The Tutor Program Tip - **Get Organized: Part 1**

No matter what time of the semester, it’s never too late to get organized! Getting organized and planning a semester schedule is part of being a successful college student. Learning self-management skills are not only great for college, but are an important life skill. In order to develop these skills for college it may helpful to know, while high school students are in class for almost 35 hours a week, college students are in class for only 12-15 hours *per week* plus lab time. Most work must be completed outside of class. Self/Time management skills not only reduce stress but also are highly marketable skills. Developing these skills now will pay off later!

**Make sure to print a copy of your class schedule.** To obtain a copy of your class schedule, sign on to your MaineStreet account and click 'Student Self-Service'. The schedule shown should view your current week's schedule. Click 'Weekly Schedule', written underneath the current schedule, and make sure you arrow ahead to a week that there are no days off, in order to get a complete week's schedule. *Utilize the check on/off tool underneath the calendar to view your instructors, course title, etc.*

**Based on your class schedule,** have you made out a daily/weekly schedule of your class, work and family activities? Print out a copy of the document titled: ‘class/work schedule’ to plan out your own schedule and include:

a) Your class schedule.
b) Your work or practice schedule or extra-curricular activities that you are involved in, if applicable.
c) Non-school activities like getting ready for class, eating, exercising, regularly scheduled meetings, commuting time and family matters.

**Here are a few things to keep in mind when blocking out study time:**

**For every hour spent in class, two hours should be dedicated to studying.** If you carry 15 credit hours, an additional 30 hours a week is needed for studying! If you use your time effectively between classes, there will be plenty of remaining time for your other responsibilities.

**Study in 20-30 minute blocks of time, take 5-10 minute breaks and then go back to studying.** This allows information to transfer from short-term memory to long-term memory. Breaking large assignments down into smaller, more manageable units will help you to stay on task and cause less frustration!

**Schedule study times when you are the most alert.** Reading while lying down is not recommended. You can do your laundry and eat when you are half-asleep, get your studying done while you are awake!
Use your time between classes effectively. Review notes from the previous lecture while the information is still fresh. Preview chapters prior to the next lecture to help you follow along with the professor and make it easier to take notes. Attempt homework problems as soon as possible after class to help retain the methods the instructor followed during class. Use flashcards to review vocabulary, formulas and other terms to reinforce learning.

It takes 5-7 times of review of material before it is truly learned. That does not necessarily mean 5-7 hours of study for each concept; it means working with the material 5-7 times is needed for repetition and reinforcement purposes. In addition, the longer time in between being introduced to new material and actually doing something with it (review notes, make up questions, make a study guide, compare notes to text, teaching someone else, etc) the more information or learning is lost. Up to 70% of new information is lost if not reinforced within 24 hours.

Avoid studying similar subjects back-to-back. Studying psychology and sociology right after each other may lead to confusion of concepts or terms as the disciplines overlap.

Tackle your most difficult subjects first. Most students will complete assignments for the subjects they really like the most, first. However, leaving the assignments that you enjoy the most until late in the day is better as most students will be able to complete the assignments no matter how tired they are! If you leave the dreaded assignments until very late in the evening (or early morning) you may find that you don’t do them at all!

Schedule study time to match the teaching format of the course. You will need to study material thoroughly before a discussion-oriented class so that you will be prepared to participate. For a lecture-oriented class, read the associated material well enough to be able to ask questions for clarification and note-taking purposes.

Well, how did you do? Were you able to find the appropriate number of hours for study by utilizing time on weekends, free hours during the day and time between classes? Great! Now it's up to you to stick to the schedule you established. You may need to make minor adjustments as you attend more of your classes as some subjects may require more time, others may require a little less. Plus, don’t forget that you will have to account for those long-range projects and exams!