
The Anthropology Student Guide

To Better Grades

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Introduction

Welcome to the Anthropology Program at Montclair State University. We the faculty want you to do well in your classes so you can prepare for a productive, exciting, and good-paying career. Maybe you want to go to graduate school in anthropology. Maybe you want to enroll in our 5-year BA/MA program in Practical Anthropology. Maybe you want to use anthropology as a stepping-stone to some other profession such as law, social work, community psychology, medicine.

As I said, we the anthropology faculty want you to do well in your classes. In fact, we want you to do even better than you think you can do. I've been teaching at Montclair State since 1972. Over the years I've compiled a list of typical problems students have in getting the most out your reading, your classes, your exams, and your term papers.

If you are a straight-A student, you may be doing everything right already. Otherwise, why not read this booklet and see if you can improve your study habits? And if you're having a problem I missed, come and tell me so I can put it into the next edition.

One final note. This is not a book of tricks. True, you can get better grades by learning to study better and take tests more effectively. But

everything in this booklet is based on the idea that you are going to **read, study, and come to class**. The essential ingredients in getting good grades are your intellect and your determination.

So let's get busy and find out how to turn your abilities into higher grades.

1 How To Study While You Read

By reading and studying efficiently, you can save hours and raise your exam performance at the same time. Follow these nine rules:

1. Study in complete quiet.
2. Do all readings on time.
3. Take notes on the readings.
4. Learn to find key sentences
5. Use the headings of the reading to make an outline.
6. Use telegraph style in taking notes.
7. Pay attention to boxes, diagrams, and photo captions.
8. Before going to the next chapter, review the last.
9. Look up all words you don't understand and write down their meanings.

Let's look more closely at each rule.

1.1 Study in Complete Quiet

To read, you must concentrate. Turn off the stereo. Never study with music in the background. Get away from any other noise or distractions. If you can't control conditions at home, study as much as possible in the library. Even one silent hour between classes can be worth two hours in a noisy, distracting house. At the library, go to an isolated desk by a window. Stay away from those inner tables where you will constantly be looking up at the pretty girls or handsome guys. There is only one way to learn college material: put everything else out of your mind and read with concentration.

1.2 Do the Readings on Time

Never try to read just before the exam. Do the readings when they

are assigned—then you will benefit from the instructor's lectures and will be able to review for the exam instead of cramming at the last minute. Besides, you'll only have time to do the readings correctly—by taking notes as in the next rule—if you do them on time.

1.3 Always Take Notes on the Readings

Study actively, not passively. Throw away your yellow highlighter. The best way to get the material in your mind is to write down in outline form what you are reading. When you transfer what you read to what you write, you engage several senses at once; this fixes the material in your mind and will save you hours of pre-exam studying.

Get a notebook with 11½ by 8 inch pages. Take your reading notes on the right hand side only. Leave the left side for questions, comments, or notes to yourself such as "Prof said this will be on the exam," or "Ask about this in class."

Spread out your notes on the page. Leave space and lines between things you write. Leave wide margins at each side. It's much easier to review a page with a few short lines spread apart than many long lines crammed together; besides, you may be putting in additional notes as you review.

1.4 Look for Key Sentences

Most anthropological texts and journal articles have key sentences that tell you the main point. If you have a journal article, read the abstract carefully; it may contain the major key sentences lined up in order. A good abstract gives you the outline of the entire article. If there is no abstract, look for the key sentences in the text. They are frequently the first or last sentences of the whole piece. Otherwise, they are almost always the first or last sentences of a paragraph. For a rule of thumb, write down a key sentence for each two or three pages of a journal article. Which of these is the key sentence of the whole article? Here are a few examples of key sentences:

Kerala State in southwestern India has achieved some of the third world's best rates of life expectancy, literacy, and infant mortality, despite one of the lowest per capita incomes. (in the abstract)

The food-producing revolution in southwestern Asia is here viewed not as the brilliant invention of one group or the product of a single environmental zone, but as the result of a long process of changing ecological relationships between groups of men and the locally available plants and animals which they had been exploiting on a shifting, seasonal basis." (near the end)

The aim of this paper is to outline an assemblage of concepts and measures for describing and analyzing longitudinal aspects of particular household units. (near the beginning)

The association between lynching and rape emerges most clearly in their parallel use in racial subordination. (in the middle)

The forces shaping the experience of Asian American women come out of the historical policies of the U.S. toward Asians. (in the middle)

The material presented here will show that the ritual cycles of the Tsembaga, and of other local territorial groups of Maring speakers living in the New Guinea interior, play an important part in regulating the relationships of these groups with both the non-human components of their immediate environments and the human components of their less immediate environments, that is, with other similar territorial groups. (on the 3rd of 20 pages)

1.5 Use the Outline of the Book or Article

Books and articles usually have a structure that you can use to organize your note taking. Textbooks especially have been reviewed by editors who specialize in adding headings and subheadings to make the structure clear. Your notes should follow this structure. Before reading an article or chapter, look through it and write down the headings.

The basic idea is this: the most general, inclusive ideas in a chapter get #1 headings, the next most inclusive get #2 headings. Few anthropology readings go beyond #3 level headings and most stop at #2.

You can tell these headings by their type size, print color, or the numbering system. If they are numbered, usually they will appear as 1 (the chapter number itself), 1.1 (the chapter #1 heading), 1.1.1 (the chapter #2 heading), and so on.

If they are organized by appearance only, they usually follow a simple rule of editors: the #1 heads are centered, the #2 heads are flush left and italicized, the #3 headings are flush left, italicized, and the text begins immediately after without any blank lines. Or, the #1 headings are all capital letters, the #2 headings caps and small letters. You can get the structure from the table of contents. Here is a textbook example outlined from Marvin Harris, *Cultural Anthropology*, (3rd edition:1991)

Chapter 14: Personality and Culture

Culture and Personality	←	#1 Heading
Freud's Influence		
IS THE OEDIPUS COMPLEX UNIVERSAL	←	#2 HEADING
Childhood Training and Personality		
Male Initiation and Childhood Training		
Patterns and Themes		
Basic Personality and National Character		
JAPANESE NATIONAL CHARACTER		
Culture and Mental Illness		
CULTURE-SPECIFIC PSYCHOSES		
WINDIGO "PSYCHOSIS"		
The Normal Versus the Abnormal		
Dreams and Hallucinations		
Summary		

Let's look at this outline. The #1 headings are in capital and small letters, just as they appear in the book. The #1 headings are farthest to the left; they are the most general and inclusive. In the chapter itself all the headings are centered—you have to see the difference in the typefaces and styles to make this outline structure.

