By this point in the semester, you have access to your mid-semester grades, which provide you with vital feedback about your performance so far. Feedback can take many forms: grades, conversations with your professors, and even internal things you tell yourself. All of this is crucial information you can use to make positive changes, regardless of the outcome of the feedback you are receiving.

If you are not entirely happy with your mid-term grades, use that feedback. Being upset with grades that do not meet your expectations is a normal response that everyone experiences. But it is what you do next, how you choose to perceive your performance, that is more important.

You can choose to allow lower grades to confirm that you are inherently a “bad” test-taker no matter what you do. Or you can choose to take a more positive and proactive attitude: for example, you can attribute the grades to improper preparation. The latter attitude empowers you to make positive changes. The former keeps you boxed in a negative and hopeless mindset.

College success, like life, is about the choices you make, including both outer behavioral choices and inner mental choices. So why not make choices that allow you to excel?

**Mid-Semester Self-Check: The Power of CHOICE**

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**Tip of the Month: Talk to Your Professors**

Your professors are one of your most important resources to utilize in order to meet your academic goals. Talking to them often about your progress, how to improve on your grades, and to begin forming a professional relationship in general is a vital study habit to start making use of.

Contrary to Professor Snape-like stereotypes, professors WANT to talk to you, get to know you, and help you to succeed. Why not reach out today? Perhaps start with a simple email?
The BLUEprint and Your Future

The BLUEprint is Illinois College’s new general education program. Our faculty members spent several years thinking and talking about what kind of education best prepares people for success during the early decades of the 21st century. We believe that we have offered a good answer in the BLUEprint.

At its core, the BLUEprint consists of twelve courses in three categories (foundations, explorations, and transformations). This section of the program is designed to allow each student to learn the basic skills and knowledge necessary for a successful life as an active citizen and working professional. It enables students to explore a range of disciplines, discovering what they are best at and most interested in, before making an informed choice about their major.

The BLUEprint also contains requirements for connected courses and embedded experiences. These requirements are tightly linked to the nature of professional work, the skills that employers say that workers need to be hired and promoted, and the requirements for effective problem-solving in civic life. One 2007 survey of employers, for example, found that while many college graduates possessed the skills necessary for an entry-level position, most lacked the skills and knowledge in writing, speaking, problem-solving, global knowledge, ethics, and other areas that were necessary for promotion to better-paying senior positions. The BLUEprint is our plan to ensure that all of our graduates are well prepared to advance in their chosen profession and to fill leadership positions in their communities.

You will enjoy some aspects of the BLUEprint more than others, but a basic mastery of all of its areas will give you a competitive advantage over your peers at many other institutions. That advantage will matter in today’s highly competitive job market.

Research Writing Help Sessions: Coming Soon!

If you have not already been assigned research projects that tend to be due toward the end of the semester, you most likely will be soon.

These projects typically account for a large percentage of your course grade. In many cases, doing well on these projects can mean the difference between a high or low grade—or even the difference between passing and failing a course.

The TRiO program will be continuing the Research Writing Help Sessions we started in the spring semester. Librarian Brittney Thomas will again be on hand to help you locate the best sources possible for your projects. A TRiO professional tutor, as well writing center tutors, will be on hand to help you use your sources to provide adequate support for your thesis and supporting points.

Be on the lookout for the time and dates of these upcoming Research Writing Help Sessions. Like last semester, you will also able to count them toward TRiO workshop credit!
Counselor’s Corner

Cultivating Help-Seeking Behaviors!

Asking for help is not easy, but it is one of the best gifts you can give yourself. It is a habit that the most successful college students regularly make use of. These students have cultivated help-seeking behaviors into their daily routines. Unfortunately, we are constantly bombarded with messages telling us that seeking help is for the weak and incompetent, that it is more mature to be self-sufficient and independent. Cultivating help-seeking behaviors is therefore seen as a sign of weakness.

The reality is that all human societies rely on the work and help of others in order to survive and thrive. We are not independent; we are instead interdependent—mutually benefitting from the help we continually give and receive. Interdependence is not only a more effective and mature method to accomplish our goals, but it is also more fun.

In order to best make use of the services available on campus, students have to be planful and allow time to seek and receive help. Illinois College has vast variety of resources designed to help you achieve your academic and professional goals. Unsure of what some of these resources are? Start cultivating help-seeking behaviors by asking someone.

Dimitrios Jason Stalides, TRiO Academic Counselor

Kaissa Sakouvigui: My Overwhelming Freshman Year

I was first introduced to TRiO about two years ago during my orientation day at Illinois College. Since then, the program has supported my academic goals in a variety of ways. My TRiO Academic Counselor has helped me find my way and has also provided me with a lot of support, such as helping me with my time management skills, exploring majors and careers that fit best for me, dealing with my life on campus, and advising me on financial issues.

As is the case for many college students, my freshmen year felt overwhelming. I had a huge amount of work and many lectures to somehow juggle, and my GPA that first semester was on the verge of becoming pretty low. Learning to better manage my time and communicate often with my professors was a big deal for me. Before I implemented better study habits, I didn’t know how to balance an active social life and my academic obligations. My TRiO Counselor provided me with the academic support I needed, including how to better plan my study time and how to avoid distractions while studying.

