

WELCOME TO UNE: SET YOUR COURSE TO DEEPER WATERS

Hi I'm Dr. Eric Drown.

I'm a professional writing coach at the University of New England Student Academic Success Center.

I'd like to welcome you to UNE and congratulate you on your recent accomplishments. Whether you just graduated from high school or are choosing to pursue a college education after some time in the workforce, you've decided to take the first steps in a transformative journey, one designed to prepare you to sail into deeper waters, where, because you learned the knowledge and skills that college has to teach you, you'll be able to help solve problems in our world and contribute your professions and communities.

This is the first of a series of videos that will introduce you to ideas and techniques that will help you be successful academically at UNE. When you're done reviewing these materials, we hope you'll understand that your academic success depends on adapting to the expectations of your new academic community, we hope you will learn the key attitudes and behaviors that are shared by the best college students, and we hope you know that the Student Academic Success Center can help you throughout your journey to become the best college student you can be.

EXPECT TO CHANGE, LEARN, AND GROW

Whether you just graduated from high school or whether you been working for a while, going to college is a significant transition, both in terms of your life and how you learn.

Students entering college from high school have to learn how to manage new freedoms and responsibilities. Despite their experience in the world, students returning to college after time in the workplace have to adopt a beginner's mindset once again, and also juggle other responsibilities that they may have.

No matter what kind of student you are, everyone will have to acquire new roles and new identities, new ways of looking at the world, new ways of doing things, and new ways of interacting with people.

Everyone will face new demands and expectations and challenges. You have a great opportunity for evolution and growth in a new environment, but you're going to have to adapt, embrace change, and, most importantly, make an effort to join the academic community.

ADAPT TO NEW EXPECTATIONS & SEEK OUT NEW CHALLENGES

Whether you're just embarking on your journey for changing your course you need to understand how learning works in college to thrive at UNE. If you were a successful student in high school, you may already have some of the study habits you'll need to be successful in

college, but it is important to understand that there are some significant differences between high school and college that will require even the best students to make some transformations in the way that they learn.

One of the most important differences between college and high school is that there is far more time for learning in class in college than there is in high school. In high school, there are 180 days in the school year. Classes run every other day, so let's say you have 90 days to learn whatever course has to teach. Those days are probably split up and into hour-and-a-half blocks, so we're talking about 135 hours of in-class learning for each subject.

In college, you'll have about 45 class days per semester, and those will probably be about an hour-and-a-half. So, we're talking about 68 hours of in-class learning in college. What that means is that far more of your learning is going to have to take place outside of class. That makes homework, problem sets, reading, and studying way more important in college than it was in high school.

So, if you're not sure how you might best prepare for class, or study for an exam or learn things on your own, make sure you find out where the Student Academic Success Center is. Pay us a visit and we'll help you get started.

The second most important difference between high school and college is that learning in high school can be teacher driven. What that means is that teachers decide what you're going to do, how you are going to do it, and take an active role in teaching you how to do things.

You might find some college professors who work that way too, but more often you'll find professors expect you to take responsibility for your learning and be an active, driven participant in your education.

They expect you to have or develop good study habits, come to office hours to get tutoring when you need help, to make use of learning resources like textbooks or online videos on your own, and to raise questions in class and participate in discussion actively.

All this is just another way of saying professors expect you to go deep with your learning. They want you to make connections between your classes and life, they want you to ask questions, and to use other resources to develop mastery of whatever the topic or skill is.

It won't be enough to do some shallow learning, where you learn some facts or know how to process some simple problems, instead they'll expect you to use the knowledge and skills you are developing in order to better understand the world taking learning beyond the classroom. Take your learning beyond the classroom. Embrace challenges, seek out new opportunities. If you're going to sail in deeper waters, you can't be content to get the basics. You have to go deep.

LEARN NEW ROLES AND IDENTITIES

When you come to college, you have to embrace new roles and identities. Your first job is to make the transition from being a high school student to being a college student. If you just graduated from high school, you were at the top of your school. You had the most knowledge, you were fluent in important skills, and you had the deepest experiences.

But, to be successful in college, you are going to need to embrace a beginner's mindset. That means being ready and open to learn, accepting that you have new things to figure out, and realizing that it's going to take some time for you to get up to speed.

So, here at the start of your college career, it is important to be an avid beginner, but you really do want to aspire to become the expert that you want to become. Experts do things differently because they proceed from a depth of knowledge and have lots of experience to draw on as they go about their business. They have established ways of doing things, a community of peers they can go to when they need help, and powerful tools to use to understand the world.

