

COLL101 COLLECTION

**CASCADIA COLLEGE
COLL101 TEAM**



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INTRODUCTION

Cascadia College COLL101 Team

This article collection supports the curricula of COLL101, College Strategies, College Success, and First Year Experience courses at colleges and universities. The content created by Cascadia College faculty, staff, and librarians orients new students to their learning environments and fosters or reinforces the knowledge, skills, and habits of successful college students. The content here is enthusiastically shared as an open educational resource.

1.

NAVIGATING COLLEGE SAFELY AND COURAGEOUSLY

2021

Cascadia College COLL101 Team



[Courage](#) by [Quinn Dombroski](#) CC BY-SA 2.0

In pursuing a college education, you have exercised a clear choice about your future. This is a courageous act! Up until college, your education was a “received” education, one that was required and heavily influenced by your parents/guardians, teachers, and other adults. (Rich 1979 eloquently makes the distinction between receiving and claiming an education). You might have made some choices about which high school classes you took and the activities you pursued, but by and large, your education in the U.S. K-12 system was a received one, and it was managed for you. (If you come from outside the U.S. you also likely received a compulsory educational system, even if it looks a little different from the U.S. system.) Once you have made the decision to pursue higher education though, you are in charge of managing this choice– this new education in this new environment–and deciding how you will claim it.

What’s tricky is that some aspects of college are not

expressly taught in your classes. In effect, you have joined a new social institution that has its own roles and rules. Many of these roles and rules are subtle or require intentional effort on your part to understand. While you are doing this you are also being challenged by new expectations, ideas, perspectives, and you are effectively in a sea of adults (or near-adults) of different ages with different lived experiences and outlooks. Some of them are also newly navigating the college environment themselves, while others have been around for a while, and still others are employees in that environment, faculty and staff. It can all feel a bit risky, yet to make the most of your college education and to get a sense of belonging, it's largely up to you to figure out the roles and rules. To that end, this article offers insights to some of the hidden aspects of college, and a few suggestions, to help you claim and navigate this college education of yours, safely and courageously.

As suggested above, colleges are social institutions with their own roles and rules, rather like a bubble. Finding your place in that bubble is on you, as is navigating that bubble so that you are both safe and challenged.

Safe spaces in college

In regards to safety, college students have protections that guarantee certain aspects of their educations and they also have responsibilities to understand these themselves. For example,

Regarding physical spaces:

- You will likely have some classes on a physical

campus, or you may prefer to study on campus. It is up to you to recognize safety features and emergency plans, such as those listed in classrooms and hallways. Consider taking a look at posted maps and emergency instructions when you first enter a building or classroom.

- Similarly, your college has equipment and policies related to pandemic control, health emergencies, and other health-related situations. You may be expected to give health attestations in order to access campus, if mandated by law, and you may be asked to abide with health conduct rules. Be sure you understand these.
- It is also in your interest to locate and identify the health emergency resources on campus that are available to all, and those that specifically apply to students.

Regarding personal identity and self-expression:

- Your college provides you with a college identification and email accounts (and possibly other accounts) that are meant to protect your personal information and give you access to college resources. You will want to immediately set up all accounts or adjust all account profiles that you need at your college. (This includes adjusting preferred names and pronouns too.)
- When working in small groups in classes or studying with other students, consider carefully

the decision to share personal contact information instead of your college contact information.

- You also should know that by federal law (FERPA), only you can make inquiries about your education with your college's faculty or staff. Faculty and staff are not allowed to speak to anyone about your education except you. Do not ask parents, siblings, significant others, or roommates to call a professor or staff member on your behalf! (In a very limited number of cases for minors attending college, a student may share the rights to their information.) Similarly, access to your college accounts and any resources you seek with those accounts is only for you, and may not be shared.

Regarding your rights as a student:

- Your identity as a college student is protected under FERPA (as discussed above), while laws like Title IX, ADA, and other federal and state laws protect your rights to learn with or without accommodations and free from harassment and discrimination. Familiarize yourself with these protections, by reviewing them on your college's public website, and find information about them on most syllabi.

Regarding student conduct and academic integrity:

- You have a Student Code of Conduct that you have agreed to upon admission. It clarifies

expectations around regular interactions and academic integrity. Consider reviewing the Student Code of Conduct of your college which can also be found on the public website. Your course syllabi will also clarify your instructors' and the college's policies around how to demonstrate your learning appropriately.

Brave spaces in college

The roles and rules of the college environment exist not only to protect you as you learn, but also to push you to exchange new ideas, learn new perspectives and skills, and to engage with difficult information and concepts. To this end, you will not be protected from discomfort or struggle. In fact, learning often comes through productive struggle. To fully claim your education, as the Association of American Colleges and Universities suggests, it is up to you both to be bravely aware, expressive, and questioning, and to welcome the same courage in others around you (2020). For example,

Regarding the kinds of ideas you might learn about:

- Liberal arts education

You have access to what we pride ourselves in the U.S., a liberal arts education. You might be pursuing a specific skills-based degree, major, or certificate that is tied directly to a career field, but all U.S. students take at least a few classes meant to enhance their critical thinking skills,

communication skills, integrated learning, understanding of other cultures and ideas. These are believed to distinguish the U.S. higher education system from others, and we have evidence that suggests that this benefits our society and students themselves. (See Association of American Colleges and Universities 2020, Svrluga 2020.) The key point made by the AAC&U is that a liberal education is one in which the student is an ‘active participant’ in their own education and partner in the educations of others.(2020, p. 9) So, embrace ‘required’ courses and learning, even when you are not initially certain how some required classes directly relate to your main field of study.

- Systemic inequalities

You might notice that college, like any social institution and society at large, is not necessarily equally organized. There are privileges and oppressions built into the system that affect everyone in the system. It is in your interest to pay attention to these, to recognize that you may have a different set of privileges than the students next to you, or vice versa. You might even speak up or act when you feel these need to be pointed out or acted upon. (This awareness also relates to recognizing the rights you and your classmates have as college students that were discussed in the Safe spaces section above.)

Regarding the respectful exchange of ideas:

- Some college discussions and conversations may feel very controversial or uncomfortable to you. At all times, you have the responsibility to listen and to share respectfully and courageously, within the guidelines set by your instructor or by your class as a whole. Your ideas and your lived experiences matter, as do those of each of your classmates: learn from each other! You were encouraged to review the Student Code of Conduct at your college above in the Safe spaces section. In addition, as you anticipate challenging discussions in college, you might think in advance of the basic elements of brave sharing spaces in college, offered by Arao and Clements (2013):
 - Accept controversy with civility—Different opinions will be expressed and accepted as such.
 - Own intentions and impacts—Some conversations might affect the emotional well-being of others which should be acknowledged.
 - Challenge by choice—Everyone has the opportunity to step in or out of challenging conversations.
 - Respect—Everyone shows respect for others' basic personhood.
 - No attacks—No one inflicts intentional

harm on others.

Conclusion

The sections above offer considerations that may help you claim your college education in ways that ensure your safety and bravery and make that college education meaningful, useful, collaborative, and expansive.

References

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2.

LEARNING TOGETHER IN COLLEGE

2017

Cascadia College COLL101 Team



People-girls-women-students by StockSnap licensed under CC0 BY

I. Introduction

This reading will introduce you to an important part of Cascadia's academic culture: team-based learning. As those of you who have been here for a couple of quarters know, Cascadia stresses collaborative learning, both in and out of class. In class, small group discussions give you a chance to discuss and apply concepts presented in readings or lecture. You will also have many chances to work in learning teams outside of class. Often, your instructor will assign a major group project due at the end of the term.

One purpose of this reading is to let you know why group work is an important part of Cascadia's learning culture. As instructors (and as long-time students ourselves) we have seen (and experienced) teams that work brilliantly and dysfunctional teams that belong on Jerry Springer. Fortunately, the former far outnumber the

latter. But, given the risk of unproductive group experiences, one might ask why Cascadia stresses small-group learning? We want you to understand the important benefits of team-based learning.

We also want you to be able to tell the difference between really good group work and second-rate group-learning. A top-notch group will challenge you to do and learn more than you would on your own. However, a very common student strategy short-circuits this outcome. Let's call it the simple division-of-labor model: each group member contributes a couple of slides to a PowerPoint presentation and there is little group interaction beyond that. We want you to understand the essential elements of group-work done right, and we want you to understand why a simple division-of-labor model falls short.

Finally, we want you understand the kinds of skills and knowledge needed to experience superior team-based learning. These are skills that you will want to develop throughout your academic career. You may have already experienced their value outside of the classroom. Take a moment now to imagine being able to set up a learning-team to master whatever challenge is at hand. This reading will introduce those skills.

Reflection:

What are your attitudes towards cooperative learning? What experiences have you had? Describe the best and worst moments in your group-work history?

II. What Research on Small-Group Learning Says

Let's first examine some of the benefits of learning groups. According to Barbara Gross Davis of UC Berkeley, "Students learn best when they are actively involved in the process. Researchers report that, regardless of the subject matter, students working in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the same content is presented in other instructional formats. Students who work in collaborative groups also appear more satisfied with their classes." (147)

According to Alice Macpherson of Kwantlen University College, "Cooperative learning is supported by one of the strongest research traditions in education, with many hundreds of studies conducted across a wide range of subject areas and age groups.... This large body of research suggests that student to student collaboration conducted in a manner consistent with cooperative learning principles produces superior results on a host of variables, including achievement, thinking skills, interethnic relations, liking for school, and self-esteem." (11)

Macpherson offers a more detailed description of some of these benefits:

1. *Academic Achievement:* In experimental-control comparison studies of the achievement effects of cooperative learning, most found significantly greater achievement in cooperative than in control classes....

Critical thinking is stimulated and students clarify ideas through discussion and debate.... Using cooperative learning, students are continuously discussing, debating and clarifying their understanding of the concepts and materials being considered during the class. They are constructing their own knowledge base. The emphasis is on understanding the material as evidenced by the student's ability to explain ideas to their peers. This leads to a sense of content mastery versus a passive acceptance of information from an outside expert, which further promotes a sense of helplessness and reliance upon others to attain concepts.

2. *Skilled Communication:* Researchers found that learners involved in cooperative learning activities developed skills for interpersonal communications more readily than learners who were in other classroom settings did. They were more considerate of others' feelings, worked in cross-cultural situations more easily, liked their classmates and liked their teachers more than other learners. Researchers found that they developed friends from other cultures and kept these friends outside of class. They had

positive expectations toward future interactions. They had more accurate understanding of others' perspectives. In conflict situations, they were more able to negotiate and solve conflicts in a win-win manner.... Social interaction skills are developed with cooperative learning strategies.... Students do not come by these skills naturally.... By asking group members to identify what behaviors help them work together and by asking individuals to reflect on their contribution to the group's success or failure, students are made aware of the need for healthy, positive, helping interactions when they work in groups. Developing ways to manage conflict before conflict arises is an important part of this process.

3. *Psychological Health*: Learners who were in classrooms with a significant amount of cooperative learning were psychologically healthier than learners who were not. They had higher self-esteem. Learners in cooperative learning classes have more positive feelings about themselves than do learners in traditional classes.... [Research also shows that] these learners had feelings of individual control over their own fate in school, their time on task was higher, and their

cooperativeness and altruism were higher as well. (MacPherson 11-12)

That's a powerful list of benefits! We hope you see why team-based learning is so important at Cascadia. But not all group work produces these benefits. To deliver maximum results, group work must be done right. This reading and the exercises you do in class will give you a clear picture of what to aim for in your groups and a chance to practice the skills needed to hit the target. Let's take a look at some of the characteristics of successful learning groups.

Reflection:

Are these benefits appealing to you? On the surface, this is a no-brainer: who will say they aim to learn nothing, become worse at communicating, and develop a severe phobia of people after their group projects? But think carefully, have you ever thought about your team-learning tasks as a chance to really grow in all of these areas? Do you mainly focus on the task at hand or do you also understand and value the benefits that result from the process itself.

III. What Makes Learning Groups Succeed?

What makes the difference between learning groups that achieve the benefits listed above, and learning groups that don't? Let's begin by

examining a very common approach to group projects. How would you rate the learning group described in the scenario, below left? How close do they get to the kind of group that will enjoy the benefits listed above?

