Academic Success and Strategies

In order to be successful in education and in life, one must learn how to ask for help. Many college students do not realize they will need help because they have been used to help coming to them, not the other way around. It is essential to be proactive when your academics are involved, by doing so, students will see the results they want to see. Recognizing that you need assistance is the first step to taking control of your life and academic success. Students must then work on building skills in routine prevention and maintenance.

Here are 5 ways to do this:

1. Self Awareness

This involves knowing where your strengths and growth areas lie, we all have them. Be able to objectively look at yourself and describe yourself accurately. You can do this through self-examination, asking friends/professors/coworkers to give you feedback, working with a counselor on campus, etc. Expose yourself to opportunities by taking on leadership positions, thinking critically about world problems, engaging in meaningful dialogue with others, getting a job and seeking feedback, engaging in class, keeping a journal about your day and your feelings, etc—these things can help you identify what is important to you and what you think. Knowing about yourself and what you want can help motivate you to become who you are meant to be. Take inventories with CSAS to learn about yourself (e.g., learning styles, personality types, values). Do a self-awareness analysis (below).

Self-Awareness Analysis
What are your biggest academic strengths? Where are your biggest areas for academic growth?
In what did you perform best last year? What contributed to that?
In what did you perform less than you desired last year? What contributed to that?
On a scale of 1-10 (1 being best and 10 being lowest), where would you rate your awareness of campus helping resources?
What would others say are your most defining qualities? What would you say are your most defining qualities?
What do you most want out of life?
If I were the very best version of myself, what would that look like (describe the qualities)?

Consider why things do or do not work for you, or why you do or do not like to do certain things. Are there areas you need to overcome to live your best life?

2. Goal-Setting: How To Achieve What You Want

How do you achieve what you most want out of life? What small things can you start adding to your daily life that will help you become the very best version of yourself?
List 3 Concrete Goals You Want to Achieve Academically this semester. If you have trouble doing this, set up time with CSAS or AHC to do so.

3. Strategizing: How Do I Achieve These Goals and Form Good Habits?

To achieve those goals, what do you need to do?
List 2 (or more) ways you will work to achieve each goal under each goal.
Samples:
Goal 1: Only miss one class in each class this semester
Strategy 1: Keep track of my attendance in each class with a calendar
Strategy 2: Reward yourself at the end of the semester if you achieve the goal
Strategy 3: Set my alarm before every class
Strategy 4: Tell friends/parents of your goal and ask them to check in with you about it

Goal 2: Make a B in History
Strategy 1: Attend every class and keep up with all assignments
Strategy 2: Go meet the professor several times each semester for feedback and ask for ideas to help you perform better
Strategy 3: Devote time every day to study the material—put this time in your planner

4. Learn and Use Resources
What resources are already at your disposal to help you achieve your goals and become your best self? Why should you use them? Use the Academic and Personal Resources Handout to pick some resources that could help you with your goals. List them and make a point to visit them by setting dates you will do so this semester.

Samples:
Goal 1: Only miss one class in each class this semester
Resources To Use: Academic Success Coaching at CSAS
Why Use this Resource?: Provide accountability
Goal 2: Make a B in History
Resources to Use: Free Tutoring at CSAS
Why Use this Resource? Help me stay ahead and devote time to studying

5. Do Routine Prevention and Maintenance Checks
All students should routinely do “prevention and maintenance checks” on their academic performance. Start by putting certain “maintenance” dates/events in your calendar. Review your goals for the semester and gauge where you stand on them (if you have not, meet with Academic Success Coaching with CSAS to do this). To determine where you stand, engage in self-analysis from time to time, talk with professors/friends/family for feedback, do grade checks on yourself, keep a journal and review it, etc. You can determine what type of preventive maintenance you should engage in depending on your goals. But there are certain preventive and maintenance checks all students should do:

1. Check the Academic Calendar to help guide other things you should do in your Maintenance Check-Ups.
2. Put this information in your planner
   - Dates to rent/buy books before or during first week of class.
   - Class dates/times. Make attending class a priority. If you miss, contact your professor to make up any work.
   - Study times for each class (at least several hours a week for each class).
   - Class deadlines, you must review class syllabus regularly in order to do this.
3. Schedule time to individually meet each professor during office hours during the first week or two of classes. Ask them for tips to help with your success in the course. Get in the habit of doing so throughout the semester for a grade check and feedback on your performance and standing.

4. Get a Success Guide from CSAS for your classification and follow it.

5. Visit the CSAS website for info on academic support services like free tutoring, academic success coaching, and academic success workshops and sign up.

6. On the TU homepage, check Info for Current Students for things like the calendar of events, various resources on campus, policies, services, etc. Check Campus Life on the homepage as well for resources like housing, dining, activities, health and safety info.

7. Read emails from your Academic Advisor about important upcoming dates and events. Put these in your calendar and refer back to them.

8. Know the last day to withdraw from a class (during the 12th week of classes). Getting a W on your transcript is far better than a failing grade, you could take it again in the future to get a passing grade. If you find yourself in this situation, visit CSAS, your professor, and/or your Academic Advisor to discuss options and to make plans for better outcomes next time.

9. Allow for rest time every week. Use this as a reward for meeting your weekly academic goals.

For more assistance with this, visit CSAS and set up Academic Success Coaching in 249 Zink Hall or by e-mailing CSAS@utulsa.edu.