In this chapter we see a few #2 headings. The #2 headings are in “small caps,” just as in the book; here they are indented slightly to the right. This shows they belong as smaller topics than the #1 headings beneath which they are listed. The author considers the question "IS THE OEDIPUS COMPLEX UNIVERSAL?" to be a more specific topic under the general (#1 heading) "Childhood Training and Personality." Read this chapter and see if you can figure out *why* the author would take such a position. ***Learning the logic of the outline of what you are reading is essential to understanding and remembering what you've read.***

You can make an outline like this on the left-hand side of your note-taking pages. On the right, put each heading as you read it, then try to write down a summary of what is said in your own words. In a way, you are making a list of #3 headings under this #2 heading. Under the topic "Is the Oedipus Complex Universal?" the author

- (1) summarizes Freud's theory of the Oedipus complex,
- (2) summarizes Malinowski's criticism based on his research in the Trobriands,
- (3) notes how Melford Spiro replies to Malinowski, then
- (4) states his own view of what it all means.

You could make a list of these four points (they are not numbered in the book) and effectively put down 200 words of text in 50 words. Most of the time, you should be able to take notes at a rate even less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of what you are reading. But if you are not sure how much to write, consider $\frac{1}{4}$ a good average rate.

Your notes on the right-hand page might look like this:

1. Oedipus complex: boy's early sexual feelings directed towards his mother, but discovers that she is sexual object of his father. Competition of father and son. Father provides protection but also stern discipline. Son is frustrated, fantasizes he can kill father. Combined hostility and jealousy arouse fear (father seen as threatening to cut off son's penis) and guilt (son also loves father). To resolve conflict boy must redirect sexual desires toward other females and express hostility in constructive ways.
2. Malinowski said Freud too based on 19th century Viennese family. Trobriands males under authority of mother's brother (uncle), not father, thus complex can't be universal. No love-hate conflict between boy and father for Trobriands.
3. Spiro revives Freud by saying hate-love not from sexual jealousy for Trobriands but from authority. Father is easy-going rather than stern, but sexual rivalry still develops. Spiro says Trobriands still have a basis for Oedipus Complex.
4. Harris concludes maybe it is the intensity of Oedipus Complex that varies—by amount and quality of control parents exercise. This varies with structure of the domestic group.

1.6 Use Telegraph Style in Taking Notes

In the notes above, see how the language is chopped down. Omit unnecessary words as long as you are sure you don't lose meaning. Some words you can leave out: is, the.

1.7 Pay Attention to Boxes, Diagrams, and Photo Captions

Textbooks put in photos, diagrams, and other devices to break up monotonous discussions. Photo captions and especially figures add important information or summarize what's in the text. Copying the figures can be the same as taking notes.

1.8 Before Going to the Next Chapter, Review the Last

Don't review only before the exam. Go back over your notes and make notes on the notes in the left hand side of the page. For the example above, you might write in the left hand page things like:

(Next to)

1. What if boy doesn't resolve conflict? Ask in class about this. What are constructive ways to express hostility? What does Freud mean?
2. Why do Trobriands have mother's brother taking care of the boys? Why doesn't father do it?
3. This not clear. Ask in class?
4. Oedipus Complex strong in some cultures, weak in others?

Your notes summarized the reading. By writing them down you learned most of what was there. By commenting on them, you further fixed them in your mind and began to think about them. You see that some of the notes are not clear. You go back to the reading and find that it is also a bit hard to make out. You can ask more information from the instructor. Or maybe you have a term paper topic in the making!

1.9 Look Up All Words in the Dictionary

Don't let a word go by that you don't understand. It might turn up on

the exam. It was important enough to be in the text. You need it in your vocabulary. You may get points for knowing it on the graduate, law school, or other entrance exams.

At first you'll look up a lot of words. But for 200 words you have to write down, you'll eventually remember more than 50 of them. Next year, you'll have fewer, and by senior year, you'll be reading quickly through the anthropology literature because you know the technical language. And many of the words you learn will be in readings in other courses. With a little pain at first, you will soon be saving time.

2 How to Get the Most Out of Classes

Unless your instructor says otherwise, assume that about 50% of exams are based on readings and 50% on class lectures and discussions. This means you need to know how to get as much out of classes as of readings. Here are the basic rules:

1. Take an active, not passive attitude towards classes.
2. Take detailed, extensive notes in class.
3. Take notes in outline form.
4. Write down anything the instructor writes on the board.
5. Ask the instructor to slow down if s/he is talking too fast.
6. Participate in class discussions.
7. Learn to ask questions that will get you useful answers.

Let's look at these rules more closely.

2.1 Develop an Active Attitude Towards Class

You may have been bored in high school. You may be wishing your classes were more entertaining. Some lectures seem just too dull to pay attention to. Boring or not, they may contain information crucial to getting a good grade. Which is worse, being bored or getting a bad grade? Which is better, daydreaming or getting a good grade?

You can only develop an active participatory attitude towards classes by an act of will. Tell yourself that you are going to work in

class. After you get used to it, you'll discover that fewer classes are boring.

2.2 Take Detailed, Extensive Notes in Class

Get an 8½ by 11 inch notebook. Take notes on the right side of the page only. Leave the left side for notes and reminders about the notes. Write down and underline the major points made in class. Under them list as many of the smaller points as you can. Depending on your handwriting, you should take 4 to 8 pages of notes in a 50-minute lecture.

2.3 Take Notes in Outline Form

Many instructors put an outline of the class on the blackboard. Write this down at the beginning of the class. While the instructor is speaking learn to use telegraph-style writing for notes. Leave out "the" and other small words. Make up abbreviations such as & for "and", "w" for "with," etc. Use them regularly but not on exams!

Start notes for each class on a new page. Put the date of each class at the top of the page. Keep all notes for one class together in order.

Keep your reading notes in another notebook.

Classroom Courtesy=Better Grades Professor Richard W. Franke

Please observe the following rules of classroom courtesy. By observing these rules will help me—the instructor—to provide a better and more interesting course. You will also help yourself and your fellow students to achieve better concentration and therefore to get better grades. I do not curve, so the more you concentrate, the more you learn, and the better your grade, no matter how other students do. So, please—

1. **Be in your seat with your notebook open and your pen or pencil ready when the class starts.**
 2. **Do not start packing your materials until class is actually over.**
 3. **Do not eat or drink during class.**
 4. **Do not leave the room during class unless you plan to stay out for the period. Use the toilet and the drinking fountain before or after class.**
 5. **Do not whisper, rattle papers, or otherwise distract your fellow students during class, especially during videos or films. If you have seen the film previously and are bored, either try to see something new in it, or leave.**
 6. **Do not ask to discuss your grade or other matters at the beginning of class unless you feel your concerns are relevant to the entire class. In that case, please tell me you feel a public discussion is needed. Otherwise, use my office hours or make an appointment to see me privately.**
 7. **Let me know if special circumstances make it hard for you to follow any of these rules.**
 8. **Break these rules on occasion if particular circumstances make it necessary. If most people observe the rules most of the time, an occasional exception will not cause any problems.**
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2.4 Write Down Anything the Instructor Writes on the Board

Most instructors write things on the board if they consider them important. You might even want to put a * next to things copied off the blackboard; this is one of your best guides to what will be on the exams.

