

# Self Assessment: Reasons for Academic Difficulty

By examining the contributing factors to your academic status, you will be taking the first step toward returning to good academic standing. Please honestly reflect on your situation and complete this self assessment.

## Part I:

This checklist is designed to help you identify and clarify the reasons or problems which might have caused your academic difficulty last quarter. Go through the list of items and check those that apply to you.

### Motivation

- Most of the time I don't enjoy studying.
- I usually do things at the last minute.
- I don't enjoy my classes.
- I don't know what I want to major in.
- I have trouble concentrating on my work because I am thinking about other things.
- It's more important to my family than to me that I am at UCSD.
- I find it difficult to go to class regularly.
- It's difficult to get up in time for early classes.
- I find that other activities or interests take up time in place of studying.
- My courses do not seem relevant to my life or to what I want as a career.
- My instructors do not make the course material very interesting.

### Adjustment to College Life

- I spend too much time partying/socializing.
- I stay up late most nights.
- Everything is so big and impersonal; I feel anonymous.
- I've been very discouraged by poor grades.
- This school is more competitive than my high school or community college.
- I haven't found any student groups or activities that interest me.
- I have trouble planning my time now that I'm on my own.
- I commute to UCSD and do not feel a part of the community.
- I miss my friends and family back home.
- I don't like the people or environment here.
- I have a job, so not enough time to study or get involved in activities here.

### Direction & Goals

- I'm not sure what a liberal arts degree will do for me.
- I don't know what I can do with my major.
- I worry because my classmates seem to know what they want to do with their lives and I don't.
- I am afraid to commit myself to any one major.
- What I think I'd like as a career doesn't fit in with what my family or others expect of me.
- I can't be admitted to the major I want.
- UCSD doesn't offer a defined major for the field I'd like to study.
- I keep changing my mind about what career direction or major I want.
- I don't know what to major in.

### Personal Issues

- I feel tired all of the time and have no energy.
- I feel tense and anxious.
- I've been bothered by problems with my family/roommates/significant other/friends.
- I haven't been in school for awhile and it's rough being a student again.
- I have medical problems that interfere with my studies.
- I have family responsibilities (parents, siblings, children, etc.)
- I've lost my self confidence and wonder if I'm as smart as most of the students here.
- I'm not as successful as I was in high school or community college.
- I wonder if my relations with alcohol or other drugs are getting in my way.
- Cultural pressures.

Study Skills/Time Management

- I can't find a quiet enough place to study.
- I'm embarrassed to talk to my instructor or TA when I get poor grades on a paper or test.
- I'm always behind in my work and never seem to catch up.
- I don't know how to make a study plan that works.
- I don't know how to vary the way I study for different kinds of classes.
- English is not my first language; I have trouble with it.
- No matter how hard I study, I can't seem to do well.
- I study the wrong things for the exam.
- I'm uncomfortable admitting to anyone that I need help to improve my study habits.
- Even though I know the material, I panic on exams and do poorly.
- I read slowly and rarely get my reading assignments done.
- I don't know how to take good lecture or reading notes.
- I find it difficult to recognize the most important points in a lecture.
- I procrastinate.
- I spend too much time on: computer/TV/video games.

Part II:

Review the items you checked in Part I. Choose one or two items from each category that have brought you the most difficulty and list them below:

Motivation

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Direction and Goals

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Study Skills

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Adjustment to College Life

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Issues

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Part III:

Take some time to think about the items you have chosen for Part II. How can you go about changing these behaviors and/or situations that have contributed to your academic difficulty? Remember, a behavior is something YOU did or did not do. It is not an excuse (i.e., "the class was boring" or "I didn't like the instructor"). List these here: \_\_\_\_\_

While there may be several statements above that you would like to work on, you should not try to change everything at once. Start out by choosing ONE item from above that you would like to change. Phrase the item in the form of a goal that you will be able to accomplish this quarter.

This quarter, I will: \_\_\_\_\_

### Time Management:

Where do you do the majority of your studying? \_\_\_\_\_

Approximately how many hours per week did you spend on each of the following last quarter:

\_\_\_\_ Attending class

\_\_\_\_ Studying during the week (Monday – Friday)

\_\_\_\_ Studying during the weekend

\_\_\_\_ Working at a paid job

\_\_\_\_ Social or extra-curricular activities

\_\_\_\_ Other commitments (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Did you utilize any tutoring services (circle one)?    Yes    No

If so, which one? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you participate in any study groups?    Yes    No

How often did you consult with your professors or TAs during office hours? \_\_\_\_\_

### Goals:

Long term goal: To earn a Bachelor's degree from UCSD.

Immediate objective (to reach goal): To move out of academic difficulty by improving my grades this quarter.

What steps will you need to take to achieve your immediate objective?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

### Staying Focused:

When I find myself discouraged I will: \_\_\_\_\_

I will check my progress toward my goals on a weekly basis by: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Helpful Resources:

- ERC Academic Advising: 858-534-9864
  - <http://roosevelt.ucsd.edu>
  - <http://vac.ucsd.edu>
- [Where does your time go?](#)
- [Guide to creating a Mock Exam](#)
- [Discover your learning style](#)
- [Methods of Inquiry \(TMC 10\)](#)
- [Back on Track](#)

- Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD)
  - <http://disabilities.ucsd.edu/>
- Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)
  - <http://caps.ucsd.edu/>
- Career Services Center (CSC)
  - <http://career.ucsd.edu/>
- International Students & Programs Office (ISPO)
  - <http://istudents.ucsd.edu/students/>
- Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services (OASIS)
  - <http://oasis.ucsd.edu/>