When it comes to studying for a college quiz or exam, our minds immediately revert to thoughts of stress, disgust, denial, or possibly all three! There are rarely tests on course material that students actually look forward to studying. I’m not saying this article will make studying fun and exciting, but it will hopefully improve your learning and understanding which will ultimately improve your grades!

After reading the article “Effective Study Skills” by Dr. Bob Kizlik, I found many of his tips and techniques very useful to any student. He realizes that everyone is different and no two students are going to have the same study habits. What works for one person may not be helpful to another. For this reason he created a list of some general techniques to achieve effective studying skills.

The first area Dr. Kizlik focuses on is the value of a schedule. I find making a schedule really helpful in staying on track. If you simply block off a chunk of time to study for a test you will be able to schedule around that for when other unexpected events come up. This will save you time in the end while improving the effectiveness of your studies.

Knowing when to study can be a challenge in itself. Your best studying will occur when you are rested, alert, and have planned for it. These optimal conditions can be hard to come by, but we need to be sure to use our time to the fullest. Time is our most valuable resource, but it can be very easily wasted. Avoiding studying is so simple for college students but if you stick to a schedule, and don’t let distractions get the best of you, studying will come easier than you think. All of these techniques may seem obvious but when it gets down to it and you’re studying for an exam the next day, it is hard to remember the basics. For that reason, I have compiled a list of tips that will hopefully help with your study skills:

1. Begin studying no less than 30-90 minutes after a meal.
2. Never study within 30 minutes of going to sleep.
3. Prioritize by making a set list of what you intend to study.
4. If possible, study no more than 30-40 minutes at a time. You will retain more by studying for shorter periods with breaks in-between.
5. Try to find a place to study that is free of distractions so you can make the best of your time.
6. Use a highlighter instead of underlining. Highlighted passages are more easily remembered than the same passage underlined.
7. Outline all the course information to fully understand the material, instead of simply studying the bold information and what seems important.

The key factor in making all these study skills work is your willingness to WANT to improve and do well in school. Effective study skills are just the building blocks to being a successful college student. By simply reading this article you are finding value in your education and are eager to improve your study habits. Now get out there and study! I will leave you with an oddly innovative quote from Dr. Kizlik to think about, “Work smart…not hard.”

By: Kelsey Knowlton
My name is Tia Jacobs. I am studying Business Management and Marketing. This is my second year as an SSS mentor. In my spare time I like to go to the gym, go for walks, and play wii and xbox. I hope that you all have a wonderful semester!!!
My name is Alle Engelman and I am a junior here at Northwest, pursuing a degree in Biology/Psychology. I’m also involved in Phi Mu sorority as well as Student Health Advisory Committee. After graduation, I plan on going on to grad school and becoming a Physician’s Assistant.

My name is Ryan Hesse and I am a Senior accounting major. I am from Farber, Missouri, which is a small town an hour Northeast of Columbia. I am in my third year studying accounting at Northwest, and I plan to graduate in December. I enjoy playing sports and being outside.

My name is Cassie Shearholdt and I am a senior psychology major from Liberty, MO. I will be graduating this spring and, hopefully, pursuing a graduate degree in counseling next fall! As far as classes, I’m pretty good with anything psychology/sociology related, as well as basic chemistry and biology courses. At Northwest, I am involved in Residential Life as a Resident Assistant, Sigma Society as the Secretary, and obviously Student Support Services as a Student Mentor. Apart from school, I’m very passionate about traveling and photography. I’ve been to nearly every state (forty-six!) and have been to several foreign countries, too. I’m really excited to start this year and get to know everyone, as well as have fun!

My name is Garrett Hargiss. I am a junior here at Northwest Missouri State University. My hometown is Middlebrook, which is located in Southeast Missouri, a seven hour drive from Maryville. I am currently double majoring in Wildlife Biology and Botany. My areas of expertise are Biology, Ecology, and Botany, along with a lot of other science. Some of my hobbies include reading, hiking, and outdoor activities in general.