SCENARIO: Team X's assignment is to deliver a 10-minute presentation on the history of collaborative learning. The team is given 20 minutes in class to organize their project. The team concludes they only need to meet twice to knock out the project. In their initial meeting, they first analyze the issue and outline the ideas they will present. Next, they divide the project between the group members: each member is assigned 2 -4 slides to prepare for the presentation. Someone

How well did this group do? Let's start with the positives. There are some very good things this group does. First, they begin by brainstorming and analyzing the broad topic and breaking it into smaller units of analysis. This would provide a chance for critical thinking, as members evaluate different views on the issue. Second, they get organized at the start: each person has a clearly defined task. Third, each person knows what they should do: there is some accountability. If each person is responsible and pulls his or her weight, then the presentation may go flawlessly. If each person has done a good job with their

research, they may even get a good grade.

Unfortunately, the strategy focuses on maximizing the ratio of grade points per minute spent on task. The simple division-of-labor model does not motivate the group members to master the subject or develop their learning abilities. The reason is that no one needed to learn from anyone else. No one was challenged. No one was supported and encouraged. Outside of the first meeting, the “group” project devolved into a set of individual projects, stitched together without further reflection of the material. A truly collaborative project requires repeated evaluation of ideas, which hones critical thinking. It also involves mutual support, which promotes personal growth. To experience these benefits, groups must be wisely structured around certain core elements.

What are the key elements of high-performing learning teams?

Five traits are widely cited by experts in team-based learning. Keep in mind that the elements listed below are derived from decades of actual research. (For example, see Felder and Brent)

1. *Positive Interdependence:* Groups that exhibit this trait take responsibility for each other’s learning. While it is very important to take responsibility for one’s own learning, members of the

best learning groups go beyond this: they take responsibility for each other's learning. They take on a true "team" mentality. Members commit to assist, encourage, and support each other's efforts to learn. There are many ways instructors promote positive interdependence. One method is simply to assign a group grade to the project. A more intensive strategy would require group members to teach material to each other before an exam. The team then gets the average of the individual grades. Obviously, in a scenario like this, team members have an incentive to care about and support each other's learning. It is important to understand the rationale behind such project requirements. Why is positive interdependence important? How does it promote the superior outcomes associated with team-based learning? Understanding the connection is important because this element, more than the others, opens the door to many of the group-work outcomes that students (and teachers) dislike most: domineering group members who take control of a project, or slackers who don't pull their weight, for instance. But it is precisely these risks that make this element so beneficial. First, group

members must learn to trust each other. The experience of trusting and being trusted can be transforming and pay life-long dividends. Second, group members must learn to motivate each other. This requires, in part, an understanding and appreciation of the different circumstances that motivate one's teammates. Third, group members must learn to teach each other. As your instructors will attest, one of the best ways to master a subject is to teach it.

2. *Individual Accountability:* In groups that exhibit this trait, each group member knows what is expected of them. In addition, there are explicitly stated consequences for not fulfilling one's promise to the group. There should be honest and supportive discussion about the assignment of responsibilities and consequences. The minimum expectations should be reasonable (not everyone has the time, training, or inclination to create an A+ project) and derived using a fair process. If not required by the instructor, groups may choose to share their accountability decisions with their instructor. It is reasonable to ask your instructors to help facilitate accountability in your group. Finally, don't forget to praise a

job well-done. Often, a group will draft a document during their initial meetings that outlines expectations and sets out criteria for evaluating individual and group performance. Your instructor may require you to submit a group charter.

3. *Repeated Interaction:* Groups that get team-learning right, will meet several times throughout the course of a project. (The number of times depends partly on the scope of the project; some of your assignments may only allow for a single meeting.) Multiple meetings allow members to provide one another with feedback, evaluate and refine reasoning and new ideas. It also allows group members to develop their interpersonal and small group skills: often, it is not until a third or fourth meeting that group members begin to really understand how to work together successfully. A glaring weakness of the simple division-of-labor approach in our initial example was the lack of interaction. The rationale behind this element is no secret: mastery and skill acquisition require practice.
4. *Development of Interpersonal and Team-Building Skills:* In successful learning teams, students understand the

importance of different types of roles, or functions, that members play. Teams recognize the fact that each person becomes a leader when they take responsibility for a role. Team members' willingness to step into a role, while at the same time relying on associates to play their part, is part of the trust-building process. Participants learn to manage conflict and communicate clearly.

5. *Self-Assessment*: Successful learning groups take time to assess their work and their work strategies many times throughout the course of a project. Some assessments will be short and informal – perhaps a question or two at the end of a meeting. (Groups can have each member articulate their understanding of a concept or an assignment.) Other assessments will be longer and more formal. Often, an instructor will require a formal write-up that gives students an opportunity to reflect on the group project in the context of their broader goals. Such evaluations are crucial for helping students to learn how to learn (both individually and in groups). In short, pausing for reflection and evaluation allows teams to identify what they have done right and what they want to

change.

Reflection:

What questions would you ask in a group assessment? What measures would you use to assess each of the first four elements of high-performance learning teams?

IV. Five Common Stages of Group Development

So far, we have surveyed the benefits of group learning, discussed the limitations of the simple division-of-labor model of group work, and highlighted the essential ingredients of a high-performance team. Now we consider what you can expect to experience as you go about the process of team learning.

Often, after a couple of meetings, group members will discover that they had misunderstood an important aspect of a project, or perhaps they revise their thinking on an important concept or group strategy. At this point, a student may be tempted to blame others, may feel ashamed, or may even want to quit the group. But, as we'll see, these sorts of misunderstandings are actually a common part of the process of group formation. This section of the reading will help you to anticipate how groups will change throughout the course of a longer project and it will help you to interpret your own experiences in a productive manner.

Alice Macpherson describes the stages of group development as follows:

For a team to work effectively it is important to recognize that there are steps that will happen and that the team task and interpersonal behaviors will change over time. A team or group develops a culture of traits and patterns as they progress. Dr. Bruce Tuckman developed a model of how teams progress and exhibit behaviors around both the task being done and the interpersonal interactions.

Stage 1 – Forming: This is the time of organization and orientation to tasks. The task(s) and information about them will be identified. The question to be answered is “What is the task of this group and how will I be able to contribute to that task?” In the behavior area, the members will develop group guidelines, either by consensus or by informal testing of behaviors. Some members will look to others to either lead or follow. The question to be answered is “What kind of behavior is acceptable in this group and how am I to behave?”

Stage 2 – Storming: Here there are

individual emotional responses to the group. The demands of the task will trigger part of this response and the more difficult the task appears in relation to individual's self-perceived abilities, the greater the potential for a "storm". The question to be answered is "Am I emotionally ready to deal with this task?" Varied understandings of task and roles are expressed or become apparent. Differences between members may be expressed in a hostile manner and members may wonder if they want to be part of the group. They think, "Do I really want to work with these people?"

Stage 3 – Norming: Now communication is opening up and developing. Information is being exchanged and ideas and opinions are shared. The focus is on the task and members are answering the question, "What do I have that will help us accomplish this task?" Workable guidelines are established. On the behavioral side, the individuals are becoming a group. There is a sense of harmony and people are looking at "How can I help contribute to group unity?"

Stage 4 – Performing: Everyone is

focused on constructive action directed towards the successful completion of the task. The interpersonal and task behaviors with shared understandings start to merge and functionality is the main idea. Problem-solving will be primarily directed to the work and the product.

Stage 5 – Adjourning: When teams have completed their tasks, they wrap up, and then go on to other teams in other places. It is important for the team to take the time to look at its process one last time. “What went well?” “What could we do better in another situation?” so that the loose ends are wrapped up on the task. The conclusion of the interpersonal behaviors includes a chance to say thank you and goodbye to the team members. This can range from an imaginary gift to each person all the way to various celebrations and even plans to meet again at a later date. Closure is a final essential part of the team process. (Macpherson 5-6)

Reflection:

You can detect these stages in all sorts of groups:

game alliances, learning teams, volunteer organizations, for example. Check out a [group-development analysis of the movie Remember the Titans](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hEJaz3sinEs) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hEJaz3sinEs)

V. How to set up your groups:

This section will describe two sets of questions you can ask to help create a high-functioning learning team. Experts who study group process stress the importance of two kinds of traits. High-functioning groups (whether learning groups in school, design teams at work, or sports teams, for example) focus on the task at hand, and they also focus on the group itself. It is important to have the skills needed to perform a task, but also the skills needed to create a positive group culture. As you set up your group project, you will want to answer most of the questions listed below. (These principles are geared towards longer group-learning projects, but they can be modified to apply to shorter in-class projects.)

A. Task Questions:

These questions pertain to the content of the assignment. The content of an assignment, obviously, will vary with the subject and with the

project. The following are general, all-purpose questions that can help with a wide variety of projects and class topics.

1. *Instructions Review:* Is everyone clear on what, exactly, the project requires? Have at least two members explain their understanding of the project. You may also want to ask your instructor whether you understand the project correctly.
2. *Task Analysis:* What specific steps must be taken to finish the project? What questions should be answered in order to address the main topic? What kinds of information are relevant for answering these questions? What sources will you use to answer the questions?
3. *Evaluation Criteria:* How will you evaluate the quality of your work? Consult your instructor's evaluation criteria, but also step back and think about the criteria you would use. Do they match your instructor's criteria? (This may be revised throughout the project, as your understanding of the subject improves.)
4. *Individual Assignments:* How can the workload be divided to encourage positive interdependence and continual

feedback and revision? Is it possible to assign sub-tasks to pairs of group members? Working in pairs promotes deeper collaboration. Have you built-in opportunities for each group member to share their expertise with the group?

5. *Meeting Schedule*: How will you share and discuss each other's findings? This step is crucial. The key to high-performing groups is feedback and discussion of each other's work.

B. Group Culture Questions:

The goal here is to build a productive group culture. You want to create a sense of mutual trust and support. You also want to design routines that will result in higher levels of competence. How would you build your team? What core competencies will you promote? Here are some things that the learning-team experts recommend.

1. *Introductions*: Share your names and contact information. Gauge each person's interest and prior knowledge of the subject. It's important to realize that group members do not all start at the same place.
2. *Build trust and establish goals*: It's likely that group members will have different time constraints and different academic

goals. Don't assume that everyone has the time, inclination, or prior training needed to turn in an A+ project.

3. *Identify key leadership functions* that you want to see expressed in your group (see VI. Leadership Roles, below).
4. *Draft a group Charter and Mission Statement:* This exercise creates an opportunity for clear communication about expectations. It helps to establish expectations and accountability.
5. *Draft a Peer Review Document:* This explains how each person's work will be evaluated. Agree to fair standards. This is the document you will use to evaluate both individuals and the group itself.

VI. Leadership Roles

Groups need leadership. But does this mean they need a leader – a single leader? Often, the person designated as “the leader”, is the organizer. This is the person who initiates discussion and coordinates everyone's efforts. No doubt, this is a crucial role. Although this person is often looked on as “the leader” of the group, many other things need to happen to develop a powerful learning team. Each of the roles described below

is part of the leadership process. Which roles a person plays depends on his/her abilities, personality and preferences. Some may fill more than one role, at the same time or over a period of time. There may be one person who fills several of these roles and is considered to be the group “leader,” but without the leadership contributions made by others in the group, the group would function less effectively, if at all. Roles are also often shared, for example, many people may serve as initiators or encouragers.

According to Context Institute, there are many roles we each may play in groups (24). Take a look at these roles and identify where you see yourself when it comes to working in teams. Notice that the roles are divided into two categories. This highlights the importance of a twin focus on both task and process.

Task roles

- The COORDINATOR shows or clarifies the relationships among various ideas and suggestions, tries to pull ideas and suggestions together, or tries to coordinate the activities of various members of sub-groups.
- The ELABORATOR spells out suggestions in terms of examples or developed meanings, offers a rationale for suggestions previously made, and tries to deduce how an idea or

suggestion would work out if adopted primarily upon relevant facts or information.

