Get Organized!
Academic Success

Utilize a Planner or Calendar Application
A planner or calendar application is key to staying organized. Always have your planner with you and put it somewhere you can see it so you remember to check it all the time.

Keep the syllabus for each class in print and electronically available.

Consider color coding for each type of activity or class and make note of tests, project due dates, special events, chapters to be read, etc.

Make sure you pay attention to any changes your professor may throw at you.

Use Your Cell Phone For Reminders
Set your phone to remind you of specific events; do it to stay organized and for peace of mind.

Stick To A Study Schedule (see a sample plan at the end of this document). One of the hardest parts about college is trying to balance work and fun. To stay organized, you need to set aside a certain amount of time to study. Ideally, it should be at the same time every day. Also, break up your study time. If you're really tired, you are most likely not going to retain any information.

Color Code Your Life
Having different colored folders or binders with loose-leaf paper for each class is an easy way to get organized. Three-hole punch handouts and put them in the proper section of your notebook. Keep everything important – when in doubt – keep it!

Keep Certain Items In Your Backpack
A key to being organized is to have things set up before you need them. To avoid leaving something important behind, especially when you are running late, keep the basics in your backpack. Pens, pencils, highlighters, blue books, and post-its are a good idea. You don’t want to show up to an exam and realize you don’t have anything to write with.

Write Down Everything
When you learn of an upcoming test, event, or anything you must prepare for or attend, immediately jot it in your planner. Don’t wait for later; you will most likely forget it.
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Avoid Procrastination
Just because a paper is due next month, it doesn’t mean you have to wait to do it. If you get the paper done early, you have time to look over it, and your life will feel much more organized and simple.

Be the Teacher’s Pet (Kind Of)
Having good relationships with professors is really important. Come to class on time and be alert so you can participate in discussions. If you are having trouble in a course, don’t hesitate to go in for office hours with the professor. It may seem embarrassing, but most professors want to help. The more you interact with your professors, the better chance they will help you when you need it. They’ll also be more likely to write you a good recommendation. They may even have some tips for how you can stay organized in their classes. Have their office number, email address, and phone number at the ready.

Carry a USB With You
On the USB, make one folder for every class. These folders are a great place to store downloads that many professors expect you to have. It also makes finding assignments to turn in really easy.

The Best Way To Stay Organized Is To Take Care Of Yourself
Being in college is hard — and not just with classes. You need to find time to sleep, eat healthy, and exercise. It’s impossible to get organized if you don’t have the physical, emotional, and mental energy to function. And most importantly, don’t forget to reward yourself for all your hard work.

Create a “Study Plan.” – SEE NEXT PAGE for a sample student plan from Jeffrey Kamal, VWCC, May 2016
“Here is a one-week excerpt for two classes in one semester (REL 210 and ITE 141):

**Week 1 May 16 - May 22**

**Assignments:**
- REL 200 Discussion Board: Introduce yourself to the class and tell us why you are taking this course. Completed 5/18
- REL 200 Assignment: Complete the quiz under Assignments – It Is In the Bible? Due by May 22. Completed May 16
- ITE 141: do Session 1 & submit assignment. Completed May 16

**Review:**
- REL 200: Ch. 1 & 2 (which you already read)

**Read ahead:**
- REL 200: Ch. 8, p. 154-186 (32 pages)

**To do:**
- Sunday, May 15--read p. 154-158
- Monday, May 16--read p. 159-163
- Tuesday, May 17--read p. 164-168
- Wednesday, May 18—read p. 169-173
- Thursday, May 19--read p. 174-178
- Friday, May 20--read p. 179-183
- Saturday, May 21--read p. 184-186 (end of Ch. 8)

A few important things to note:
- Two of the main things I credit to my grades are the fact that I have a Study Plan and that I read ahead.
- Because I already have read Ch. 1 & 2, I marked it as “Review.”
- Assignments that are due get put in BOLD.
- To figure out how much I need to read each day, I take the number of pages I need to read each week and divide it by the 7 days in a week.
- Because I modify my Semester Plan whenever I get ahead and complete assignments, I create this document as a Google Doc on Google Drive on my student email.
- Whenever an assignment has been submitted, I put a strikethrough and the day it was completed.