Tutor Program Tip - Evaluate your Study Environment

The amount of time and energy you dedicate to studying will ultimately determine your success at the University of Maine. Poor study conditions can decrease your concentration level and ability to comprehend/remember material, and waste valuable time.

These tips will help you do two important things; help you to evaluate your study environment and learn to recognize and remove distractions.

Do you have a definite place to study?

Students need a quiet study area free from visual and auditory distractions. You will need enough space to spread out. It is strongly recommended that you study in the same place regularly to increase your comfort level with the study environment. The tone will already be set and your surrounding can help to motivate you to study.

Are the conditions for studying adequate?

Good study conditions include a sufficient level of quietness, proper temperature, correct lighting, a straight-backed chair and desk or table, and the right physical condition (you are not ill or fatigued).

Do you have scheduled times for study?

In the Tip, “Get Organized,” we covered setting up regular study times. Having study time planned into your daily schedule will make it that much easier to keep yourself on track. Treat your study time like an appointment. Organize your study time by breaking up studying into 20-30 minute blocks and give yourself a 5-10 minute break between each session. You will find your concentration level is better and you will have time to process the information you are learning.

Does your study environment include everything you need?

Make sure that you have all necessary study aids at your desk at the time you begin to study (paper, pencils, highlighter, thesaurus/dictionary, syllabi, notes, text, computer, etc). You may want to make a list of the items you need before you study so you will not forget essential items.

If there are distractions to your studying, how can you remove them?

Think about how you can enhance the quality of studying by examining the factors that are conflicting with your study time. For example; Do you need to study in a place where your friends cannot find you? Learn to say no to people who request your time while you are studying. Are you studying in your room, where the phone, TV, radio or e-mail is a temptation? Move to another location.

There is no one technique that will work for everyone. Keep these questions in mind when you study. Controlling environmental factors is a very important part of keeping focused and motivated to study.