FINDING THE PATH

As you find yourself beginning a semester full of classes that you absolutely LOVE & ADORE...oh, wait. This is probably a dream and you’ve overslept! Let’s face it, you’re going to have some classes you like, and some that you don’t particularly care for, but I can promise that you will LEARN something from every single one of them.

As with life in general, you learn as you go. This lesson is particularly true in your courses. And we’re not just talking about “I learned that I don’t like to get up for 8 a.m. classes!” Your academic experience at Texas A&M will have a large impact on WHAT you will do in life, and in many ways WHO you will become, so take the learning experience seriously!

As you progress through the semester, pay attention to the ways that you study, and try to isolate the best approach towards preparing for different types of courses. Studying for calculus isn’t like studying for history! It’s important to get to know your strengths and weaknesses, but it’s even more important to admit that WE ALL HAVE WEAKNESSES. The plain truth of the matter is you will have a course (or several) that you have a hard time in, no matter how great you were in high school, but don’t let that get to you! The only way you can make a horrible mistake is by not seeking help from the many resources that are available to you. Be sure to talk to your professors and your Academic Advisor about how you are doing in class, and what steps you can take to improve. They want to help you!

However, as you make this journey into higher education, be sure to let your experiences teach you about what you want to do, and what you want to study. Your classes might teach you that your major might not be the right fit for you, or that your interests have shifted to another area. Do not be afraid of changing your mind! Trust me, I changed my undergraduate major twice, and even my graduate major once! You will learn as you go, and when I reflect back on my time at Texas A&M, I wouldn’t change a thing. “Why,” you ask? Because if I didn’t have the experiences that I did, I never would have ended up in the “right major,” or in a career that I love!

Remember: If you take the time to learn from your experiences, and you seek out the people who are here to help you, you will find yourself on the right path!

Sam Murdock
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HOWDY AGS!

I’m Roxanne Fairchild, the 09-10 President of RSO, a student-run organization linked to the Regents’ Scholars Program. Last year, RSO participated in service events like Replant and The BIG Event, not to mention we held social events like a scavenger hunt and a camp-out. We hope to see everyone return from our induction year as well as any new Regents’ Scholars!

If you’re not already in RSO or want more information on what RSO is all about, check our website at rso.tamu.edu. There, you will find the latest on upcoming informational, meetings, and events as well as our contact information.

We can’t wait to see you at our first meeting!

Thanks and Gig ‘em,
Roxanne Fairchild ‘10

FYI

Don’t wait until it’s too late. Free tutoring is available.

Supplemental Instruction (S.I.) schedule
Department of Multicultural Services FREE tutoring
University Writing Center
Mathematics Department Help
Study Skills and Time Management workshops
Center for Academic Enhancement Tutoring
To schedule an appointment call 979.845.2724 or come by 118 Hotard.

WHAT IF?

What if I think I’m in the wrong major?

It’s not uncommon for students to get to college and question their choice of major. If you think you may be in the wrong major or don’t think you will enjoy or excel in your choice of majors, make an appointment to meet with your Academic Advisor. Your Advisor will be able to help you explore your current major, with career options and future classes in mind. Your Advisor can also direct you to resources on campus where you can learn about other majors, along with your own career interests, aptitudes, and strengths.

Answer the opinion poll on the top of page 3 to win A&M goodies!
Robert Michael Gates is a first generation student himself who received his bachelor’s degree from the College of William and Mary before earning his master’s degree from Indiana University and finally a PhD from Georgetown University.

He joined the CIA in 1966 and became the only career officer person in their history to rise from an entry-level position to serving as the Director of Central Intelligence. Dr. Gates became the president of Texas A&M University in 2002 and served until 2006, when he was sworn in as the 22nd Secretary of Defense where he currently serves.

Every year the Regents’ Scholars Program recognizes a staff, faculty, advisor or mentor as the recipient of the Dr. Robert M. Gates Inspiration Award. The award is based on nominations received from students and acknowledges outstanding contributions to the program. Nominators share how they were inspired to succeed.

Aggie Tradition:

Yell Practice began as a post dinner activity in 1913, when different corps companies would gather together to "learn heartily the old time pep." However, it was not until 1931 that Yell Practice became as it is known today. It began, when a group of cadets were gathered in Peanut Owen’s dorm room in Puryear Hall. Someone suggested that all of the freshmen should fall out and meet on the steps of the YMCA building at midnight. The cadets notified senior yell leaders Horsefly Berryhill and Two Gun Herman from Sherman, who could not authorize it, but said that they may just show up. Well, needless to say, the word spread quickly, and when the freshmen began to arrive, there were railroad flares and torpedoes stuck in flower pots around the YMCA building to light the area. The first Midnight Yell had begun!!!

Today, Midnight Yell is held the night before a home game in Kyle Field and at the Grove on Thursday nights before away games. Also for away games, a site is designated for a Midnight Yell in the city of our opponent on the night before the game.

For a yell at Kyle Field, yell leaders lead the Fightin’ Texas Aggie Band and the Twelfth Man into the stadium. The yell leaders lead the crowd in old army yells, the singing of the fight song, and tell fables of how the Aggies are going to beat the everlivin’ hell out of our opponent for the next day. Lastly, the lights go out, and Aggies kiss their dates. If they don’t have a date, all they have to do is flick their Bicks. As the story goes, the flames make it easier for two dateless people to find each other, and maybe they won’t be dateless anymore!

The purpose of Midnight Yell is to pump up the Twelfth Man for the next day’s big game!

Did You Know?