- The ENERGIZER prods the group to action or decision, attempts to stimulate or arouse the group to “greater” or “higher quality” activity
- The INFORMATION GIVER offers facts or generalizations which are “authoritative” or relates his/her own experience pertinent to the group problem.
- The INFORMATION SEEKER asks for clarification of suggestions made in terms of their factual adequacy, for authoritative information and facts pertinent to the problem being discussed.
- The INITIATOR suggests or proposes to the group new ideas. S/he offers a novel point of view concerning problems, procedures, goals, or solutions.
- The OPINION GIVER states his/her belief pertinent to a suggestion made. The emphasis is on what s/he believes should be the group’s view of pertinent values, not primarily upon relevant facts or information
- The OPINION SEEKER asks primarily for clarification of values pertinent to

what the group is undertaking or values involved in various suggestions that have been made.

- The PROCEDURAL TECHNICIAN expedites group movement by doing things for the group, e.g. passing out materials or setting up chairs.
- The RECORDER writes down suggestions, makes a record of group decisions, or writes down the product of discussion. The recorder fills the role of “group memory.” (Context Institute 24)

Maintenance roles

- The COMPROMISER operates from within a conflict in which his/her idea or position is involved. S/he may offer compromise by yielding status, admitting his/her error, disciplining him/herself to maintain group harmony, or by “coming halfway” in moving along with the group.
- The ENCOURAGER praises, agrees with, and accepts the contribution of the others. S/he indicates warmth and solidarity in her/his attitude toward other group members, offers commendation and praise and in

various ways indicates understanding and acceptance of other points of view, ideas, and suggestions.

- The GATE-KEEPER expedites attempts to keep communication channels open by encouraging or facilitating the participation of others (“we haven’t gotten the ideas of Mr. X yet,” etc.) or by proposing regulation of the flow of communication (“why don’t we limit the length of our contributions so that everyone will have a chance to contribute?” etc.)
- The GROUP OBSERVER keeps records of various aspects of group process and feeds such data with proposed interpretations into the group’s evaluation of its own procedures.
- The HARMONIZER mediates the differences between other members, attempts to reconcile disagreements, relieves tension in conflict situations through good-hearted jokes, a soothing attitude, etc
- The REALITY TESTER subjects the accomplishment of the group to some standard or set of standards of group functioning in the context of the group task. Thus, s/he may evaluate or question the “practicality,” the “logic,”

the “facts,” or the “procedure” of the suggestion or of some unit of group discussion.

- The STANDARD SETTER expresses standards for the group. These standards apply to the quality of the group process, or set limits on acceptable individual behavior within the group.
- The SUMMARIZER defines the position of the group with respect to its goals by summarizing what has occurred, points to departures from agreed upon directions or goals, or raises questions about the direction which the group discussion is taking. (Context Institute 24)

Reflection:

How important are group maintenance roles? Check out the following TED talk: [Build a tower, build a team](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0_yKBitO8M) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0_yKBitO8M)

VII. Final Thoughts

Cascadia is committed to the concept of team-based learning. We express our commitment in the way we structure our classes and in our use of smaller group projects. Each of your instructors

will have their own way of applying the basic principles discussed in this reading. But we agree on the basic concept because research shows that it works. We hope, after reading this material and practicing some of the elements of successful learning teams, that you, too, will develop a deeper commitment to cooperative learning. A learning team is a tool that you can use anytime you want to learn something and will pay dividends outside your college life.

Reflection:

Consider [Colorado State article](https://writing.colostate.edu/guides/guide.cfm?guideid=42)'s great discussion of frequent fears about group work (<https://writing.colostate.edu/guides/guide.cfm?guideid=42>)

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3.

KEEPING UP AND KEEPING TRACK, WITH TIME MANAGEMENT

2021

Cascadia College COLL101 Team



Image by TaniaRose from Pixabay

Introduction

New college students are often very excited about having ownership of their own school time and about the prospect of so much unscheduled time between classes. This is especially true for students who are coming to college straight from high school or are attending college while still in high school. In high school, school time is often much more tightly structured from hour to hour with teachers often reminding or cajoling students of upcoming assignment due dates and projects (Wang et al. 2010). In contrast, school time in college is much freer and more flexible. Also, the responsibility for remembering assignment tasks and deadlines and for organizing one's days shifts solely to the student. What many new college students discover though is that they often lack the skills around how to manage their school time effectively, especially in light of the substantially

heavier workload and cognitively deeper demands of college coursework (van der Meer et al. 2010). This ineffective time management is often related to academic stress and is often met with self-blame (Misra and McKean 2000, van der Meer et al. 2010). Time management also seems to be related to school performance (Adams and Blair 2019).

Learning how to manage time as a college student has only fairly recently been addressed by most institutions of higher education in the U.S.; historically, becoming a college student has largely been assumed to be a rite of passage that everyone is expected to endure, often by muddling through, often with significant academic stress, in order to come out at the end of that time with the skills for how to study, organize time, and complete coursework. It is also a system that was initially designed for white, upper-class, male students. Thus, the organization of higher education and college life, the norms and practices, and the expectations, are often not familiar to many students. Although a few students may quickly recognize and learn college ways at little cost due to their family backgrounds or previous educational experiences, that is not often the case. For a great many new college students, and especially for first-generation college students, the acclimation to college and the way time is managed there is much more dramatic because college itself is a completely new setting to them, with new norms and practices (Gable 2021). Unfortunately, the transition can often be a costly one; for some, it may take numerous academic terms and possibly repeated coursework—costing hundreds to thousands of dollars—to get to the point where they are able to work within the

system, organize their own study time, and attain academic achievements that finally reflect their potential.

Fortunately, recent educational research on the college student experience (in part from higher education systems similar to that in the U.S.) has indicated that new students do benefit from early guidance on how to do college (van der Meer et al. 2010) and that they do want to be organized but often lack strategies for doing so (Adams and Blair 2019). Today, First Year Experience or College Strategies/College Success courses at U.S. universities and colleges are exceedingly common, guiding students towards the academic skills and habits needed for successful college study. In a way, these courses help students develop a college student mindset that includes cultivating the skills and habits for regular, independent, deep study and for managing one's study time, even in the absence of looming assignment deadlines (van der Meer et al. 2010).

This article supports the development of a college student mindset, specifically in regards to how to manage study time. The sections that follow outline common and less common time management challenges and offer practical suggestions and discussion starters for ways to meet the challenges. The goal is to help new students identify their own strategies to keep up and keep track of their college obligations and expectations.

Time management challenges and possible solutions

One way to learn about how to manage one's college time is to first identify the ways in which one's own time management is challenged and then to brainstorm ideas to address those. Certainly, there are many time management issues that are commonly experienced for which there might be some common, if not universal, solutions. At the same time, college students, like anyone really, also have unique struggles due to unique personalities, identities, abilities, and lived experiences. Additionally, diverse ethnic, linguistic, racial, and class backgrounds play a strong role in who we are and how we navigate situations. These may be hard to address with universal solutions because the strategies may need to be highly personalized, may require specialized professional expertise, or may relate to intractable societal or systemic issues about which society as a whole continues to struggle. For example, it may be that the time expectations of the current system of higher education are what need to adapt or change, to be more inclusive and responsive to the wider range of experiences and needs (see van der Meer et al. 2010 for a brief discussion of this).

To the extent that they can, many College Success/College Strategies and First Year Experience curricula do acknowledge that institutions could do more to change, yet most courses themselves focus on helping new college students face the most common time management issues that they face now in the given institutional context. That is the approach for this article as well: what are the main

kinds of challenges college students face in the current collegiate environment, and what are some practical and commonly- applicable solutions that many students can adapt. (Again, this is not to ignore more systemic issues that need addressing.) The sections below consider three common ways that college students' time management may be challenged, with suggestions for how to address those.

Personal mindset issues

Research has shown us that our personal mindsets can hamper or enhance our educational and other outcomes (see Dweck 2016). Personal mindsets may also be related to college, and to college time management, because our psychological make-up can influence how we see and feel about our college experience and time, and how we approach these. This is similar to how we can think about water glasses as half full or half empty (see van der Meer et al. 2010). Are we generally optimistic about what we can accomplish in college, and how we relate to time in college, and our capacity to use and organize that time? Or, do we see college and time in college as always being out of our control, or as full, or unchangeable? Consider the following questions:

- When faced with school tasks, are you confident that you can assess what needs to be done and make appropriate plans?
- Do you make learning goals for yourself, plans for enacting them, and adjust them as necessary?

- Does new information spur you to rearrange your plans?
- Do you see failures and successes in school as learning experiences?
- Do you prioritize study time?
- Are you able to work on school tasks with other students in ways that benefit everyone?
- Do you have the ability to decide when you have done enough, or your work is good enough?
- Are you able to limit your screen time, taking time to be alone with your own thoughts or to be engaged fully in tasks without multitasking?

Mindset time management suggestions

If you answered ‘no’ to some of these questions, you may be making it harder on yourself to succeed in managing your time and college studies effectively because you may not feel like you are able to effectively organize your time or take control of your time. Maybe you feel it is futile to change how you relate to time, in the face of exhausting daily experiences you may be facing, or fears, or other factors that may be reinforcing a negative mindset. Maybe you career from situation to situation letting these control your time, rather than stopping to think deeply about how to adjust your reactions to the situations. You might fear or resist the hard personal work it might take to shift into a mindset that supports college-positive study habits and time management. To that end, highly personalized solutions to time management that are related to mindset or psychological issues are beyond the

scope of most College Success/College Strategies or First Year Experience courses. A possible first step you can make on your own is simply to become self-aware of mindset challenges you pose to yourself. Then, secondly, to engage in self-reflection about how you might adjust your approach.

Suggestion:

You might seriously consider looking at Dweck's very insightful and useful book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (2016), available at most college libraries or for purchase at booksellers. The research on mindset is powerful and actionable.

Suggestion:

You may also find other resources at your college to guide you in your self-reflections or in pursuit of a growth mindset: campus learning center, academic advising, counseling services, campus library. Your instructor may also be able to direct you to other appropriate campus resources.

Logistical issues

Logistical issues are the practical ones that we face each day, and some of these are commonly experienced by many college students. Consider the questions below.

- Do you use a calendar or planner for your school tasks (homework, reading, class time)?

- Do your school tasks have set times on your calendar or planner that are realistic, logical, and ample enough?
- Do you have reminders for what you should be doing during your school task times? Have you broken up your tasks, especially for complex school tasks?
- Have you set aside free time? Have you set aside time to do regular planning each week?
- Do you have physical spaces in which to do your work, and the tools to do it?

Logistical time management suggestions

If, as a college student, you answer ‘no’ to more than one logistical question, look at the ideas that follow for how you might concretely solve some of the most common logistical issues related to managing college time.

Do you use a calendar or planner for your school tasks (homework, reading, class time)?

Suggestion:

If no, create a weekly schedule that lists both your face-to-face or synchronous class time as well as study time outside of this. This will help you see how your life as a college student is represented each week. You can use a weekly planner that you purchase, or a piece of paper, or a digital page to sketch out your schedule. It’s likely the schedule will shift slightly from week to week, but aim for routine over the course of the quarter. You can re-

draw the calendar each week, or use a single one for the week and then adjust it daily. (The next section offers some thoughts about how to allot time more accurately.)

Additionally, consider duplicating your efforts on a daily planner and a monthly calendar, so you can see both the big picture of your academic quarter and your detailed daily schedule. This will make your life as a student much clearer and you will know what you should be doing at a given time.

Suggestion:

Add assignment deadlines for each class to a monthly calendar so you see the full month or most of the quarter at a glance. This way you will not be caught at the end of the quarter with a major Computer programming project you didn't plan for. (These deadlines are usually found on the course syllabus and/or learning management system. Ask your classmates and/or instructor if you are not seeing them.)

Do your school tasks have set times on your calendar or planner that are realistic, logical, and ample enough?