My name is Alle Engelman and I am from Rockford, Illinois. I’m a junior here at Northwest, pursuing a degree in Biology/Psychology. I’m also involved in Phi Mu sorority as well as Student Health Advisory Committee. After graduation, I plan on going on to grad school and becoming a Physician’s Assistant.

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My name is Kelsey Knowlton and I’m a Junior here at Northwest. My home town is Papillion, Nebraska, which is just south of Omaha. Aside from being in my first year of mentoring at SSS, I am also heavily involved in my sorority, Phi Mu, as well as other organizations including SAC and Order of Omega. You may also see me giving tours around campus as a Student Ambassador for the Admissions Office. I am currently double majoring in International Business and Financial Management. I hope to expand my knowledge of these fields when I study abroad in Australia this coming year! My dream job would be to work in tourism, hotel, or resort management, and travel the world. I’m looking forward to this year at SSS and can’t wait to become better acquainted with everyone in this fantastic program!
StrengthsQuest

Strengths-based organizations celebrate and honor each person's talents -- and leverage them to build a better, more complete group. How strong is your student organization? How effective is its leadership team? The best teams get the job done by intentionally using each member's strengths. StrengthsQuest supports student organizations to reach greater success by helping them create a team dynamic that welcomes, values, and leverages each members’ talents. StrengthsQuest offers a valuable tool to support student organization leaders in facilitating discussions about team strengths -- the Team Talent Map.

To create a Team Talent Map, ask each member of your team to take StrengthsQuest and send you their top five talent themes. After you receive each member's top five talents, follow the link to create a Team Talent Map. http://www.strengthsquest.com/content/141395/Student-Organizations.aspx

If you have not completed the StrengthsQuest assessment, please stop by the Student Development Specialist, Brenda Johnson’s office (AD 363) to pick up instructions for completion.

StrengthsQuest will help you identify and utilize your personal attributes and teach you how to use these attributes both in and out of the classroom!

How you think, learn, study, and work best is unique to you. Leverage your talents to help you "do what you do best" in the classroom. How do you prefer to study -- in a quiet corner of the library, listening to music in your room, or with a group of friends? Each student learns and studies best in different ways. The best way for you to prepare for your next exam, paper, or presentation, might be different than the way your roommate, classmates, or your friends prepare. StrengthsQuest can help you thrive in your academic career by showing you how you can leverage your talents to approach your coursework through a focus on what you naturally do well. By using your strengths in your studies, you can take greater control over your academic future. To learn more about how to apply your talents to your success in the classroom, check out Chapter 7 of StrengthsQuest. You will need to sign in to view this content. http://www.strengthsquest.com/content/141344/Academics.aspx
Looking For a Fun New Hobby? Try Planking

By: Ryan Heese

Planking is a game that is gaining a lot of popularity, where people (known as “plankers”) lie down on the ground – typically in an unusual location – and post the picture of planking on an online community such as Facebook.

The rules of planking are simple, as a planking page on Facebook posts, “You got a body, you got a Plank.” The planker must lie face down, on the ground or aerial, body straight like a wooden board, and palms attached to the side. The more innovative the situation, the more popular it gets.

Sounds random and silly, but people are posting hundreds of pictures on Facebook of their planking activities, and the numbers are increasing.

The planking game has developed gradually in the past decade. According to Tom Meltzer of the Guardian, the game traces back 14 years to two English boys, Gary Clarkson and Langbon, who called it “the lying down game”.

While Clarkson and Langbon do not remember what inspired its beginning, some believe the video for the Radiohead song “Just” from 1995 to be the point of origin. In this video, a man lies down on a road ignoring the surrounding crowd, and by the end everyone lies down together. The Washington Post suspects a 1993 film “The Program” might have had an influence on the game. In this movie a scene featured the quarterback lying down on the yellow line in the middle of the road as cars passed by. The scene was later deleted because some people were reported to have been killed or injured by trying to imitate the “brave” quarterback.

