Building Study Skills

Collegiate life is much different than high school and so is the studying requirement that goes along with it! Reading requirements are longer and denser, essays and papers are more frequent and studio critiques are more critically engaged. Students will have to adapt their study techniques to succeed in this new college setting. This sheet will provide a map of where to start.

1. Note Taking/Annotating Readings
It is hard to study without great notes! Develop a system of note taking and annotation that works for you. Use this system when writing lecture notes or reading texts.

- Develop your own set of symbols (*, !, #, <, >) to mark importance, unresolved questions, areas to come back to etc.
- Draw attention to key words, and concepts.
- Organize notes by subject or class, keep them all in one place.
- Read over your notes after each session and highlight, underlining or circle areas of importance, or areas you need to clarify with the instructor.
- Make notes on your notes. Summarize and annotate the notes you made. Sometimes it is helpful to split your page into two. On one side write the notes in real time during class. On the other side, write the summary notes you make when re-reading your class notes. Or annotate in the margins of your page. These are spaces to mention important things the professor repeated, stories they told, images they displayed etc.

2. Study Sessions
To avoid cramming on the day before a test, start studying and reviewing notes at the beginning of the semester, and after each class.

- Figure out which time of day you work best and schedule study time like you would schedule a shift at a job.
- Develop a habit of studying at the same time, or place, each day.
- Try to work on big assignments for an hour a day and not all at once.
- Working in a clean, clutter free environment can promote more focus.

3. Starting an Assignment
Start early! It is better to start your work right after the project is assigned, this way you have time to write, re-write and edit on your own or with a tutor.

- Time management can be used to structure your writing. Start with brainstorming one week, and then move on to structure the next and so on.
- Brainstorm all ideas with a mind map on paper so you can refer back to it.
- Refine your thoughts to a thesis, and develop your main argument.
- Write a rough draft, get all of your thoughts and ideas on paper.
- Starting an essay is the hardest part. If you are stuck, try writing your body paragraphs before your introduction and conclusion.
- Make sure all of your topic sentences relate to your thesis.
Places to study at SFAI and in San Francisco!

In a world full of distractions, sometimes finding a quiet place to focus is challenging. Here is a list of places to study in and around SFAI and San Francisco.

@SFAI Main Campus 800 Chestnut:
- **The Academic Resource Center (ARC):** Open 10-4 M-F the ASC invites students who may not have appointments to use the space in the center for a quiet study time. With personal cubicles and computer access, this space is great for reading and essay writing!
- **The Library:** By the magazine racks or in the stacks, the historic library here at SFAI has ample seating and desk space and a quiet place to study!
- **The Quad:** A perfect space to study outside and take in breathtaking views of the city. There are tables and seating just outside the café.
- **The Café:** If you like a little more lively environment the café will work, and you can grab a coffee or snack!

North Beach:
- Café Sappore, 790 Lombard St
- SF Public Library - North Beach Branch: 2000 Mason St
- Readers Bookstore (Book Bay), Fort Mason Center

Other SF Locations:
- Phils Coffee, 748 Van Ness
- Yerba Buena Gardens Lawn, 750 Folsom St
- La Boulange, 500 Hayes St
- Royal Ground Coffee, 2216 Polk St
- Dogpatch Café, 2295 3rd St

SFAI Graduate Campus 2565 Third Street:
- **Library Annex:** Located in Bay L by the AV checkout, this room is quite, sunny and has a collection of great art books and magazines to read in your down time!
- **Student Lounge:** Ample seating and tables for small meetings or personal study sessions with computer access and vending machines!

East Bay:
- Berkeley Public Library, 2090 Kittredge, Berkeley
- Claremont Branch Library, 2940 Benvenue Ave, Berkeley
- Willard Park, 2720 Hillegass Ave, Berkeley
- Espresso Roma, 2960 College Ave, Berkeley
- Mudrakers, 2801 Telegraph Ave, Berkeley
- Sacks Coffee, 2701 College Ave, Berkeley
- Cal Lawn, on campus park, Berkeley

Peninsula:
- Caffe Roma Coffee Roasting, 143 S El Camino Real, Millbrae
- Il Piccolo Caffe, 1219 Broadway, Burlingame
- Rendez Vous Café, 106 S El Camino Real, San Mateo
- San Mateo Public Library, 55 W 3rd Ave, San Mateo
- Coupa Café, 538 Ramona St, Palo Alto