Suggestion:

Instructors will often offer an estimate of how much time you should expect to spend studying or doing classwork. (See the course syllabus. If you cannot locate this information, consider asking your instructor during their office hours.) The general rule of thumb is that you will spend up to three times the amount of credit hours the course is listed at. For example, a 5-credit hour course

in a quarter system will entail upward from 15 hours a week of your time. (The expectations for a 3-credit course in a semester system will be calculated similarly.) Some of the expected time (out of the 15 hours or more for a 5-credit course, say) will be time spent attending class face-to-face or in a synchronous remote session. So, it may be that out of the 15 or so hours you should expect to spend on the course, 5 of it will be taken up by face-to-face time and/or say, work time in the Biology lab. That leaves at least 10 hours of time that is expected to be used in independent study of your subject: reading, working out problems, working in small groups, writing up assignments, submitting assignments. These are estimates, of course, and sometimes you may need more or less time for different kinds of academic activities.

Suggestion:

Make sure you are strategic about your weekly schedule, saving your freshest times each day for your hardest brainwork, while more mundane work might come at times when you are more tired, have less capacity for deep work. In this way, you are accommodating some of the external challenges you might face, like time spent at your job that may affect your school time. (Such external challenges—employment—are discussed in the next section.) If you are a morning person and are able to do some writing for your English class first thing in the morning, maybe schedule an hour to do so in the morning. If you have an exhausting work shift that ends at 11 pm, maybe don't plan to read 300 pages of a really dense textbook (unless your goal is to fall asleep really quickly!).

Suggestion:

You'll also want to account for so-called optional or extra study opportunities. Students are often unsure of what faculty mean when they offer additional, 'extra,' optional study opportunities (van der Meer et al. 2010). Is the video suggested by your Math instructor really optional? What students often do not realize is that while these are optional, they are being recommended as enhancements to learning, and probably are worth doing. The importance of exploring or embarking on them is often left to the students to determine, but if you don't add them to your calendar, you won't remember to engage or participate in them!

Have you set aside free time? Have you set aside time to do regular planning each week?

Suggestion:

Schedule your truly free time or uncommitted time into your weekly schedule, just as you do your study and class time. This way you know you have some downtime away from schoolwork, and it may even make the free time feel more rewarding if it is preserved. You might even consider setting goals for it to make it feel truly fulfilling (Wang et al. 2010), even if those goals are simply 'to veg out' or 'do nothing' or 'snapchat with best friend.'

Suggestion:

In regard to regular planning time, commit to reviewing your weekly planner or schedule a few times a week, but

especially at the start of your week (whether that is Saturday, Sunday, or Monday for you). This will help prepare you for what's coming up that week, and you can check in throughout the week so that you prepare thoroughly for say, the Art critique or Communication speech that is due by the end of the week. This helps you avoid being caught unaware by assignment deadlines. Similarly, you may want to glance at your monthly calendar during your planning time, or maybe this can be taped to a wall or a notebook.

Do you have physical spaces in which to do your work, and the tools to do it?

Suggestion:

To help you keep to your time schedule, you'll want to support your learning with an actual space or spaces to go to for studying. If you are able, organize a space for your studying at home that will be where you 'go' to do your college work. This space might be where you keep all of your learning materials when at home, where you charge up your devices, and where you are able to sit to do your work. Or, you might choose different kinds of physical spaces for different times, such as spaces outside the home when available (campus library study carrels, a coffee shop nook, a study area on campus or at a local library). Planning out where you do your studying can help you focus more quickly, saving you time.

Suggestion:

For tools, you may want to review if you have the essential

physical tools and try to keep those together in your physical space or in a bag that you carry with you: your computing device (laptop, tablet, phone), chargers, headphones/ear buds, paper notebook, pen/pencil, school books or articles (Ex: Physics lab materials), and daily/weekly/monthly planner. Having these items in one place or together will also save you time as you settle in to study. Some colleges provide some of these items on loan or as student freebies. You can ask about them on campus at the Information desk or at Student Life.

Do you have reminders for what you should be doing during your school task times? Have you broken up your tasks, especially for complex school tasks?

Students don't often recognize how to study all quarter long for the mysterious final exam that awaits them in some classes, or how to prepare for the final projects/papers they will submit. Knowing there is a lot of work to do '...[does] not necessarily translate into knowing how to approach the study load." (van der Meer et al. 2010, p. 784), and most students do not recognize that studying towards exams is something they should be doing throughout the academic term (van der Meer et al. 2010).

Suggestion:

Carefully read or re-read the assignment instructions or listen to them if recorded by your instructor. Jot down or mark where you need clarification. See if your instructor has a question-and-answer forum online and pose your questions there, talk to classmates about your questions, ask your instructor's via email or attend their office hours.

Suggestion:

Break down big assignments and projects into smaller tasks. Same thing as above: first, make sure the final assignment due date is noted on your planner(s). Then, take the assignment handout or page and identify the tasks you need to accomplish for your project, whether in Chemistry or COLL101 or any class. Your instructor might have helped you with this by assigning due dates for parts of the assignment. You can use this to help you plan your work.

Suggestion:

Prepare for final exams all quarter long. First, have the exam date noted on your weekly planner, but especially on some kind of monthly schedule so you see when it is coming up. Then, aim to create daily artifacts of your studying: if you read a History chapter or viewed an Accounting video lecture, practice ‘retrieval techniques’ to summarize on a page what the main points were. Then, go back to the reading or lecture to fill in the gaps that you couldn’t remember. Label and save this artifact in a way that will help you find it to study from later.

Suggestion:

If you discover that you simply cannot fit everything into a week’s worth of time, maybe your course load is too heavy, especially if you have issues truly beyond your control (see the next section). Realize that college work is often quite heavy and it’s not unusual to feel like you cannot possibly do everything as carefully as you’d like. Furthermore,

there may be times when you have been over-ambitious with your course load. If you think that might be the case, it might be wise to speak to an academic advisor about which class(es) to drop so that you don't find that a dropped course will not be offered for several quarters.

External issues

External issues that influence our time management are those over which students have less control and which may be related to unique personal situations, cultural backgrounds, or social positions. External issues may not all be solvable, but recognizing them for what they are may give clarity about how to accommodate them. These external issues vary among students, and may also even vary in a single student's life. Consider the following questions:

- Do you suffer from a health or (dis)ability issue that affects your energy or time?
- Are you preoccupied by a personal or family life transition (in addition to your transition to college)?
- Is your regular environment one in which you are frequently interrupted, or you lack privacy?
- Is your time for school further constrained by employment or family responsibilities?
- Is your approach to time different from that of the system of higher education in our society, possibly because of cultural, family, or other

personal experiences where time is organized differently?

Possible solutions

If you answered ‘yes’ to any of these questions, the solutions will likely be in the form of accommodations that you will need to make in terms of how you approach your college career, or even in how you address the logistical issues above. In some cases, you may need to consult with professionals to help you, either from available campus resources, or from outside of the educational setting.

For example:

If you suffer from health-related issues that affect your time management, you may want to consult with a medical doctor, mental health counselor, occupational therapist, or any other appropriate professional about ways to manage your school time. After doing so, it may be appropriate to look into academic accommodations through the college’s disability support services.

For example:

If you have demanding family or employment responsibilities or find yourself distracted by an additional life transition, you may need to adjust or reduce your course load and study times. An academic advisor could help you strategize here about which classes would be ideal for you given the time constraints you currently have, and which classes you could postpone until later. If

it's too late to make class load changes, you may want to discuss with your professor some possible adjustments to particular coursework. If you can come up with some concrete ideas or requests ahead of time, this may help your instructor help you.

For example:

If you want to better understand how time management works in the U.S. system of higher education because it doesn't reflect your own experiences with time, consider talking with classmates to understand how they are organizing themselves. Also consider engaging in time management sessions at your college's learning center, or talk to your professors.

Conclusion

New students often discover that the free time they now have is in fact not that free. Instead, it is time that does need to be managed if the goal is to succeed in college without excessive academic stress. This article suggests you think about personal mindset, logistical issues, and external issues as you consider appropriate ways to manage your time. Clearly, the easiest and most common time management solutions for college students are those around scheduling, planning one's time and space, and engaging in the daily work of keeping up and keeping track of the expectations in one's courses. Other time management issues may be more intractable, requiring guidance from professionals inside or outside the college. In the big picture, having autonomy over how to spend one's time in college is a perk of college life. Learning to

manage that time in ways that benefit your college studies is also a perk, one that carries over to life after college.

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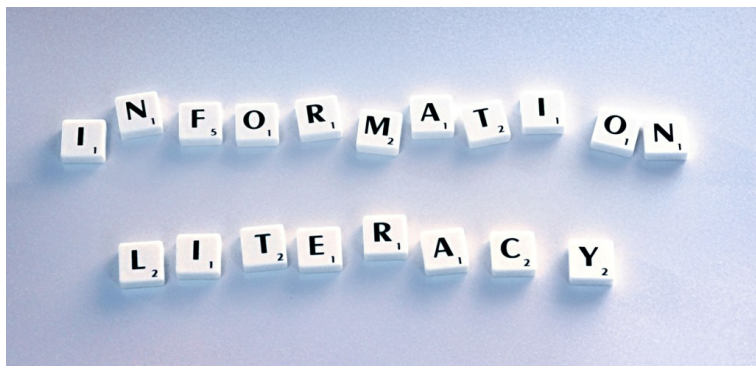
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4.

DEVELOPING INFORMATION LITERACY

Cascadia College COLL101 and Campus Library Team



Information literacy by Ewa Rozkosz licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

Developing information literacy is an important part of a college education because it is a way in which to become

an informed member of society and global citizen. The Association of College and Research Libraries defines information literacy as “...the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning.” (2016, p. 12)

The process of developing such literacy may start with becoming acquainted with your Campus Library’s resources and thinking about what you need to do research on, but it quickly becomes much deeper than that. Information literacy is about understanding what kinds of knowledge matter for different disciplines and topics, critically identifying and evaluating appropriate sources and information, and practicing search strategies to locate and access the many different kinds of library resources.

In COLL101, students begin the process of developing information literacy in order to do some basic research. The expectation is that students will continue to develop their information literacy over time, in subsequent courses, after college, and over their lifetimes. Information literacy is something that many will use in their careers, as surveys of graduated college students have suggested (i.e. Fraillon et al., 2020; Travis, 2011). And, as with other literacies, information literacy is a lifelong skill that improves with practice.

This article contains the following sections that will offer information about developing information literacy and opportunities for reflection about the process:

- Part 1 Campus Library Introduction
 - Part 2 Critical Internet Searching
 - Part 3 Introduction to Campus Library Resources
 - Conclusion
 - References
-

Part 1: Campus Library Introduction



Campus library reading room from Cascadia College website

On the University of Washington Bothell and Cascadia College campus, students begin their learning about information literacy at the Campus Library. The Library is part of the University of Washington Libraries system, which operates as [one library serving three campuses](#)

and is recognized for the exceptional quality of its staff, services and collections. Library staff are leaders in user-centered services, assessment, collaboration, online learning, and innovative pedagogies.

The UW Bothell/Cascadia College Campus Library specific mission is stated below:

The Campus Library supports and enhances teaching, learning, and research at the University of Washington Bothell and Cascadia College. As part of the University of Washington Libraries we acquire and manage material and virtual resources, and promote the creation and use of knowledge in an atmosphere where information and ideas are readily accessible and freely exchanged. (UW Libraries)

Library Services

Thus, like other university libraries, the Campus Library is an active and engaged partner in the creation, dissemination, transformation, preservation, and exchange of new and existing knowledge and scholarship. There are over 9 million volumes available in the library system! These will be very useful to you as a student, in your learning and research. In addition, you might also like to know that the Campus Library is a learning space that recognizes and promotes diversity and where UW Bothell and Cascadia students can read, explore, research, create and collaborate. The library offers a 24/7 Chat with a Librarian service to support your work, as well as computing and printing services, and plenty of study space including private study rooms. As such, students

can expect their Campus Library to foster the critical inquiry, information literacy, and research abilities necessary for academic success, and cultivate the lifelong learning skills that students need to be engaged and information-fluent global citizens. (UW Libraries).

Keep in mind that to access most library services and resources, you'll need to have your UW NetID and password set up. With your UW NetID and password, you'll be able to access all the library databases, read ebooks and electronic articles online, and reserve physical items to checkout. To learn how to set up your UW NetID and create a password, visit the Campus Library's webpage: [Using your credentials: UW NetID and Cascadia Network Account](#).

