Turning Cupcakes into CEOs
Tough Love Preparation for College Students

Common Call
Greenville 2017
Making An Impact

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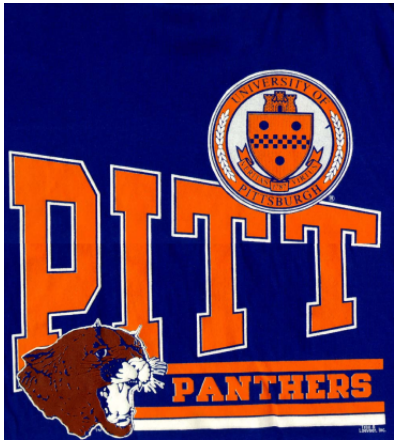


Transition to College

One Tough Assignment for Many High School Students

Many students across America are quickly learning that their transition from high school to college is one of the toughest assignments they've ever received. And, for a Christian student, achieving success in a secular university is even harder.

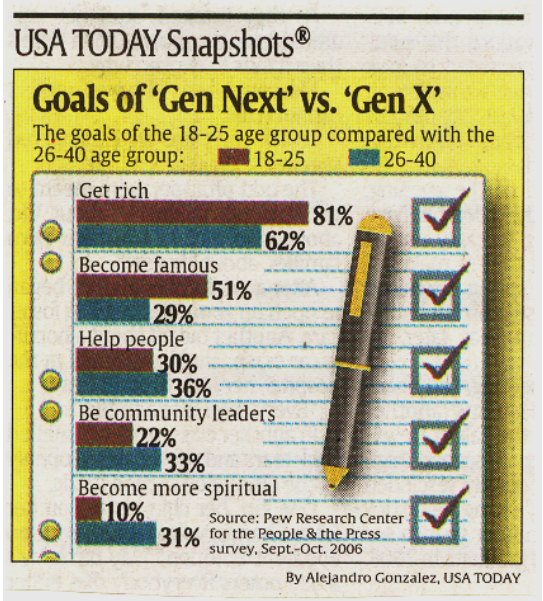
- **The Manhattan Institute reports that only 32% of high school seniors graduate with the skills they need for college.**
- **David Spence, California's Chief Academic Officer, reports that about 60% of freshman in the California State University system need remedial help in math or English, which holds true nationwide at 70% according to a study conducted by Achieve, Inc, (a school reform group led by business leaders).**
- **Only 20% of students have 'basic' quantitative skills which are those necessary to compare ticket prices or calculate the cost of food according to a study by The American Institute for Research.**

Transition to College

Some Reasons the Transition is Difficult

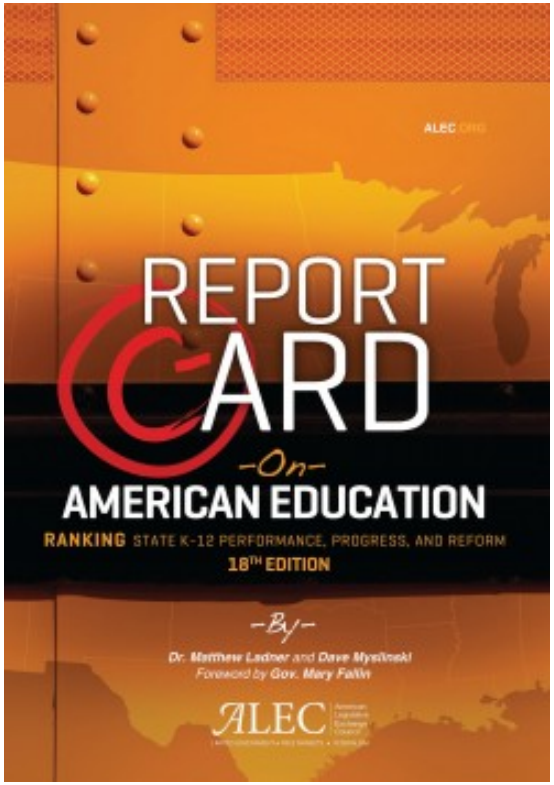
- **Mediocre high school training.**
- **Cultural/secular influences on the millennial generation.**
- **The impact of helicopter parents (ones that hover over their children fighting their battles and micro-managing and their needs)**

. . . are three of the forces that have put many students in jeopardy from day one, resulting in disillusionment as students realize they're not ready for college.