2.5 Ask the Instructor to Slow Down if S/he is Talking Too Fast

Teachers often get into their lectures. We forget how fast we are

talking. A polite reminder can help. Sometimes we may act annoyed, but remember, your getting the material is more important than preventing us from being annoyed.

2.6 Participate in Class Discussions

You can help yourself a lot by trying to answer questions thrown out by the instructor. You did the reading on time—see part 1 above—so you have something to contribute. Don't be afraid to be wrong or off the subject a bit. Being corrected in front of 30 people seems scary at first, but after a few times, you won't even notice! And the interaction of thinking, talking, listening, reacting, and writing down the correction in your notes will be most rewarding at exam time.

Many instructors give class participation points. You can add to your grade even before the exams by participating actively in class.

2.7 Learn to Ask Questions That Will Get You Useful Answers

Don't be a lazy questioner. Become an active, intelligent question-asker. When you are ready to say "I don't understand..." or "Could you explain...?" you are not really ready to ask a question. Stop and ask yourself first what you don't understand. Try to make your question contain some information. This will get you half-way to the answer and will elicit much more information from the instructor. Here are some examples:

Don't ask: Could you explain what aggression is?

Ask (something like): Is aggression the same as violence?

Don't ask: Could you go over Hinduism again?

Ask (look at your notes first): So do Hindus believe in a place like heaven? Is that what reincarnation means?

Don't ask: I can't understand what the Semai mean by *punan*. Would you help me?

Ask: So *punan* is some kind of mental state? But what is it most like in our terms? Guilt? Anger? Fear?

3 How to Study for Exams

This one is easy. You took good reading notes. You took good class notes. Your notes are in order. Your notes are in outline form. **You've already done most of the studying!**

To review, you go over your notes, reminding yourself of the most important parts of the course. Draw arrows or make other marks on the left sides of your pages to point to the notes that you are having trouble with. Go back and re-read those parts of the text.

3.1 Study in Groups if Possible

You can get more from your study time with someone to help you. Your friend reads out questions based on your reading notes. You try to answer. Then you do the same for your friend in reverse. More than two can also study together. The combination of talking, asking, answering, thinking, even the laughs will all help fix the materials in your mind. If you study alone, you always risk daydreaming and mind-wandering. If you study with a friend or friends, your attention will be focused on the material even if you are having a good time.

Go over the materials at least once a day or two before the day before the exam. The night before the exam is too late to review the amount of material in most college courses. Make a final pass over the material the night before the exam and go to bed at your normal time if possible. If you followed the rules for reading and taking class notes, and if you went over your notes a day or two ago, you can get more from the extra sleep than from frantic, last-minute re-re-reading of notes.

3.2 How to Cram

The rule for cramming is: DON'T. You cannot expect to do the things described above in a few hours. It just isn't possible. If you got used to acing a high school course with late-night last-minute caffeine-assisted blurry-eyed concentration, kick your habit. College courses are too rich and detailed for such non-methods of study.

Once or twice in your undergraduate years, however, perhaps you will be forced to take a test for which you did not prepare properly. You had unexpected family responsibilities. You were sick. You had other real, unforeseen, problems. Here are some tips on what to do.

Try to reschedule the test. The best way to cram is to avoid it. Take advantage of your professor's sense of fairness. Ask—as far ahead of the exam as possible—to take the test a few days later. Explain briefly your problem. Use the extra days to study properly. Remember that what you learn in one course accumulates towards the next. A cheap good grade not really earned may satisfy you for a moment, but you will probably pay in lost points eventually. By rescheduling and studying properly, you will get the good grade you want and then be positioned to continue getting good grades in later semesters.

Don't try to reschedule a test after it has been given, except in the most unusual circumstances. A post-exam request to reschedule forces your professor to suspect you of manipulation. At the very least, call on the morning of the exam and leave a message on the professor's phone saying why you could not make the exam and stating when you will contact her/him to arrange to make up the work.

If you are forced to cram...set your sights on a grade of C. Yes, you might do better. But the best way to prepare last-minute is to set a low to medium expectation and work for that. Trying for a crammed A will only get you sick from exhaustion and disappointed when you find out the test covered the material thoroughly after all.

To cram, focus your attention on headings, subheadings, chapter summaries, and things the instructor wrote on the board. If you can't study properly for lack of time, try to learn the main concepts. This will help you write somewhat useful essays and may get you through a portion of the multiple choice or short-answer parts of a test. Use the suggestions in section 1 above to focus your attention on as many of the big headings as you can.

Learn at least ½ of the material well. Don't cram by going over everything faster than you should: you will end up remembering nothing. Instead, study at least ½ of the material normally, then cram quickly over the other half. If you can do well on at least 50% of a test, with a bit of

luck you will get 50% of the other half, which gives you about 65-75%, and a good chance at a C. If you are stuck in a situation where you can't study seriously at least 50% of the material, don't even consider cramming—you are much better off asking to reschedule your exam or asking your professor for a grade of "Incomplete," which you can replace with a good grade the following semester.

4 How To Take Tests

The rules for taking tests are simple.

- 4.1 Know the materials.
- 4.2 Know how to read the questions.
- 4.3 Know when and how to guess.
- 4.4 Know how to write effective essays.

4.1 Know the Materials

No test-taking skill can replace the essential ingredient of writing a good exam: you have to know the course material. The tips that follow may help you if you have test anxiety or little experience with tests.

4.2 Know How to Read the Questions

You can improve your test scores by learning how to read the test questions more effectively. One technique is to read the question, stop, close your eyes for two or three seconds, then read the question again. This may help you avoid the mistake I see sometimes where a student gets the question backwards or freezes and sees a related, but different question. Remember, the grader cannot figure out what you might have been thinking, only what you put on the test paper. The extra few seconds are often worth it.

4.3 Know When and How to Guess

You can sometimes slightly improve your performance on multiple choice questions by learning how to guess effectively.

With multiple choice. Know whether the instructor subtracts wrong or some wrong from right. If not, guess as much as you want. If so, guess very cautiously. Some instructors will subtract 20% of wrong answers from right if there are five choices. If there are five choices you will get about 20% of your guesses right. When 20% of the wrong guesses have been subtracted, you have a guessing score of about zero. (The SAT and other standardized tests have similar policies.) To break above zero, you should therefore guess only when you can eliminate one or more of the choices so the chances of being right are better than 20%. Eliminating some of the choices usually means knowing something about the material, so you are also playing by the rules of the course.

