

Use Your Notes to Study

Now that you've created a set of notes from both class lectures and from reading your textbooks, how do you get the most benefit from them?

If you've been following the note-taking method described in this chapter, your notes will include questions that you've answered by reading or listening. Rather than just re-reading notes, which is less effective, you will benefit most if you use your notes as a self-study tool.

1. Read any questions in your notes out loud. Cover the answer with a sheet of paper.
2. Recite the answer out loud as best as you are able, or write it down on a piece of paper.
3. Compare your answer with the answer you have in your notes. If you're correct, move on to the next question. If you have difficulty with a question, review the related material in your notes again. You may wish to use highlighter to mark questions you need to review again.

As you continue to take good notes, you'll strengthen your learning skills, and become better at identifying key information from class lectures and texts. By including study questions in your notes as you take them, the notes become a powerful tool for later review and test preparation.

Try it!

Don't just take notes, *make* notes.

- This week, try to practice at least one note taking strategy you've learned from this chapter.
- Use the questions you created to review and test yourself throughout the week.
- How does this method compare with re-reading your notes?

Try this Note Taking Template to guide you through the process.

Extend Your Learning

Learn about other note-taking strategies by exploring NSCC's Writing Centre Guide.

CHAPTER 18

Vocabulary Building Strategies

Reading strategies and vocabulary building strategies go hand-in-hand. Developing your personal dictionary of words is important to understanding what you read and being able to use the words in your program and workplace.

Tips for building your vocabulary

1. **Read.** The more you read, the more words you're exposed to. Try reading about different topics and use different sources (e.g. newspapers, blogs, books, articles, etc.).
2. **Use a graphic organizer.** A graphic organizer is helpful when you have a lot of new vocabulary to remember. It helps you make connections between words.
3. **Use a vocabulary journal.** Like a graphic organizer, writing down new words and how to use them correctly in a sentence can help with memory and understanding. Review your journal regularly to help remember the words and practice using them in conversation and writing.

4. **Use a dictionary.** Using an online or paper English-English dictionary is helpful when you need to look up a word you don't know. It will give you the parts of speech, definition, common uses, and pronunciation.
5. **Use a collocations dictionary.** Understanding common word pairings in English can help you with your conversation and reading skills. For example, "I need to **make the bed** before I leave". To **make the bed** is an English collocation. It's incorrect to say, "I need to create the bed before I leave."
6. **Practice new words in conversation.** You'll learn and remember new words if you use them in conversation and writing. Challenge yourself to use new words with your classmates, family, and friends.

Try it!

Create a personal dictionary of new words you've recently read in one of your textbooks.

Extend Your Learning

NSCC's Writing Centre Guide has more resources for you to explore on spelling and developing your vocabulary.

NSCC also has English as an Additional Language (EAL) Supports that can help you in listening, speaking (including pronunciation), reading, and employment readiness.

PART VI

STUDY SMART

Plan-Monitor-Evaluate Connection

In this chapter, you'll be focusing on strategies to master important course concepts. You'll do this through active learning that promotes deep engagement with course material. This chapter focuses on the second part of the ***planning** cycle*, where you answer the question "How will I learn this material"? As you use these strategies, you'll also ***monitor*** how well you're learning, by actively assessing how well you can answer self-testing questions about the material you're covering.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you'll be able to:

- Choose strategies for active learning.
- Try new memory strategies to effectively retain important course concepts.
- Effectively master course content by using questioning

strategies.

- Understand the 4 levels of questioning.

CHAPTER 19

Choose Strategies for Active Learning

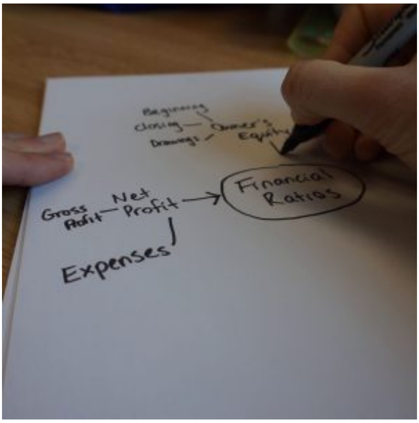
Beginning
Closing
Drawings
Owner's Equity
Gross Profit
Net Profit
Financial Ratios
Expenses

Photo Credit: Graeme Robinson-Clogg

Now that you've identified *what* you need to learn, you can now make a plan for *how* to learn, and to put it into practice. The best kind of learning is *active* learning. When you learn actively, you apply a variety of strategies to your course material, including reading, writing, reflecting, solving problems, organizing material visually, self-testing, and working with others.

Active learning requires you to choose a method to process and recall the material you're learning. Some active learning strategies are:

- Using flash cards.
- Making a visual organizer that summarizes key chapter

concepts, such as a *mind map* or chart.
- Organizing key ideas into a new chart.
- Answering questions or creating a practice test.
- Working with a study partner or group.
- Writing about the material you are learning.

Not only is active learning a more engaging and fun way to study, but it also allows you to use your study time more effectively.[1]

Try it!

- Consider the material you're learning in 1 of your courses this week.
- Create a list of active learning strategies that you can use to study this content.

Extend Your Learning

Check out the following resources:

- NSCC Study Skills Subject Guide for tips, tools and resources.
- Essential Study Skills guide by Algonquin College.

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1. Michael, J. (2006). Where's the evidence that active learning works? *Advances in Physiology Education*, 30(4), 159–167. https://doi.org/10.1152/advan.00053.2006

CHAPTER 20

Master Your Memory

What is memory?[1]

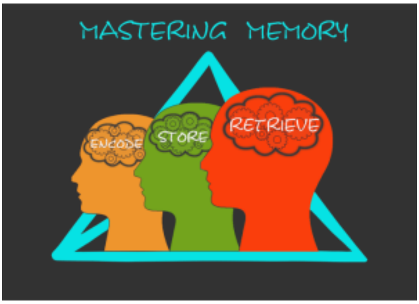

Image Credit: Vijaya Jammi

Memory is the ability to remember past experiences and is a record of the learning process.

The human brain has the ability, known as neuroplasticity, to form new neural pathways, alter existing connections, and adapt and react in ever-changing ways as we learn. We must have ways to retrieve information learned that's stored in our long-term memory.

Long-term memory stores significant events that mark our lives. It lets us retain the meanings of words and the physical skills that we've learned.

There are 3 steps involved in establishing a long-term memory: encoding, storage, and retrieval.

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[1] Dubuc, B. (2002). *Memory and learning*. The Brain from top to bottom. http://thebrain.mcgill.ca/flash/a/a_07/a_07_p/a_07_p_tra/a_07_p_tra.html

1. To **encode**, you assign meaning to the information.
2. To **store** information, you review it and its meanings (study). Repetition is essential to remembering.
3. To **retrieve** it, you follow the path you created through encoding. This might include memory triggers that you used when you were encoding.

What strategies help store information in long-term memory?[2]

Mnemonics (the initial “m” is silent) are strategies to associate the information we want to remember with a physical sense to turn it into something that’s more likely to stick in your mind and be able to bring it back when you want it.

The key idea is that by coding information using vivid mental images, you can reliably code both information and the structure of information. And because the images are vivid, they’re easy to recall when you need them. Here are some tips and examples:

- Use positive, pleasant images. Your brain often blocks out unpleasant ones.
- Use vivid, colourful, sense-laden images. These are easier to remember than drab ones.
- Use all your senses to code information or dress up an image by using sound, smell, taste, touch, movements, and feelings as well as pictures.
- Give your image three dimensions, movement, and space to make it more vivid.

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[2] MindTools Content Team. (n.d.). *Introduction to memory techniques*. https://www.mindtools.com/memory.html

- Exaggerate the size of important parts of the image.
- Use rhymes or humour! Funny things are easier to remember.
- Symbols (red traffic lights, pointing fingers, signs, etc.) can code quite complex messages.

Table[3] [4]

Type	**Sample Method**
Acronyms	Every discipline has its own language and acronyms are the abbreviations, Acronyms can be used to remember words in sequence or a group of words representing things or concepts. CAD can mean: Control Alt Delete, Canadian Dollar, Computer Aided Design, Coronary Artery Disease, , Crank Angle Degree, etc.
Acrostics	Acrostics are phrases where the first letter of each word represents another word. They are relatively easy to make and can be very useful for remembering groups of words. For example: King Philip Can Only Find His Green Slippers. This is the classification system of: Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Order, Family, Genus, Species.
Chunking	You can capitalize on your short-term memory by “chunking” information. If you need to remember this number: 178206781, the task would exhaust your seven units of storage space unless you “chunk” the digits in to groups. In this case, you could divide it into three chunks, like a social insurance number: 178 206 781. By chunking the information and repeating it you can stretch the capacity of your short term memory.
Images	This helps you remember by linking words to meanings through associations based on how a word sounds and creating imagery for specific words. This sort of visualization is found to be more effective when one listened to someone reading a text than when they read the text themselves.
Locations and Journeys	Traditionally known as the Method of Loci, we associate each word from a list or grouping, with a location. Imagine a place you’re familiar with, such as the rooms in your house. These become the objects of information you need to memorize. Another example is to use the route to your work or school, with landmarks along the way becoming the information you need to memorize. When you do this in order of your journey through the imagined space, it makes it easier to retrieve the information in the future.
Maps & Diagrams	Graphic organizers help you remember by connecting new information to your existing knowledge and to let us see how concepts relate to each other and fit in to a context. Mind and concept maps, Cause and Effect, Fishbone, Cycle, Flow Chart, Ladders, Story Board, Compare and Contrast, Venn Diagrams, and more.
Reciting	Saying something out loud activates more areas of our brain and helps to connect information to other activities.
Rhymes	Rhyme, rhythm, repetition, and melody make use of your brain’s ability to encode audio information and use patterns to aid memory. They help recall by limiting the possible options to those items that fit the pattern you have created.
Summarizing	This traditional element of note taking is a way to physically encode materials which make it easier for your brain to store and retrieve. It can be said that if we cannot summarize, then we have not learned…yet.

3. Dubuc, B. (2002). *Memory and learning*. The Brain from top to bottom. http://thebrain.mcgill.ca/flash/a/a_07/a_07_p/a_07_p_tra/a_07_p_tra.html
4. Whitehead, J., Fraenkel, C., Yu, E., & Van Der Mark, A. (2017, February 1). *Memory*. http://etec.ctlt.ubc.ca/510wiki/index.php?title=Memory&oldid=63689

Try it!

Select one course where memorizing key concepts is part of your exam preparation.