Library Sources Along the Information Spectrum

Now, back to those 9 million volumes! You can think about the Campus Library's resources as sources of information that fall along the lines of an information spectrum. The information spectrum chart provides a helpful way to identify and evaluate the sources and information you will use for research. Below, the Information Spectrum Chart lists various kinds of information sources and the various places we can find these information sources. Notice that the information sources listed on the left of the dotted line are all found on the Internet and are produced very quickly. Whereas information listed on the right of the dotted line is found in electronic and print formats, and includes scholarly

information which cannot always be found freely on the Internet, but can be found in the library.

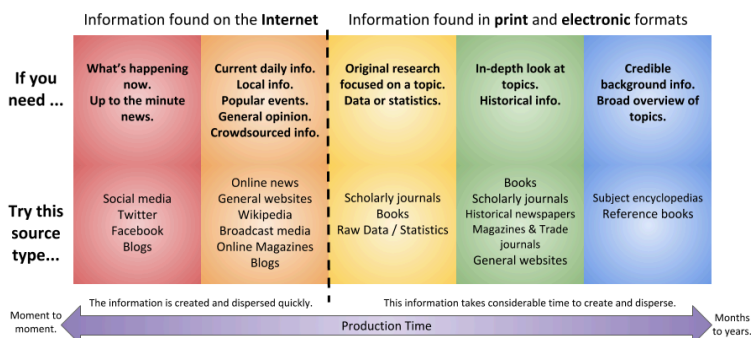


Figure 1: Information Spectrum Chart by Myra Waddell and Caitlan Maxwell. Licensed under CC BY-NC

The spectrum helps answer the following questions:

- Where does information come from and what are its unique characteristics? Information found on CNN news is different from The Economist magazine or a book about economics from the library. Why? Because information changes depending on the purpose of the source and as a topic, event or cultural phenomenon develops. One source type is not necessarily better than another; they are all different. You can account for those differences in your research.
- How long does it take to create and share information? Sometimes only seconds, like Twitter posts. Other sources, like subject encyclopedias, can take years to publish. The speed at which information is produced and the

reasons why some sources are distributed faster (or slower) than others, helps define a source's context and purpose.

Before you start research, a good question to ask yourself is: What kind of information do I need? Your class assignment requirements, the subject you are researching, and where you are in the research process should inform your choice of information. Use the Information Spectrum chart to help identify your research need and the types of information sources that correspond with the research need.

Part 2: Critical Internet Searching

As we develop our information literacy skills, we must think critically about Internet searching and the types of information resources we can find freely on the Internet.

What kinds of information can be found on the Internet? Consider the Information Spectrum Chart. The information sources listed on the left of the dotted line are all found on the Internet. This includes information sources such as Wikipedia, online news and broadcast media, online magazines, all websites, social media, and blogs. All this information is produced quickly, sometimes daily, hourly, or even second to second.

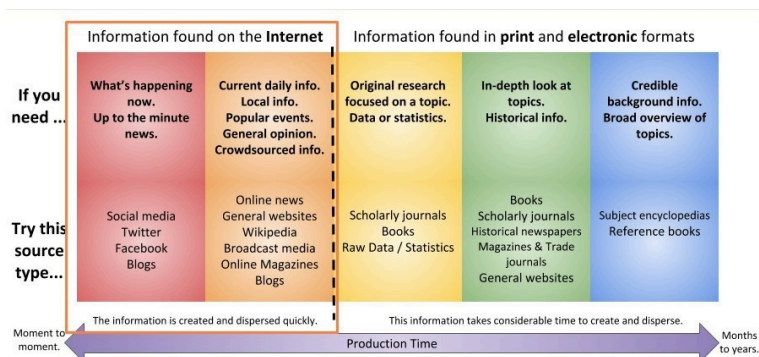


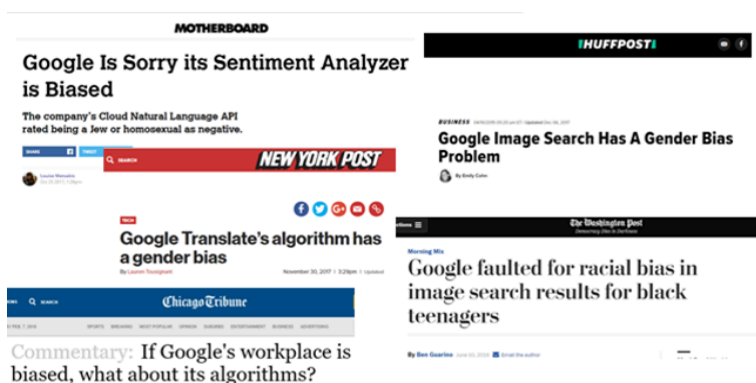
Figure 1: Information Spectrum Chart by Myra Waddell and Caitlan Maxwell. Licensed under CC BY-NC

Many of us tend to use the Internet, or more precisely, Internet search engines such as Google to find the information we need, whether for personal and/or academic purposes. Google is just one example of a popular search engine run by the company Alphabet Inc. Google averages about 3.5 billion searches a day and 1.3 trillion searches a year worldwide (Internet Live Stats.org).

Search Engines, Algorithms, and Bias

Since many people use Google (especially in the United States) on a daily basis to find the information they need quickly, it is important to think critically about how Google actually works. How does the Google search engine come up with the search results for a particular search? How are these search results set up? What information might be left out of a search results list?

Search results are governed by algorithms, which are sets of instructions written by human programmers that tell a computer what to do. Search engines like Google, as well as social media platforms (such as TikTok and Instagram), can use algorithms to react to our search histories and preferences, presenting us with “personalized” content that the algorithms predict is most likely to meet our needs or interests.



Research has shown that the search results from search engine algorithms also reflect or amplify biases, including gender, racial, political, and others. Professor Safiya Umoja Noble has written a book called *Algorithms of Oppression* (2018) that studies how search results based on algorithms can perpetuate bias. Dr. Noble's ongoing research about how search results based on algorithms can perpetuate racism and sexism is described in the video [Safiya Noble | Changing the Algorithms of Oppression](#) (2016). While Dr. Noble's description of her research in this video took place several years ago, her research is ongoing. Today, if you replicate the searches she describes in the video, you will not get results exactly

like hers. However, to this day, search results from search engines continue to reflect or amplify biases.



(If you'd like to hear more about the research behind Algorithms of Oppression, watch this presentation from the Personal Democracy Forum 2016.)

Check Other Sources

Now that we have a better understanding of how bias can be present in search engine algorithms, we can begin to think about how to work against these biases by building critical evaluation skills. Chances are you will come across information on the Internet and you will not know how reliable or trustworthy it is. To help determine how true and dependable the information is, try verifying the information with other sources. There are multiple ways to verify information including:

- Searching for information on the author of the source.
- Searching for other sources and checking that they are providing the same or similar information.
- Checking to see what else the source or publication has published.

In the video [Skill: Check Other Sources](#) (2020), research scientist Mike Caulfield explains one approach to verifying sources found on the Internet. Watch the video to learn how to use this easy skill anytime you need to check information on the web. If you would like to learn more about sorting truth from fiction, read about Caulfield's [SIFT method](#) (2019). SIFT stands for:

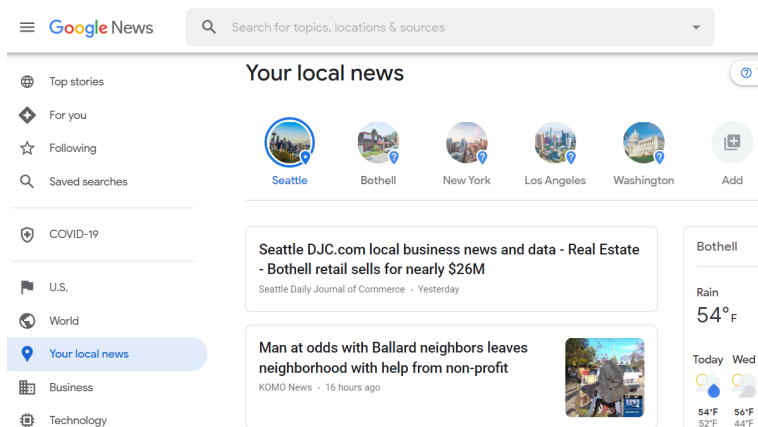
- S – Stop
- I – Investigate the source
- F – Find better coverage
- T – Trace claims, quotes and media to the original text

Online News Articles

News articles are a popular source of information that can also be found using Internet search engines. (Sometimes such articles pop up on our social media newsfeeds too.)

How do we specifically search for news articles? The Google platform provides a few different specialized

search engines, such as [Google News](#), an aggregation service that collects articles from news websites and newspapers all over the world. It's a useful source for finding reports and stories covering the same topic from varying perspectives. You can use Google News to start looking for some current stories and reports on your research topics.



As mentioned above in “Check Other Sources”, there’s a good chance you’ll come across information on the Internet and not know how reliable or trustworthy it is. This includes the trustworthiness of news articles. Often news articles are written by skilled journalists and reporters, though sometimes news reporting can be questionable. In reality, fake news, disinformation, and misinformation exist in the information landscape. It is our job as students, researchers, and information consumers to be vigilant about detecting misinformation and opting for the highest quality news sources available.

How can we identify fake news, misinformation, and disinformation? How can we determine if a news source (or any information source) is trustworthy and reliable? For starters, we can use the skills we learned above in “Check Other Sources.” In addition, the Campus Library has helpful online guides students can use to practice evaluating information:

- [News: Fake News, Misinformation & Disinformation](#) In this guide, students learn about the differences between fake news, misinformation, and disinformation. As well as discover online tools and tips for detecting fake news.

- [Evaluating Sources: How do I tell if this is a good source?](#) Whether students desire to evaluate a journal article, website, news source, blog post, book chapter, or any other source of information, this guide outlines strategies to evaluate information quality and determine if information is appropriate for academic use.

The process of learning how to evaluate information may feel overwhelming and complicated at first. The more you practice, the easier it becomes. With practice you will strengthen your information literacy skills and become a more informed and skilled information consumer.

Wikipedia

Wikipedia is a free and very popular tool for finding background information that is used by millions of people every day. When searching in Google, links to Wikipedia pages often appear at the very top, or close to the top, of the search results list. By allowing Wikipedia to usually appear near the top of the results list, Google is anticipating its users to use Wikipedia for their information needs. When using Wikipedia for research, we must keep these three things in mind:

1. Wikipedia is written by members of the public. Sometimes, the authors are experts, though it is not always easy to find out who the authors are or what their expertise is. Often, the authors are not experts at all. Anyone, including you, can create an account with Wikipedia and edit the content on any Wikipedia page anytime you

want. Since the content on a Wikipedia page can be edited by anyone at any moment, the content is typically not considered reliable.

2. Many Wikipedia pages include citations at the bottom, which can sometimes help you locate more authoritative sources of information. However, not every citation in Wikipedia is factual or trustworthy.
3. Wikipedia is a great tool to help you start learning more about a topic, discover related topics, or to direct you to other resources. However, it should not be your most significant source of information, and it should not be cited in academic papers or included in your bibliography.

As you progress through your academic career, you will get better at identifying appropriate and inappropriate sources of information for different purposes. This is a part of becoming information literate.

Opportunity for reflection:

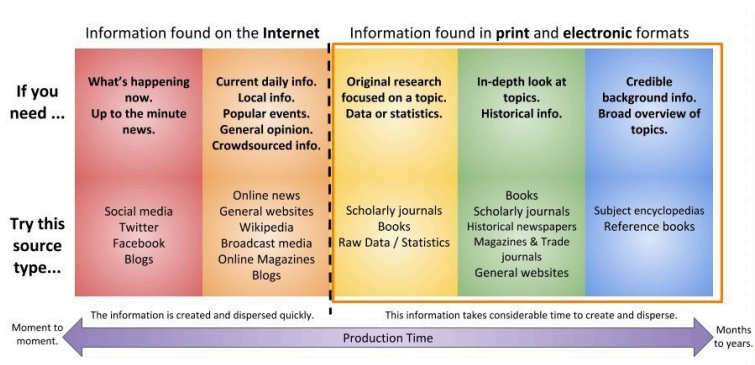
- Now that you've learned that researchers, like Dr. Noble, are surfacing aspects of bias in internet search algorithms, reflect on a time when your searches returned content that you were not expecting and how that felt for you.
 - What is one company, product, or site that you use to get information online? How do you decide whether to trust what you find there?
-

Part 3: Introduction to Campus Library Resources

The Campus Library has many resources available to Cascadia and UW Bothell students. This section will introduce you to several resources that you can use throughout your academic career.