Sometimes, however, you can add a point or two to your score by examining the logic of the answers. Consider the following:

The recent Canadian court decision linking pornography with violence against women is

- a. supported by rape and pornography correlations in Denmark, Japan, and the U.S.
- b. unsupported by rape and pornography correlations in Denmark, Japan, and the U.S.
- c. supported only by the Japanese data.
- d. all of the above
- e. none of the above

Look carefully. You can see that answers a and b contradict each other. Answer d (all of the above) is therefore impossible. You now have a 25% chance instead of 20% to be right. Now think hard about what you learned in class. If e (none of the above) is to be right, you should recall a discussion about pornography and rape in some other country. That is the most likely reason for e to be the answer the teacher is looking for.

Now consider c. Think hard about whether there was any talk of the Japanese data being unique, different from the others, the only data

available, or what?

If you can get this far and conclude that nothing was said to justify c, you have it down to a or b. If you were listening in class, you would know which it is, but if you just can't recall, you have at least raised your chances to 50-50, a lot better than 20-80.

Do your guessing after all the rest of the exam.

Multiple choice disputes. You think you know the answer, but you aren't sure you are interpreting the question the same as the instructor. You can raise your hand and ask for clarification, but many instructors don't like to get into discussions of their multiple choice questions during the exam. It disturbs the other students, and you often don't get the information you want anyway.

An alternative strategy is to mark the answer you believe to be the best one and write a brief justification next to it—or a note next to one other answer you think the teacher might have in mind. Since the problem is that you see two possible correct answers, you have a chance to get a point by showing that you know the material even though you didn't pick the answer the test maker had in mind. Consider this example:

Yanomamo men

- a. take drugs to ease their pain.
- b. kill their female offspring.
- c. establish permanent alliances with other villages.
- d. all of the above
- e. none of the above

Because you studied, you know that Yanomamo men take drugs. You also know that they don't kill their female offspring; the women have to do that. You remember that they have trouble establishing alliances, so c is out. D can't be true by now, so you are left with e or a. So you decide on a.

Then you suddenly begin to doubt. Do they take the drugs to ease their pain? Is this an instructor trick question? Do they take drugs for some other purpose? You want to go to e, but you feel the instructor left

the question too hard to interpret. Try this: circle a and write something like "they may take drugs for other reasons such as having religious visions, but the effect might be to ease their pain." You showed the instructor that you know a lot of what is in the reading and could justify your answer. Or pick e and write "the drugs are mostly for religious visions. They might help ease pain, but are not the reason the men take them." In either case, you have given the instructor reason to believe you know the course material. Since multiple choice questions sometimes have ambiguous or unexpected interpretations, instructors are often willing to grant the point.

Do **not**, however, expect your teacher to give you a point after the exam has been graded and you come up with these explanations.

True-false. These have a 50% chance, so you have nothing to lose by guessing. Some instructors will subtract a wrong from each right to stop you from doing this. In such cases, don't guess unless you have a good idea which is right—in which case you aren't totally guessing.

Another strategy with true-false is for the instructor to ask for an explanation. No explanation, no points for getting the T/F part right. If you are guessing on the T/F, you will have to make up an explanation.

Fill-ins. These almost always require knowledge of the course materials, but be sure to read them carefully.

4.4 Know How to Write Essays.

Essay questions cause many students extreme anxiety. What do I say? How much should I write? Where do I begin? When have I answered the question?

If you know the material, you can write an effective essay on any essay question. Here are a few tips:

1. Read the question carefully at least twice.
2. Outline the entire essay before you begin writing.
3. Write at least one blue book page for each 5 minutes of essay time.

4. Make your first sentence a direct response to the question.
5. Structure your essay according to the question.

Read the question. Don't just start writing. Read the question, stop, read it again. You'd be surprised how many times students write first-rate essays on a question different from the one asked. The extra time you take to absorb the question will not be lost. Your mind is already searching for what you know about the topic.

Outline the essay. Once you recall the material that is being asked for, write down the main points you are going to make. Put them right in the blue book, on the first page or on the inside of the front cover. If you don't finish the essay, you might get a point or two from the grader who sees your outline and realizes that you knew the point.

More importantly, outline so you won't lose out if you go blank during the essay. After a brilliant exposition of point #1, you are about to go for an A, but 12 minutes into the essay, you suddenly can't remember what point #2 was. It's a normal exam anxiety event. Now look back to your outline—you wrote down points #1, #2, and #3 before writing the essay. You have them there to remind you.

Write one page per 5 minutes. Use this as a minimum guide. The instructor asked a question with a 20-minute suggested time or 20 points out of a total of 100. This should tell you s/he wants more than a sentence or two. Writing a lot does not guarantee you a high grade, but writing very little almost always wins low marks. If you studied and if you made your outline, you will probably find you have a lot to say anyway.

Answer the question head-on. Your instructor may be reading a lot of exams. Your first essay sentence will be making a big impression—for lots of points or for few. In most cases, you can get the best start on your essay by taking words right out of the question and feeding them back to the reader—with something to show you know what's in the course material. Let's look at a few examples.

"Why do most anthropologists reject the killer ape theory of human origins?"

Anthropologists reject the killer ape theory because...

"How did the invention of agriculture change human society?"

The invention of agriculture changed human society in four important ways: [this is the number you recall and have on your outline] (1) it caused people to settle down, (2) it made possible accumulation of wealth, (3) it allowed humans to control the size of the food supply, but (4) it is also associated with a decline in quality of the diet and with nutritional insecurity. [Now you discuss each topic in detail.]

Now let's try a harder one:

"Discuss the role of anthropology in the debate on racial inequality."

1. Anthropology has provided crucial evidence (or a crucial perspective?) to show that theories of racial inequality have no scientific basis.

or

2. Anthropology has played a major role in the debate on racial inequality.

Questions starting with "Discuss" are the most difficult to get into hard and fast. Starting sentence #2 is easier to come up with but less informative and interesting than #1. If you made an outline, you should be able to go straight into #1. This is probably what the course taught you and what the instructor emphasized.

How would you continue on this question? Depending on what was in the course, you might have an outline like this:

1. Physical anthro: brains identical, humans an allopatric species but still one, so genetic intermixing in past, so no pure races anyway. No chromosome ever identified for intelligence.