With that said, Christian students are not immune to low performance in college, which is tragic to the Body of Christ. Christian students should be our best college students! They should be successfully mastering college level work and becoming movers and shakers in our world.

What the Experts Say



When asked what he would like to see changed about K-12 education in America, Craig Barrett, former CEO of Intel Corporation (and my old boss), one of the world's leading technology companies, answered

"if we could capture 1% of the hot air that has gone out on this topic and turn it into results, it would be wonderful. The results are how our kids compare to their international counterparts, particularly in math and science. The longer kids stay in the system, the worse they do compared to their international counterparts. In fourth grade, our kids are roughly comparable. By eighth grade, they are behind. By the 12th grade, they are substantially behind other industrialized nations"

The Dollar Value of Being a Good College Student

Not Chump Change

In 1970, workers with bachelor's degrees earned 36% more money than employees with only high school diplomas. Now the gap is 76%.

When accrued over an average lifetime working span of 40 years the differential results in ~ $1,000,000 more in earnings.

Is a million dollars enough to motivate you to do well in college?

What Accounts for the Low Performance of America's Students?

There are many causes . . .

- **The onslaught of secular culture into your life.**
- **The breakdown of the American family.**
- **Politically correct, "feel-good" notions of education.**
- **Government regulation of education, which has dumbed-down and controlled content so everyone can use a computer and art appreciate but nobody can read, write, and do arithmetic.**
- **Principals and administrators who don't have their teachers backs.**
- **Classrooms turned into socially tolerant zones by schools which refuse to impose discipline and a high bar.**
- **Students and parents who try to run the school system.**
- **Institutional acceptance of mediocrity.**
- **Students refusing to spend adequate "time on the books."**

Note: $$ is not on my list

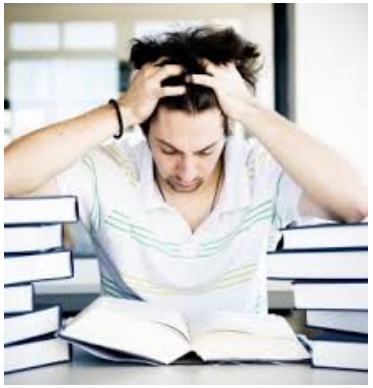
Ten Strategies for College Success for the Christian Student

The Skinny On™:
College Success

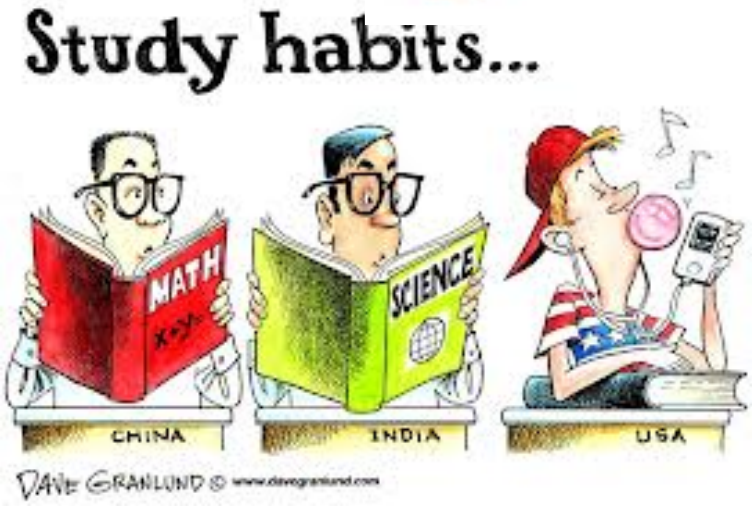
Study Your Study Habits

Strategy #1

Few students, Christian or otherwise, come to college with good study habits. They either come from high schools where high grades could be achieved by not studying much or they were never taught how to study without memorizing everything.