At UNE, you will be surrounded by all kinds of experts – the most obvious ones are your professors. But, the professional staff around you also have all kinds of expertise. And don't forget your fellow students. Many of them have expertise that might be useful for you. Watch the way that more advanced students go about their business and you will learn important things about what it means to be a college student.

So since you're here at UNE to become an expert, start noticing how experts do things and follow their lead.

The other important role you'll be expected to take on is that of your major. Even if you haven't decided on a major yet, you came to college to train in the habits of mind and ways of working of a particular major.

Maybe you want to be a biologist, chemist, occupational therapist or nurse, social worker, psychologist, writer, or artist. Whatever major you choose, you won't just be learning information that's important in that field. You'll actually be learning how to think, act, and work like a person in that major.

So, if you're at UNE to learn how to become a biologist, you can only become a biologist by working alongside more experienced biologists. First, you work with them as a beginner, then as you gain more knowledge and experience as an apprentice, and later as a fellow expert.

Whatever your major, study how the professors and advanced students in your fieldwork and try to do the same.

While we're talking about embracing new roles and identities it's important to remember that you're not coming to UNE just to learn a profession. You're also coming to UNE to develop your capacity as an educated person for responsible and ethical participation in the world. A university education can help make you a well-rounded citizen of the world, ready to

participate responsibly and ethically in local, national, and global debates about the direction of our communities and society. It can also make you a collaborator capable of working across cultural political and professional divides with people of diverse origins, views, and goals. Any university education helps create flexible people who can adapt to and thrive in changing circumstances by learning new ways of thinking, being, and doing things in the world.

DEVELOP NEW WAYS OF UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

To participate responsibly and ethically in the world you'll need new habits of mind, new ways of asking questions, new ways of gathering and interpreting data of all kinds, and put all that to use to understand the natural, social, and human world. Ultimately, you'll use that understanding to help solve problems we find there.

Whether you're studying the natural sciences, social sciences, or the humanities, you'll find that all field of inquiry share certain core academic principles. It's those core principles that are the foundation of your education, whether we're talking about preparation for your profession or participation in the world.

All fields of study at the University share a commitment to reasoned inquiry. We understand that knowledge is evidence-based and subject to revision. We know that it's important to consider evidence that complicates or counters a point of view and look at information from diverse points of view.

In all your coursework you will be expected to develop these core academic principles. You will also be expected to develop some important habits of the educated mind. Those habits include curiosity, flexibility, openness, creativity and persistence.

By the time you leave UNE, you will have developed fluency in those core academic principles and be able to put those habits of mind used to solve our world's problems, and contribute to your professions and communities.

BECOME AN EXPERT: JOIN THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

I think it's helpful to think of UNE as a community. Like any new community you want to join, if you're to fit in, you have to learn the language, customs, and values of your new community. But, I'm like other communities you may be part of, UNE is a community built on learning, exploration, and discovery. So, the language, customs, and values you have to learn have to do with those core functions of our community. As you might know from moving to a new town, or joining a club, the best way to learn is to get involved and work alongside more experience members of the community.

In this video, rising UNE Senior Nicole Martin explained to her growing sense of expertise really started by getting involved in the university community in a variety of ways.

Nicole Martin: When did I begin to feel like an expert? [Laughs]: I don't know when I started to really feel like I knew what was going on in my field, but I definitely know that, throughout my three years here at UNE, I have definitely seen my confidence going up. I think I was able to build my confidence in a lot of ways, such as getting involved in things I really cared about: I was volunteering in the community, I worked summer jobs in my field, being a tutor, joining a research lab, going to conferences. All of this made me feel, I was an active member as a student in my field, as a person in my field. I felt that I had valuable experiences to share. Not just that, but talking to others, whether it's in how you're getting involved or outside of that. Talking about my research, my classes, my passions, it all helped me feel comfortable and build my confidence to get me where I am today.

UNE STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER

Eric Drown: As you work to join the UNE academic community, remember that the Student Academic Success Center can help you understand more than just the subject you're studying. Our tutors, writing consultants, peer academic coaches, media consultants, learning specialists, and professional staff can also help you better understand the habits, customs and values of the University.

At UNE, we take pride in preparing students to thrive in a rapidly-changing world with the goal of improving the health of people, communities, and our planet through innovation. We hope you're inspired by our work.

We are UNE. Come be one of us.