- Choose at least one new strategy from the chart above this week.
- Monitor – is this strategy effective for what you're trying to learn?
- A good way to monitor is to see if you can recall the information accurately without looking at a text or notes.

Extend Your Learning

Check out this resource on studying and memory:

- Essential Study Skills by Algonquin College

CHAPTER 21

Effective Self-Testing Strategies

Self-testing is one of the most powerful study strategies. Creating good questions requires you to think critically about what you need to learn (planning).

Practicing answering questions without referring to a textbook or notes allows you to check your progress. The trick to effective self-testing is asking the right questions. In college, you're required to move beyond recalling basic facts and details, and you must apply and analyze material.

One way of picturing these levels of depth in learning is *Bloom's Taxonomy*. The categories in the cognitive taxonomy include:

1. **Remember** (knowledge recall) – retrieving relevant knowledge from long-term memory.
2. **Understand** (comprehension) – interpreting the meaning of information; being able to "translate" knowledge into your own words; linking new information to what you already know.
3. **Apply** – using what you know to do required tasks.
4. **Analyze** – taking things apart; dissecting; asking "why?"; seeing relationships and how things work.

5. **Evaluate** – appraising, judging and critiquing the outcomes.
6. **Create** (synthesis) – putting things together; building on what you know to create something new; seeing new relationships or making new connections. [1] [2]

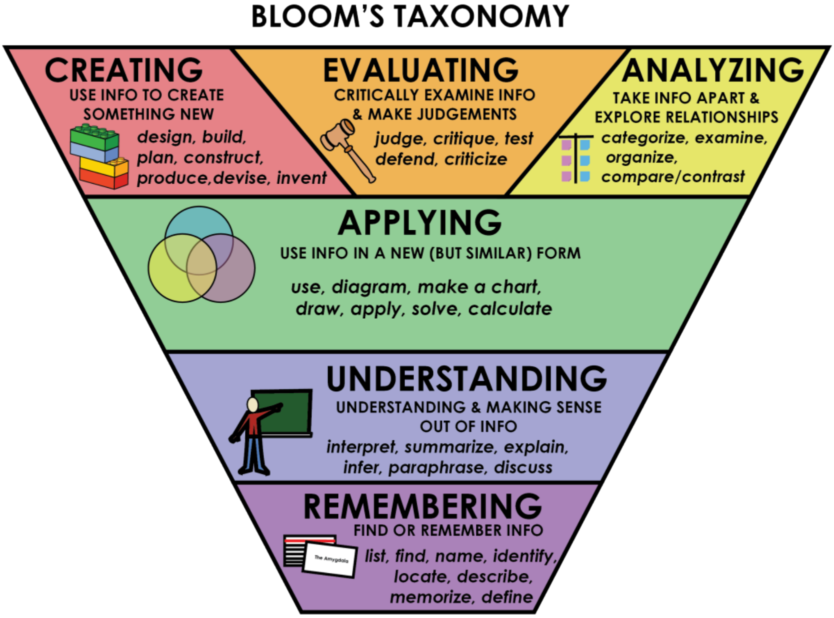
BLOOM'S TAXONOMY
CREATING
USE INFO TO CREATE SOMETHING NEW
design, build, plan, construct, produce, devise, invent
EVALUATING
CRITICALLY EXAMINE INFO & MAKE JUDGEMENTS
judge, critique, test defend, criticize
ANALYZING
TAKE INFO APART & EXPLORE RELATIONSHIPS
categorize, examine, organize, compare/contrast
APPLYING
USE INFO IN A NEW (BUT SIMILAR) FORM
use, diagram, make a chart, draw, apply, solve, calculate
UNDERSTANDING
UNDERSTANDING & MAKING SENSE OUT OF INFO
interpret, summarize, explain, infer, paraphrase, discuss
REMEMBERING
FIND OR REMEMBER INFO
The Amygdala
list, find, name, identify, locate, describe, memorize, define

Image Credit: Rawia Inaim. [Long Description].

A way to create study questions or active learning activities is to move step-by-step through each level of Bloom's Taxonomy. Begin with a few questions at the *Remembering* level then go deeper into your subject as you move through the levels. If you don't yet know

1. Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. (Eds.). (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. New York: Longman.
2. Bloom, B., Englehart, M. Furst, E., Hill, W., & Krathwohl, D. (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals. Handbook I: Cognitive domain*. New York, Toronto: Longmans, Green.

the technical language of the subject, it will be difficult for you to apply, evaluate, analyze, or be creative.

Try it!

Create Self Study Questions Using Bloom's Cognitive Taxonomy

- Pick a topic you're working on.
- For each level of Bloom's Taxonomy:
    - Create a question and answer it to show that you can think about the material at that level.
    - Then, working with a partner and using the chart below, explain the question at each level of Bloom's taxonomy.
    - Discuss how your question would allow you to assess how much you know and what level you're working at.

Level	Question
Remembering	Remembering and Recalling information.
Understanding	Explaining ideas or concepts.
Applying	Applying information in a familiar situation.
Analyzing	Analyzing by breaking information into parts to explore relationships.
Evaluating	Justifying a decision or course of action.
Creating	Generating new ideas, products, or ways of viewing things.

CHAPTER 22

Explore the 4 Levels of Questioning

Another way of creating effective self-study questions is to divide questions into 4 levels. The levels move from more surface questions, towards deeper, more analytical questions. To be sure that your self-study questions probe deep enough into your course content, you'll want to include questions from each level in your review.

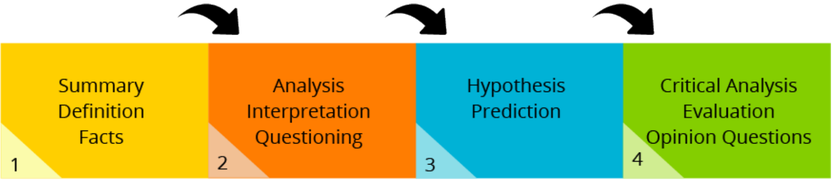
Summary
Definition
Facts
1
Analysis
Interpretation
Questioning
2
Hypothesis
Prediction
3
Critical Analysis
Evaluation
Opinion Questions
4

Image Credit: Rawia Inaim

4 Levels of Questioning

Level 1. Summarizing / Definitions / Fact Questions	These questions give you the vocabulary and scope of the subject matter.
	What is the definition of…?
	Who did…?
	When did…occur?
	How much/many…?
	What is an example of…?
Level 2. Analysis / Interpretation Questions	Here, you are looking for the context and impact, supported by evidence.
	How did…occur?
	Why does…occur?
	What are the reasons for…?
	What are types of…?
	How does…function?
	How does the process occur?
	What are my own examples of…
	What causes …to occur?
	What results when…occurs?
	What is the relationship between…and…?
	How is…similar to/different from…?
	What does…mean?
	What conclusions can be drawn from…information?
	What is (are) the problem(s), conflict(s), issue(s)?
	What are possible solutions/resolutions to these problems, conflicts, issues?
	What is the main argument or thesis of an author?
	How is this argument developed?
	What evidence, proof, support is offered?
	What are other theories, arguments from other authors?

Level 3. Hypothesis / Prediction Questions	These questions help you to develop hypothesis and look at possible outcomes.
	If…occurs, then what would happen?
	If…changed, then what would change?
	What does theory x predict will happen?
	What hypothesis or theory explains this data or given information?
Level 4. Critical Analysis / Evaluation / Opinion Questions	Use these questions to analyze differentiate, and make choices about the subject in context and with supporting evidence. Is…
	Good/bad? Why?
	Correct or incorrect? Why?
	Effective or ineffective? Why?
	Relevant or irrelevant? Why?
	Logical or illogical? Why?
	Applicable or not applicable? Why?
	Proven or not proven? Why?
	Ethical or unethical? Why
	What are the advantages or disadvantages of…? Why?
	What is the best solution to the problem, conflict, issue?
	Why is it the best?
	What should or should not happen? Why?
	Do I agree or disagree? Why?
	What is my opinion? What is my support for my opinion?

How You Use These Questions

Take any concept or statement, put one of these question “keys” in front of it, put a question mark at the end, and you have your question.

Now go look for an answer.

Remember, these questions may already be at the end of your textbook chapters or learning objectives. Look for them in the chapter and use them if they're relevant to your learning. [12]

Try it!

- Choose one chapter you're currently studying.
- Create as many questions as possible – include questions from each of the 4 levels.
- Use the 4 levels to ensure that your questions are varied and deep.

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1. Adapted from: Salustri, F. (2015). *Four levels of questions*. Retrieved April 23, 2018, from [http://deseng.ryerson.ca/dokuwiki/design:four_levels_of_questions.](http://deseng.ryerson.ca/dokuwiki/design:four_levels_of_questions) Used with permission.
2. McMaster University. (2005). *What questions engage students?* Retrieved April 23, 2018, from http://cll.mcmaster.ca/resources/pdf/what_questions_engage_students.pdf

PART VII

GET READY FOR QUIZZES AND TESTS

Plan-Monitor-Evaluate Connection

Tests are coming! How will you prepare?

In this chapter, you'll begin by creating a study **plan** for your tests by returning to your Learning Objectives and determining what you need to know for your tests and quizzes. You'll develop a plan for how you will use active learning strategies in your review sessions, learn about test taking strategies and how to limit test anxiety.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you'll be able to:

- Strategically organize review sessions.

- Apply effective test-taking strategies for answering multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.
- Manage test anxiety.

CHAPTER 23

Getting Ready for Review Sessions

Step 1: Set Clear Goals

Create goals that are SMART! Remember, SMART goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=89#h5p-3

Step 2: Determine what to learn and how to show it on a test

Refer to the learning outcomes for your course, and individual modules within your course. You can find these:

- In your course outline and work plan.
- At the beginning of textbook chapters and Brightspace module.
- In course notes provided by your instructor.

Step 3: Identify Active Learning Strategies

There are many ways to learn the material. Finding an active learning strategy that works for you is important.

Strategies
Develop and answer self-testing questions
Use flash card for key concepts
Make your own flashcard or use an app to create flashcards with key concepts
Create mind maps
Create charts that compare/contrast key course concepts
Develop **mnemonics** to help you memorize important information
Write outlines for potential essay questions
Complete practice questions from your textbook/course materials
Develop practice exams with a study partner or group
Create summaries of course notes
Develop a daily study plan that includes goals and rewards
Review previous quizzes, noting your strengths and areas for improvement

Step 4: Identify resources that can help you succeed

You don't have to do it alone! There are many resources available to NSCC students to help you succeed.

