In order for you to continue to receive financial aid, including the Regents’ Scholarship, during the 2012-2013 academic year, you must complete the Renewal Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA becomes available on January 1, 2012. The Scholarships & Financial Aid Office encourages students to submit the FAFSA form by March 15, 2012 to receive priority in awarding. To expedite the process, we encourage you to file your tax return as early as possible.

In order to complete the FAFSA, you will need:
- Student and parent social security numbers
- W-2 Forms & any other records of money earned for both the student and parents
- Student’s 2011 federal income tax return
- Parents’ 2011 federal income tax return
- If filing electronically, PIN for both the student and the parents

In order to expedite this process for students, Scholarships & Financial Aid will be hosting several Renewal FAFSA/TASFA workshops for Regents’ Scholars during the Spring semester. We encourage you to attend these workshops if you need assistance filing your FAFSA. These events are scheduled for:
- February 15, 2012 9:30AM-10:30AM
- February 16, 2012 11:00AM-12:00PM
- February 17, 2012 12:30PM-1:30PM
- February 20, 2012 2:00PM-3:00PM

Registration is required. To register, students should visit http://financialaid.tamu.edu/workshops.


If you are currently living on campus, you need to participate in Housing Decision 2012.
Go to http://reslife.tamu.edu/ to complete your renewal or cancellation January 30th through February 24th.
Talk to your resident advisor or the Housing Assignments Office (979)845-4744 for more information.

Are you undecided about your choice of major and/or career path? Take advantage of the workshop, sponsored by the Career Center:

Undecided: Choosing a Major and Career
Wednesday, February 15th
5:15pm in Rudder 301
Maximize Your Memory

Forget rote learning, one of the best ways to commit something to memory is to think of associated images – the more outlandish, the better. If you’re revising for an exam, learning a new language, or just keen on maximizing your memory for everyday life, here are some strategies that might help …

Rehearsal

The brain is often likened to a muscle, the suggestion being that if you exercise it, its function will improve. A bodybuilder can strengthen his biceps by repeatedly lifting weights and so, the argument goes, you can improve your memory by repeating over and over to yourself (either out loud or sub-vocally) the information you wish to remember.

‘Elaborative’ processing

Although many people imagine that actors memorize their lines using rote rehearsal, research conducted by the psychologist Helga Noice suggests that this is not always the case. Noice found that some actors learn their lines by focusing not on the words of the script, but on their underlying meaning and the motivations of the character who uses them. This is consistent with laboratory evidence – although rehearsing a list of words improves long-term memory for the material to some degree, a more effective strategy is so-called “elaborative” processing, which involves relating the information to associated facts and relevant knowledge. In one study, participants were asked to learn words using one of the following questions:

a) Is the word written in capital letters?
b) Does the word contain two or more syllables?
c) Does the word refer to an item of furniture?

Highest levels of recall were observed following question c, which involves deeper, more elaborative, meaning-based processing.

Mnemonics

A visit to any bookshop will reveal myriad self-help books promoting the use of mnemonics as a means of improving your memory. The Method of Loci, perhaps the most well-known mnemonic technique, involves thinking of images that link the information you are trying to learn with familiar locations. So, when trying to remember a list of words, you might imagine walking between the various rooms in your home and in each one commit a word to memory by forming an image that combines the word with a distinguishing feature of the room. For example, if trying to remember the word “apple”, you might imagine an apple bouncing on the sofa in your living room. Retrieving the list of words is achieved by mentally walking through the rooms of your house again. One study found that people using the Loci method could recall more than 90% of a list of 50 words after studying them just once.

Techniques such as Loci can be readily adapted to help us remember appointments, birthdays, errands we need to run, etc. As illustrated by Foer’s example, the key with mnemonics is creating the most striking visual images possible. The more ludicrous, creative and elaborative you can be, the greater the chance of success.

Retrieval practice

Evidence suggests that repeatedly testing yourself on the information you have learned can enhance retention considerably. The great memory researcher Endel Tulving was among the first to discover the merits of so-called “retrieval practice”. In a number of experiments, participants learned lists of words in three conditions: standard (study, test, study, test); repeated study (study, study, study, test); and repeated test (study, test, test, test). The repeated study group had three times as much exposure to the words as the repeated test group. If learning occurs only when studying, it follows that they should have had better memory. But Tulving found equivalent immediate learning across conditions. However, if retention is measured after a one-week delay, repeated retrieval testing can lead to markedly better recall than repeated studying, even if the studying involves an elaborative learning strategy.