While Internet search tools like Google, Google News, and Wikipedia can be used to get very current news or crowdsourced information, you will often need credible information from qualified sources or an overview of topics for research. Especially if you are not very familiar with the subject you are researching or have not decided which aspect of the subject you want to focus on.

Information search tools housed within library websites –also known as library databases–are especially good choices for finding background information on research topics because they are generally trusted, academically-curated collections of information. Library databases can be used to find subject encyclopedia articles and reference books, and they can also lead you to scholarly journal articles and popular books. These are the kinds of sources you would find on the right side of the Information Spectrum. They tend to be produced by qualified sources, say, by experts in the fields, and they offer information that is consistent with other information. Information resources like books and encyclopedias dive deeper into topics and take a long time to produce, sometimes months or up to years.



Using Keywords to Search for Topics in the Library Databases

Searching in the Library's databases or within subject encyclopedias is a little different than searching Google or Wikipedia, but it does require something a little like identifying hashtags that lead you to social media posts on certain topics. Since most library databases can't understand the natural language we'd use while speaking or writing (e.g. full, complex sentences), you need to brainstorm keywords related to your topics. These are like database 'hashtags'. Brainstorming a list of keywords will help you search library databases more efficiently and effectively. If one keyword isn't finding relevant results, try another; finding the right keywords can unlock a whole world of information.

Library database keywords can be synonyms, broader or narrower terms, and related terms, but they might also be phrases, names or places. For example:

tent cities

While using the key phrase ‘tent cities’ will probably give some results in the library database, it’s a pretty broad topic. We will get better and more useful results by being more specific. Being more specific means brainstorming a lot of keywords or phrases related to the topic. You might ask yourself some of the big questions around your topic: who, what, where, when, how.

For example, think about who is creating and using tent city spaces, and who is not. Think about what these spaces are and what they mean for the people living there. Think about where they are being built, when they were or are being built, and how they are being built. Think about how these spaces are being treated and talked about by media, lawmakers and citizens who are both insiders and outsiders to the culture of tent cities.

As you think in these terms, pull out the main words or phrases that come up for you when you think of ‘tent cities’. For example:

- Who: homeless, protestors
- What: housing, movement
- Where: legislation, treatment

Using ‘tent cities’ plus the additional keywords above, in combination with each other, creates search strategies that work very well in library databases.

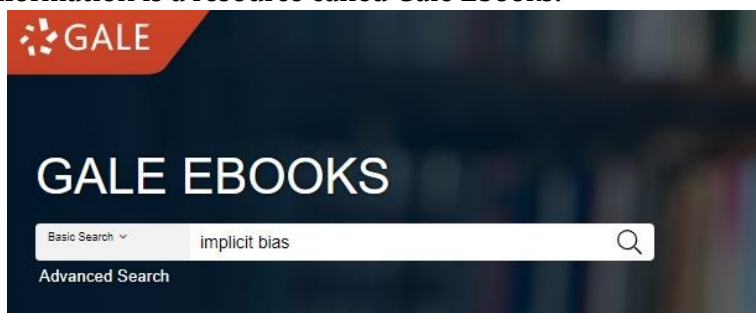
Opportunity for Reflection:

What might be some possible keywords for a research topic of yours?

Academic Encyclopedias: Gale Ebooks

When you begin researching a topic, you'll want to start with finding background information. This is especially important if you are not very familiar with the subject you are researching or if you have not decided which aspect of a topic to focus on.


One library database you will encounter in the Campus Library that is a fantastic option for finding background information is a resource called Gale Ebooks.



Similar to how you might use Wikipedia to search for basic information, Gale Ebooks can be used to find background information on topics because it is a collection of online academic encyclopedias and other reference sources, including introductory resources for most subject areas. The developers of the articles in Gale Ebooks have expertise in the topics they write about. Each

article includes citations and references that are attached to the information so that one can do deeper research and assess the reliability of the source, which is an important quality in academic research. Gale Ebooks is an excellent resource for academic research and can be cited in class assignments.

Gale Ebooks is available to library users through a subscription that the library has purchased. Access to academic encyclopedia databases like Gale Ebooks are a privilege to college students and other users of academic libraries. Keep in mind that Gale Ebooks is just one encyclopedic resource available through the Campus Library. Students can access a list of available encyclopedias, including Gale Ebooks on the [Encyclopedias & Dictionaries](#) page of the Campus Library Website.



CAMPUS LIBRARY
UW BOTHELL and CASCADIA COLLEGE

Research Services About the Library Equity and Diversity

Home
Reference Tools By Subject


Library Guides / Bothell / Encyclopedias & Dictionaries / Home

Encyclopedias & Dictionaries: Home

Encyclopedias

Gale Ebooks  

- Full text encyclopedias in all subject areas. (Tutorial: [How do I Search in Gale eBooks?](#) 2:19 mins.)

Oxford Reference Online  

Full text dictionaries, encyclopedias, and subject reference works from Oxford University Press.

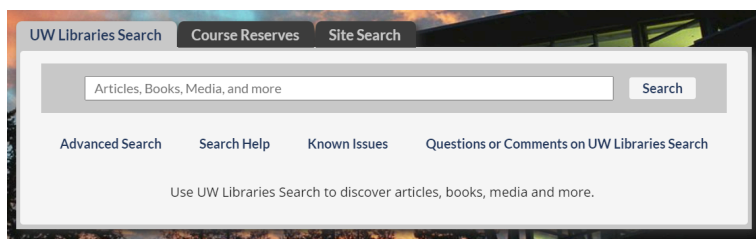
What are Reference Sources?

"Reference sources are authoritative works that help you locate information about people, facts, and ideas. These sources can help you find the date of an important event, major achievements of an individual or organization, or a definition of a term or concept. These books are often used to find specific facts,

UW Libraries Search: Finding Print Books and Ebooks

In addition to individual encyclopedia databases, UW Libraries has one primary database, called UW Libraries Search that can be used to find all sorts of information, including print books and electronic books (ebooks) available through the UW Libraries. Like online encyclopedia collections such as Gale Ebooks, general reference books can provide background information and broad overviews of a topic or event, as well as provide more in-depth coverage and analysis. It isn't always necessary to read an entire book; often you'll find that a chapter or two will be most relevant.

Locating the UW Libraries Search box is easy! You can find the search box on the Campus Library [homepage](#).

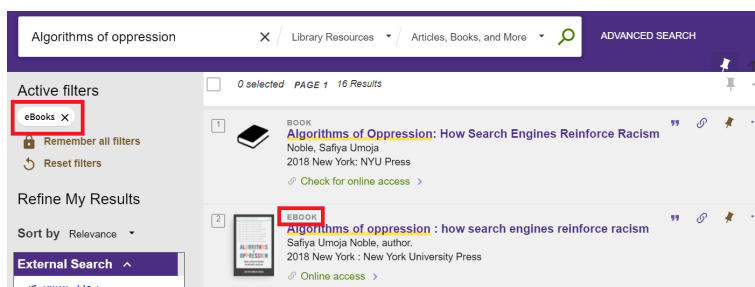


Ebooks in UW Libraries Search

Let's take a moment to focus on searching for ebooks. An ebook is a book that is accessible electronically. Meaning, the book's contents (the text and images) can be read

online. A large percentage of the books available through UW Libraries are available in the ebook format and therefore accessible whenever you work online.

When using UW Libraries Search, students can adjust their search results by limiting to ebooks, which instructs UW Libraries Search to show ebooks in the search results list. Students will be able to recognize ebooks in the search results list by the “EBOOK” indicator above the book title. In the screenshot below, notice that UW Libraries has both print and electronic copies of Dr. Noble’s *Algorithms of Oppression*. Also notice that the ebooks filter has been selected and above each title on the list, BOOK or EBOOK is indicated.



To read an ebook, you will first need to be logged in with your UW NetID and password. Then, select the ebook you wish to read by clicking on the title. This will lead you to a page with instructions on where to view the ebook. Here are helpful tips to keep in mind when using ebooks:

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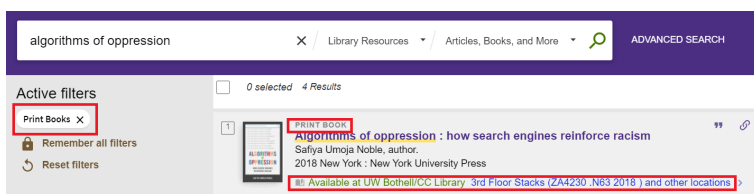
read an ebook at the same time. Some ebooks can be read by multiple people at once, while others can only be accessed by one person at a time. Sometimes students will try to access an ebook but receive a message indicating the ebook is in use. When this happens, the student should try accessing the ebook again later on.

- Sections of ebooks, such as individual chapters, can be downloaded and printed. At times, it is preferable to read content in print. An entire ebook cannot be printed; however, students can choose specific chapters or subsections of text to print. Students should look for a printer icon near the top of the ebook interface; here is where instructions on printing can be found.

Print Books in UW Libraries Search

Cascadia Students have access to thousands of print books at the Campus Library, as well as access to all the hundreds of thousands of print materials at the UW Libraries in Seattle and Tacoma. Students can place holds on books at Seattle or Tacoma and UW Libraries will transport them to the Bothell campus for free, where they can pick them up at the Campus Library.

Similarly to how UW Libraries Search is used to find ebooks, a search can be configured to show only “print books.” Records for print books will indicate which UW library the book is located at (Bothell, Tacoma, or a branch of the UW Libraries in Seattle).

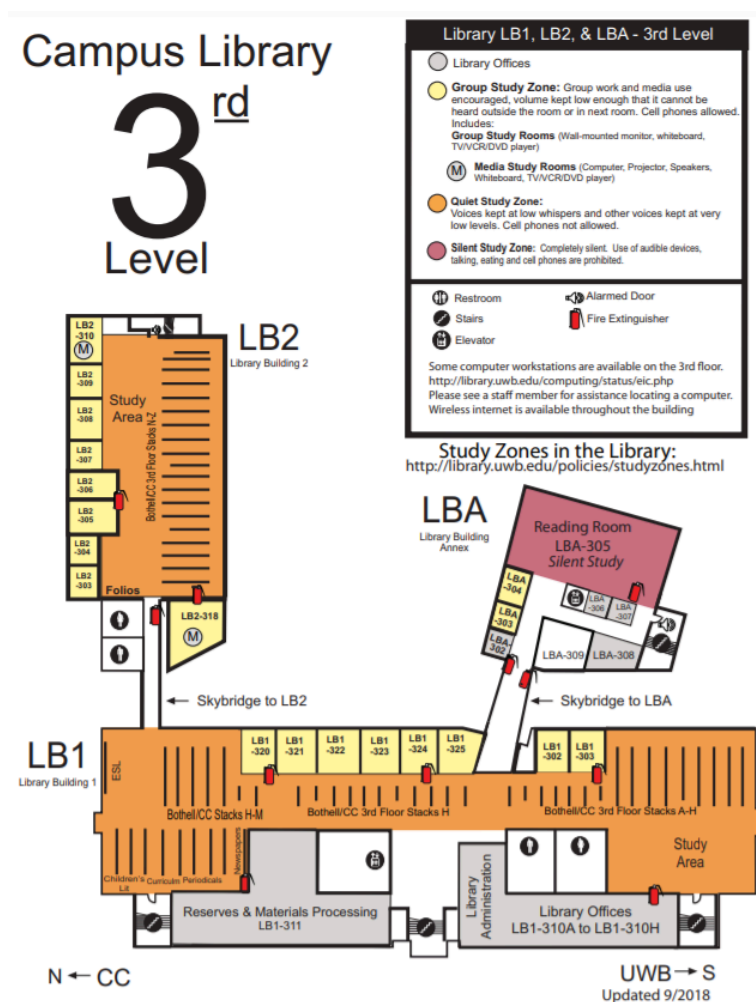


Physical books are assigned a call number, which is a code that organizes books by subject and indicates where the book is located in the library. Call numbers were established by the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.