Effective study habits in college, however, require practice, work, and discipline. The earlier in your freshman year you get yourself alone in a library to study, the better you will do in college.



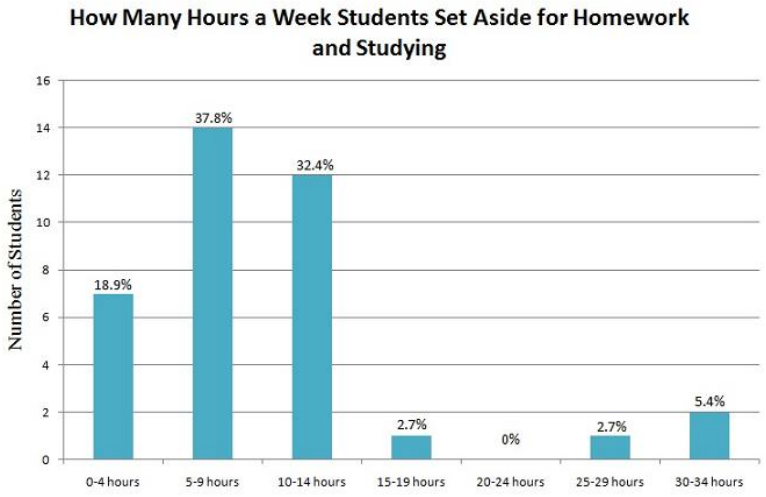
Clock Into College

Strategy #2

Say you are flipping burgers at McDonalds to help pay for college. At minimum, your boss expects you to show up on time, do your job completely, be professional and accountable. So, why would you do less as a student where there is much more at stake than cooking burgers?

Why would you be on time for a job, but then cut your classes; or be competent at work, but then turn in sloppy, careless homework in college? You shouldn't!

Treat being a student with the same loyalty and respect as you would treat a job. You will make fewer mistakes and you will feel better about your college experience.

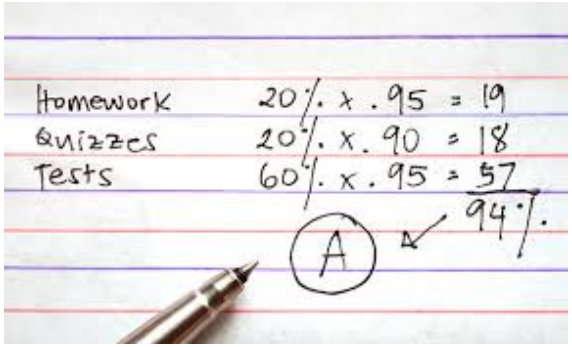


Learn the Curve

Strategy #3

You save an enormous amount of time and energy by understanding the grading systems used by professors.

Most employ either an absolute or a relative system commonly called a curved grading scheme. Students understand an absolute system because it was used by teachers in high school. However, many of my students taking introductory physics have no idea how a curved system works.



If you don't understand how you're graded you'll find yourself putting your efforts where they are minimally effective. Don't shoot yourself in the foot by misplaced effort! Get ahead of the 'curve' and ask your professors to explain their grading systems because effort is costly and should be placed where it matters the most.

Save Dough--Ask the Pro(fessor that is)

Strategy #4

When the going gets tough, it's amazing how many students turn to everyone and everything EXCEPT their college professors.

Sometimes it's because they have had a bad experience with a professor, or their professor is not adept at helping students, or they simply don't want their professor to know that they are so far behind the pace.

Whatever the hang-up, you've got to move on. I always encourage my students to ask for help early in the semester. It's true without exception that when a student gets in early for help, the one-on-one interaction turns an F on the first test into an A or B before the course ends.

Avoid Rookie Mistakes

Strategy #5

Success in life depends on minimizing mistakes. Just as turnovers play a large role in the outcome of a football game (turn the ball over and you lose--hang onto the ball and you win), the same is true for college students.

The best college students make the fewest mistakes. They don't cut classes, fail to hand in homework, put social life and work ahead of school, quit classes when they get hard, expect professors to spoon feed them, or prefer short-cuts to honest effort. And, they certainly don't wait until the last minute to study and then pray for God to rescue them--they actually study and do the work!