2. Cultural anthro: centers of science and art move from place to place too fast to be genetic, must have cultural or historical reasons, race can't be it since genetic,

- plus groups on top often brand groups on bottom inferior,

suggests racism more a social rationale than science

- plus whites distorted record of African achievements, now just starting to rediscover
- plus no culture-free test since all tests based on someone's culture e.g. Navajo draw-a-man

3. Linguistics: arguments for inferior languages shown false long ago, vocabulary and grammar equal in all languages.

4. Anthros find people able to adapt to each others' cultures, children especially, so how could genetic inferiority be possible?

Anthros: Boas, Herskovits, Klineberg (Psych but influenced anthros), Alland, ?

Your essay would fill in these points. You might even reorder them after looking over the outline. What would be a more effective order of presentation?

Structure your essay according to the question. Use the order of the question to frame your answer. This will help you to answer all parts without missing some. Consider this question:

"Men are not gentle creatures who want to be loved...they are, on the contrary, creatures among whose instinctual endowments is...a powerful share of aggressiveness." (Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*.)

—What are some of the major points of evidence for and against Freud's theory?

—Which side of the argument do you find more convincing and why?

(30 minutes)

Note the structure of this question. After reading it over at least twice, you will already have flagged the words "instinctual" and "aggressiveness." The question is asking you to summarize the debate about the instinct for aggression in humans, using Freud, who might not have been mentioned in class, as an example.

Note that you are **not** being asked to write an essay about Freud or Freudian psychology. You have an essay that is really four related questions: (1) points for, (2) points against, (3) your view, and (4) why. Be sure to answer them all. If you were in my cultural anthropology course, your outline might look like this:

Freud a supporter of instinct theory=biological determinism= aggression theory.

5 major points for/against:

1. prevalence of violence/existence of nonviolent cultures
 2. like other animals/human violence not predictable
 3. territoriality same/but pacifists?
 4. killer apes/but teeth wrong
 5. XYY/but research badly done
- Anti-Freud arguments stronger because genetic basis not found and cultural variations too great to be explained genetically.

Your essay would go in order of the outline, but if time presses, you might pick only 2 or 3 of the 5 points, then get to your view and why.

5 How to Write a Term Paper

No matter how frightened you are, you can write good term papers in anthropology. Here are the main rules:

1. Pick an important, interesting topic.
2. Pick a topic that fits the course you are taking.
3. Write a one-page outline with a one-page bibliography and get your instructor's approval. Do this 6 weeks before the paper is due.
4. Use about one reference (book or article) per term paper page.
5. Figure about two hours' research and one hour's writing and rewriting per term paper page.
6. Get help from the reference people at Sprague Library.
7. Use your reading notes techniques from part 1 above to take detailed notes in outline form.
8. Make a detailed outline of the paper before you start to write.

9. Read and correct your first draft a day or more after you finished it.
10. Look through your final draft for spelling errors, grammar or style problems.
11. Check your bibliography for spelling and correct citation style.
12. Turn in your outline with your paper.
13. Buy and use the following books:

A Short Guide to Writing About Social Science
A Guide to Writing Sociology Papers
Line by Line: How to Improve Your Own Writing

Let's look at these points one by one.

5.1 Pick an Important, Interesting Topic

Many students fear term papers because they think they cannot write. Here is the single biggest secret of good writing revealed—pick a good topic! The best writers can make a boring trivial topic only boring and trivial. You will write much better when you have something worth writing about. As you write more, you will write better. If you have major writing problems, we can get you help at the university in the English Department.

Some instructors give out lists or otherwise define or limit the topics of their term papers. If so, you should always choose from their list unless you have a burning interest in something else. Papers will fall into these five types for most undergraduate courses:

1. The debate paper. This is the easiest to organize. Usually you can outline two opposing views. So your paper has an introduction, view 1, view 2, some discussion, and a conclusion. Here are a few examples of debates for which pretty extensive sources exist:

Food Taboos: Symbolic or Pragmatic?
 Overpopulation—Cause of Poverty; or Poverty—Cause of Overpopulation?
 Who Knows Best? "Thick Description" and Informant Explanation Versus Positivism and Outsider Analysis in Anthropology

2. *The ethnography paper with a debate.* Here you focus your debate paper on a single culture which has itself been the focus of a major debate:

The Trobriands: Proof or Disproof of the Oedipus Complex?
Aztec Cannibalism: Problem of Meaning or Problem of Protein?
The Chan Kom Debate: Peaceful Peasants or Violent Urbanites?
India's Sacred Cow: Irrational Cause of Hunger or Means of Survival?
Land Reform in Cuba and Taiwan: Are Communism and Capitalism Different?

3. *The cross-cultural paper.* You take a subject and compare it across a large number of cultures. You may find comparisons already done or you can do your own. Doing your own is a lot of work and probably requires using the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) downstairs in Sprague Library. Or, you can take off from existing literature by continuing or expanding the cross-cultural comparison started by someone else:

Rape and Violent Sports in Cross-Cultural Perspective.
The Cross-Cultural Debate Over Male Initiation Rites
The Cross-Cultural Study of Cross-Cousin Marriage
House Structure and Gender Inequality: a Cross-Cultural Study

4. *The state-of-knowledge paper.* You summarize early, recent, and most recent research leading to an overview of what we have learned, changed our minds about, and need to look at next:

New Findings in the Fossil Record: How Old *Are* Humans?
How Anthropology Has Benefited From Improved Dating Techniques.
The Latest Insights Into the Causes and Consequences of the Invention of Agriculture.
What Anthropologists Have Learned in a Century of Study on the Origins of the State.
Why Anthropologists Consider Black English Nothing Less Than Equal to Its White Counterpart.

5. *The anthropology-contributes-to paper.* You take a big subject and show what specific facts, ideas, and limitations anthropology has brought to it:

How Anthropology Uncovered the Meaning of the Sickle Cell.
What Anthropology Tells Us About the Causes of Peasant
Revolutions.
Is Anthropology the Key to Understanding Gender Inequality?
Why Anthropology Became the Central Science in Refuting
Racism.
The Anthropological View of Multicultural Education.

Many other kinds of topics are possible. Every time you read in a text about a topic that "is still the subject of considerable debate" or is one on which "anthropologists are constantly learning new facts" you have a possible topic.

5.2 Pick a Topic That Fits the Course You Are Taking

Many instructors are very flexible about paper topics, but remember that they will be most interested in papers about things they are teaching about. Why ask for the incredible frustration of spending hours on a paper that you then decide your instructor didn't really appreciate?

5.3 Get Your One-Page Outline and Bibliography Approved Six Weeks Before the Paper is Due

When you have an idea, see your instructor. If the topic is acceptable, go to the library and get an initial bibliography. (Your instructor may already have suggested some of the most important sources.) The reference staff at Sprague can be very helpful. Try to use at least a couple of "classic" books and a few articles.

