

It is never too early or late to develop the skills needed for Academic Success. In your experience at Stony Brook, you may find the skills you developed in high school may or may not work. Some of you may have excelled in high school with little or no effort, while many of you may have put in hours of studying just to achieve B's & C's. No matter what your experience was in high school, all of you will be challenged when it comes to goal setting, study skills, note taking, and most importantly, time management.

Goal Setting

Why did you come to Stony Brook University? Millions of students go to college every year and their reasons for going are as diverse as their backgrounds. It is important for you to think about why you came to college and start to set goals. By setting goals, you are programming yourself for success.

What are your own goals for your academic and personal life? Utilize your 101 instructor, your TA, other chapters in this book, or your peers to make sure you are including all important aspects of college student life when answering these questions. Take some time to write out your goals and put them in a place where you will see them on a daily basis.

- What are your academic goals that you would like to meet by the end of this week?
- What are your **personal** goals that you would like to meet by the **end of this week**?
- What are your academic goals that you would like to meet by the **end of this semester**?
- What are your **personal** goals that you would like to meet by the **end of this semester**?
- What do you want your **GPA** to be by the **end of this year**?

Read your Course Syllabus

Your syllabus provides you with a lot of important information that you will need to know for your course. You should read each of them over very carefully so you'll know exactly what to expect for the semester. Here are some important things to look for:

- 1. Your professor's information and how they prefer to be contacted if you have a question.
- 2. The expectations the professor has for the class. For example, some professors do not want students to bring laptops to class to take notes, some have strict policies regarding cell phones and MP3 players, and some have rules about

eating in class. It is important to read these over carefully.

- 3. Days that the class will be meeting in a different location so you do not end up being late those days by going to the wrong place.
- 4. The dates of exams and due dates for homework assignments. Many college professors do not remind you that tests and/or assignments are coming up since they expect you to be reading the syllabus.
- 5. Grading policies such as how much each test/quiz/assignment/project is worth so you'll know exactly where to focus your attention. Additionally, look to see if there are any extra credit opportunities, what the policy is for attendance and class participation, if the lowest test grade is dropped, and what the penalties are for turning in assignments late.

Note-Taking

Note-taking skills are critical to being successful at Stony Brook. Since a majority of your first-year classes will be lectures taking place in large lecture halls, good note-taking skills can be the difference between failing and passing a course. You will need to be prepared, ready to listen, aware of what methods work for you, and willing to review all of your notes to not only survive college, but to do well. Keep in mind that you may need to try a variety of methods before finding out what works best for you.

Be Prepared

- Use a binder instead of spiral notebook.
- Try to have one binder per class.
- Bring multi-color pencils and highlighters to class.
- Read the assigned material before class.
- Start each lecture on a new page (always date and note topic).
- Leave blank spaces for notes recorded later.

Ready to Listen

- · Have a clear mind.
- Eat before class.
- · Get enough sleep.
- Pay attention (this may take some conscious effort).
- Sit as close to the instructor as possible.
- Put all distractions away (iPods, cell phones, etc.).
- Listen for details, facts, explanations, and definitions (these are usually test answers).

Use a Variety of Methods

- Use a highlighter.
- Using a laptop may allow you to type fast and not worry about deciphering later.
- Use short-hand or abbreviation.
- Draw diagrams or pictures that help you understand.

Use Abbreviations

Abbreviations can assist you in taking notes faster so that you can jot down more information during class lectures. Some examples are below. You may know several more, or you may even create your own!

- w/o = without
- b/c = because
- e.g. = example
- esp. = especially
- w/ = with
- vs. = versus
- etc. = etcetera
- ch = chapter

Review and Edit Notes

- Review your notes sooner rather than later (the longer you take, the more you will forget).
- Fill in your shorthand or abbreviations.
- Circle or highlight things you don't understand so that you can clarify with your professor or classmates.
- Rewriting your notes may help you memorize them.

To improve your note-taking, reflect on the following questions and talk about your answers to your 101 instructor, T.A., advisor, or a student who has taken the same class.

- How do I take notes currently?
- Does how I take notes differ depending on what class I'm in? If so, how?
- What are some ways I have seen students take notes differently?
- How can I improve my note-taking to make it more effective for me?