Resources include:

- Contact your instructor with questions.
- Form/attend a study group.
    - Check out Study Groups and Group Work in the NSCC Study Skills Subject Guide for more information.

- Attend Peer Assisted Learning Supports (PALS) sessions:
    - study groups, drop in sessions and one on one tutoring (NSCC Office 365 login required).
- Get help from a tutor.
    - NSCC students have access to Pear Deck Tutor and Cultural Tutoring Supports (NSCC Office 365 login required). If you have questions, connect with a Student Advisor (NSCC Office 365 login required).
- Consult with your Student Accessibility Specialist (NSCC Office 365 login required).
- Use supplemental online resources such as LinkedIn Learning (NSCC Office 365 login required).
- Use Library Subject Guides designed specifically for your program.
- Use Learning Supports Guides to further help with college readiness and academic skills.

Step 5: Create a study plan

A study plan can help you organize your time to make sure you cover all the material you need to learn along with strategies to support your learning. Think of one test that you'll be writing soon. Identify:

- what you need to learn, and
- 1 or more active learning strategies that you'll use to study the content.

Use this information to create a study plan. The chart below provides an example of what might be included in a study plan. What might your study plan include?

Study Session Date	What I need to learn	Strategies/resources for learning
February 1	Psychology Chapter 3: LOs	Venn diagram (compare/contrast types of memory)
	Compare/contrast types of memory (semantic, episodic procedural)	Review vocabulary in flash card app
	Describe the stages in recording new information in long-term memory	Self-testing questions on memory
	Explain the role of the hippocampus, amygdala, and cerebellum in memory processes	Draw and label diagram of brain re: memory
February 2	Explain the role of Pavlov, Skinner and Watson in the development of behaviourism	Create a mind map of behaviourism/ behavioural psychologists
	Compare and contrast classical and operant conditioning	Review vocabulary in flash card app
	Create a model to demonstrate how learning occurs through a process of conditioning	Develop scenarios that explain the process of classical/operant conditioning
		Write questions for study group session
February 3…		

As you complete your study plan, track the Learning Outcomes you're comfortable with, and which are still difficult for you. When your test date comes closer, spend extra time in areas that are still challenging.

Try it!

Create a study plan using the Strategic Study Plan Template for an upcoming test.

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=89#h5p-8

CHAPTER 24

Answering Test Questions

Test-taking doesn't have to be a scary experience. Understanding how to take a test is a valuable and empowering skill.

General Test-Taking Tips

- Listen to your instructor for any last-minute instructions.
- Read the directions carefully.
- If you can, review the entire test before you begin to answer.
    - Look for "quick wins" and answer the questions that you know first.
    - Look to see if the questions are weighted differently (e.g. one question could be worth 2 points and another 10 points) and decide which to focus on next.
- Do a "brain dump" of key concepts, definitions, formulae, etc. on a blank piece of paper (check with your instructor first to make sure this is okay).
- Pay attention to the time allotted for the test.

- Take the time to check your work before you hand it in.

What to do if your mind goes blank?

Put your pen down, take a deep breath, sit back and relax for a moment. If you're in the middle of an answer, read through what you have written so far. If you have to remember formulas, try associating them with pictures or music while revisiting. If you really can't finish with this answer, leave a gap. It will probably come back to you once you're less anxious.

Answering Multiple Choice Questions[1][2]

Read each question carefully

Multiple choice tests examine your ability to read carefully just as much as they test your ability to recall information. You must answer the question that is being asked.

Start with questions you feel most comfortable answering

- Cover up the possible responses with a piece of paper or with your hand while you read the body of the question. Decide what you think the answer is.
- Uncover the answers and pick the one that matches your answer. Check to be sure that none of the other

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1. Multiple choice content adapted from: Study Guides and Strategies. (n.d.). *Multiple choice tests*. Retrieved from http://www.studygs.net/tsttak3.htm
2. University of Toronto (2023).*Multiple choice tests and exams*. Retrieved from https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/task/multiple-choice-tests-and-exams/

responses are better.

- Read the body of the question with each option treating them as a true-false question and choose the most true.
- If you are unsure and need to spend more time with the question, or you answered the question but are unsure that you made the correct choice, put a question mark beside that question, and move on to the next.
- Move on and finish all the questions that you can answer and then come back later to the questions you're unsure of.
- Sometimes the answer will occur to you simply because you are more relaxed after having answered other questions.

If you can't decide on a correct answer

- Absolute words, such as "always" or "never" are less likely to be correct than conditional words like "usually" or "probably."
- Be careful of double negatives (e.g., "there are not insignificant numbers of salmon in British Columbia waters = there are significant numbers of salmon in British Columbia waters). Create the equivalent positive statement.
- Eliminate options that you know to be incorrect.
- If all else fails… guess.

Finally: Take the time to check your work before you hand it in.

Short Answer Questions

For these questions, your instructor is looking for a brief and descriptive answer.

- Allocate your time according to the proportion of marks each question is worth. A question worth 5 points will need more time then a question worth 2 points.
- If a question asks you to “explain”, pretend you’re telling a friend about the topic.
- If you have questions that are a mix of short and essay answers, read your instructions carefully so you don’t miss answering part of the question.

Essay Questions

Essay questions ask you to discuss and expand on a topic, and are usually several paragraphs long.

Think about what the question is asking

- What are you expected to include in your answer?
- What material will be relevant? If a question asks you to “briefly comment”, treat it as a mini-essay.
    - Have a sentence or 2 to introduce your topic.
    - Select a few points to discuss with a sentence or 2 about each.
    - Add a concluding sentence that sums up your overall response.

Make a Plan

Take a few minutes to think and make a plan:

- Underline the key words in the question.
- Identify the main topic and discussion areas.
- Choose a few points/arguments about which you can write.
- Make a mini-plan which puts them in order before you start writing. You can cross it through afterwards.

Demonstrate that you're answering the question

- In your introduction show how you understand the question and outline how you'll answer it.
- Make short paragraphs with 1 or 2 points or arguments per paragraph and summarize how it answers the question.
- In your conclusion summarize the arguments to answer the question.

Try it!

An excellent way to prepare for tests is to spend time doing practice quiz.

- Do any practice tests your instructor prepares. If your instructor has not prepared a practice quiz, create one for yourself using your class notes or questions from your textbook.
- Take the practice quiz as if it were the real test.

    - Close your books.
    - Allow yourself the same amount of time as you will have for the test.
    - After you finish, check your work.
    - Monitor what you successfully completed, and what you'll need to spend additional time studying.

CHAPTER 25

Managing Test Anxiety

Test-taking can be a stressful experience.

Managing test anxiety starts by creating and following good habits throughout the term, and in the weeks leading up to the test. It also involves avoiding bad habits like cramming at the last minute, relying solely on memorization, and not prioritizing your mental and physical health.

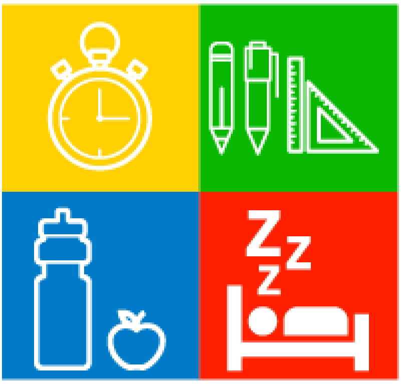


Image Credit: Rawia Inaim

What can you do on Exam Day to Manage any Jitters

1. Be well rested and avoid drinking too much coffee.
2. Arrive early and take a moment to relax.
3. Avoid distractions including sitting near anything or anyone that distracts you.

4. Listen to and/or read instructions carefully. Ask for clarification if you don't understand the directions.
5. As soon as the test begins, do a memory dump. Write down any relevant formulae or concepts.
6. Before you start answerig, if you can, read the entire test so you know what to expect and take note of the point value of each section.
7. Do the easiest questions first then go back to the harder questions. This will help increase your confidence and may trigger your memory for other answers.
8. If you find yourself beginning to panic, or feeling anxious, pause and take some deep breaths and exhale slowly.
9. Focus on the questions by underlining key words in each question.
10. Take your time and don't race through the test.
11. Use any extra time to check for errors, re-visit difficult questions, and proofread for grammar and spelling. Make sure you answered all the questions.
12. Don't change answers unless you're absolutely sure that you've made a mistake. Your first response is likely to be correct and second-guessing can lead to lower scores.

Make a plan for test day:

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=94#h5p-9

Extend Your Learning

Explore the NSCC Libraries Study Skills Subject Guide for more resources and tips on managing test anxiety.

PART VIII

GET ASSIGNMENTS AND RESEARCH DONE

Plan-Monitor-Evaluate Connection

Completing major assignments requires strong **planning**. In this chapter, you'll learn how to manage your time to complete your assignments. You'll also use **rubrics** to plan what you need to do to be successful. You'll **monitor** if you're meeting your daily goals. Using your rubric and self-editing strategies, you'll monitor whether you're completing the assignment requirements before submitting your work.

Learning Objectives

Major assignments can seem overwhelming at first, but by creating an achievable step-by-step plan, you'll be able to complete your assignments on time.

By the end of this chapter, you'll be able to:

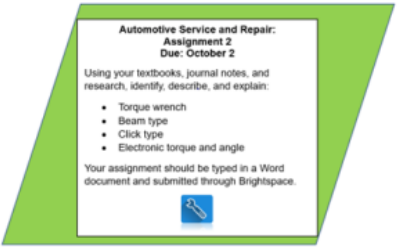
- Determine what's required for your assignment.
- Develop an assignment plan.
- Move past writer's block and generate ideas for your assignment.
- Understand the research process.
- Create an outline for a written assignment.
- Use the 5 steps of editing your work.
- Understand APA citation and how to avoid plagiarism.

CHAPTER 26

Manage Your Assignments

Assignments require planning. You'll need a clear understanding of what your instructor wants before starting an assignment. If you're not sure, ask your instructor.

Step 1: Read the assignment carefully and determine requirements



Automotive Service and Repair:
Assignment 2
Due: October 2

Using your textbooks, journal notes, and research, identify, describe, and explain:

- Torque wrench
- Beam type
- Click type
- Electronic torque and angle

Your assignment should be typed in a Word document and submitted through Brightspace.

Ask yourself:

- What is the assignment asking me to do?
- Who is my audience?
- What type of resources should I use?
- What work have I done in class that will help me with this assignment?
- When is the assignment due?

- What other tasks require time management around the due date?
- How do I submit the assignment when complete?