Set up your initial outline roughly like this:

1. The Problem (Topic) and Why It Is Important

2. Overview of the Literature (Sources)
3. The Main Data or Main Arguments
4. Your Evaluations, Criticisms, Comments
5. Future Research Questions Coming Out of This Study
6. Bibliography (second page)

Now go back to the instructor and ask for comments on your initial outline and bibliography. Once approved, you have six weeks to do the research and write the paper. You will need all six of them.

5.4 Use About One Reference or More Per Term Paper Page

Don't turn in a 15-page paper with two sources. Part of the term paper assignment is to get you to work with multiple references. Your initial bibliography might be five sources, but your final reference list should indicate that you read fairly deeply and widely in the literature. Otherwise, how do you know you didn't miss something important?

5.5 Spend at Least Two Hours on Research and One Hour Writing and Rewriting Per Term Paper Page

A good term paper is a lot of work. There is no way around it. Budget a lot of time. A good term paper is rewarding. It gets a good grade and you feel a great sense of accomplishment. You see that you can indeed do it.

A really good term paper can be submitted with your graduate school application. It might help you get admitted or get a fellowship. If you aren't going to graduate school, the experience will improve your skills in almost any job you do. The time will eventually pay for itself.

Need Help with Your Outline?

Take a look at John W. Creswell. 1994. *Research Design:*

***Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches.* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.**

On pages 13-15 he gives generic outlines for qualitative and quantitative type papers.

On pages 48-50 he gives examples of how to state the problem in a way the reader will easily understand.

5.6 Get Help from the Reference People at Sprague Library

The librarians may not be anthropologists, but they know how to find things. Ask them to teach you how to search the CD-ROM's for recent journal articles. Check with the government documents section if your topic could possibly relate to government data (rape, sickle cell, or any health topic may benefit from health statistics).

Need Help with Your Library Search?

See chapter 2 of the Creswell book cited on the previous page.

Or, try David Dooley. 1984. *Social Research Methods.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Prentice Hall. Chapter 3 includes advice on using the library and using computer-based searches. It also provides insights into how to interpret research reports.

Another valuable source is H. Russell Bernard. 1994. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches.* Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications. Second Edition. His chapter 6 offers much valuable information on how to use anthropological resources including the Social Science Citation Index and some foreign sources as well.

5.7 Take Detailed Notes in Outline Form

Get a notebook for the term paper. Or use note cards. Take detailed notes, putting down page numbers and references for all notes. Take notes with your rough outline next to you and note which topics the notes you are taking are relevant to.

Almost immediately you will begin to see additional outline categories. Write them down. Your notes in outline form will provide a structure for the paper.

5.8 Make a Detailed Outline Before You Write

Writing a term paper is not so much an exercise in writing. It is really an exercise in outlining the subject logically. Once you have an outline, you write by filling in the sections. You really write a series of short essays, stuck together by your outline to make an elegant and convincing paper. The writing part is easy so stop worrying about it and get your outline together: that's where the real brain work is involved.

Let's take one example from the topics above and make a possible outline. Do a little work in the library and yours could be much better. Our sample paper outline appears on pages 32-33.

Let's look at this outline more closely. Note first that the outline stays on one page only. Unless you are writing a mammoth study, your outline should be short and simple. This one is actually more detailed than necessary to hand in. Your actual working outline might be several pages long as you compile your research. Then simplify it. For example, item 4.3 on the final outline might read "4.3 Peggy Sanday's Theory of Male and Female Symbols."

Note that the headings and subheadings all use Arabic numbers. It's simpler than trying to remember I, A, 1, a, etc. Undergraduate papers don't usually need more than two or at most three levels of outline. Note how the outline headings move to the right as they become more specific and go back to the left when they are more inclusive. The two headings about "origin" theories and "cross-cultural" theories are equal distances

from the left margin because they both refer to logically equal subjects: sets of theories. Once you get the idea of organizing your material like this, you can write fairly easily.

Then things get a little harder. This paper is a hodgepodge (academically we call it a "synthesis") of the State-of-Knowledge and the Anthropology-Contributes-To paper types. How would you make it purely one or the other?

Need Help With Anthropological Resources?

MSU's librarians will help you with your library search. Be sure to check out the following:

HRAF (Human Relations Area Files): cross-cultural data for several hundred cultures and more than a thousand variables (or cultural traits). MSU now has access to HRAF on the World Wide Web (the files are actually on a computer at the University of Michigan) which the reference librarians can show you how to search.

The Tozzer Library card catalog: the card catalog of the Peabody Museum of Harvard University is the most extensive and complete anthropological bibliography in the world. MSU owns a CD-ROM version of this essential bibliography and has installed it on a single computer near the reference desk. The reference librarians nearby will show you how to use it.

Infotrac, JSTOR, Expanded Academic Database, Wilsondisk, etc.: A number of additional journal search engines are available in the library, and some can be accessed from computers anywhere on campus, including the dorms and even from your home. Ask the reference librarians or ask me for more details.

The Harvard University On-Line Information Service (HOLLIS)—for books only. Using Telnet, you can search the subject facility of the Harvard University Library—one of the three largest in the entire United States—and have Harvard's computer e-mail back to you the full bibliography of its holdings on any subject their catalog recognizes. At the Telnet prompt, just type:

hollis.harvard.edu or library.harvard.edu

and follow the on-screen instructions. Keep in mind that you can only e-mail 200 sources at a time. See me for more information.

If Harvard identifies valuable books that MSU doesn't own, have the MSU reference desk librarian help you get the books you need on interlibrary loan. It's worth it.

Need Help with Your First Sentence?

Sometimes the hardest part of writing is just getting started. Here are three ideas about how to do it.

Take a look at the Creswell book—see the citation on page 23. On his pages 48-50 are examples of good first sentences.

Copy down the first sentences of, say, every 3rd book or article you are using for the paper. Study these sentences carefully: you may find one of them suggests how you should start out.

If you just can't figure out what to do, use your title or your first subheading as the first sentence, then continue immediately with something like "In this paper I will try to show..."

This will at least get you writing.

Notice how the initial problem is stated. Question words are very good for starting off. It could say "Why men have ..." instead, but the "why" is still there.

Under part 1, we have three subheadings. Subheadings help you to write more clearly, to keep sentences together when they should be and separate when they should be. They also tell the reader how you are thinking and make it easier for her/him to see what you are doing. Nothing is worse than a paper that goes on page after page without a heading or subheading. It means you either don't know what you are

talking about or don't care to help the reader to see it.

Now look at part 2. We go straight into what the title says the paper will tell the reader. Always make sure your title and your outline are closely tied.

Parts 3 and 4 have the main body of the paper. Here you are summarizing six anthropological theories grouped into their appropriate types. What if you were also considering biological determinist or sociobiological theories? How would your outline change?

