Spring break is right around the corner, and we will soon reach the halfway point of the semester. Use the break for some much deserved rest and relaxation. However, it is also a good time to look back at the first half of the semester and reflect on both your successes and struggles. Use your successes to help inform your approach for classes you may want to do better in. Which study habits and techniques work best? Which produce less desirable results? What changes will help make the second half better than the first? How will you implement those changes?

Also consider the following study habits and techniques below to incorporate or improve upon:

- Refer to your syllabi frequently.
- Maintain continual communication with your professors.
- Go to class every day (your career is not something that will happen; college is your career—stating right now!)
- Prepare for class before every class (see the Study Cycle, page 3)
- Study as soon as possible after every class (see the Study Cycle, page 3)
- Ask for help!—utilize campus resources such as the Writing Center, Speech Center, your advisor, Career Services, a TRiO Academic Counselor, etc.!

Mid-Semester Issue: Spring 2012

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Upcoming Workshop: Financial Literacy: March 15

Illinois College Accounting Professor, Nausser Jamali, will present our first financial literacy workshop on March 15th from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. in Kirby 108.

The next two financial literacy workshops will be on March 22nd and March 27th. Attendance at one of the three financial literacy workshops is required for the TRiO program and also to be eligible for the TRiO Grant Aid Scholarship, which will be awarded toward the end of this semester.
Student Guest Column: Katia Swane-Barzaowski

Why the TRiO Area is One of the Best Discoveries at Illinois College

When I first came to college, the most difficult adjustment I had to make was learning how to accomplish all of my goals and tasks while also having to constantly interact with others. Not only was I expected to live with a stranger, but I was expected to perform all of my daily tasks in the presence of others. This made studying particularly difficult—I was constantly being distracted by friends and passersby. I searched and searched for a comfortable yet quiet place on campus to focus but could not quite find the perfect place. Just when I thought there was no such place, I found the top floor of the Shewe Library, where the TRiO Student Support Services program is located. The area is close to all the resources I could possibly need, and it is not stuffy or loud; instead, the area is quiet and comfortable, with plenty of couches and chairs, desks and lights, outlets and space—exactly what I was looking for. More importantly, there is the excellent TRiO Staff, who are more than willing to assist students with any problems or study needs they might have (including snacks!). Overall, the top floor of the library is one of the best discoveries I have made here at Illinois College, and with it, I feel I am on my way to becoming a more successful student.

“The most difficult adjustment I had to make was learning how to accomplish all of my goals and tasks while also having to constantly interact with others!”

Introducing the CAE Intern, Mariah Davidson!

We are very pleased to introduce the Center for Academic Excellence student intern, Mariah Davidson. Some of the projects she will be working on this semester include helping to update the CAE website, working to reach out to IC students and TRiO participants, assisting with the Celebration of Excellence, and presenting one of our TRiO Workshops, which will focus on her experiences as both a student and professional intern. The workshop is scheduled for May 1st at 4:30.

Mariah is a senior double majoring in Communication and Rhetorical Studies and English; she is a TRiO participant, former Yates Fellow, and a Yates Teaching Fellow. Along with her two current internships this semester, she is involved in several campus organizations, including serving as Vice President of Sigma Tau Delta and as a member of Lambda Pi Eta. Mariah spends most of her time on homework, working at the Holiday Inn, “doing boring things” with her friends, and planning her post-Illinois College life. She is interested in pursuing a career in advertising and has recently been accepted into the Master of Communication Graduate Program at Illinois State University.

One of her favorite quotes is by Kurt Vonnegut: “Who is more to be pitied, a writer bound and gagged by policemen or one living in perfect freedom who has nothing more to say?”
“Formula” for Academic Success: Study Cycle and Study Sessions

The Study Cycle:

Phase One (Before Class): Read or preview chapters to be covered in class…before class. (Create chapter maps)

Phase Two (During Class): Go to class, listen actively, take notes, participate in class discussion.

Phase Three (After Class): Review, process and summarize class notes as soon as possible after class.

Phase Four (After Class): Implement Intense Study Sessions (See below).

Repeat!

Intense Study Sessions:

2 – 5 minutes: Set goals for session (specific and realistic)

30 – 40 minutes: Study with FOCUS and ACTION
**Distraction-limited environment required!**
- Read text more selectively and highlight
- Summarize reading material and create margin notes
- Work examples, develop own examples
- Work practice problems
- Recite lecture and text notes out loud
- Summarize notes in own words
- “Teach” the information to assess comprehension
- Develop concept maps to organize material
- Discuss material with study group
- Construct and answer possible exam questions
- Quiz self (without referencing notes, book, etc.)

5 minutes: Review material just studied.

10 minutes: Take a break.

Repeat

Next TRiO Writing Workshop/Tutor Session: Thursday, March 1st!

Receive help with your writing assignments AND fulfill your TRiO tutoring requirement for the semester!

Our next TRiO writing workshop/tutoring session is Thursday, March 1, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., in the Baxter 102 computer lab!

Come by ANYTIME during the available hours to receive help with any writing project you are working on!