Step 2: Start an assignment Journal

Create a document and gather details about the assignment. Details like:

- Due date.
- Word count.
- Topic.
- **Scope**.
- Keywords.
- Resources needed.
- APA citation requirements.

Also start gathering:

- Answers to questions you asked in Step 1.
- Your topic ideas.
- Any brainstorming ideas you have.
- Resources as you find them.
- Any questions you may need to ask your instructor about the assignment.

Step 3: Look at the Rubric

The **rubric** is an assessment tool used by your instructor to guide how they assign marks to assignments. You can use the rubric to help understand your assignment and how it will be graded. If you have questions about the assignment or rubric, talk to your instructor.

When to use the rubric.

Before you begin working on your assignment, review the rubric. This will help you avoid wasting time on work that may not fit the assignment.

While you're doing your final draft, grade yourself against the rubric and make sure you've hit all the key points.

Step 4: Create an Assignment Schedule

Add scheduled time to work on your assignment into your weekly schedule. Divide large tasks into several smaller ones to make it easier to get started and help you stay focused. Once you've completed smaller tasks, check them off to see your progress and to keep you motivated.

Don't forget to consider any life events (i.e., work or appointments you need to attend) when you're developing your schedule.

Time Management

Time management is a skill that helps you organize, plan, and schedule for upcoming tasks and commitments as well as deadlines. By using time management strategies, like daily to-do lists and weekly schedules, you can set clear expectations for yourself and have a plan for success.

For more information on how to develop a weekly schedule or use an assignment calculator, visit the Time Management Subject Guide.

Try it!

Review your assignment instructions and rubric. Use them to answer the following questions:

1. In one sentence, describe your task for the assignment: What do you need to do?
2. What resources will you need to complete this assignment? (textbook materials, handouts, or class notes that relate to this assignment.)
3. How many additional resources do you need to find to complete the assignment task (e.g., articles, books, websites)? Where should you look for these resources?
4. What content do you need to create for this assignment?
5. What formatting do you need to follow for the assignment?
6. What format do you need to use for citations and references?
7. Do you know how to submit the assignment?
8. Do you know where to go for support (e.g., Campus Library, Writing Centre, etc.)?

CHAPTER 27

Make an Assignment Plan

The idea of completing an assignment may seem overwhelming, but if you can divide the tasks into smaller steps or manageable "chunks", you'll be more likely to complete your assignment on time and avoid procrastination.

Consider the following example. The assignment is divided into chunks with a clear date when each task needs to be completed. It's always good planning to add in a couple of extra days in case something unexpected happens or a task takes longer than you thought. This will help you meet the deadline and not feel rushed.

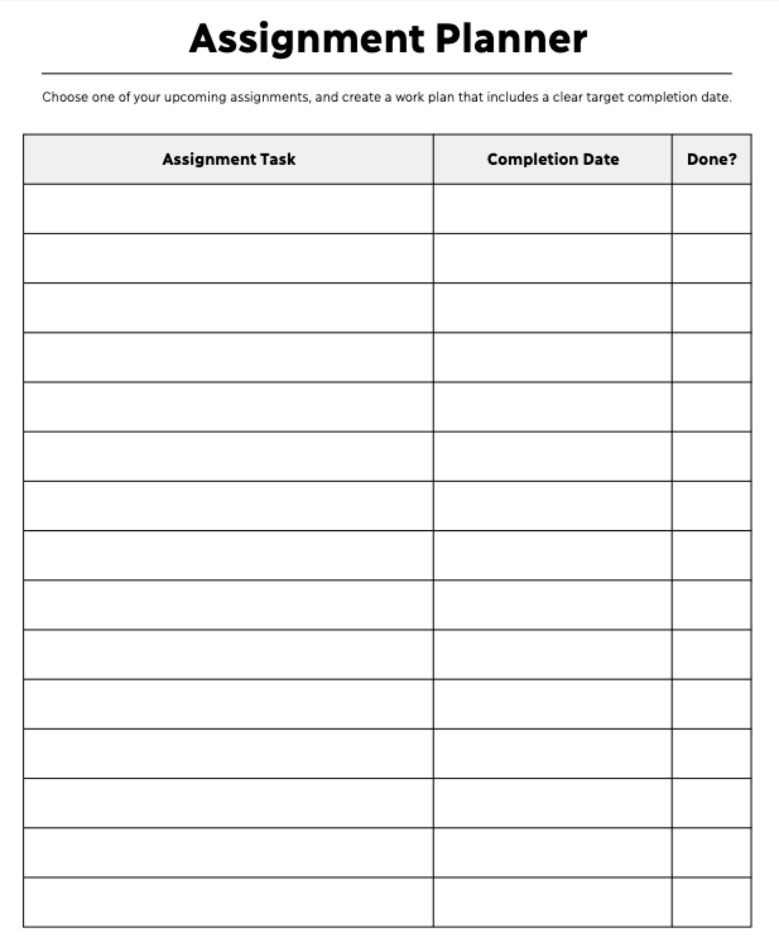
Assignment Task	**Target Completion Date**	**Complete?**
Read assignment instructions and rubric	September 19	Y
Clarify any questions you have about the assignment or rubric	September 20	Y
Find where in Brightspace you need to submit your assignment	September 20	
Review course materials and find the information you need	September 21	
Library research – find any information you need to identify, describe, and explain	September 22	
Read and take notes on the items	September 23	
Organize your notes and begin to complete the assignment	September 24	
Make a Writing Centre appointment if you need help getting started	September 24	
Write an assignment outline	September 27	
Include details as required in the assignment description	September 27	
Self-edit content and organization (use the rubric as your guide)	October 3	
Make a Writing Centre appointment for feedback	October 4	
Edit and proofread assignment	October 8	
Submit final assignment	October 10	

Use the Assignment Planner worksheet below to break your assignment into smaller tasks. Create tasks that can be done easily in one day, and preferably in a single work period.

By setting specific and achievable goals, you'll be more motivated to get started, and you'll be able to measure your progress each day. Remember to reward yourself for meeting your goals along the way.

Try it!

Choose one of your upcoming assignments, and create a work plan modelled on the example above.



Assignment Planner

Choose one of your upcoming assignments, and create a work plan that includes a clear target completion date.

Assignment Task	Completion Date	Done?

Download the assignment planner worksheet.

CHAPTER 28

Move Beyond Writer's Block

Even when you understand the assignment and have a plan, sometimes it can be hard to get started. If you're feeling stuck and need to get your ideas flowing, you may want to try some of the following strategies:

1. Try some free writing. Write a journal, poem, or story that includes your main ideas.
2. Say your ideas out loud. Talk to a friend, family member, or classmate about what you're reading and learning about your topi. Or, record your thoughts on a phone or use the dictation feature in Microsoft Word then play the recording back.
3. Write your ideas on post-it-notes with one idea per sheet. Then, group your notes according to themes. This can help you to create the initial organization of your assignment.
4. When using ideas from sources like a book, website or article, write down the name, author, publication date, url and/or page number of the source right away. You'll need this to create your citations and reference page later. If you don't keep track of them as you go, it will be time

consuming and hard to find them later.

5. Create a mind map or concept map.

Mind Map

Mind mapping is a way of collecting ideas around a topic and making connections. You can use mind mapping to brainstorm ideas, and visualize how these ideas are related.[1]

Mind Mapping is a good way to start the assignment process. It can help you see where you will need more information to include in your assignment.

How to Use Mind Mapping

Start with what you know. This may be as little as 1 word. The next step is to define your word. Each part of the definition can become a new circle in your mind map. Write as many ideas as you want and build on those ideas, don't limit yourself.

Ask yourself, "Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How" questions to help identify what you know and/or remember about your topic.

As you make new connections, you'll also see where there are gaps and what you don't know about the topic. This can lead you to identify what you need to research more about the subject.

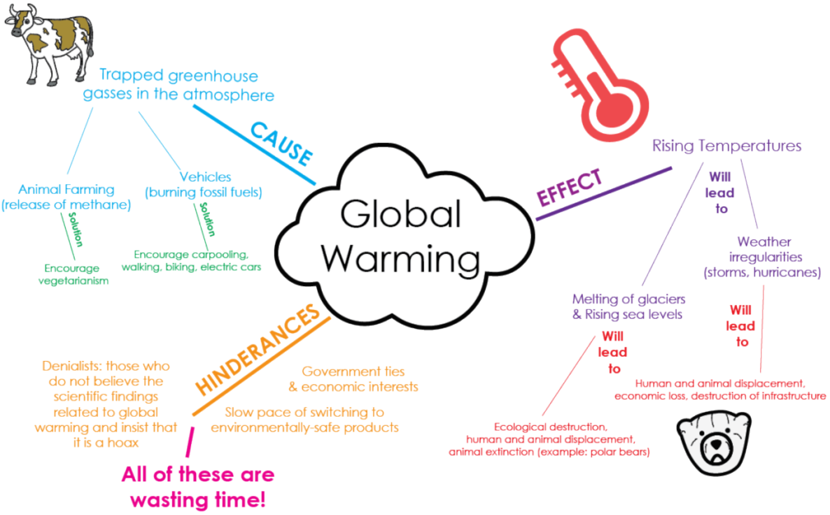
Once you have enough information, you can start to develop the relationships between the ideas. This allows you to continue to expand on your ideas.

---

[1] Buzan, T. (n.d.). *What is a mind map?* Retrieved from http://www.tonybuzan.com/about/mind-mapping/

Mind Mapping Example

Below, is an example of a mind map created about global warming. Look at the main ideas, supporting details, examples, cause and effect relationships, and conclusions. Notice how there are a combination of words, images, and colours to help visualize the topic, organize information, and make connections.


Trapped greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere
CAUSE
Animal Farming (release of methane)
Vehicles (burning fossil fuels)
Solution
Solution
Encourage vegetarianism
Encourage carpooling, walking, biking, electric cars
Global Warming
EFFECT
Rising Temperatures
Will lead to
Weather irregularities (storms, hurricanes)
Melting of glaciers & Rising sea levels
Will lead to
Will lead to
Human and animal displacement, economic loss, destruction of infrastructure
Ecological destruction, human and animal displacement, animal extinction (example: polar bears)
HINDERANCES
Denialists: those who do not believe the scientific findings related to global warming and insist that it is a hoax
Government ties & economic interests
Slow pace of switching to environmentally-safe products
All of these are wasting time!

Example Mind Map. Image Credit: Rawia Inaim

Try it!

