

Staying Afloat at Orange Coast College

2020 - 2021 Academic Year



Suggestions for Balancing School and Work

Multiply the number of units you are taking this semester by 2 or 3, depending upon the difficulty level for you. That is how many hours outside of class you should spend each week in order to complete the reading, writing, and studying necessary to achieve an A or a B. This means that a student taking ENGL A100 (3 units) is expected to invest 6-9 hours on course requirements per week outside of class in order to do well.

When the Struggle Gets Real...

Sometimes, despite your best intentions, a class is not going well. Many factors contribute to your level of success in a given semester. As soon as you begin to experience difficulty, it is important that you create opportunities for change.

Opportunities for change are the steps you take early on—before everything spins out of control—that increase your ability to succeed. Do not wait until these windows of opportunity have passed, or the class grade is beyond recovery, before reaching out for help.

The following are strategies and resources we encourage you utilize **before** withdrawing from a class:

- Talk to your instructor. Make an appointment during his/her office hours. Trying to catch your professor before or after class is not nearly as effective.
- Get help. Orange Coast College offers **free academic tutoring** and assistance—even in a virtual environment! Please see a list of resources on the back of this sheet.
- Visit your counselor before you give up. Dropping a class is sometimes best, but it may result in unintended consequences. Counselors will review your situation from every angle and recommend next steps.

Course Repetition vs. Academic Renewal

If you earned a D, F, or NP in a class, the fastest way to improve your GPA is to repeat the course. Repeating a course allows you to suppress the first grade from your GPA. Please keep the following in mind when considering course repetition:

- Repeat standard classes before adding new ones for faster GPA improvement.
- **Repeating a course does not remove the original grade from your transcript.** Instead, the first grade will be annotated to reflect that OCC is no longer computing it in your GPA.
- **Check with a counselor before repeating a course on another campus** to make sure it is deemed equivalent for grade replacement. The same course name and/or number is not a guarantee.

Academic Renewal is another option for removing a grade from your GPA when it does not make sense to repeat the course. **Make an appointment with a counselor to discuss whether this option makes sense for you.** Academic Renewal requires GPA and progress eligibility. It can only be requested up to two times ever. A counselor will help you strategize if and when you should request Academic Renewal.

Recommended Unit Load for Students with Jobs

35 - 40 Hour Work Week

5 - 6 Units Maximum

25 Hour Work Week

9 - 10 Units Maximum

20 Hour Work Week

12 Units Maximum

15 Hours or Less

15 Units



There's a Class for That!

Feeling stressed out and looking for ways to cope? Not sure what you want to do with your life? Confused by the college transfer process? Consider taking a Counseling class! Here are just a **few** of the options available at OCC:

COUN A105: *Strategies for College Success* (3 units, UC/CSU transferable)

COUN A104: *Career and Life Planning: A Holistic Approach* (3 units, CSU transferable)

COUN A100: *Introduction to College* (1 unit, CSU transferable)

COUN A110: *Applied Stress Management* (2 units, CSU transferable)

OCC Academic Resources

Student Success Center (Available via Zoom while the campus is closed!) [CLICK HERE for more info!](#)

- Drop-in Tutoring
- Scheduled Appointments
- Group Tutoring
- Workshops

Writing and Reading Center (Available via Zoom while the campus is closed!) [CLICK HERE for more info!](#)

- Drop-in Tutoring
- Directed Learning Activities
- Workshops
- Study Groups and ESL Conversation Groups

Brainfuse Online Tutoring: Students enrolled in TUT 050N can access 9 hours of free online tutoring per month through MyOCC Canvas. Call 714-432-5559 for more info.

Get on Your Professor's Radar (in a good way!)

Whether you are struggling in a class, maintaining equilibrium, or completely dominating, it is to your advantage to visit faculty office hours.

Taking a little extra time at least once per semester to schedule an appointment and sit down with your professors demonstrates that you take school seriously and care about what they think of your work. Use this time as an opportunity to share your academic experiences and best modes

of learning, to ask questions, to indicate what you are enjoying about the class, and to get to know one another as two interesting human beings.

This small investment of your time can be a powerful currency throughout the semester, as your professor is more likely to notice your accomplishments and struggles, as well as remember you later if you need a letter of recommendation!

Create an Academic Counseling Portfolio

You will likely speak with a variety of different counselors throughout your stay at OCC. Each one will approach your personal and educational planning needs from a lens that reflects what is most important to you in that particular moment. In order to keep track of everything you cover in your counseling sessions, it is recommended you utilize DegreeWorks in MyOCC and start an Academic Counseling Portfolio. Bring this with you to every counseling

appointment. Recommended items include:

- High school transcripts
- Unofficial transcripts from other colleges/universities
- Records of AP/IB exam scores
- The GE pattern you are following
- Notes and documents from previous counseling sessions

Get a Comprehensive Educational Plan

A comprehensive Student Educational Plan (or SEP) is a map of how a student can attain his or her academic goal from start to finish. For students interested in transferring to four-year institutions, an SEP should contain all of the general education requirements, major requirements, and prerequisite courses needed to qualify for transfer consideration at the schools of their choice. For associate degrees or certificates, an SEP contains all of the required coursework to graduate.

When you get a plan that specifies the classes you need only for the next semester, this is called an *abbreviated* SEP. An abbreviated SEP does not give you an idea of the bigger picture: it only considers what you need in the immediate sense. A comprehensive SEP maps out every semester to illustrate the full sequencing of courses for a student. A comprehensive plan can allow a student to see a full science, math, or English sequence to better understand how

many semesters it will take to complete it. It also gives that student a better picture of time to completion for the academic goal.

It is imperative that you have an OCC counselor build your Comprehensive SEP and that you follow up with your counselor every semester because...

- 1.) Counselors are skilled at finding ways to complete academic goals efficiently. This could help you save time and money.
- 2.) Counselors are constantly updated about changes to requirements for degrees, certificates, and transfer majors at various institutions.
- 3.) Counselors are incredibly resourceful!

Please note that **an appointment is necessary for a Comprehensive Plan.** [CLICK HERE to schedule an appointment!](#)