*I Can Do It: Academic Boost in Studying and School Work*

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When studying for an exam, writing a paper, or even reading a book, I know I sometimes fall flat. Academically speaking, I know my work falls through the cracks at times, but nobody is perfect. Even through these mistakes and downfalls, I remind myself of the critical thinking and study skills I obtained from my Note Taking and Study Skills class in high school and University Studies 121 and 122. These are huge reminders of what I need to do with all my academic works, from English to Math.

Some basic reminders to myself about studying come from Kathleen T. McWhorter’s *Study and Critical Thinking Skills in College* in an outline I created in University Studies 121:

**COPING WITH NEW EXPECTATIONS**

* **Set Your Own Operating Rules**
  + Your time is your own
  + There are no defined hours except for when classes are in session
  + You are on your own; you choose to do. What you want. When you want. If you want to at all.
  + Some students feel that they should spend all their time studying; others put it off and never really find the right time to get it done
  + Set your own guidelines as to what you think you should obey to make yourself more successful
    - Examples of “Self-Rules”
      * Start studying for a major exam at least a week ahead
      * Make review a part of each study session
  + Write them down and post them so you see them daily as a reminder
* **Take Responsibility for Your Own Learning**
  + Professors function as guides; *You* do the learning
  + Instructors expect you to learn the material and to be prepared to discuss it in class.
* **Develop New Approaches to Learning**
  + College requires new attitudes and approaches toward learning
* **Focus on Ideas, Not Right Answers**
  + Many students expect to be either right or wrong.
  + “Learning is limited” to facts and mastery of the course and is measured by the number right answers
  + A professor *expects you to think and provide a reasoned, logical, consistent response using information acquired through readings.*
  + Many questions don’t have a definite, single correct answer.

**TAKING CHARGE**

* + *People who make plans and decisions are more successful than those who do not*
  + People without plans or goals drift through life passively, letting things happen and allowing others to control their lives
* **Accept Responsibility for Grades**
  + Teachers don’t *give* you grades, you *earn* grades
  + You will not always earn the desired grade. Analyze what you could do next time to improve a disappointing grade, put work into preparing for the next exam.
* **Don’t Make Excuses**
  + Studying is not easy. Studying requires time and conscious effort.
  + Don’t make excuses for not studying, you’re only lying to yourself.
  + (My thought) Just get it done and move on. Once it’s done, you don’t have to worry about it anymore!
* **Develop Essential, Marketable Skills**
  + Work on expanding and modifying your skills by taking courses to strengthen your weaknesses and to acquire basic competencies in a variety of areas.

With these basic but important reminders, I bring these ideas back into my mind and show myself I have control and power over my academic experiences. So with this, I have another set of skills that empower my academic success. For English especially, writing is a key area seen in many fields. From essay tests to papers, writing skills are crucial for academics and cannot be thrown together within a few hours, rather must be carried out among days or even weeks at a time. Here are my tips that I put together:

**PLAN IT OUT**

* + Writing is a process and should be planned accordingly.
  + A majority of writing assignments are given to students ahead of time; this is prime opportunity to organize and schedule the writing process in order to achieve quality work.
* **How do I write? (The writing process)**
  + There are four key points to the