Choose 1 of the 4 strategies listed below:

1. Talk about your ideas
2. Spend time freewriting
3. Group post-it notes

4. Create a mind map

Now that you've started to generate your ideas, you'll be ready to move onto gathering your research materials and creating an outline.

Extend Your Learning

- NSCC Writing Centre Guide: The Writing Process
- Research Process: Researching and Writing: Get Started
- Study Skills Guide: Mind Mapping Resources

CHAPTER 29

The Research Process

Research can be a complex and iterative process. Your understanding changes as you move between the steps of finding and evaluating information, which leads you to ask new and better questions.

Repeated questioning improves your research.

- Explore
- Search
- Evaluate your findings
- Cite
- Share your thoughts

Step 1: Choose and develop Your Topic

Your topic must meet the requirements outlined in your assignment and ideally, it should be interesting to you. Writing a paper or assignment will be easier if you're interested in the topic you're researching.

Select a topic that has good information available. Choosing a topic with too much information or too little information can make your writing challenging. You may need to narrow or broaden your topic, depending on what you find in your search.

Step 2: Finding Information

When working on a research assignment you'll need to find resources that support your ideas. It's a good idea to do a preliminary search to see if you can find enough information on your topic.

If you need help searching and locating resources for your assignment, visit the NSCC Libraries Website or talk to your Campus Library staff. They can help point you in the right direction to find materials for your topic.

NSCC Libraries gives you access to:

- a library catalogue (search for books, eBooks, and more)
- streaming video collections
- over 100 journal and article databases
- subject guides

There is also a collection of instructional videos on the NSCC Libraries YouTube Channel to help you get started.

STEP 3: Evaluate your information

While you're collecting materials for your assignment from various sources, it's important to evaluate if the materials are good quality. Information found in a general internet search can range from being very reliable to not reliable at all. It's important that you check the quality of the information before you use it in your assignment.

There are several different types of tools to help you evaluate information. Two of the most popular evaluation tools are:

- CARS (Credible, Accurate, Reasonable, Support)
- CRAAP (Currency, Relevancy, Authority, Accuracy, Purpose)

You can find information about these evaluation checklist tools in the Research Process Subject Guide.

STEP 4: Cite your sources

As you're collecting information and materials, keep track of where you found the information. You must give credit and cite all the sources you use in the creation of your assignment including websites, books, articles, images, audio, video or any other source. If it was created by someone else, you must acknowledge this by giving the author or creator credit. Not citing your sources is considered plagiarism, and is a violation of the NSCC Academic Integrity Policy and can have serious consequences.

Explore the Academic Integrity and APA Citation chapter of this book for more information. The NSCC Libraries APA Style Guide will show you examples of how to cite different types of sources to ensure you are giving proper credit in your assignment or paper. When in doubt, ask you Campus Library staff for help.

STEP 5: Share Your Thoughts

You're now ready to start writing the outline for your assignment or paper!

Extend Your Learning

Watch the What is Research? video from the NSCC Libraries YouTube Channel.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=107#oembed-1

CHAPTER 30

Create an Outline

Using an outline will help you organize your information and present your ideas clearly.

Step 1: Create a thesis statement

When writing an essay or research paper, begin by writing a draft **thesis** statement. A thesis statement is the main argument/idea that you will develop in your paper. You can revise this later if needed.

Step 2: Identify the main ideas that relate to your thesis statement

Based on the readings and research you've already done, list the main points you'll be discussing in your assignment. Put your ideas in the most logical order and think about how each idea supports your thesis/main topic. These main ideas will become the topic sentences for each body paragraph.

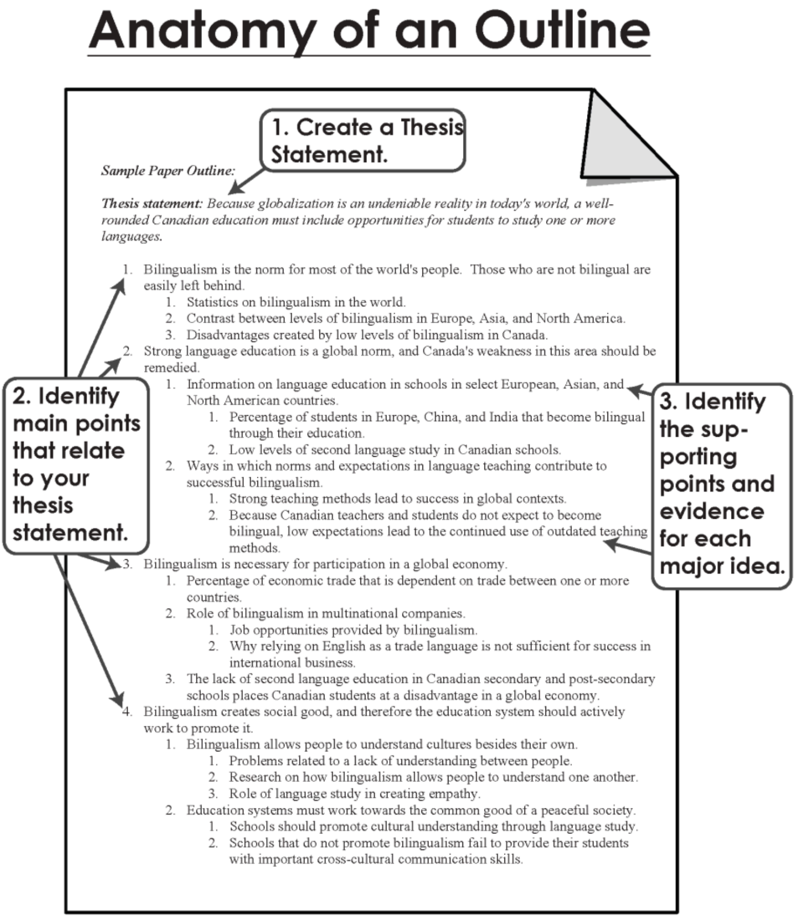
Step 3: Identify the supporting points and

evidence for each major idea

Each main point will need supporting ideas, details, and evidence that you've collected from other sources. Remember, each piece of information or idea must be cited whether you've quoted it directly, paraphrased, or summarized the information. The APA citation style is used most often at NSCC. The APA Citation Style Guide will help you get started with examples of how to cite different types of sources, create a reference page, and format your paper.

Step 4: Create your outline

Outlines are used to help identify your main ideas and supporting ideas. In the example below, main ideas are numbered, while the supporting ideas are indented and labelled with letters. Each level of supporting detail is indented further.



Anatomy of an Outline

1. Create a Thesis Statement.
2. Identify main points that relate to your thesis statement.
3. Identify the supporting points and evidence for each major idea.

Sample Paper Outline:

Thesis statement: *Because globalization is an undeniable reality in today's world, a well-rounded Canadian education must include opportunities for students to study one or more languages.*

1. Bilingualism is the norm for most of the world's people. Those who are not bilingual are easily left behind.
    1. Statistics on bilingualism in the world.
    2. Contrast between levels of bilingualism in Europe, Asia, and North America.
    3. Disadvantages created by low levels of bilingualism in Canada.
2. Strong language education is a global norm, and Canada's weakness in this area should be remedied.
    1. Information on language education in schools in select European, Asian, and North American countries.
        1. Percentage of students in Europe, China, and India that become bilingual through their education.
        2. Low levels of second language study in Canadian schools.
    2. Ways in which norms and expectations in language teaching contribute to successful bilingualism.
        1. Strong teaching methods lead to success in global contexts.
        2. Because Canadian teachers and students do not expect to become bilingual, low expectations lead to the continued use of outdated teaching methods.
3. Bilingualism is necessary for participation in a global economy.
    1. Percentage of economic trade that is dependent on trade between one or more countries.
    2. Role of bilingualism in multinational companies.
        1. Job opportunities provided by bilingualism.
        2. Why relying on English as a trade language is not sufficient for success in international business.
    3. The lack of second language education in Canadian secondary and post-secondary schools places Canadian students at a disadvantage in a global economy.
4. Bilingualism creates social good, and therefore the education system should actively work to promote it.
    1. Bilingualism allows people to understand cultures besides their own.
        1. Problems related to a lack of understanding between people.
        2. Research on how bilingualism allows people to understand one another.
        3. Role of language study in creating empathy.
    2. Education systems must work towards the common good of a peaceful society.
        1. Schools should promote cultural understanding through language study.
        2. Schools that do not promote bilingualism fail to provide their students with important cross-cultural communication skills.

Try it!

Create an outline for a paper or assignment for 1 of your courses.

1. Write a thesis statement that clearly presents the argument that you'll make.

2. Write topic sentences for each body paragraph.
3. Use a multi-level outline, similar to the one in the example above, to create an outline before you begin writing.

Extend Your Learning

- Writing Thesis Statements from The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- Writing Topic Sentences written by Jenny Hall and Jerry Plotnick, University College Writing Centre, University of Toronto.
- Sample Essay Outline from the Student Learning Centre, Ontario Tech University.

CHAPTER 31

Write Your First Draft

Your thesis statement and outline will guide you through the rest of the writing process.

Tips for Writing Your First Draft

Step 1: Write the body paragraphs first

Although the introduction is the first thing your reader will see, it is sometimes easier to write an introduction once you know how your paper develops. Use an outline to help you organize your points and ideas ahead of time.

Do

- Make sure each paragraph supports the main idea (thesis statement) of your paper.
- Include only one main idea in each paragraph. Use a new paragraph for every new piece of information you want to discuss.
- Begin each paragraph with a topic sentence.
- Include evidence: facts, details, examples, statistics, and

any other information that improves your argument. Be sure to cite all of the sources that you use.

- Introduce different paragraphs with words like First, Next, In addition, Moreover, Finally.

Don't

- Include paragraphs that have no connection to your main idea (thesis statement).
- Have more than one main idea in each paragraph.
- Make "sweeping statements" (generalizations). Do not make an extreme statement without giving details to support it.

Step 2: Write the Introduction

Get your audience's attention. What's important or interesting about this topic? What background do your readers need to understand?

Your introduction should also include your thesis and an overview of the main points you'll be discussing in your paper. Your introduction tells your reader what you're going to cover in the essay.

Do

- Make it clear to the reader what your paper is about.
- Give a strong thesis statement. What do you want to say about the topic?
- Start with something that "grabs" the reader.
- Give any necessary background and suggest why this topic is important.

Don't

- Make it too long. The introduction should be no more

than 15-20% of your essay.
- Say, "This essay is about ..." What do you want to say about it?

