

Concentration: Some Basic Guidelines

1. Set aside a place for study and study only!

- a. Find a specific place (or places) that you can use for studying (for example, the campus library, quiet areas in the student center, study center in Daniels Hall).
- b. Make a place specific to studying. You are trying to build a habit of studying when you are in this place. So, don't use your study space for social conversations, writing letters, daydreaming, etc.
- c. Insure that your study area has the following:
 - ▶ good lighting
 - ▶ ventilation
 - ▶ a comfortable chair, but not too comfortable
 - ▶ a desk large enough to spread out your materials
- d. Insure that your study area **does not** have the following:
 - ▶ a distracting view of other activities that you want to be involved in
 - ▶ a telephone
 - ▶ a loud stereo
 - ▶ a 27-inch color TV
 - ▶ a roommate or friend who wants to talk a lot
 - ▶ a refrigerator stocked with scrumptious goodies

2. Divide your work into small, short-range goals.

- a. Don't set a goal as vague and large as ... "I am going to spend all day Saturday studying!" You will only set yourself up for failure and discouragement.

- b. Take the time block that you have scheduled for study and set a reachable study goal. (for example: finish reading 3 sections of chapter seven in my Psych. text, or complete one math problem, or write the rough draft of the introduction to my English paper, etc.)
- c. Set your goal when you sit down to study but before you begin to work.

Set a goal that you can reach. You may, in fact, do more than your goal but set a reasonable goal even if it seems too easy.

Adapted from Virginia Tech Cook Counseling Center