

Advice: Expectations Many College Professors Have of You

1. If English is not your first language and your English reading, writing, or audio comprehension is not very good, take ESL classes.
2. Read your syllabus. Not just skim, but read everything.
3. Come to class every day.
4. Arrive to class 3-5 minutes before class is scheduled to start.
5. Get out notebook, pencil, and any other class materials before class begins.
6. Write neatly and legibly.
7. Keep a personal calendar or planner. Write your assignment, assignment due dates, class schedule, and any other appointments in your calendar. Consult your calendar every day.
8. Turn off and put away your cell phone, ipod, laptop computer, gameboy, and any other electronic devices before class starts.
9. Plan your life so that you get up, take care of other responsibilities, study, get regular sleep and meals, and get to school on time. If your first plan doesn't work, change it. Keep making changes until you have a plan that works all the time, every day, every class, no excuses and no exceptions.
10. Expect to study. Hard work is essential to college success.
11. Realize that less-successful students pretend they are successful and claim that they "don't need to study" or "don't need to show all the steps", or "just reviewed a little before the test", or some other claim of genius. Most of the people who make these claims are actually D or F students who just don't want you to realize it. When you study, it's because you are better than these people, not worse.
12. Introduce yourself to your classmates before or after class. Find people you like and who are working hard in the class and arrange to study together.
13. Surround yourself with people who want you to succeed in college. If your "friends" are telling you to blow off your studying or your classes, they are not really your friends, because they have something else besides your best interests at heart.
14. "Almost" is not good enough in college. If you "almost" got there on time, you were late. If you "almost remembered", you forgot. If you "almost got the problem right", you got it wrong. If you "almost got a C", you didn't pass.
15. When the instructor tells you about a detail, it's important. Pay attention to details.
16. You will not get college credit for sitting in class. You have to demonstrate that you learned to do the things the class taught you. If you demonstrate half of the skills, you get 50% -- that's an F. Half-way is not good enough. If you demonstrate $\frac{3}{4}$ of the skills, you get 75% -- that's a C. Three-fourths of the way is barely good enough. The other $\frac{1}{4}$ that you didn't get right will be the part you get wrong in the next math class, making it harder for you to pass the next class. Most students who have C in the prerequisite class get D in the next class, unless they do something totally different in their study time.
17. Enroll in a class that's appropriate for your skills – not higher. Pretending you know more than you do will only backfire when you get a D or F, or choose to drop the class.
18. Read your textbook and all other materials your professor gives you.
19. Take notes in class. If your notes are sloppy or incomplete, recopy them after class.
20. Expect to become a different person when you have been college-educated. When you learn to organize your thoughts, writing, and daily life for success in college, you will look at every aspect of the world differently. Some students change a lot in the first year or two of college. Some students don't figure it out until several years later – they are usually the ones that take 5-10 years to leave the community college and transfer.
21. Many students don't study because they are afraid that they might study and still fail. But not studying guarantees you'll fail. Don't set yourself up to fail by taking a class and not doing your best. If you sign up for a class, do that class with intent to do the best you can. Your best effort will make you better than you are, and that change is important, regardless of the outcome in the class.
22. Eat breakfast, and regular healthy snacks or meals throughout the day. Your brain needs food to be able to think, regulate your emotions, and keep you awake.
23. Speak politely to your peers and professors. Speak the truth, calmly. If you have to exaggerate or make inflated or emotional claims, educated people know that you're bluffing.
24. If you have personal crises or need guidance in any aspect of your life, see a counselor and/or ask for help.