Step 3: Write the conclusion

The conclusion is the end of your paper and tells your reader what you have covered in your paper. You should restate your thesis, summarize the most important points, and demonstrate that you've proven your thesis.

Do

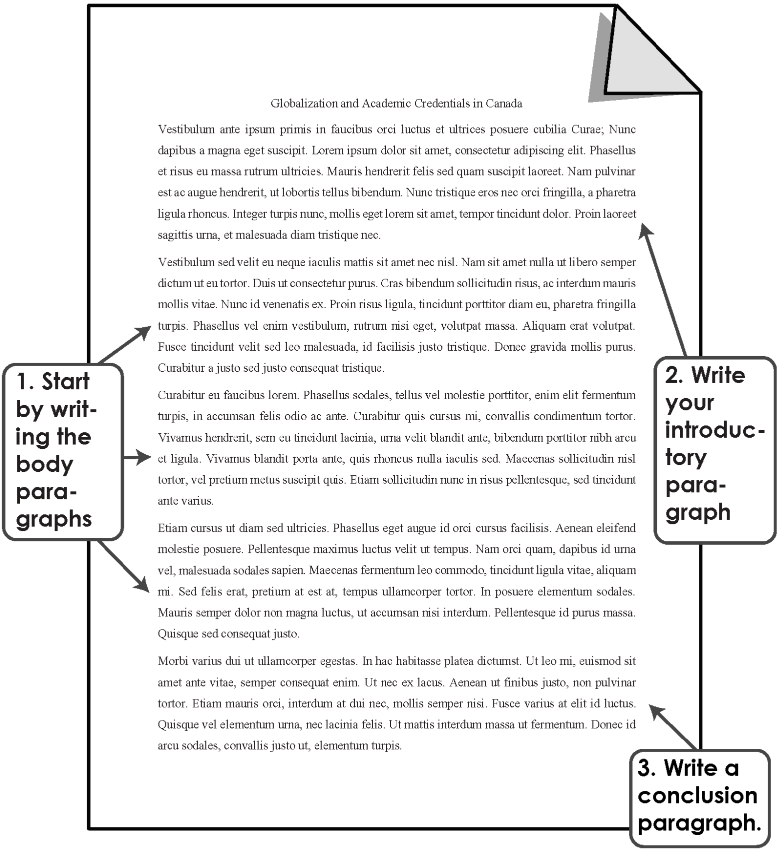
- Summarize your key points.
- Make recommendations, suggestions, and/or predictions. What should happen next?
- Start with a phrase like "In conclusion", ... or "To conclude", ... or "To sum up", ...

Don't

- Make it too long. Aim for no more than 15% of your essay.
- Add new information or arguments at this point.

Remember: You can book an appointment with the NSCC Writing Centre for help with writing your paper or assignment.

Writing an Essay Draft



Globalization and Academic Credentials in Canada

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Morbi varius dui ut ullamcorper egestas. In hac habitasse platea dictumst. Ut leo mi, euismod sit amet ante vitae, semper consequat enim. Ut nec ex lacus. Aenean ut finibus justo, non pulvinar tortor. Etiam mauris orci, interdum at dui nec, mollis semper nisi. Fusce varius at elit id luctus. Quisque vel elementum urna, nec lacinia felis. Ut mattis interdum massa ut fermentum. Donec id arcu sodales, convallis justo ut, elementum turpis.

1. Start by writing the body paragraphs

2. Write your introductory paragraph

3. Write a conclusion paragraph.

CHAPTER 32

Self-Edit Your Work

Editing
Proofreading

Proofreading is part of editing, but editing is much more than proofreading.

Editing: a process of revising the content, organization, grammar, and presentation of a piece of writing.

Proofreading: Checking for accuracy in a piece of writing that is nearly complete. Includes checking smaller details of grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Self Editing

After you've finished creating a first draft of your paper or assignment, begin the process of editing and revising.

Editing allows you to present your ideas in the clearest and most effective way possible. It involves making improvements to your paper or assignment. Editing includes reviewing your thesis, supporting details, paragraph structure, sentence structure and grammar, and the organization of your assignment

Self-Editing in 5 Steps

It can be hard to know where to start when editing. Following these 5 steps can help take the mystery out of the editing process.

Step 1: Check the assignment instructions

- Compare the assignment instructions to your draft. Use the instructions like a checklist.
- Look for missing information or details in your assignment and focus on those areas.
- Compare your draft to the rubric provided by your instructor.
- Note any adjustments you need to make before submitting your assignment.

Step 2: Check the thesis

- Is it the right type of thesis for the kind of paper or assignment you’re writing?
- Can it be more specific? Is it clear? Does it tell the reader what you’re going to talk about in the paper/assignment?
- Does it match the conclusions you draw in the body of the paper/assignment?
- Does it explain the significance of your argument?

Step 3: Check the body paragraphs

- Is each topic sentence easy to identify?
- Is there evidence to support your ideas? Have you properly cited the sources of the evidence?
- Is it clear how the evidence supports the ideas?
- Have you explained/discussed the evidence thoroughly?
- Is there a smooth transition from one paragraph to the next?

Step 4: Check the introduction and conclusion

- Does the introduction introduce the topic and engage the reader?
- Does the conclusion do more than repeat what you already said?
- Does the conclusion elaborate on the significance of the thesis?
- Is the conclusion clear?

Step 5: Proofread the paper

- Do this several times.
- Make major revisions first. Do your ideas come across clearly?
- Then check for grammar mistakes, awkward sentences, repetition, citations, style, and formatting.
- Use built-in tools in Word to help. Using the Read Aloud function in Microsoft Word can help you hear how your assignment is read and catch grammatical errors.

Proofreading

Proofreading is an important step in the editing process. It involves looking at the smaller details like spelling, grammar, punctuation, and word choice. Proofreading comes after you have edited the content and organization of your assignment. A good editing process moves from the "big picture", step-by-step towards the smaller details.

Try it!

Take out the first draft of any piece of writing you're currently completing.

- Follow the 5 steps listed above.
- How does following this process help you to edit your work in a systematic way?

CHAPTER 33

Academic Integrity and APA Citation

At NSCC, it’s important that you complete your work with honesty and integrity.

Academic Integrity means completing all of your work in an honest and ethical way. This includes giving credit to other people when using their ideas (citing sources).

When you write your assignments and research papers you’ll include information from sources you’ve found in your research. When you use other people’s ideas, words, images, or other content, it’s very important to cite them properly to avoid plagiarism.

What is plagiarism?

Plagiarism is using someone else’s work and not acknowledging it with a citation.

NSCC defines plagiarism as “presenting, in any format, someone else’s ideas, presentations, writing, artistic work, or creations, whether verbal, print, structural, design or electronic, in whole or in part, as one's own, by failing to credit the source. Plagiarism can be intentional or occur through carelessness"[1]

If a student is caught plagiarizing, they may be asked to redo their assignment, lose marks, get a zero on the assignment, and in severe cases, may be suspended from the College. If a student is found to have plagiarized, they may have to attend an academic hearing with their faculty member, Advisor, and Academic Chair. You can read the NSCC Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure (NSCC Office 365 login required) to understand your responsibilities as a student.

Remember: "I didn't mean to" is not an excuse for plagiarism. It is considered plagiarism whether it is intentional or not.

How to avoid plagiarizing

- Use in-text citations and a reference list to indicate which parts of your assignment or paper came from individuals whose ideas, theories, or research have directly influenced your work.
- Cite all of your sources including, but not limited to books, journals, newspapers, videos, audio, images, websites, social media, personal communications, government documents.
- At NSCC, we primarily use *APA* Style (7th edition) for citation and reference formatting. The APA Citation Style Guide can help you find the proper citation format to fit the different type of sources you've used in your assignment or paper.
- When in doubt, your Campus Library staff can help.

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[1] NSCC. (2017, October 1). Academic integrity policy. https://www.nscc.ca/about/publications/policies-procedures/policies/academic-integrity-policy.asp

In-text citations

In-text citations give enough information to lead your reader to the connected reference on your Reference page.

- A **direct quote** involves reproducing another author's ideas word for word and representing this with quotation marks.
- An **indirect quote** (paraphrase) involves taking information from the original source and paraphrasing or putting it into your own words. Paraphrasing can be tricky and takes practice. When in doubt, use a direct quote.

Reference Page

Your Reference page is the final page of your assignment, paper, or Brightspace post. It contains a full list of the sources used to create your assignment. Your references tell your reader where you found your information, and include enough information to locate the original sources used.

An Example of using apa style in your assignment

In-text citation example – Direct Quote

> "In Alaska, the ground is riddled with ice wedges that were created during the last glaciation" (Kolbert, 2006, p. 16).

In-text citation examples – Indirect Quote (Paraphrasing)

> According to Kolbert (2006) Alaska's landscape changed dramatically during the last glacial period.

> Alaska's landscape changed dramatically during the last glacial period (Kolbert, 2006).

Reference list entry

Locate the following information from the source and include it on the Reference page:

Author. (Publication Date). Title. Publisher.

Example

> Kolbert, E. (2006). *Field notes from a catastrophe: Man, nature, and climate change*. Bloomsbury.

Guide to Citing Resources

- *NSCC APA* Style Subject Guide

Try it!

- Take some time to explore the Academic Integrity Module in the NSCC and Me student orientation course in Brightspace (NSCC Office 365 login required).

- You're enrolled automatically and will see it in your list of courses.
- You can review it at any time throughout the academic year.

Extend Your Learning

- Explore the APA videos available on the NSCC Libraries YouTube Channel.
- NSCC Libraries Academic Integrity Subject Guide will provide you with a more in depth understanding of academic integrity including academic dishonesty, plagiarism, contract cheating, and more.

PART IX

EVALUATE AND MOVE AHEAD

Plan-Monitor-Evaluate Connection

This chapter focuses on the **evaluation** phase of the learning cycle. By this point in the semester, you'll have received feedback from instructors on assignments and from tests and quizzes. Reflect on feedback to help you grow.

As you've seen throughout this book, learning is a cycle. You'll use your learning from the evaluation phase to help you plan the next steps of your journey.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter you'll be able to:

- Use feedback to improve how you learn.
- Adopt a growth mindset as you plan the next phase of

your learning.

CHAPTER 34

Evaluate Your Learning

During the learning process, you'll receive feedback about the quality of your learning and work. At college, this often comes in the form of grades and instructor comments on assignments and tests.

After college, feedback can look like employer evaluations, conversations with colleagues, partners, or friends. By using feedback, you can make adjustments to move towards your education, work, and life goals.