My advice to freshman is to take your time on everything. Don’t get too caught up in the social scene; instead, set your personal boundaries and find a balance between your work and social life. Don't get involved in too many extracurricular activities at the expense of your grades, and spend time learning how to be a better college student before taking on extra responsibilities. Talk to as many people as possible; introduce yourself to your professors; ask questions in and out of the classroom; and make efforts to know your classmates—you might be able to help each other in ways you hadn’t considered. Above all, plan and use your time well because it is really easy to allow time to slip away, including checking your email, texting, going out at night, working too many hours, chatting with your friend, and so on.
Need Help Figuring Out What Major and Career Best Fits You?

Make an Appointment to Take a Career Test!

Our new career test only takes about twenty to twenty-five minutes! Make an appointment to take the test today! Call Tammy at 217-245-3575, or email the TRiO staff at trio@ic.edu.

The test combines your interests, skills, and values in order to provide a more accurate description of your “working personality.”

After you take the test, a TRiO staff member will help you to interpret and use your results to explore majors and careers that are compatible with your “working personality.”

Furthermore, our career testing program allows you to use your results to continue the major and career exploration process. You can look up detailed and specific major and career information in order to make more informed decisions.

For example, are you considering social work but unsure of the educational requirements, salary, tasks involved, job demand, and skills involved? Use our program to find out this crucial information and more.

You are only a phone call or email away from learning specific and vital major and career information!

Study Tables: What They Are and Where to Find Them!

Study Tables are a tutor resource offered and coordinated through the Center for Academic Excellence. They provide regularly scheduled times every week for students to get help with a wide variety of subjects.

The schedule for Study Tables is available on the following page of this newsletter.

To get help, all a student has to due is show up during the scheduled Study Table time. A trained tutor will be waiting during that time to assist students with a particular subject.

You can make use of the tutor during that time in a variety of ways. You can work intensively with the Study Table tutor for the duration of the Study Table session. You can also work on your homework on your own where the Study Tables are being held for a particular subject; when you get stuck on some concept or problem, the Study Table tutor is there, ready and waiting to help you as needed.

If your schedule is not compatible with the Study Table schedule, the schedule also has tutor contact information, so you can set up individual appointments that better fit your and the tutor’s schedules.

Study Tables are an excellent and convenient resource that allows you to get help in a wide variety of subjects with a readily available tutor.
# Weekly Study Tables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Days and Times</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biology</strong></td>
<td>Monday &amp; Wednesday: 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Parker Upper Rotunda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chemistry</strong></td>
<td>Monday &amp; Wednesday: 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Parker 237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday: 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Computer Science</strong></td>
<td>CS160 &amp; CS280 Monday &amp; Wednesday: 8:20 to 9:20 p.m.</td>
<td>Crispin 104C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CS160 Tuesday &amp; Thursday: 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Japanese</strong></td>
<td>Sunday through Thursday: 8:00 to 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Kirby Language Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Math</strong></td>
<td>Sunday: 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Parker Fish Bowl 102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monday through Thursday: 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>7:00 to 9:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Music Theory</strong></td>
<td>Tuesday: 6:15 to 7:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Rammelkamp Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday: 9:00 to 10:00 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sociology</strong></td>
<td>Tuesday &amp; Thursday: 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Schewe Library, top floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physics</strong></td>
<td>Monday: 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Parker Fish Bowl 102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday &amp; Thursday: 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**By Appointment:**

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<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>Clinton Everetts, <a href="mailto:Everetts.Clinton@mail.ic.edu">Everetts.Clinton@mail.ic.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>Briana Peper, <a href="mailto:Peper.Briana@mail.ic.edu">Peper.Briana@mail.ic.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>Nyamochir Tsrenlhagva, <a href="mailto:Tserenlhagva.Nyamochir@mail.ic.edu">Tserenlhagva.Nyamochir@mail.ic.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Nyamochir Tsrenlhagva, <a href="mailto:Tserenlhagva.Nyamochir@mail.ic.edu">Tserenlhagva.Nyamochir@mail.ic.edu</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| French    | Chandler Polyte, [Polyte.Chandler@mail.ic.edu](mailto:Polyte.Chandler@mail.ic.edu)  
|           | Wendy Orhin, [Orhin.Wendy@mail.ic.edu](mailto:Orhin.Wendy@mail.ic.edu)  
|           | Ray Nkum, [Nkum.Ray@mail.ic.edu](mailto:Nkum.Ray@mail.ic.edu)  
|           | Kaisa Sakouvgougi, [Sakouvgougi.Kaisa@mail.ic.edu](mailto:Sakouvgougi.Kaisa@mail.ic.edu)  
|           | Dani Hillis, [Hillis.Danielle@mail.ic.edu](mailto:Hillis.Danielle@mail.ic.edu) |
| German    | Andrea Klinedinst, [Klinedinst.Andrea@mail.ic.edu](mailto:Klinedinst.Andrea@mail.ic.edu)  
|           | Amibeth Thompson, [Thompson.Amibeth@mail.ic.edu](mailto:Thompson.Amibeth@mail.ic.edu) |
| Sociology | Matthew Schneider, [Schneider.Matthew@mail.ic.edu](mailto:Schneider.Matthew@mail.ic.edu) |
| Spanish   | Emily Donnan, [Donnan.Emily@mail.ic.edu](mailto:Donnan.Emily@mail.ic.edu)  
|           | Laura Reynolds, [Reynolds.Laura@mail.ic.edu](mailto:Reynolds.Laura@mail.ic.edu)  
|           | Joana Torres, [Torres.Joana@mail.ic.edu](mailto:Torres.Joana@mail.ic.edu)  
|           | Ellen Radcliffe, [Radcliffe.Ellen@mail.ic.edu](mailto:Radcliffe.Ellen@mail.ic.edu) |