You will most likely be able to locate a print book at the Campus Library within the third floor “stacks”. Though some books are also shelved on the first floor. The stacks are arranged alpha-numerically using the Library of Congress call number system. Library maps are available

to help users locate sections within the stacks. This map of the third floor shows where the stacks begin at A and end at Z:



A map of the [entire Campus Library](#) can be downloaded as a PDF.

While in the stacks, you might explore or ‘browse’ the area around your chosen book because other books on the related subjects will appear near each other in the stacks.

Physically going into the library’s stacks, tracking down print books on the shelves, and exploring how they are organized, may be different from what you’ve experienced in libraries before. Going into the Campus Library though is a quintessential college student experience. You might even discover a quiet study carrel, the beautiful reading room, or a study room you can use.

Checking Out Books and Your Library Account

If you would like to check out physical materials from the Campus Library, such as books or video games, you will need to activate your library card (which is also your CC student ID card). Cascadia students can get their student ID card at the Bock Learning Center. Once students have their ID card, they can bring it to the Campus Library where library staff will activate the card at the front desk.

Opportunity for Reflection:

If you were going to teach a fellow Cascadia student one thing about the Campus Library, what would it be?

Conclusion

Throughout this article on Developing Information

Literacy, students were introduced to Campus Library services and resources, and to basic research skills that can be used to achieve information literacy. A few learning outcomes from this chapter include:

- Consulting with the Information Spectrum Chart to help determine what types of information sources can be used to meet specific information needs.
- Developing critical internet searching skills when searching for information on the free Internet. Critical internet searching includes understanding how algorithm biases affect search results and critically evaluating the credibility of sources found on the web.
- Using Campus Library resources for finding background information in academic encyclopedias, and for finding print books and ebooks in UW Libraries Search.

Don't forget that the library is supported by people—by its users, and by the librarians and library staff who help them. Librarians are available as resources to you. They can answer quick reference questions and are also available by appointment for individual or group research consultations. Students can connect with a librarian through the Campus Library's 24/7 chat service, by emailing questions to the Library's e-reference service, or by reaching out to individual librarians. More information

about how to contact the library can be found on the Campus Library's [Ask a Question](#) webpage.

Finally, recognize that the achievement of information literacy is a lifelong activity, and you will become more adept at it as you do it over time. With practice you will learn how to create effective keywords, how to assess the sources of information you find, and how to take full advantage of the more sophisticated tools and information sources available in academic libraries like our Campus Library. Becoming an informed, global citizen depends on it.

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**RESPECT AND
RESPONSIBILITY: HOW TO
COMPLETE A COURSE OR
INSTRUCTOR EVALUATION
THAT TRULY REFLECTS
YOUR LEARNING
EXPERIENCE**

2019

Cascadia College COLL101 Team



Students in Classrooms at UIS 9-14-10 by Jeremy Wilburn License CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Introduction

A key learning outcome in many COLL101 or College Success courses is to be able to demonstrate your agency and personal responsibility for learning. This responsibility for learning includes offering feedback from your perspective as a student. For example, throughout the academic term, you may be asked by your instructor for feedback about how things are going, what could be improved, and/or what is working; some instructors do this more than others. Most instructors will ask you to complete the college's formal course or instructor evaluations by the end of an academic term. Typically, course or instructor evaluations are anonymous surveys composed of a series of demographic and other questions about students (i.e. why did you enroll in the course, etc.), how the course or instructor addressed the learning

outcomes of the college, and two open-ended questions (which aspects of the class were most beneficial to your learning and what you recommend the instructor add or change in future sections of the class). Additional questions about the laboratory or online or hybrid nature of a class are also included, if applicable. Such surveys usually takes 10-15 minutes to complete and may be done on campus with pencil and paper, or online. Anonymous results of the evaluations are returned in an aggregate summary to the instructor after grades have been submitted at the end of the quarter.

Often, course or instructor evaluations are done in a rush at the end of the academic term, and students have little preparation for the responsibility of offering useful and appropriate feedback. Many students are overwhelmed and stressed towards the end of an academic term and may have trouble using constructive language or focusing on their experience over the entirety of the quarter when they complete their evaluations. As a result, the evaluation reports themselves are often not as useful for instructors or the institutions as they could be. This short reading addresses some possible misunderstandings and inexperience around course or instructor evaluations by explaining how such evaluations are used and reported, and some of the issues around course evaluations in regard to anonymity and bias. The reading ends with a practical list of recommendations for how you can make your course evaluations reflect the actual learning experience you have had.

How course evaluations are used

Unlike popular crowd-sourced tools for rating professors, colleges carefully develop their own unique and detailed course evaluations that ask about learning in various ways. These help colleges assess if students are learning and instructors get information about what works and what can be changed and improved in their future courses. At some colleges, course evaluations may also be used for evaluative purposes for employment status (i.e. promotions such as tenure, periodic reviews, etc.). Faculty seeking jobs elsewhere may even be asked to provide course evaluations from previous courses (Nowak, 2019). Thus, course or instructor evaluations may be a valuable part of a college's assessment of programs, and course and instructor evaluation processes, while also offering feedback that can be utilized by instructors in a relatively quick fashion for improvement, or for validating beneficial course designs.

How course evaluations are reported

While formal course evaluations are completed near the end of an active quarter, instructors receive these after the quarter has ended and final grades have been submitted. (What students write on course evaluations do not affect their grades in any way, nor can an instructor see an individual student's evaluation.) The instructors receive the quantitative results in aggregate form, meaning that the numerical data from the evaluations are counted and averages are provided to the instructors. For example, the

report may tell an instructor that 80% of the students who took the survey believed they would pass with a particular grade, and that on a scale of 1-5, the average score for the students' assessment of "Instructor was prepared" was 4.3. Qualitative results are shown as typed text. For example, under the question, "Which aspects of the course were most beneficial to you?" an instructor may receive a list of sentences or phrases such as: "The class discussion. The library. The writing process. Extra credit options." or "I liked when examples of previous projects were shown."

Anonymity + respect

One notable feature of most formal course evaluations is their anonymity. This means you do not write your name on your evaluation or any identifying information. By design, being able to submit anonymous course evaluations gives you, the student, the opportunity to be honest about your learning experiences without fear of reprisal. Anonymity ensures fairness and respect for your feedback. However, the anonymity does not mean that colleges want you to use the formal evaluation as a venting session against a professor or a course. This can happen when feedback is offered from behind a veil of anonymity. However, inflammatory, non-constructive, and even vague statements without merit or support are just not very useful to instructors or the college itself. Sometimes, comments are offered unkindly. Comments on course evaluations are much more likely to be taken seriously by the college and the instructor if they reflect respectful language and tone,

and they are constructive. Remember, your instructor wants to learn about what worked and didn't work for you during the quarter. The anonymity is to protect you, the student, but it is your responsibility to use that protection respectfully. You might think about the feedback you receive from your professors every day, which is not anonymous, yet is delivered professionally and constructively. That feedback is meant to be useful to you, to help you improve your skills and capacities, and to re-direct you if necessary. You should offer the same. We are all humans here, and how we say what we say matters. Respect is a two-way street!

Constructive commenting

A comment such as, "I love this class" is admittedly nice, but it isn't very specific or detailed. What did you love about the class specifically? Giving even one or two specific examples provides invaluable feedback for the instructor. What if the comment said something like, "I love this class – the discussion boards really pushed me to think on a deeper level, apply class readings, and interact with other students when I am usually not comfortable in-person talking to others." That is a much more informative and useful comment!

A comment such as, "This class had too much work for an intro level class!" provides a little more insight, but can you elaborate? What assignments were too much work and what are you comparing this against? Different disciplines and courses inevitably have different workloads, particularly depending on the student's interest and experience. For example, a student going

into the medical field would likely be challenged by a chemistry class, but find it interesting, worthwhile, and valuable in the path to their chosen field. A student taking it because they needed a lab class to graduate, but was interested in social sciences might find it an extremely difficult class and the workload high and unreasonable. So different perspectives lead to different evaluations of courses as well. What if instead the comment said something like, “This class had a lot of work and I was really challenged by the lab writeups since I am not a science student”? That would provide a lot of useful information and some context about what the student’s experience is in the discipline.

What the literature tells us about biases and course evaluations

Type of Class

Is the class you are evaluating one that you look forward to or is it one you looked upon with dread? Is it a fun elective or one that you are required to take? Is the course something you are already good at and interested in (thus likely leading to an easier perception of the class) or is it something you are not interested in and struggle with from the beginning? These factors can influence your excitement, engagement, and even your evaluation of the instructor’s teaching. Perhaps you remember the idea of a “productive struggle” as a path to learning. Being pushed out of your comfort zone and challenged in a hard class or one that wasn’t your first choice may bring about a good learning outcome for you, yet so-called hard classes

or instructors of such classes are often evaluated more harshly than easier ones. It is also widely accepted that social sciences and humanities instructors are generally rated more highly than math and science instructors (Patrick, 2011). Possibly, the general fear that many students have of these disciplines and “not being good” at them is already setting a precedent of anxiety that carries over into perceptions of how effectively the instructor is teaching. So, the kind of class you are taking and evaluating may bias, or affect, how you think about it unless you pay attention and reflect deeply about what you learned while you are doing your evaluation.

Similarly, classes in which students expect a lower grade than they perhaps wanted may also result in lower ratings of the instructor despite obvious learning and advancement in course knowledge. So, regardless of the grade you are expecting in the course, it is valuable to think beyond the grade.

Finally, after Clayson’s extensive review of student evaluations (2009), the author suggests that the type of learning being measured during the course can also influence instructor evaluations. Subjective evaluations that incorporate feelings and memorization (a skill familiar to most students and thus acceptable to most) are often rated higher than those with objective learning such as concepts and analytical skills. Clayson concludes that “instructors who are teaching students to think, and to stretch mentally and professionally, could actually be penalized” in course evaluations (2009, p. 27).

Race and Gender Bias

It is also vital to evaluate an instructor's teaching practices and course design without regard for their race, gender, physical appearance, age, etc. Though most people do not think they are judging/evaluating on these latter characteristics, research strongly supports that this is widely done, even if subconsciously (Boring, 2017, Mitchell and Martin, 2018, Sprague and Massoni, 2005).

Relatively few studies have examined race biases; however, given that racism is an ongoing issue in society, it would make sense that this would find its way into student evaluations. For example, white instructors have been shown to receive higher ratings than instructors of minority group backgrounds such as Hispanic or Asian American (Anderson and Smith, 2005), while Black instructors receive even lower ratings than those associated with other minority groups (Smith and Hawkins, 2011).

In regard to gender bias, much research has been done over decades indicating that women are evaluated lower for doing the same quality or effectiveness of teaching (Boring, 2017). Students often have subconscious gender role stereotypes associated with males and females, and a study of an online course reveal this effect especially clearly (MacNeill et al. 2015). Females tend to be associated with adjectives such as warm and nurturing while males are expected to be challenging and assertive. Numerous studies have suggested that when women instructors stray from stereotypical gender roles (i.e. being assertive), they receive lower ratings (Anderson and Smith, 2005, Basow and Silberg, 1987, Freeman, 1994).

Additionally, to achieve similar higher ratings equivalent to their male counterparts, women instructors are often forced to strive to the higher expectations that students demand of female instructors, including formal preparation and organization, as well as interpersonal relations (i.e. one-on-one contact time during office hours) (Bennett, 1982). In other words, women often must do more than their male counterparts to get the same ratings. Women are also often expected to be easier graders and more lenient. When they do not act this way, students may evaluate them lower than they would for the same action done by male instructors.