Tick Tock—Time Block

Strategy #6

You have enough time in college to do all the things you need to do, but only if you manage yourself wisely.

Decide which 4 or 5 things are the most important and stick with them.

One tip is to organize your courses, for example, in the morning. You will appreciate the uninterrupted time in the afternoon to study or schedule labs. An hour here or an hour there between classes most likely will lead to a cup of coffee at Starbucks, surfing the internet in a campus computer lab, text messaging your friends or watching TV in the student union.

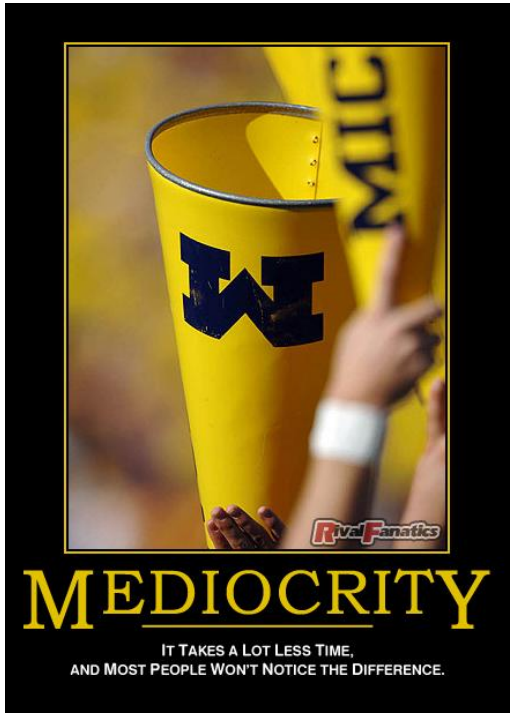
Mediocrity is Lukewarm

Strategy #7

Revelation 3:15 says "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other!"

You are not called to be lukewarm! I often hear students saying, "I got A's in high school without studying, so why should I study here?" Say what? This is not high school, this is college! And, a college education is determinative of the rest of your life; the stakes are much higher.

What worked for you in high school is not going to work in college unless you are majoring in basket weaving. The mediocrity of high school doesn't fly in college if you want to be a person of excellence. Don't spend too much time on the politics of getting through--instead enjoy the ride and do a good job at it.



Avoid the Social Snares

Strategy #8

Christian students in a secular university inevitably are confronted by difficult social issues.

College life is an environment full of new freedoms to experiment with risky behaviors formerly policed by parents and teachers. Sex, drugs, alcohol, and the culture are the four most dangerous risks that can derail a successful college career. Relationship issues involving boyfriends/girlfriends can suck an enormous amount of time away from achieving your goals.

Guard your life and focus on getting your degree! This can be accomplished by holding fast to Biblical convictions and allowing God to guide your life. Poor judgments and social snares can short-circuit the wonderful life God has planned for you.