Study Skills

Studying is very important in college. Your study hours may vary, but it is best to set a schedule. Once you set your class schedule, look for gaps throughout your day. It is during these gaps that you should avoid going back to your room to watch TV, hang out with friends, or take a nap. Instead, head to your favorite study spot. This will allow you more social time after your classes are finished for the day. In college the amount of time you study usually directly correlates with what your grades become. Here are a few more differences when it comes to studying in college instead of high school:

STUDYING IN HIGH SCHOOL	STUDYING IN COLLEGE
You may study outside of class as little as 0 to 2 hours a week, and this may be mostly last-minute test preparation.	You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class.
You often need to read or hear presentations only once to learn what you need to know.	You need to review class notes and test material regularly.
You are expected to read short assignments that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class.	You are assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing which may not be directly addressed in class.
Guiding principle: You will usually be told in class what you needed to learn from assigned readings.	Guiding principle: It's up to you to read and understand the assigned material, as lectures and assignments proceed from the assumption that you've already done so.

Here Are Some Great Study Tips for Stony Brook Classes:

When to Study:

- Plan 2-3 hours of study time for every hour you spend in class.
- Study your most challenging or least favorite subjects first.
- Avoid scheduling marathon study sessions (cramming is not effective).
- Be aware of your best time of day to focus.
- Be productive during time gaps between classes.

Handling the Rest of the World:

- Pay attention to your studies.
- Come to an agreement with roommates about times for visitors, times you'd prefer to study without distractions, times you'd like to sleep without disruption, etc.
- Avoid noise distractions.
- Notice how others misuse their time and don't make the same mistakes.

Where to Study:

- Decide on a regular study area where you can be productive.
- Don't get too comfortable (it is NOT effective to study in your room)!
- Use designated study spots or lounges on campus.
- Avoid sitting in front of a computer (Facebook can be too tempting).

Know Your Resources:

- Your peers, fellow students
- Your professor, instructor and/or TA
- Your College Advisor http://ucolleges.stonybrook.edu/advising 🗗

- Residence Hall Director/Resident Assistant—they can help you find quiet places in the building to study or help to control noise on your floor if it's too loud to concentrate.
- Commuter Assistants— they can help you identify strategies for effective studying given the challenges of commute time (i.e. study on public transportation, schedule gaps in between classes, utilize commuter student lounges, etc.).

Good Places to Study on Campus

- Atrium in the Humanities Building
- Library North Reading Room, Central Reading Room
- Music Library
- 3rd and 4th floor of the Main Library Stacks
- 6th and 7th floor lounges of the Social and Behavioral Science Building
- SAC 3rd floor lounge
- Commuter lounges in the SAC and Library
- Residential Quad Lounges

Study Habits Assessment

Directions: Please answer the following questions to help you evaluate your study habits. Then reflect on your answers with your 101 instructor, TA, College Advisor, Residence Hall Director, or someone whom you trust to give critical feedback.

1. To do well this semester, I think I should study
a) less than I did in high school
b) the same amount of time I spent studying in high school
c) much more often than I did in high school
d) I have not thought about it
2. In high school I studied
a) only if I had an upcoming test
b) I did not study; I just did homework
c) often (during school and at home)
d) usually just during study hall
a) assumy fust during study hun
3. I study best when
4. For me, the barriers to studying successfully have been
5. What are some strategies I can employ to improve my study habits?

Building a Relationship with Professors and Instructors

Students usually talk to their professors when they have questions or need assistance with an assignment. Although talking to your college professors can sometimes be intimidating, it is important to remember that they are here to contribute to your college education. In order to learn as much as you can, you need to ask questions when you do not understand something. Additionally, it is beneficial to have a positive rapport with your professors/instructors when you need to request academic references.

When interacting with your professor, keep the following things in mind:

- 1. Sit in the front of the classroom or lecture hall. In addition to enhancing your learning by being more attentive, this will enable you to ask questions more easily in class. By being more engaged in class you will have more to talk about with your professor inside and outside of class.
- 2. Know a little about your professor. Does he/she have a specific passion for this topic of study, or is this an introductory course that he/she is teaching as a department requirement? Is he/she known for research, teaching, or service to the University community? Much of this information may be found on each department's website.
- 3. Professors are happy to meet with motivated students and are impressed by students who ask questions and strive to excel in that class. In fact, if you express a strong personal interest in studying this subject, you may even be considered for departmental research opportunities, scholarships, mentoring, and teaching assistant positions.
- 4. Do not let peers interfere with your personal and academic goals. You may have chosen to sit near friends or in the back of the classroom in high school, but in college it is important to prioritize very carefully. The reality is that many students realize too late how important it can be to have built a rapport with professors. At Stony Brook you are likely to take one or more classes taught by a preeminent scholar in their field. It's up to you to take advantage of that excellent educational opportunity.