September 25th is the birthday of Dr. Robert M. Gates - a former A&M president. He is also the individual responsible for initiating the Regents’ Scholarship.
Creating a Budget

For many students, the financial aid refund is often the first time they face the responsibility of managing a large amount of money. Some students manage their funds wisely, but others make poor decisions which can lead to running short of money during the semester. Money worries add unneeded stress at the end of the semester when there is often already stress from final exams and deadlines for papers. Here are 2 things to keep in mind about your financial aid refund.

- Students will begin receiving their fall financial aid refunds during the latter part of August, but the spring refund will not be distributed until January. If your only income is the refund, it will need to last you nearly 5 months. Every year we see students who spend too much of their money early in the semester on items that are not required for their college expenses and are left without funds by the middle of the term.

- The financial aid refund is given to you for the purpose of assisting you with your educational and living expenses, not for your family’s living expenses. If you are concerned that your parents may use some of your money for their own expenses, we recommend you establish your own checking account that is only accessible by you. You can then control how your money is spent.

We urge you to attend our workshop entitled “Creating a Budget That Will Work for You” to learn how to prepare a budget (spending plan) so that you can make smart decisions in spending your money. The workshop also explains software and online options that enable you to easily track your money. If you have questions you can email a Money Wise Aggie counselor at moneywise@tamu.edu or call us at 979.458.5325.

August Opinion Poll Winners

Question: Now that you are in college, what are your plans for stepping up your study habits from high school-level to college-level?

In high school I took notes in class and understood pretty much all of the curriculum, so studying was not something I did much. When I needed help, I asked for it and stayed after-school a few times to get help from the teacher. It worked out then, but I know that will not be the case in college.

I want to continue to be able to know my professors on a similar level as my high school teachers, where I can go up to them and ask for help if I need it. Though I realize that college is going to be completely different from high school. I know I am actually going to have to study, not just skim over the chapters. I will not be able to procrastinate doing papers or projects until two days before the due date, and I will have to learn to organize my time so that each class gets enough attention.

It all comes down to being responsible for myself, giving two hundred percent, and taking care of business. It is scary to think of now, but I am sure I have what it takes to get it done. - Lacey Anderson ‘13

My plans for stepping up my study habits will be to find my system as soon as possible. I’ll need to find a study buddy, plan good times to study, have meetings with my professors, overcome my procrastination habits, and take advantage of friends in my access community for help when I need it. - Sarah Alarcon ‘13

Now that I am in college, I plan on stepping up my study habits from high school to college-level by hitting the books with more enthusiasm. Reading for pleasure is always easy, reading for a class in something different but not impossible. It will have to be a must for me, so that I may get ahead of class and actually grasp the lectures and understand what the professor is talking about without worrying of falling behind. Joining a study group is also part of my plan. I don’t want to get help when it’s too late so I prefer to form part of a study group and have a pace before I’m faced with a failing grade. - Sasha Aldama ‘13

Congratulations Lacey, Sarah, & Sasha!
One of the biggest differences between high school and college is the difference between high school teachers and college professors.

Think about it! In high school, your teachers knew your name, knew what sports you played and what clubs you were in, knew what other classes you were taking, and knew if you had a job outside of school. Personality goes a long way in high school, and probably if your teacher liked you, he or she was willing to give you extra time on a test or overlook some late assignments. Your high school teachers may have also been your athletic coach, band director, or yearbook advisor. Your teachers in high school knew you both inside and outside the classroom.

Now you are in college. A big college. One of the biggest (and best!) universities in the country. The first difference is that in college your teachers are called “Professors.” Your professors probably don’t know your name because you are one of 300 students in the classroom. They don’t know what sports you play, what organizations you are involved in, or where you work part-time. And if you have never gone to visit your professors during office hours, or if you aren’t involved in class discussions, then your professors probably don’t know your personality very well.

But believe this — your professors DO care about you, and they DO want to help you! Your professors want to get to know you as a person, not just as the student in seat 134. Your professors want you to ask questions during class, to visit them during office hours, and to let them know when you are struggling with the material. It is easy to be intimidated by professors! They have Master’s or Doctoral degrees and are experts in their field. They are sometimes very stern and serious, and they always grade tough! But remember that your professors are committed to helping you learn. They want you to succeed in their class and in all of your academic pursuits at Texas A&M University.

Keep in mind, your professors don’t know you as well as your high school teachers did, so it is important that you make a good impression when communicating with your professors. Here are some tips:

- **Be polite** — If you show respect for your professor, then your professor will have respect for you. Address your professor with the appropriate title: “Dr. Jones,” “Mr. Dickens,” or “Ms. Smith.”

- **Be professional** — If you want your professor to treat you like a mature young adult, then you need to act like one! When you email a professor, write in complete sentences and avoid slang. Use grammar check and spell check for EVERY email and assignment. Sign your emails with your first and last name, as well as your UIN.

- **Be prepared** — When you visit a professor during office hours, be prepared with specific questions about the lecture or the chapter. Identify certain concepts or terms that you are having trouble understanding, and ask the professor to explain those terms.

- **Be peaceful** — It is hard not to be angry and disappointed when the grade you get on a test or paper is much lower than you were expecting. However, you can’t always blame the professor for your bad grade. There are many factors that affect a grade. When you are discussing grades with your professor, be calm. Ask the professor what you did wrong and what you need to do to improve on the next test or paper. Ask the professor to suggest resources that might help you. If you remain calm and keep a positive attitude, your professor will be more inspired to help you.

Your professors at Texas A&M University have high expectations for you, and they want you to achieve those expectations. If you are willing to work hard and make the extra effort in class, then you will succeed. Remember, you aren’t in high school anymore. The textbooks are enormous, the reading assignments are long, and the homework is intense. Welcome to college!

And please, don’t skip class to watch MTV!