In part 5 you show your instructor that you can read and can also *criticize, comment, refute, or support* the theories you described in parts 3 and 4. You may not have the most brilliant ideas in the world, but try them out anyway. Think both at the level of individual theories and the categories you created. Did Harris provide real evidence or only some clever speculations for his "plow" theory? What kind of evidence might be necessary to prove it right or wrong? Can origin theories be proven cross-culturally? Does Sanday do that in her synthesis of male-female symbol associations?

Now for part 6. If you were making this a debate paper—say a debate between origin theories and cross-cultural theories—you might now take up the question "What Research is Needed Now?" In this paper you choose to work instead on implications of these theories for explaining or trying to change gender inequality in modern US culture. Does the plow theory have much to do with us here and now? Is *corvée* labor in the ancient empires of any relevance today? Be sure to check carefully what Karen Sacks herself says about this before drawing your conclusions.

You've compressed a lot of material and ideas into six major (#1 headed) sections. That's enough sections for anywhere from 10 to 30 pages of term paper. If you get too many #1 headings, you have two or three term paper topics, so get rid of all but one of those topics.

Now for the final conclusion. Did anthropology tell us things we couldn't have known without it? Does it tell us anything we can use in today's world? Don't be afraid to repeat yourself a little; it might be necessary to get into your points. Don't be afraid to speculate, but try to refer your speculations to one of the specific theories you took so much

time to explain. This will convince the reader that you really thought about what you read. It will also show that you can do more than summarize.

Is Anthropology the Key
to Understanding Gender Inequality?

1. The Problem: Why do men have more wealth and power than women?

1.1 Male control of the political system.

Is it universal?

Does it hold for hunters-gatherers?

1.2 Male control of the religious system.

Is there always a religious system?

When are women sometimes influential?

1.3 Male control of the household.

Are household tasks always unequal or are they sometimes just different?

Why does the degree of male power vary so much from culture to culture?

2. Why We Need an Anthropological Approach

2.1 Anthropology's Unique Contribution: to view the problem across all time periods and all cultures.

2.2 Anthropology focuses on origins.

2.3 Anthropology considers the whole range of cultural cases.

2.4 Anthropology can absorb information and theories from all other social and biological sciences.

2.5 In this paper, we look at recent origin and cross-cultural theories to show part of anthropology's contribution.

3. Anthropological Origin Theories of Gender Inequality

3.1 Eleanor Leacock: Hunters, gatherers, classes, and sexism.

3.2 Karen Sacks: Corvée labor in ancient empires and the subordination of women.

3.3 Marvin Harris: Did the plow cause gender inequality?

4. Cross-Cultural Theories of Gender Inequality

4.1 Ernestine Friedl: Women's labor and women's position among hunter-gatherers.

4.2 Harris and William Divale: The cross-cultural proof of how war causes sexism in primitive societies.

4.3 Peggy Sanday: Why female symbols mean weak and inferior -- a cross-cultural study.

5. Which Theory Makes the Most Sense?

6. Implications for Society Today: Does

anthropology tell us things about gender inequality that suggest ways to reduce or eliminate it?

7. Bibliography

Note: For more information on logic and style in term paper writing, get a copy of the two-page *Standards for Formal Written Work for Students at Montclair State* from me or from the English Department.

For general help in writing get a copy of:

Cook, Claire Kehrwald

1985 *Line by Line: How to Improve Your Own Writing*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company. (\$8.95 in paperback)

The author is a former English composition instructor and now a copy editor for the Modern Language Association.

Need Help with Paper Mechanics?

Your paper should include:

A Title Page

The Outline

The Text of the Paper

Any Endnotes if Required by the Instructor

The Bibliography

The title should describe the main subject of the paper. It should appear about the middle of the title page, followed by your name, and other information about the course, including the date:

Is Anthropology the Key
to Understanding Gender Inequality?

by

Ima Student
Anthropology 315
The Anthropology of Women
Professor You-Know-Who

December 1, 1998

Repeat the title (only, not your name etc.) at the top of the outline page and again at the top of the first page of text.

Number all pages starting with the first page of text and through the bibliography.

Put page numbers on all work you hand in to faculty.

Finally, you present your bibliography. List *only* sources that you actually cite in the text of your paper. If you read a number of other pieces, you can make a separate bibliography section called "Other references consulted." I don't recommend it: readers are usually only interested in knowing where you got the specific things you quoted or paraphrased.

5.9 Read and Correct Your First Draft After a Day or Two

Give your head a rest from this intense research and writing experience. After a day or two, reread your paper: you may see logical inconsistencies or places where you left out information that is necessary to support your points. You can also make grammar and spelling improvements. Never turn in a first draft as the final paper.

5.10 Do a Third Reading Just for Grammar, Spelling, and Citation

Now you have the structure the way you want it. Look just for grammar and spelling mistakes. Use your computer spelling checker and grammar program if you have them. I can't give you a whole guide to grammar, but you will notice some problems if you read over the paper carefully. Typically:

(1) Change passive voice to active voice. Don't write "It is thought by anthropologists." Instead, write "Anthropologists think".

(2) Replace wrongly chosen words with better choices. "Matrilineal" doesn't mean "matriarchal;" "identical" tells the reader things that "similar" does not. Read your paper over, thinking carefully about each important word as you come to it—does it say *exactly* what you mean—nothing more, nothing less, nothing different, nothing unclear, nothing leading the reader off the point, nothing that could be misinterpreted? Learning to choose the most appropriate words is a key to good writing.

(3) Shorten really long sentences by separating them. Look at some of the bad key sentences in part 1.4 above. Numbers 2 and 6 could be broken into short sentences, giving the reader time to catch a logical breath. Computer grammar-checking programs such as *Grammatik* are set at the factory to flag sentences of 30 words or more and suggest you shorten them. Take their advice. If you don't have a grammar checker, watch for long sentences as you read, and look for places to put a period, and make them into shorter sentences, and then your paper will be better, because it won't be full of long and complicated run-on sentences like this one. Can you fix the previous sentence of 49 words? Can you make it into two sentences? Three? Four? Which combination reads best to

you?

(4) Get your citations right—learn how in the next section.

5.11 How To Cite Sources and Make a Bibliography

Citation in anthropology is very simple. You just put the author's last name(s), date of publication, a colon, and the page number from which you are citing or quoting. You do this right in the text where you are citing. Here is an example:

Twelfth and 13th century English kings had incomes averaging 24,000 times that of English peasants (Lenski 1966:212).

You cite the source because you are making a statement you could not possibly know about without having read someone's research (unless you did a study of the documents and made the calculation yourself). You cite the source at the end of the sentence so as not to disturb the logic and power of your data. You cite the author's last name, followed by a space, then the year of publication—no comma—and the page after the colon with no spaces. You put the citation *inside* the sentence so the period comes after. You can do all your citations this way. Stay away from *op cit*, *loc. cit*, and the like.