In the Communication Chapter, specific practices and etiquette rules for communicating with University faculty are addressed. This chapter includes important tips for how to interact in a respectful and appropriate manner in this formal setting.

Time Management

Your first year at college can be an exciting and overwhelming time. During your freshman year at Stony Brook, you will be juggling classes, sleeping, eating, socializing, and family obligations. Effective time management involves establishing a ROUTINE. You most likely had a weekly and daily routine while in high school. At Stony Brook you will have to establish your own balanced schedule and routine within the new freedoms of the college environment.

Self-Reflection

Before classes start, you should sit down and evaluate your time management skills from high school. Keep in mind, you no longer have someone (parent, teacher, sibling) looking over your shoulder and reminding you to do your homework and or study. No one is going to reprimand you if you don't study, attend class, or complete homework assignments. However, this will be reflected in your grades. No one is here to remind you to go to sleep early or get up for class. There will be no one to make sure you eat something before you start your day. All of this is your responsibility. Be aware of your current self-discipline and time management skills; make any changes necessary to maintain your overall wellness and achieve academic success.

Avoid Procrastination and Time Wasters

Students often procrastinate unintentionally due to environmental distractions or time wasters that prevent them from staying on track. Distractions such as Facebook, cell phones, TV, and video games are some examples of avoidable distractions that tend to lead to procrastination. You can plan time for both studying and socializing, with the priority being your studies.

Kicking the procrastination habit in college may prove to be very difficult due to the many ways in which college differs from high school. Deadlines for research papers might be half of a semester away, assignments might be open-ended and vaguely defined rather than structured and clearly outlined, and the midterms for your courses may all be held within the same week. Essentially, you will be responsible for structuring your own time, and might be juggling multiple commitments, such as a part-time job, sports, or clubs.

Make Time to be Present and Attentive in Class

Students often waste time in class by going on the internet, texting, talking, sleeping, and engaging in other unproductive activities. Because attendance is not always taken, students may be tempted to skip class altogether. These activities are not only disrespectful to the professor or instructor and decrease learning, but as outlined below they waste money too.

Sample Cost of Attendance

Student Status	A. Tuition (full year)	B. Fees (full year)	C. \$ per credit (/15)	D. \$ per course (*3)	E. \$ per class (/14wk/2.5)
NYS Resident	\$5,570	\$1,990	\$252	\$756	\$21.60
Out-of-State	\$16,190	\$1,990	\$606	\$1,818	\$51.94
International	\$16,190	\$3,525	\$657.16	\$1,971.48	\$56.33

^{*}Estimated yearly tuition and fees for full-time undergraduates. Effective 3/1/2013. All charges are subject to change following regulations from the state of New York, the State University of New York, and Stony Brook University.

Columns A and B show Stony Brook University tuition and fees during the 2013-2014 academic year based on student status. If the average student takes 15 credits in the fall and 15 credits in the spring, they paid the amount in column C per credit. If each class is an average of 3 credits, they paid the amount in column D per course. If the semester is 14 weeks long and classes meet on average 2-3 times per week, the amount in column E is what each class costs.

Put another way, students waste the amount in column E each time they skip a class or engage in wasteful activities

during a class. Very few college students would actually throw \$21-\$56 in the trash, but this is essentially what you are doing when you fail to engage in class activities. This amount increases when you factor in the additional cost of books, transportation expenses, room, and meal plan.

For current information regarding the total cost of tuition and fees at Stony Brook University, visit: http://www.stonybrook.edu/bursar/tuition/ug.shtml 🗗

Planners Are Helpful - When You Use Them!

Use the Success Book planner that you received at orientation. Make a daily, weekly, and monthly list of every task and refer to these lists every day to keep yourself on track. To help you get started, please fill out the following schedule grid. Don't forget to include time for all classes, club meetings, sports, eating, sleeping, studying, and "just hanging around" time.

