

**TRINITY VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS: DS 0305**  
**SPRING 2006**

**PROFESSOR:** Al Cook, Ph.D.

**OFFICE:** A126 Academic Building

**PHONE:** (903) 675-6243

**TEXT:** Ellis, B. David. Becoming a Master Student, 11<sup>th</sup> ed.  
Houghton Mifflin Co., 2006

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The primary purpose of this course is to provide you, the student, with an opportunity to learn specific knowledge, skills and strategies necessary to become a successful college student. This course suggests a direction of growth and learning where you will continually monitor and evaluate your own progress.

Course topics include time management, test taking, communication skills, study techniques, memory aides, money management, library resources, drug abuse, goal setting, etc.

The ultimate outcome of this course is for you to accept the challenge of changing some of your unproductive behavior, attitudes, values, beliefs, etc. in a direction that will be consistent with your new commitment to successful academic achievement.

There are three underlying truths in this course about which you need to be aware: (1) there are no secrets or magic associated with becoming a successful student; (2) there are no victims – blaming, whether others, our self, or circumstance does nothing to empower you to get what you want from your life – you create it all; and (3) there are no solos – we are all social animals. Therefore, your peer groups and “significant others” play a critical role in the development and reshaping of your values and belief systems and hence academic success.

**II. COURSE OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES:**

To successfully complete this course you will achieve the following:

1. Discuss how you are responsible for your experience in college.
2. Describe ways you can create a successful and satisfying college experience.
3. List and describe specific methods to:
  - A. improve your information recall ability
  - B. manage your time more efficiently
  - C. improve your textbook reading retention
  - D. improve your test taking and preparation ability
  - E. enhance your note taking effectiveness
  - F. present clear written/verbal reports
  - G. listen more effectively to a lecture

4. Describe and practice an effective model of communication.
5. Employ an effective model of communication that specifically enhances listening and confrontation.
6. Examine personal ideas and decisions regarding typical college student issues such as personal relationships, drug abuse, health practices, money management, etc.
7. Identify and match campus/community resources with typical student issues and problems e.g., health, academics, relationships, substance abuse, discrimination, residential living, etc.
8. Identify and utilize a variety of library resource materials, e.g., dictionary, thesaurus, and catalogues, Reader's Guide to Periodic Literature, inter-library lending, computer searches, etc.
9. Describe and explain several procedures for planning and monitoring time management.
10. Identify and explain several procedures for being task-oriented when reading, listening, typing, and taking notes and tests.
11. Identify and discuss methods to generate critical questions that clarify, instead of confuse. Also describe methods and list resources for locating answers to well structured questions.
12. Report in writing or verbally, to peers and instructors current college experiences including problems, frustrations, and successes.
13. Identify several guidelines for making effective plans that facilitate successful achievement.

### **III. COURSE STRUCTURE:**

The course structure consists of lectures, individual, dyadic, and group exercises, small group discussions, share time, guest speakers, preview/review, quizzes/evaluations, filmstrips, and assignments.

### **IV. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:**

Instructional materials for this course include filmstrips on study techniques, videotapes available in the media center, resource persons from the college and community and a textbook containing journal entries, exercises, and quizzes. The designated textbook for this course is entitled Becoming a Master Student by David B. Ellis, published by Houghton Mifflin.

### **V. ABSENCE POLICY:**

All students are required to attend class. Attendance in this class is very important. Class activities are designed to prepare the student to enter regular college classes with a new sense of commitment and competency. Students who are absent a total of more than three

(3) classes will cause their course grade to be adversely (negatively) affected and will be required to have an immediate conference with the course instructor.

## VI. STUDENT EVALUATIONS:

The methodology for conducting, administering, and evaluating test results is solely the responsibility of the course instructor. There will be an adequate number of exams administered in order to generate a representative grade for the student. The exams will contain questions reflecting the content/process of the course. In addition, there will be an evaluation of the class and the college in order to share experiences. There will also be a student "participation score". It will be based on attendance, timeliness, and class participation in terms of preparation and quality of class contribution. This score will be determined at the discretion of the professor and will count the same weight as an exam. There will be no make-up exams. The student may be allowed to miss one (1) exam without penalty. The final exam will count double weight when this option is applied by the instructor. Regardless of whether you miss class, the student is responsible for all information given in class, the textbook and films. This course is not intended to be punitive. The grading structure is as follows: You will notice that it does not include the grade of D.

### GRADE STRUCTURE

100 – 90 = A  
89 – 80 = B  
79-70 = C  
Below 70 = F  
In progress = IP

The student's final grade will be calculated by adding up each exam score plus an average score from several assigned projects or exercises. The latter will count the same weight as one (1) exam.

An example might be:

Exam #1	90
Exam #2	85
Exam #3	88
Exam #4	89
Participation Score*	85

<u>TOTAL POINTS</u>	437
COURSE AVERAGE	87

FINAL GRADE      B

No grades will be posted or given over the telephone.

**NOTE:** You need to be aware that if you drop or are dropped from any other developmental course this semester, state law requires that the college immediately withdraw you from all enrolled courses at this institution during this semester.

\*class attendance is vitally important