In some cases, you may want to mention the author's name in the text. Then you can cite like this:

Lenski (1966:212) calculated the incomes of 12th and 13th century English kings...etc. You could also put the date and page at the end of the sentence. And here is the correct way to put a book title into the bibliography:

Lenski, Gerhard
1966 Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

or

Lenski, Gerhard
1966 *Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification*. New

York: McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Italics versus underlining. Follow this rule: **use italics whenever possible.** If you use a modern word processor, use italics. If you have to use a typewriter or an old-fashioned word processor that just doesn't do italics, or if your printer won't do them, use underlining.

For a journal article, the citation in the text looks the same (Leacock 1978:249), but the bibliographic entry has a few small differences:

Leacock, Eleanor

1978 Women's status in egalitarian society: implications for social evolution. *Current Anthropology* 19:247-55.

Note here that the title of the article has capital letters only for the first word. The name of the journal is italicized (or underlined) and the main words are capitalized—in other words it is treated like a book—and the volume number is followed by a colon followed by the pages of the whole article. Sometimes there is also a number with the volume, as volume 19, number 2. You can then cite 19(2):247-55.

For additional information on bibliography, such as edited collections, and more than one source per author, get these books:

The Sociology Writing Group

1986 *A Guide to Writing Sociology Papers*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Their chapter 4 (pages 44-51) has all the information you need on citation, notes, and references. Their sample papers also show you how to make a title page and an abstract in case your instructor requires them. More about this book in part 5.13.

Cuba, Lee

1993 *A Short Guide to Writing about Social Science*. New York: HarperCollinsCollegePublishers.

His chapter 7 (pages 135-155) covers almost every possible type of citation and documentation problem you are likely to come across. If you cite an unusual type of document or run into other editorial problems not covered in the books already mentioned, go to the "Bible" for editors:

The Chicago Manual of Style. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press. Use the most recent edition you can find. Sprague Library should have a copy, and in an emergency, ask me.

5.12 Turn in Your Outline with Your Paper

Unless you are required to do an abstract, your outline can be the first page after your title page. If your paper is 10 pages or more, your outline will help you and also your reader. A good outline hits the reader before even starting the text. You have grade points already.

5.13 Get the Books: A Guide to Writing Sociology Papers and A Short Guide to Writing about Social Science

The sociology book contains three examples of papers like those you might write: the library research paper, the ethnographic field research paper, and the quantitative research paper. Each example comes with comments showing what is good or bad about the papers.

The Cuba book has an example of a library research paper and contains much information on how to use the library and how to organize your notes.

If you take middle-level anthropology courses, you will eventually do a library research paper as described in this section.

If you do an apprenticeship in anthropology, you will probably do an ethnographic field paper much like the example in the sociology book, only yours will be longer and better.

Any of your papers might involve quantitative research. The example in the sociology book shows how you can study something close at hand and draw interesting conclusions with very simple statistical skills.

The sociology book also shows how to present and discuss tables, and both it and the Cuba book show you how to do footnotes and endnotes if

I have examples of outstanding and

you need them, how to avoid plagiarism, and how to organize note cards.

Need Help With Tables?

For more information on the mechanics of doing tables, go to the section of this skills website called *The Research Paper* [put a link here].

6 How to Find More Time to Study

Have you been liking this booklet so far? I've left the most difficult part to the end. If you now see how much you can improve your study habits, you also know by reading this booklet that you will need more time than you think you have. I don't expect the next section to make me popular; I just hope you will someday look back and be glad you swallowed the bitter pill which I now place before you. Yes, life is hard and then you die. But before death you could have a rewarding career. In any case, first life will be hard.

Most Montclair State students have to work to pay for their education. We know. But you may have some choices you didn't consider. Here are three possible ways to increase your study time.

6.1. Limit Your Work Hours to Your Absolute Need

You came to college to learn. You came to prepare for a career. A career based on a college degree may be worth thousands of dollars more than its non-degree counterpart. Every high grade you earn brings you closer to the better-paying career you want.

That's why you should consider carefully how many hours per week

you are working to earn money. Are you working only for expenses that you must pay? If so, you have no room to cut your work hours.

But are you working for a stereo? Cash for fun on weekends? Some other item you want but could do without? If so, you are actually costing yourself money in the future. Cut down those work hours and get your degree with good grades. In the long run—in most cases—your earning power will be greater and you will have more and better stereos and more and better weekends. Don't worry—you're still young enough for plenty of good times.

6.2 Try to Work on Campus

Get an on-campus or near-campus job if at all possible. Think how much time you spend driving around from classes to work to home to work to classes to home to classes....Are you productively listening to your foreign language tapes in the car? Or are you just getting tired from fighting traffic jams, bad drivers, and from looking for that elusive parking space at Montclair State?

Yes, many on-campus jobs pay only the minimum wage. But consider how much more time you'll have to study. You go to class. You study in the library. You walk over to your on-campus job. The 45-minute drive to work is replaced by 45 minutes of grade improving study! You earn less money, but you get better grades. Later you'll pay yourself back. And don't forget the savings in gas and the fact that your car will last longer. It's not all economic loss even in the short run.

No, I can't promise it will work out better in the long run. But the odds for better income favor the person with the best education and the best credentials within that education. It's risk, but remember—you can probably find a low-paying job like the one you now have almost anytime. Didn't you come to college for something better?

6.3 Reduce Your Leisure Activities; Study More

You probably feel heavily burdened with working, taking classes, family responsibilities, and other tasks that fill up your time. Your leisure activities give you a break and help you feel better. Besides, why should life be so cruel as to take away your fun just when you're at an age you

can actually enjoy it? And who is this anthropology professor to tell you to give it up?

Look at it this way. Could you survive on one hour less leisure replaced by one hour more study? Try it for a couple of weeks. Now try one more hour. See how far you can go. Maybe you had more leisure than you needed after all. I don't have a time clock you have to punch—you are the boss of your leisure time. So experiment and try to see if you can get in a few more hours of course preparation. You might be surprised to find that you're actually less bored when you have less leisure time and more time spent in productive, satisfying activity with your books. OK, laugh now while you read this, but try it for a semester and then see how you feel. Lucky for you that I don't charge \$80 an hour for this advice.

Conclusion

So now you know how to read and take notes, how to get the most out of classes, how to study for and take exams, and how to write term papers. You even know how to create more hours in the week. In other words, you know how to get better grades. So get to work. I'll see you in class.

9,651 words 6 April 1992

10,303 words 10 August 1992

10,881 words 19 December 1994

11,922 words 24 July 1998