Planning your Week Activity

Step 1 - Click the link below to take you to the *Planning Your Week Activity*.

To download an Excel file: http://bit.ly/planningactivity_SBU

To download as a PDF:

Step 2 - Complete the chart by filling in all of your weekly commitments and responsibilities.

Step 3- Reflect on these questions based on your completed chart:

- Are there categories for which you can or should allot more or less time?
- Are there times in your week when you are not doing anything?
- How can you use that time more effectively?
- Are you allowing for 2-3 hours of study time per credit hour?

Step 4- Revise your chart based on the answers to the above questions.

Step 5- Print out your revised schedule and post it where you can easily see it each day.

Test-Taking

If you manage your time well and avoid procrastination, then you should be well-prepared when exam/midterm time approaches. Before this time comes, you should be reviewing your notes regularly, reading the assigned chapters, and asking your professor any questions as they arise. By doing these things, you will be more prepared on exam day. The more prepared you are, the better you will do on the exam. Keep the following things in mind:

Tips for Overcoming Test Anxiety

- Take a deep breath and stretch your arms and fingers.
- Close your eyes for a second and try to think of something positive.
- Try to stay calm and increase your confidence.

Before The Test:

- Be prepared! Make sure to study regularly before an exam. Do not cram right before.
- Find out what kind of test it will be: multiple choice, essay, combination, etc.
- Stay calm, focused, and confident.
- Make sure you are eating healthy and exercising regularly.
- If the professor offers a review session before the test, make sure to attend this. Your studying can be more focused after reviewing specific areas and discussing test questions. You will likely feel more prepared.
- Make sure to get a minimum of 6 hours of sleep. This will help improve brain function.
- Eat well before your exam so you can remain calm and focused during the test.
- Make sure to bring everything you need: glasses, pen or pencil, eraser, etc.

During the Test:

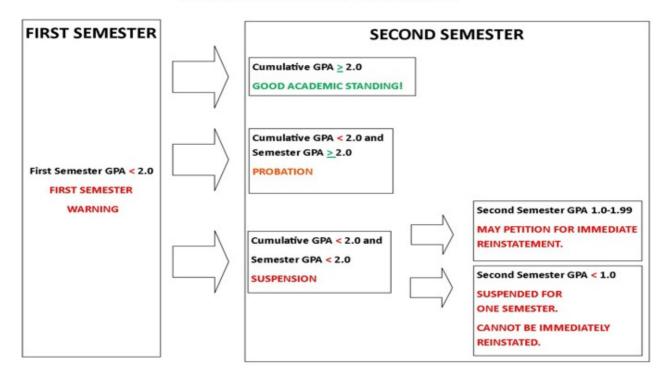
- Skim the test briefly to get an overview.
- Watch the clock and pace yourself. You don't want to rush through it or run out of time.
- Read all directions slowly and carefully.
- Skip questions that you are unsure of and go back to them later (NEVER leave a question blank, unless it will affect your grade. It's always better to make an educated guess than to not even try!).
- Answer easier questions first (this will help boost your confidence)!
- Try to stay relaxed. Dress comfortably.

Academic Standing At Stony Brook

In order to be considered in good academic standing with the University, students must have a cumulative GPA (Grade Point Average) of a 2.0 or higher. Detailed information about academic standing is available on the Undergraduate Academic Affairs website: http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic_standing 🗗

Students who receive less than a 2.0 GPA in their first semester are placed on First Semester Warning. Below is a chart that illustrates the academic standing levels:

FIRST SEMESTER WARNING



It is also important to note that your GPA and number of credits earned can impact Financial Aid Eligibility. This is called Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). For more information on SAP requirements visit the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarship Services website at: http://www.stonybrook.edu/finaid/receiving/sap.shtml

Calculating Your GPA

In order to ensure that you are staying on track with your GPA, you can use the GPA calculator to calculate your current or future GPA: http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/advising/gpa_calculator.shtml 🗗

Grades are assigned point values as follows:

A 4.0	B- 2.67	D+ 1.33
A- 3.67	C+ 2.33	D 1.00
B+ 3.33	C 2.00	F 0.00
B 3.00	C- 1.67	Q 0.00

Deans' List: After each fall and spring semester the dean of each college compiles a Dean's List of undergraduate students who constitute approximately the top 20 percent of their class. Each full-time student must have completed in that semester at least 12 credits for a letter grade (including S) and have no I's, U's, NR's, NC's, F's, R's or Q's. P grades are not considered to be letter grades. Part-time students must have earned at least six credits in a semester of letter-graded work (not including S or P grades). The grade point average cutoffs are as follows: seniors, 3.40; juniors, 3.30; sophomores, 3.20; and freshmen, 3.10.