Clarkson and Langbon’s game continued to grow, little-by-little, until they created a Facebook group in 2007, gaining thousands of followers. Plankers take pictures of their activities, usually in an unusual – and sometimes dangerous – situation, and post them on the social network site.

One person had her picture taken on the stairs of a subway station, while another person had his picture taken planking on a railroad. Sometimes it is a group effort, seniors of Treasure Coast High School in Port St. Lucie, Florida decided to hold a senior plank rather than a prank. If this does not amuse the reader, there was a man who planked across two opened overhead bins on the opposite end of an airplane – his neck on one and his ankle on the other.

The game may sound like a simple and harmless way of having fun for some. However, there is a growing number of voices that oppose this activity for having caused problems. In 2009, a group of doctors and nurses in Swindon, England were suspended for planking on duty. On May 13, 2011, a 20-year-old Nate Shaw in Australia was charged for planking on a police vehicle. Two days later, there was the first reported death while planking. Acton Beale of Australia fell from the seventh floor of a building while planking on a balcony.

Despite the risk of danger, and ironically because of the media attention they were getting, planking is gaining more popularity. As of May 27 2011, Facebook has over 700 groups related to planking, and several planking pages have drawn over 100,000 "likes." Planking can be lots of fun but **people should take caution and consider their own safety, and that of others**, while engaging in this activity.
Dr. Donald Martin shares great insider advice for those exploring the idea of going to graduate school. For the complete 12-month checklist, seven personal questions to ask about grad school, and much more, read his book, *Road Map For Graduate Study*.

Make a few campus visits. You can visit unannounced, as we mentioned earlier. In addition, graduate schools usually offer two ways to visit campus. Both will most likely appear on the website for each institution and under the section dealing with applying, and are as follows:

Most institutions provide opportunities to visit during the academic year. Visitors can usually attend classes, take a campus tour, meet current students and talk with someone in the admissions office. If an admissions interview is required as part of the application process, have the interview as part of the visit.

Some institutions also have special campus visit programs, which include sessions on the admissions process, financial aid, housing, student life, career services and more. Most often, these special programs take place in the fall.

Another way to have a “campus visit” is to find out if admissions information sessions (also called receptions) are being held close to where you live. Many graduate schools recruit in areas they have identified as strong or developing markets. This provides a great way to get to know the institution better, especially if you are not able to go there for a visit.

If possible, divide things in such a way that between campus visits and local admissions presentations, you will be able to “visit” all of your options before applying.

Make sure to evaluate your visit as soon as possible after it is completed, so that your experiences and impressions will be fresh in your mind.

**TIP** Always remember perception is reality - it is where you end up, not where you start. Reputation, rankings, and reality are very different things. When it comes to reputation, while a graduate school may be well known or considered highly prestigious, this does not mean it has to be on your final list of options or that it has the best program for you. As I mentioned earlier, rankings are useful. But remember that those publishing them are looking to sell what they publish. Also, make sure you take a close look at the methodology behind the rankings. You will see that some methodologies are sound while others are lacking. If an institution is ranked highly, but the methodology is not credible, you need to interpret that accordingly. Also, take a look at several rankings by the same organization/publication over time. If there is a sizeable difference between one ranking and the next, is it likely that good methodology is taking a back burner to selling copies of the ranking. It is very unlikely that one institution would move up or down several places in only one or two years. Finally, it is what is real for YOU that is most important. It is your time, energy, and financial resources that are being spent.

**Upcoming SSSS Events!**

**September 20th** - Lunch and Learn Academic Workshop #1
1.00 - 1.50 p.m., Student Union Tower View Room

**September 27th** - Exploring Majors and Minors
Student Union Ballroom

**September 29th** - Mock Interview Day

**October 4th** - Lunch and Learn Academic Workshop #2
1.00 - 1.50 p.m., Boardroom

**October 11th** - Lunch and Learn StrengthsQuest Workshop
1.00 - 1.50 p.m., Boardroom

**October 11th** - Fall Career Day