

College Success Guide

Tips from two students who *have been there and done that.*

How to Succeed at Montco Without Really Trying

Tips on making Montco enjoyable yet worthwhile

by **Samantha Berk**
Staff Writer

You want to succeed, right? You've taken a few steps in the right direction already—signed up for classes and bought your books. But there is more to college than just showing up every day.

Montgomery County Community College (aka "Montco") is a melting pot of people brought together by a common thread: the desire to become more educated. Whether you are a first-time college student, a transfer, or just taking classes for enrichment purposes, you will be able to succeed if you just *"think big"* (and listen to my advice).

1. Take some fun classes. To avoid dreading school, make sure to schedule some course you are actually interested in taking. Montgomery County Community College offers a variety of art and fitness classes sure to bring excitement to the semester. Being able to look forward to fun classes will make the hour and a half of calculus fly by.

2. You've probably heard this before: you need to get involved. There are student organizations to join, trips for you to go on, and, frequently, live entertainment. Commuting to a school doesn't mean you can't spend more time there than required. You might even find your niche writing for The Montgazette.

3. Get to know your professors. Being a teacher's pet has its benefits, such as letters of recommendation (you never know when you might need one). All teachers have office hours during which you can discuss your course material.

4. Be prepared to do work. Yes, sample the pastries from the coffee shops and join a game of Frisbee in the Quad. But remember why you are here: to learn. If you want to pass your classes, then you should study the night before an exam instead of playing "Call of Duty" with friends. You can still have a social life, but stay on top of your studies by reviewing notes every night, completing homework (even when it doesn't count as part of your grade) and paying attention in class.

5. Try your best to ignore the construction. Sure, it is everywhere and noisy, but our campus looks more modern and nicer since this work began. It might feel like all of the construction isn't worth it until we see the end product, which in a way is a metaphor for life.

All of your hard work will be worth it when you end this term with good grades and more knowledge. This article's title is a bit misleading. You WILL have to try at this institution. But if you are motivated to learn, then you will end the semester proudly. Success will be in your future if you give Montco the good ol' college try.

Freshman Success Formula: Follow Deadlines, Don't Cry

Tips for making this a successful year

by **Julia Tasca**
Staff Writer

College is absolutely nothing like high school. Assignment deadlines in high school are usually negotiable whereas college deadlines are, well, deadlines.

But it's not as bad as it sounds. When you apply the proper attitude, college can be a breeze. Based on my mistakes and successes, I've formulated a pretty accurate manual to making it out of freshman year alive.

The last time you were scrambling aimlessly in search of your classrooms was probably your high school freshman year. It's pretty overwhelming to step onto campus for the first time and see a huge mass of people who all look like they know where they're going and what they're doing. You may even want to curl up into a ball and cry.

Don't do that.

There's no need to be afraid of your surroundings on campus. Either make a new friend or find someone you already know to pal around with for the first week or so. This will definitely cut back syllabus-week anxiety.

Like I mentioned before, college deadlines are blunt. Your teachers couldn't possibly care less where you are if you're not in class, and they sure as hell aren't going to re-

mind you that you are missing work. Generally speaking, professors don't normally give lots of little assignments and a few larger ones; it's the other way around. Say you miss one 60-point paper out of four assignments with similar point values. Now take a look at your GPA and tell me how you feel. Oh, yeah, I almost forgot about earning extra credit. That opportunity is rare. So doing actual class work is the best engine to rev.

On a lighter note, I highly recommend a proper diet and exercise. Hot Pockets and gas station burritos do not make for a Breakfast of Champions. And walking around campus from class to class usually doesn't pass as a workout. Seriously though, pursuing a healthy lifestyle can affect your education. I'm not telling you to go join a gym and enter a bodybuilding competition, but there are subtle things you can do to stay healthy. Having some Raisin Bran instead of Frosted Flakes or lifting some free weights while watching television can have a tremendous impact on your mood.

The line between high school and college is fine yet defined. If you follow some of the guidelines described above, you should be in good shape. Try bending some rules, finding yourself, and, above all, having yourself the time of your life. College is like educational limbo hovering between adolescence and the real world.