First Generation Students

Stony Brook University is very proud to have a large number of first-generation college students. In fact, incoming students can now voluntary indicate that they are the first person in their family to go to college. Across the country, the number of first-generation college students is on the rise. First-generation college students account for almost half of the student population in colleges and universities today (Choy, 2001). There are a few different definitions of what constitutes a first-generation college student, but generally can be defined as having no parent or guardian that has graduated from a college or university. Given the fact that no parent or guardian has completed the college process, there are many areas that the parent or guardian cannot aid their student with simply because there is no personal frame of reference or experience, thus creating some barriers and challenges to first-generation students that their peers with parents who went to college might not face.

Research has shown that first-generation college students are more likely to hold part-time jobs, take fewer credits, and have lower cumulative grade point averages than students whose parents graduated from college (Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004). Additionally, first-generation college students have lower graduation rates than students who have had parents/guardians that have graduated from college (Pascarella, et al., 2004). It is not because first-generation students are not as smart or capable as their peers, rather they are most likely unaware of the appropriate resources available to them to aid in their success. For instance, if a student is not properly advised on the classes needed for their major and/or to graduate, it is possible that the student could be a semester or year behind, which could lead to an increase in unforeseen education costs.

Students are more successful in college when they are more involved (Astin, 1993). Whether it be holding a part-time job, commuting to campus, or not knowing where to start, research has indicated that first-generation college students are less involved in extracurricular activities and have less outside of class interactions with peers (Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004). Here at Stony Brook University there are almost 350 recognized student clubs and organizations. Check out SB Life (https://stonybrook.collegiatelink.net/) for a full listing. Also, at the beginning of each semester there is an involvement fair where students can interact with all the clubs and organizations on campus to see what they are doing and how students can become involved.

Are you a first-generation college student? Want to know what other first-generation students say about their experience here at Stony Brook? Check out the video below!



References:

Astin, A. W. (1993). What matters in college? Four critical years revisited. San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass.

Choy, S. (2001). Students whose parents did not go to college. Postsecondary access, persistence, and attainment (NCES Statistical Report 2001-126). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics.

Pascarella, E. T., Pierson, C. T., Wolniak, G. C., & Terenzini, P. T. (2004). First-generation college students: Additional evidence on college experiences and outcomes. Journal of Higher Education, 75(3), 249

Academic Success Checklist

Week	What you should do.	Did It?
1	 Check Blackboard before your first class meetings. Make sure your preferred email address in SOLAR is correct. Read and print out syllabi, bring to class. Attend class meetings, ask questions if anything is unclear. Evaluate your schedule—are you unsure about any classes? Buy your books. 	
2	 Speak to an advisor before you make changes to your schedule. Stay aware of all important academic dates and deadlines. Start off on the right foot—stay on top of your readings/assignments 	
3-5	 As you get acclimated to your courses, think about your study habits. If you are struggling, try one of the following options: Visit your professor, instructor, or TA during office hours. Go to a tutoring center or the Writing Center 	
6-7	 Midterms may be happening now or soon—prepare yourself! Do you know how you are doing in class? If not, contact your professor. If you are doing poorly, take action and utilize resources right away. Take a break; make sure you are taking some downtime for yourself. 	
8-9	 Reflect: Which classes are you doing well in and enjoying? Are these your major classes? If you are struggling in your major classes and not enjoying them, think about other options. As you get your midterm grades, evaluate how well you did. Is your grade what you expected? If not, think about how you could improve for next time—think about modifying your study habits and/or see a tutor. 	

Week 10	 What you should do. Speak with your academic advisor and major advisor in preparation for next semester scheduling. Begin thinking about which classes you want to take for next semester. 	Did It?
11- 15	 Continue your improved study habits and visits to tutoring departments and/or office hours through the final stretch of the semester. Register for classes for next semester, visit your advisor again or ask your 101 instructor if you need help or have any questions. Gear up for finals week! 	