If students do self-test, it is often to assess what they’ve learned, rather than to enhance their long-term retention of the material. Perhaps the fact that repeated study feels less demanding than repeatedly testing yourself leads people to prefer the first approach. However, the evidence suggests strongly that active approaches to learning such as repeated retrieval practice can reap dividends.

By Jon Simons and adapted from: http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2012/jan/14/how-to-train-your-brain-to-remember
College Student Valentine’s Day Survival Guide

By Kelci Lynn, About.com Guide

Valentine’s Day and college can make a fantastic -- or awkward -- mix. Make the most of your situation by enjoying yourself, enjoying the day, and -- if applicable -- enjoying the time with a significant other. Conversely, of course, you can find information on making the most of being single. Valentine’s Day doesn’t have to be a celebration only for those already coupled up!

If You’re Single

Being single on Valentine’s Day doesn’t have to mean being awkward or having a funky night. There are multiple ways to ensure you still have a great Valentine’s Day -- without a significant other.

5 Things to Do Off Campus If You’re Single on Valentine’s Day

1. Go out to dinner with friends. Everyone else in the restaurant may be having quiet, intimate conversations, but you and your friends may be screaming with laughter. Being single doesn’t have to mean you don’t get a fantastic dinner out of the night!
2. Head to a club. Some clubs may be having Valentine’s Day specials (no cover charge for women, for example), some may be having Anti-Valentine’s Day specials (singles only), some may not be having anything special at all. But why miss out on a great night with friends?
3. Head to the movies. You can bring your friends or head out by yourself to see that flick you’ve been meaning to catch.Treating yourself to a nice movie might be just the break your brain needs from all your academic work anyway. When’s the last time you let yourself check out for a few solid hours?
4. Head to a sports game. Lots of sports are in season in February. Grab some tickets for you and some friends and make the most of your time away from campus.
5. Volunteer. It may not be the first thing that comes to mind for Valentine’s Day, but it just may be what you’re looking for. You’ll help out your community and leave with a fantastic feeling in your heart. And what’s not to like about that?

5 Things to Do On Campus If You’re Single on Valentine’s Day

1. Plan a movie fest. Invite some friends over and plan a movie marathon. You can spend the entire night eating funky snacks, watching great (or even horrible) movies, and catching up with friends. Why not let yourself relax and enjoy a night off? You don’t necessarily need a boyfriend or girlfriend to make it happen.
2. Cook yourself a nice dinner. You can use the kitchen in your residence hall, the kitchen at a friend’s house, or any kitchen that you have access to. After spending an hour or so putting together a nice meal for yourself or friends, it’s practically impossible not to feel good afterward.
3. Throw an anti-Valentine’s Day party. Chances are, you aren’t the only person on campus to not be thrilled about the holiday. Plan an Anti-Valentine’s Day Party -- for just a few friends or the entire campus -- that shows that those without boyfriends or girlfriends can have a good (if not better) time, too.
4. Get yourself together. It may sound strange, but when was the last time you woke up feeling totally put together? Instead of moping about being single, use the free time you have Valentine’s Day evening to get yourself organized. Clean up your calendar, catch up on laundry, plan ahead for major papers and midterms, and get a head start on those assignments you’ve been avoiding. It may sound lame (okay, totally lame) at first, but you might be surprised at how good you feel after you’re done. Who needs a date to go to bed feeling like a rock star?
5. Set up an online dating profile. Alright, you may be single, and you may be at peace with it -- but you may also be interested in changing that single status. Spend some time at your computer, setting up an online dating profile. Who knows what might happen?!

If You Have a Date

1. Try to Send Old-Fashioned Mail. As simple as it may seem, getting a card, gift, or care package in the mail always brightens someone’s day. For partners who are separated by long distances, these little gestures and mementos can provide a physical connection of sorts. And besides, who doesn’t like getting a cute card or cookies in the mail?!
2. Pay Attention to the Details. You may not want to spend the limited time you have with your partner talking about the details of your life, but these are often the most important things. Hearing about your weird Biology lab partner, the English professor you love, and how you can’t get enough of the dining hall waffles are the things that make you. Your partner will want to hear all about the details of your new life. So settle in for a long conversation about the things that seem most ridiculous, but that may just end up being the things that keep you together during your time away at school.
3. Visit a cultural center. Many museums, art galleries, cultural centers, and libraries have reduced (if not free) admission for college students. Go see an exhibit and enjoy the time off campus.
4. Get yourself together. Treat yourself to a nice movie might be just the break your partner will want to hear all about the details of your new life. So settle in for a long conversation about the things that seem most ridiculous, but that may just end up being the things that keep you together during your time away at school.

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<td>12:00 PM – 1:00 PM Eating Smart on a Budget</td>
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