Reflecting through the semester

An excellent time for self-evaluation at NSCC is after you've received feedback on your first assignment or test. Consider the following reflection questions at this stage in your course:

- What does success look like for me in this course?
- How am I doing with meeting my goal for this course?
- What has worked well so far?
- What's not working well?
- What changes might help me improve?

- What learning supports could help me meet my goals?

Use Evaluation to Support Learning

Reflect on things like:

- Your use of College supports. These include instructor office hours, , library and learning supports, and Advisor consultations.
- How did you use your time? Did you make a weekly schedule, study at a good time of the day, use an assignment planner?
- When did you do your best studying? What helped you focus?
- What style of notes or study tools did you used? Maybe you used colour codes, cue cards, voice recordings.

Use the **Stop-Start-Continue Method** below to reflect and make your plan. Continue using strategies that worked well and start new strategies that you feel will support your success.

Reflecting at the End of a Course

Reflecting at the end of a course is also an excellent time for evaluation. Consider the following questions:

1. How will the information I just learned help me in my future?
2. How will I use the information in my future career and other areas of my life?
3. What have I learned about my learning and studying strategies that will help me in my next courses?

By reflecting on feedback and evaluating your learning regularly, you'll avoid unproductive patterns. You'll take charge of your ongoing growth and development, supporting your success in the future.[12]

Try it!

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=121#h5p-10

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1. Chen, P., Chavez, O., Ong, D. C., & Gunderson, B. (2017). Strategic resource use for learning: A self-administered intervention that guides self-reflection on effective resource use enhances academic performance. *Psychological Science*, 28(6), 774–785. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797617696456;
2. Tanner, K. D. (2012). Promoting student metacognition. *Cell Biology Education*, 11(2), 113–120. https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.12-03-0033

CHAPTER 35

Develop a Growth Mindset

Everyone encounters setbacks from time to time. Maybe you're taking a course that you find difficult, or maybe you received a grade lower than you expected. When this happens, you have a choice in how you respond.

Responding to setbacks

Some people might respond to setbacks by believing that they can't complete the course successfully or by blaming others for their setback. These responses are called a *fixed mindset*.

A better way to respond to setbacks and negative feedback is with a *growth mindset*. A growth mindset is the ability to learn from a setback or experience. Individuals with a growth mindset are better able to recover from setbacks and to go on to achieve greater success.

Growth Mindset verses Fixed mindset

Growth mindset	Fixed mindset
• Intelligence is not fixed, but it can be developed over time • Difficult tasks are worth pursuing • Feedback, even if it offers correction, is beneficial to support future growth	• Intelligence is fixed, and cannot be changed • If a task is difficult, it should be discontinued • Negative feedback should be avoided or minimized

How a Growth Mindset can support learning

The growth mindset principle encourages continuous learning. Adult brains continue to develop through learning and doing challenging things. This results in the brain building additional neural connections. In other words, by learning difficult material, you can actually become smarter.

If you believe that you're able to succeed by working hard and using supports, you're more able to push through difficult moments in learning, and continue to make progress towards your learning goals.[1] [2]

Try it!

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1. Paunesku, D., Walton, G. M., Romero, C., Smith, E. N., Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2015). Mind-set interventions are a scalable treatment for academic underachievement. *Psychological Science*, 26(6), 784–793. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797615571017
2. Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Mindsets that promote resilience: When students believe that personal characteristics can be developed. *Educational Psychologist*, 47(4), 302–314. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2012.722805

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=123#h5p-11

Try it!

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=123#h5p-12

CHAPTER 36

Put the Growth Mindset into Practice

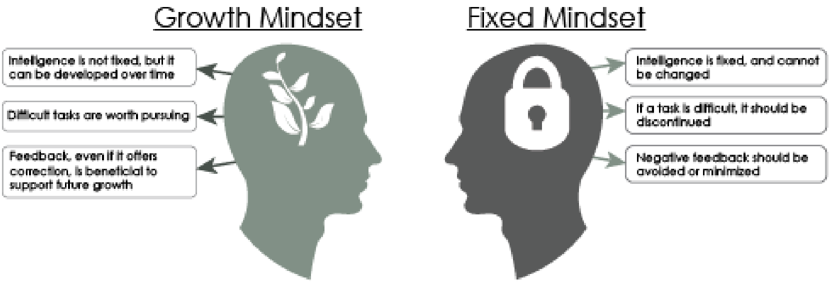
Growth Mindset
Fixed Mindset
Intelligence is not fixed, but it can be developed over time
Difficult tasks are worth pursuing
Feedback, even if it offers correction, is beneficial to support future growth
Intelligence is fixed, and cannot be changed
If a task is difficult, it should be discontinued
Negative feedback should be avoided or minimized

Image by Graeme Robinson-Clogg. [Long Description]

If you think you typically use a fixed mindset, consider how changing your thinking towards a growth mindset can help you find success in learning and life.

Adjust your self-talk

A key sentence to remember is "*I can't do it — yet*". Consider feedback as information to help you as you continue to grow towards a goal, not as a final evaluation of your ability to learn and achieve.

Respond to feedback differently

Rather than viewing feedback as criticism of who you are, consider feedback as an opportunity to grow.

Adjust your approach

You may be discovering that your current approach to learning is not leading you to the success you desire. Seek out support from others, try new ways of learning, and use the *Stop-Start-Continue Method*. Setbacks are an opportunity to learn about yourself and to discover what ways of working will be most effective for you.

Embrace challenging opportunities

Though it may seem easier to avoid situations that might be difficult or perhaps risk failure, embracing challenges leads to success in the long-term. Consider how accepting challenges will help you become the person you want to be in the future! [1]

Try it!

Apply the thinking strategies above to a situation you are currently facing.

1. What was a challenging situation I faced this semester?
2. How can I think about it differently using a growth

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[1] Adapted from: UNSW Sydney. (n.d.). *Growth mindset*. Retrieved from https://student.unsw.edu.au/growth-mindset

mindset?

3. What are the benefits to me of adopting this new way of thinking?

Extend Your Learning

Developing a growth mindset can make a powerful difference in your lifelong learning. Explore the following resources to deepen your understanding of this concept.

1. Are you interested in understanding more about your mindset? Try this online assessment to identify whether you currently have a growth mindset.

2. Explore *The Mindset Continuum* infographic. As its author, James Anderson, emphasizes, fixed and growth mindsets are the end points on a spectrum of perspectives. Use this infographic to explore where you currently are on the mindset continuum, and identify areas for future growth.

PART X

APPENDIX

Exercises and Worksheets

The *Try It!* sections of this book include downloadable worksheets and interactive activities for students to actively process the concepts they are learning. This page compiles the worksheets and activities for easy reference.

Chapter 3

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-1

Chapter 4: Evaluate Your Learning Skills and Strengths

- Multiple Intelligences Learning Activity

Chapter 4

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-14

Chapter 5: Skills for Success

- Skills for Success

Chapter 5

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-2

Chapter 6

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-3

Chapter 7

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-4

Chapter 12: Create a Weekly Schedule

- Weekly Schedule Planner

Chapter 13: Create Daily To-Do Lists

- Managing Your Day with a Smartphone App
- Scheduling Your Day with a To-Do List

- Budgeting Time and Attention

Chapter 15

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-5

Chapter 16: Read with a Purpose: The SQ4R Strategy

- Reading Academic Journals

Chapter 16

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-6

Chapter 17

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-7

Chapter 17: Take Better Class Notes

- Note-Taking Template

Chapter 23

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-3

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-8

Chapter 25

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-9

Chapter 27: Make an Assignment Plan

- Assignment Planning Template

Chapter 34

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-10

Chapter 35

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-11

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/collegeguide/?p=140#h5p-12

Long Descriptions

Chapter 20 / Effective Self-Testing Strategies

Blooms Taxonomy of Learning Long Description

A reverse pyramid, the bottom level is smallest and grows larger. Each additional level is larger than the one below.

Bottom of Pyramid – Remembering: Find or remember information: list, find, name, identify, locate, describe, memorize, define.

2nd level – Understanding and making sense out of information: interpret, summarize, explain, infer, paraphrase, discuss.

3rd level – Applying, use information in a new but similar form: use, diagram, make a chart, draw, apply, solve, calculate.

Top of the reverse pyramid- three equal but separate areas:

1. Creating, use information to create something new: design, build, plan, construct, produce, devise, invent.
2. Evaluating, critically examine information and make judgments: judge, critique, test, defend criticize.
3. Analyzing, take information apart and explore relationships: categorize, examine, organize, compare, contrast.

Back to chapter

Chapter 35

Growth Mindset Image Long Description

Examples of a Growth Mindset:

- Intelligence is not fixed but it can be developed over time.
- Difficult talks are worth pursing
- Feedback, even if it offers correction is beneficial to support true growth.

Examples of a Fixed Mindset:

- Intelligence is fixed and cannot be changed.
- If a talk is difficult it should be discontinued.
- Negative feedback should be avoided or minimized.

Back to chapter text

Glossary List

concept

An abstract or generic idea generalized from particular instances. [1]

Editing

A process of revising the content, organization, grammar, and presentation of a piece of writing.

framework

A basic conceptional structure (as of ideas). [2]

intelligence

The ability to learn, understand, and make judgments or have opinions that are based on reason.[3]

mnemonics

A mnemonic, also known as a memory aid, is a tool that helps

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1. Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Concept. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved July 10, 2023. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plagiarize
2. Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Framework. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved July 10, 2023. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/framework
3. Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). Strategy. *In Dictionary.Cambridge.org dictionary.* Retrieved July 10, 2023. https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/intelligence

you remember an idea or phrase with a pattern of letters, numbers, or relatable associations. Mnemonic devices include special rhymes and poems, acronyms, images, songs, outlines, and other tools. [4]

plagiarizing

To steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own : use (another's production) without crediting the source. [5]

post-secondary

Education beyond (at a higher level than) high school.

procrastination

To delay an intended course of action despite expecting to be worse off for the delay.[6]

proofreading

Checking for accuracy in a piece of writing that is nearly complete. Includes Checking smaller details of grammar, spelling and punctuation.

rubrics

A guide listing specific criteria for grading or scoring academic papers, projects, or tests. [7]

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[4] Literary Terms. (n.d.). Mnemonic. *In Literary Terms*. https://literaryterms.net/mnemonic/

[5] Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Plagiarizing. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary.* Retrieved July 10, 2023. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plagiarize

[6] Steel, P. (2007). Study Guides and Strategies. (n.d.). *Influencing teachers and improving classroom communication skills*. Retrieved from http://www.studygs.net/attmot2.htm

[7] Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Rubrics. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved July 10, 2023. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rubrics

scope

Assignment Scope: Overall description of the work. The range or depth of the subjects to be covered.