Academic Success Resources – How to Get Help for Free

Remember, it's never too early or too late to develop the skills needed to be successful at Stony Brook. By defining what Academic Success means to you and setting personal goals you are taking the first steps. You will need to first evaluate your current study skills, note-taking strategies, and time management habits. Don't forget, you don't have to do this alone! Besides your 101 instructor, there are many resources on campus that can help you with this transition. Take advantage of these offices and departments that offer trained staff with proven records to help you improve your academic performance.

SERVICE	COURSES	TYPE OF HELP	LOCATION & HOURS
General Academic Advising and First- Year Transition	First-Year Seminar (FYS) 101	Advising & academic success workshops for first-year students in the Undergraduate Colleges	Undergraduate Colleges IP N-3071 Melville Library 632-4378
General Academic Advising (CEAS)	N/A	Advising for students in the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences	CEAS Undergraduate Student Office 127 Engineering 632-8381
General Academic Advising (Beyond Freshman year)	N/A	Advising for sophomores-seniors and transfer students who are undeclared or in CAS, COB, COJ, or SOMAS	Academic & Transfer Advising Services E-2360 Melville Library 632-7082
Pre-Health and Pre-Law Advising	N/A	Advising for students interested in pre-health and pre-law	Pre-Health Advising (2), Pre-Law Advising (2) E-3310 Melville Library 632-7082
Major Decision/ Career Exploration	CAR 110	Individual consulting, self-assessments, workshops, online	Career Center ☑ W-0550 Melville Library 632-6810

		resources	
Academic Integrity	N/A	Online resources, workshops, Q- Course	Office of Academic Judiciary (2) E3310 Melville Library 632- 7080
Academic Success	Course tutoring and general academic success	Individual Tutors and Peer Coaches	Academic Success and Tutoring Center 4
Biology Tutoring	Any BIO course, particularly intro courses	Walk-in questions, learning resources	Biology Learning Center G10 Biology Learning Labs, Consult posted schedule
Chemistry Tutoring	CHE 129, 131, 132, 321, 322, 326	Walk-in questions and group problem solving sessions	Chemistry Learning Center 2 312 Chemistry Building Consult syllabus for specific times for your course
Math Tutoring	Any MAP and MAT Course	Walk-in questions, review sessions, learning resources	Mathematics Learning Center S-240A Math Tower (Basement) See website for hours and courses
Physics Tutoring	Any PHY Course	Walk-in questions	Physics Help Rooms A129 & A131 Physics Consult posted schedule
General Tutoring	Selected Courses in CHE, MAT, MAP, PHY	Walk-in questions, study groups, individual tutoring, exam review sessions *Not just for residential students*	Residential Tutoring Centers Center for ITS - Gray College 632-6670 Mon & Wed 8-11pm Center for GLS & HDV- Noble Halls 632-6797 Tues & Thurs 8- 11pm Tabler Center 632-6648 Tues & Thurs 8- 11pm
Writing Help	Any Writing	Individual consulting	Writing Center 2 2009 Humanities

	Project		632-7405 Visit http://sunysb.mywconline.com/ to make an appointment.
Spanish Writing Help	Spanish Writing, Projects, Grammar, Usage	Individual consulting	Spanish Writing Center N-3065 Melville Library
Language Learning Research Center (LLRC)	Language and culture courses	Teaching and learning of language, literature, and culture. Foreign Language Placement exams.	Language Learning Research Center A N-5004 Melville Library 632-7013
Research Assistance	Any scholarly project	Workshops, walk-in questions, email or text a librarian	University Libraries Frank Melville Jr. Memorial Library 632-7100
Learning Support	All courses	Adaptive equipment, alternative form textbooks, tutoring, note taking assistance	Disability Support Services 4632-6748 Email: dss@notes.cc.sunysb.edu
Educational Technologies Support	Blackboard, SOLAR, printing, virtual classroom, adobe connect	Phone support, walk- in and appointments, online assistance, workshops	Division of Information Technology and Virtual meeting room for help with Blackboard, printing, email, and more! 632-9800 for help with computer and network issues.
Business Tutoring	Any BUS course	Students should consult with TA about office hours/appt.	Business Learning Center Harriman Hall Room 312
Applied Math and Statistics	AMS 102, 151, 161, 201, 210	Students should consult with TA about	AMS Help Room

Tutoring	office
	hours/appt