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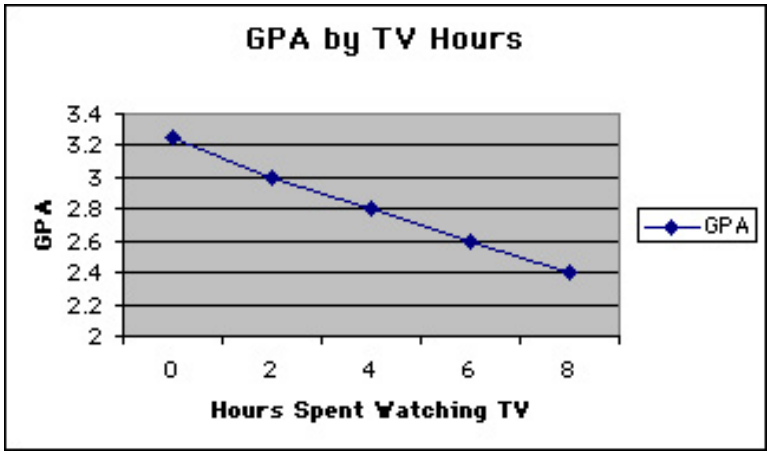
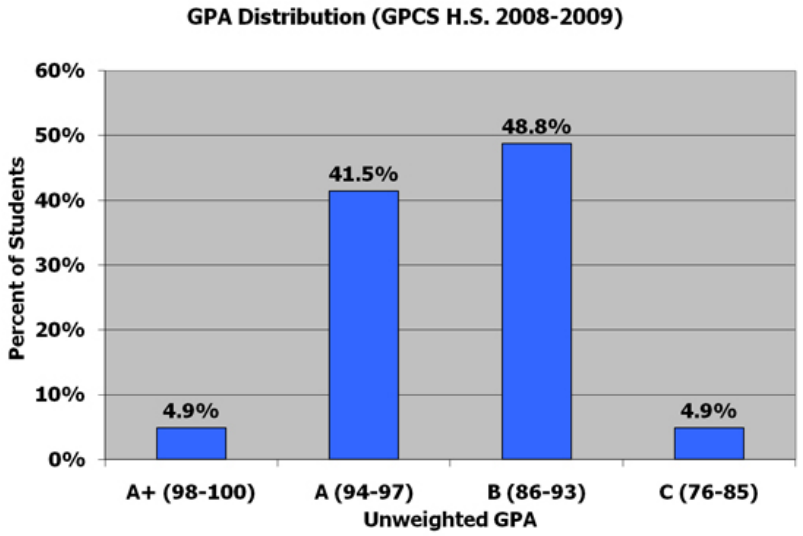
Get on the GPA Fast Track

Strategy #9



One of the impediments to high performance in college is surviving the freshman year. A bad start makes everything difficult, meaning of course that a good start makes everything easier.

A high GPA earned during your freshman and sophomore years is difficult to knock down during your junior and senior years. Correspondingly, starting as a freshman in a GPA hole makes it difficult if not impossible to build it back to acceptability during the remainder of your college years. Opt for deferred rewards and work hard early on--then you can cruise later.



Surviving the Freshman Year

Playing the Numbers Game

Take the student who gets off to a bad start and ends up with an overall GPA of 1.5 at the end of his freshman year. Question: If his target graduating GPA is 3.5, what does it take to get there by graduation day?

Input Numbers	Possibilities for Obtaining Your Target GPA
Current GPA = 1.5	600 hours with 3.6 GPA
Target GPA = 3.5	300 hours with 3.7 GPA
	200 hours with 3.8 GPA
	150 hours with 3.9 GPA
	120 hours (4 years) with 4.0 GPA

Conclusion:: It's impossible to get an overall graduating GPA of 3.5 if you end your freshman year with a 1.5 ! You would have to spend four years AFTER your freshman year and you only have three years. Worse, you would have to get a 4.0 in ALL THE REST OF YOUR COURSES. Fat chance.

Remember Who Got You Into College

Strategy #10

The biggest mistake you as a Christian student could make is neglecting God in college.

It makes zero sense to leave God out of your university life when He is the primary reason you are there! So much is riding on your college years that you need God now more than ever! You need . . .

- **daily wisdom, guidance, and strength that no professor can offer.**
- **help studying for tests, doing assignments, finding good friends, finding a job, finding a church, and to guide you through a host of other college related experiences.**
- **God to protect you from cultural forces that seek to derail your life.**

What to Do?

Advice for Parents

- **Provide a Christian counterweight to the onslaught of the culture.**
- **Stop doing everything for your kids. Let them make mistakes, assume responsibility, and get dirty. Provide a realistic evaluation of their skills. Nobody gets trophies for everything.**
- **Teach that life success is based more on blue-collar attitudes of hard work, deferred rewards, effort, and discipline – not luck, shortcuts, connections, or entitlements.**
- **Help your kids find their wiring and encourage them to serve God with their talents.**
- **Raise your own kids. If you don't, the culture or the government will.**
- **Wear the pants in the family. Have a backbone. Take stands. Kids need you to be a parent and not a "cool" friend.**
- **Never stop praying for your kids.**