Strategy

A detailed plan for achieving success ... or the skill of planning for such situations.[8]

A learning strategy is an individual’s way of organizing and using a particular set of skills in order to learn content or accomplish other tasks more effectively and efficiently in school as well as in non-academic setting.[9]

thesis

A statement that presents the main idea, opinion, or theory. "A statement or theory that is put forward as a premise to be maintained or proved." [10]

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[8] Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). Strategy. In dictionary.cambridge.org dictionary. https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/strategy

[9] Schumaker, J. B., & Deshler, D. D. (1992). Validation of learning strategy interventions for students with LD: Results of a programmatic research effort. In Y. L. Wong (Ed.), Contemporary intervention research in learning disabilities: An international perspective. New York: Springer-Verlag.

[10] Oxford Languages. (n.d.). Thesis. In *Google's English dictionary*. Retrieved July 10, 2023

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Versioning History

NSCC College 101 Chapter Mapping			
New Adapted NSCC Book		**Original KPU Book**	
chapter	**NSCC College 101 3e**	chapter	**KPU University 101**
Section I	**Learning at College**	Section I	**Learning in University: The Critical Skill of Metacognition**
1	How to Use This Book	3	Learn How to Use This Book
2	Get Ready for College Learning	1	Develop a Foundation for Post-secondary Education
3	The Learning Cycle	2	Explore the Planning-Monitoring-Evaluation Cycle
II	**Plan for Success**	**II**	**Plan for Success: Knowing Yourself and Setting Goals**
4	Evaluate Your Learning Skills and Strengths	4	Evaluate Your Learning Skills and Strengths
		5	Evaluate Your Current Learning Strategies – CHAPTER REMOVED
5	Skills for Success	9	Skills for Success in the workplace.
6	Setting SMART Goals	6	Set Goals to Move Ahead
Section III	**Finding College Supports**	**Section III**	**Your First Week: Getting Organized and Finding Resources**
7	Get to Know Your College Supports	6	Get to Know University Resources
8 New	**Technology Supports – New Chapter added July 2024**		
9	Understand Your Course Outline	7	Analyze Your Course Presentation
10	Connect With Your Instructor	8	Connect With Your Instructor
Section IV	**Manage Your Time**	**Section IV**	**Manage Your Time: Study Strategies for Busy Students**
11	See Your Semester Schedule at a Glance	10	See Your Semester at a Glance
12	Create a Weekly Schedule	11	Create a Weekly Schedule that Works
13	Create Daily To-Do Lists	12	Organize Your Day for Maximum Productivity
14	Escape the Procrastination Trap	13	Escape the Procrastination Trap

Section V	**Learn From Lectures and Textbooks**	**Section V**	**Learn From Lectures and Texts**
15	Reading Textbooks	14	Set Your Purpose for Reading Textbooks
16	Read with a Purpose: The SQ4R Strategy	15	Read with a Purpose: The SQ3R Strategy
17	Take Better Class Notes	16	Take Notes from Lectures – That You'll Actually Use
18	Vocabulary Building Strategies – **New Chapter added July 2023**		
Section VI	**Study Smart**	**Section VI**	**Study Smart – Use Powerful Strategies to Remember, Understand and Apply**
19	Choose Strategies for Active Learning	17	Choose Strategies for Active Learning
21	Master Your Memory	18	Master Your Memory
21	Effective Self-Testing Strategies	19	Use Effective Questioning Strategies
22	Explore the 4 Levels of Questioning	20	Explore the Four Levels of Questioning
Section VII	**Get Ready for Quizzes and Tests**	**Section VIII**	**Get Ready for Exams**
23	Getting Ready for Review Sessions	27	Organize Review Sessions Strategically
24	Answering Test Questions	28	Answer Your Exam Questions
25	Managing Test Anxiety	29	Manager Exam Stress
Section VIII	**Get Assignments and Research Done**	**Section VII**	**Get Those Projects Done**
26	Manage Your Assignments	21	Analyze Your Assignment
27	Make an Assignment Plan	22	Develop an Assignment Plan
28	Move Beyond Writer's Block	23	Move Beyond Writer's Block
29	The Research Process – **New Chapter added July 2023**		
30	Create an Outline	24	Create an Outline
31	Write Your First Draft	25	Write the First Draft
32	Self-Edit Your Work	26	Self-Edit Your Work

33	Academic Integrity and APA Citation – **New Chapter added July 2023**		
Section IX	**Evaluate and Move Ahead**	**Section IX**	**Evaluate and Move Ahead**
34	Evaluate Your Learning	30	Evaluate Your Learning
35	Develop a Growth Mindset	31	Develop a Growth Mindset
36	Put the Growth Mindset into Practice	32	Put the Growth Mindset into Practice
Section X	Appendix	Section X	Appendix
N/A	Exercises and Worksheets	33	Exercises and Worksheets
N/A	Long Descriptions	34	Long Descriptions

Changes to nscc 3rd edition / July 2024

- Text in chapters revised to simpler language.
- New chapter on **Technology Supports** added: See chapter mapping.
- Chapter numbering updated.
- H5P content added to Chapter 5: Skills for Success.

Changes to NSCC 2nd Edition / July 2023

- See Chapter Mapping for reordering and chapter title changes.
- New chapters added: 17, 28, 32 – see chapter mapping.
- Moved section VII to VIII – see chapter mapping.
- All chapters modified to include Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) content and resources.
- Header tagging revised to meet WGAG standards.

- Extend Your Learning tables modified – information added.
- Glossary terms added
- H5P content added.

Change Details

Section I

- Removed Learning Objective,' Added definition for the term *metacognition*'.

Chapter 3

- New Try it! activity.

Section II

- Learning Objectives modified.
    - Changed *Evaluate your current student strategies and identify new skills you hope to gain* to Discover *Skills for Success*.
    - Changed *Set your learning goals* to *Set SMART learning goals.*

Chapter 5

- Learning objectives revised
- New Try it! activity added.
- Removed 'Learning Strategies Checklist' activity.
- Added Extend Your Learning box.

Chapter 6

- SMART Goal example added.
- Removed ‘Extend Your Learning SMART-Goals’ worksheet.

Section III

- Updated Plan-Monitor-Evaluate Connection.
- Reordered and reworded Learning Objectives.

Chapter 7

- Chapter changed to include NSCC information and student supports.
- Replaced Try it! exercise.

Chapter 8

- Updated Try it! exercise.
- Removed Extend Your Learning box.

Section IV

- Revised to make consistent with revised chapters.

Chapter 11

- Modified tip list.

Chapter 12

- Enhanced section on creating to-do list principles.
- Modified Try it! exercise.

Chapter 13

- Added links to NSCC supports.

Section V

- Updated Learning Objectives.
- Changed *Use the SQ3R Strategy* to *Use the SQ4R Strategy*.
- Added Learning Objective: Create a personal dictionary.

Chapter 14

- Added NSCC content.
- Added new Try it! exercise.

Chapter 15

- Replaced content with SQ4R strategy.
- Replaced Try it! exercise.

Chapter 16

- Replaced note-taking strategy with *Cornell Method*.
- Added Extend Your Learning Box.

Section VI

- Added Learning Objective: Understand the 4 levels of questioning.

Chapter 18

- Added Extend You Learning box.

Chapter 19

- Added Extend You Learning box.

Section VII

- Updated Plan-Monitor Evaluation and Learning Objectives to reflect chapter edits.

Chapter 22

- Removed *Resource* column in the Step 3: Identify Active Learning Strategies table.
- Added new step: Step 4: Identify Resources' section.
- Enhanced content within Step 5: Create a Study Plan.
- Added links to NSCC supports.

Chapter 23

- Added 'Test Taking Tips' content.
- Reworded Try it! exercise.

Chapter 24

- Reworded and consolidated tips for 'What Can You Do On Exam Day to Manage Any Jitters'.
- Modified Try it! exercise.
- Added Extend Your Learning box.

Section VIII

- Added 'How to move past writer's block', 'Use the 5 steps of editing your work' and 'Understand APA Citation and how to avoid plagiarism' as Learning Objectives.

Chapter 25

- Replaced assignment graphic.
- Removed content related to 'Terms that might be used' and 'Begin with Background Content'.
- Added 'Step 2: Start an Assignment Journal', 'Step 4: Create an Assignment Schedule', and 'Time Management'.

- Modified Try it! exercise.

Chapter 26

- Edits to example Assignment Planner with new dates and NSCC supports available to NSCC students.

Chapter 27

- Added section on *How to Use Mind Mapping*.
- Updated Mind Mapping Example.
- Renamed Tip to *Extend Your Learning* and added content.

Chapter 29

- Updated Try it! exercise.
- New Extend Your Learning box.

Chapter 30

- Chapter rewritten.
- Dos and Don'ts tips added to the 3 steps.

Chapter 31

- Added section on proofreading.

Chapter 33

- Removed quote from Bill Gates.
- Modified Try it! exercise.

Chapter 34

- Revised chapter introduction.
- Reworded headers.

- Try it! exercise modified and replaced with H5P version.

Changes to NSCC 1st Edition / April 2020

- Book renamed NSCC College Guide 101.
- Content updated to make specific to NSCC.
- All references to University changed to College, and KPU replaced with NSCC.
- KPU student services and resources replaced with NSCC content.

KPU EDition

University 101: Study, Strategize and Succeed exists because of the contributions of the Kwantlen Polytechnic University Learning Centre team. The source material depends heavily on Learning Aids developed by Alice Macpherson and Christina Page, as well as workshop materials developed by Marti Alger, Laura Aguilera, Kim Tomiak, Adam Vincent, and Lyn Benn. Megan Robertson provided invaluable feedback on the initial drafts of the project.

Rawia Inaim, Emily Tan, Vijaya Jammi and Anmol Mangat contributed to the visual and multimedia content in the book, generously lending their technical expertise. In addition to his graphic design contributions, Graeme Robinson-Clogg also designed the printable worksheet activities.

The KPU Learning Centre team are focused on student learning, development, and success. We hope that this project contributes to the academic success of the students were are privileged to support in our work.

This book was made possible through the support of a KPU Open Education Resources Grant. Many thanks to Rajiv Jhangiani and Caroline Daniels for their support in this project.

Christina Page (Editor and Project Coordinator)
Kwantlen Polytechnic University, May 2018.