What you can do to write constructive, kind, and appropriate course/instructor evaluations

Consider your tone

Would you say the same things you are writing to someone's face? Does your professor interact with you like you are interacting on your evaluation? Put yourself in the shoes of an instructor when evaluating – both constructive feedback for improvement and validating comments on a job well-done are welcomed. Provide specific details if possible and avoid vague and disrespectful comments.

Be credible

Think about the story that your course evaluation tells. Is there substance there? Is there consistency between what you indicate is your effort and what you relate as

your experience? The instructor can only benefit from your comments if they have validity. Do your quantitative responses match your qualitative comments? In all honesty, if you stated on your evaluation that the course was so-so and it bored you, and you reported elsewhere on the evaluation that you spent just 2 hours of time spent on the course and expect a D+ in the course, is your comment that the course is boring really very useful? What would a professor be able to do with comments like that? On the other hand, did you mark that you spent 15 hours a week on the course, and completed the labs with your fullest effort, and you expect a strong B grade? If so, then you probably have some constructive feedback to offer about the course content, or design, or delivery, and you might have something to say about how to make the course a little more engaging.

Offer constructive, actionable, and detailed comments

Do you notice when instructors offer feedback that it is generally about how what you've done, or shown, or argued for or against? It also often offers suggestions for how to improve. The comments are substantive and often actionable. You can offer the same. For example, consider "Why was a particular assignment so intellectually stimulating, or how did your experience with a particular class activity prepare you for the next one?"

Focus on the learning

Remember that the difficulty level of a class or an expected low grade in a class may not be related to

learning. Ask yourself: “Even if my grade doesn’t reflect it...did I learn? Was the teaching effective? How did I learn what I learned?”

Check your unconscious bias

We know that subconscious judgments are common when evaluating instructors. Iowa State University added language to their student course evaluations to include the following, “Women and instructors of color are systematically rated lower in their teaching evaluations than white men, even when there are no actual differences in the instruction or in what students have learned” (“Calling Attention,” 2019). Just this added instruction on evaluations helped women instructors achieve higher and more reflective ratings. Thus, when evaluating instructors (either through CIEs or other electronic word-of-mouth sites that rate professors), try to remain objective to the learning and course design provided by the instructor instead of their gender, appearance, race, age, etc.

(For other tips for how to provide useful, appropriate comments: University of Michigan 2015)

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POSTER: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

By Cascadia College Guided Pathways Onboarding Team,
2021

Cascadia College Guided Pathways Onboarding Team

This content is available in two versions: poster or text-based table. Scroll down to the version you prefer.

Poster: [High school vs. College](#)

Text-based table:

High School	College
Schoolwork	Schoolwork
Students typically take 6 classes at a time .	Full-time students must take at least 12 credits and typically take three 5-credit classes per quarter .
Homework often due each class period ; teachers often give homework reminders.	Faculty assign work that is due at various times . Students need to independently track without reminders.
There might be dedicated time for homework during class time.	Dedicated homework time during class time is rare .
For every one hour of class time in high school, students can expect about 30 minutes of homework. This class time to homework time means that there's a 2:1 ratio.	For every credit hour in college, students can expect two hours of homework. This 1:2 ratio means that for a 5-credit class, there is about 10 hours of homework in addition to 5 hours of class (in a classroom or online or split between both for hybrid classes) per week.
Parents can access their student's Learning Management System (Schoology, Canvas, etc.).	Parents or any family member cannot access a student's progress without the student's explicit permission. Faculty and college staff (advisors, enrollment, financial aid) cannot talk to parent/other without student's explicit permission, on record.

High School	College
Schoolwork	Schoolwork
Each HS has a standardized GPA/grade system which all teachers use.	College faculty may each use a different percentage to GPA scale . For example, a 94-100%=4.0 in one class, while 99-100% = 4.0 in another class.
High school classes traditionally meet at least 3 days a week .	College classes typically meet 1, 2, or 3 days a week, or 0 days if online asynchronous .
High School class modes are standardized across the school (all online/hybrid during pandemic but pre-pandemic classes met fully in physical classrooms).	College class modes vary , including online, hybrid, and web-enhanced (face-to-face).
Student Support	Student Support
Students can often get extra help from high school teachers during class time .	Students can often get extra help from faculty during faculty office hours .
Responsibility is shared (counselors, teachers, parents, and students).	Responsibility lies with the student .

High School	College
Schoolwork	Schoolwork
High School Counselors offer support with academic achievement, college preparation, post-secondary options, and social/emotional support.	Academic Advisors offer support with academic degrees, plans, degree options, quarterly planning, transfer prep, and course selections.
Guardians instigate and manage student IEPs and 504s, which frequently roll over year to year without new documentation.	Students self-identify and provide medical documentation to request accommodations from Disability Support Services.
IEPs/504s focus on success measures .	Accommodations focus on access measures .
Mental Health Services are contracted through the school district, and students can access a variety of partnering institutions.	The College Counseling Center offers confidential, professional, and free psychological counseling. All students pre-pay for 6 sessions out of their student fees.

POSTER: KODIAK GUIDE TO NETIQUETTE

By Cascadia College COLL101 Team and College
Relations, 2016

Cascadia College COLL101 Team

**Two options for learning about Netiquette: Poster
or text-based. Scroll down to the version you
prefer.**

Poster version: [Poster Kodiak Guide To Netiquette](#)

Text version:

10 steps for online etiquette at Cascadia College

Step 1:

Use formal language standards: grammar, punctuation, sentence structure

Step 2:

Remember your audience: students and instructors-communicate respectfully, formally, appropriately

Step 3:

Explain yourself carefully and get to the point

Step 4:

Don't repeat what has already been posted (read the posts ahead of yours)

Step 5:

Avoid SHOUTING!!! Limit all capital letters and exclamation points

Step 6:

Avoid emoticons and texting acronyms in school online communications

Step 7:

Specify what or whom you are referencing in your message

Step 8:

Always cite when you use other's ideas, arguments, images

Step 9:

Proofread what you are about to send; the Internet is forever

Step 10:

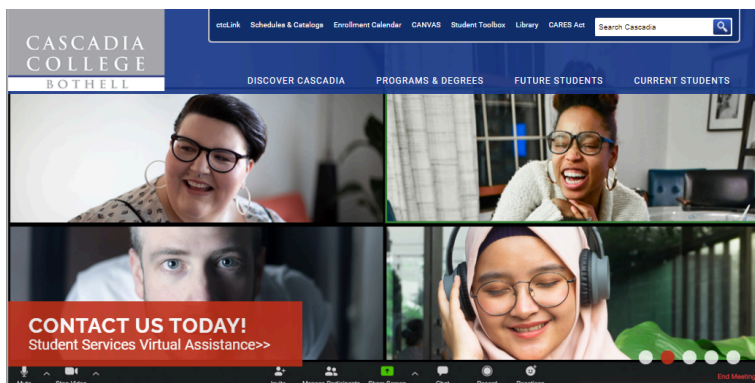
Disagree respectfully and with well-reasoned, well-supported arguments

APPENDIX

The materials in this Appendix are all made by Cascadia College COLL101 Team. The materials may be adapted as open educational resources with attribution.

RESOURCE: STUDENT ACCOUNTS YOU NEED FOR COLL101 AND BEYOND*

Cascadia College COLL101 Team



www.cascadia.edu

*To get started at Cascadia College (and in COLL101), all students who have applied to Cascadia must have

Cascadia email/network accounts and ctcLink id accounts set up. Those accounts then either auto-create other essential accounts or give students access to setting up additional accounts that are essential to their success as students. Most of these ‘essentials’ accounts will continue to be used in courses after COLL101.

‘Getting Started’ Student Accounts

1. Cascadia email (aka network account)
2. ctcLink id

‘Essential for Success’ Student Accounts

- A. Canvas
 - B. UWnetID
 - C. Navigate
 - D. Career Planner and/or CIS360
 - E. WAMAP, for math courses
 - F. Possible accounts for 3rd party apps
-

‘Getting Started’ student accounts: The details

1. Cascadia email

(aka network account: ends in @student.cascadia.edu)

What can you do with it?

- Use campus network, to print, use wireless, use computers

- Purchase parking permit
- Get access to Navigate and Career Planner applications
- Get access to Microsoft Office 365, on the web and downloadable apps
- Get discounts on Amazon prime or other software
- Get support from IT for equipment
- Set up UWnetID for campus library access
- Sign on to use computers on campus, at Bock Learning Center or in study spaces

How?

1. From the [Cascadia College homepage](#) go to one-stop shop: [Student Toolbox](#) (or click on it across the top ribbon of college website)
2. Find the section on Cascadia email/network account and follow the instructions.

2. ctcLink id

What can you do with it?

- Register for classes via ctcLink to register for classes, and manage your student profile, view notes from Advising
- Sign on to Canvas (for web-enhanced, online, and hybrid classes): ctcLink id automatically creates your Canvas account which you will use

in most classes.

How?

1. Go to the [ctcLink self-service portal](#) on Cascadia College website, or click on ctcLink across the top of the website ribbon, or go to the one-stop shop: [Student Toolbox](#).
 2. Follow the instructions.
-

'Essential for Success' Student Accounts: The details

A. Canvas

What can you do with it?

- Enter online and hybrid classes
- Get to assignment drop boxes and other resources for many face-to-face classes
- Seek online tutoring or other student support services
- Complete STAQ for COLL101

How?

1. This account is automatically created as soon as you get your ctcLink id. Follow the next steps to find Canvas, after your ctcLink id has been created.
2. Using ctcLink id, log on

to [Canvas](https://cascadia.instructure.com/login/canvas): <https://cascadia.instructure.com/login/canvas>

3. Click on Courses to see courses
4. Click on Account to edit profile and notifications

B. UWnetID

What can you do with it?

- Use wifi at library and in the LBA building
- Check out books
- Use library online

How?

1. Have Cascadia email address (network account) handy
2. Go to [Cascadia homepage](http://www.cascadia.edu) www.cascadia.edu
3. Click on Student Toolbox>>UWnetID, follow the instructions

C. [Navigate](#)

What can you do with it?

- Get summaries of academic advising appointments and interact with advisors
- Receive notifications from Kodiak Corner, including academic alerts

How?

1. Have Cascadia email address (network account) handy
2. Go to [EAB Navigate](#).
3. Follow the instructions to log in

D. [Career Planner](#) and/or [CIS360](#)

What can you do with it?

- Take and save personal career and educational explorations, assessments, and search results. Career Planner and CIS360 are offered by the same organization, and they have the same exploration options but operate on different web platforms and they look a bit different. **Select the one that works best for you** based on how you use a computer and your preferences. You may use both tools.

How?

- Go to our school's [Canvas site for Career](#)

[Planner/CIS360 login instructions](#)

E. [WAMAP](#)

What can you do with it?

- Access most math class course materials

How?

1. Go to [WAMAP](https://www.wamap.org/): <https://www.wamap.org/>
2. Set up a personal account
3. Use the access code provided by your math instructor to enter their site

F. Other 3rd party apps

If you have accessibility accommodations, you might use a tool called Accommodate. Other 3rd party applications may be introduced by instructors, or classmates may organize collaborations with each other using these.

What can you do with these (and what are some of them)?

- Access course materials (e.g. Textbook publisher-specific website, MS Office tools, Google Suite tools)
- Attend office hours or some synchronous class sessions (Zoom, MS Teams, Google meet)
- Complete course assignments (e.g. MS Office tools, Google Suite tools, Flipgrid)

- Chat with classmates asynchronously or synchronously (e.g. Slack, Discord)
- Keep track of your accessibility accommodations—contact Student Accessibility Services, sas@cascadia.edu (e.g. Accommodate)

How?

Your instructor or classmates will guide you, probably with links to access. You may or may not need to create log in accounts.

SELF-CHECK: DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AUDIT (OR HOW READY ARE YOU, TECHNOLOGY-WISE, FOR LEARNING IN COLLEGE?)



Cascadia College COLL101 Team

Purpose:

This is a self-check activity where you assess your own readiness for learning in college, doing an audit of your digital technology resources and know-how. There are no right or wrong answers, but you will have the opportunity to reflect on your results elsewhere, and you may return here to check your readiness at any time.




Tasks:

1. See the key below to understand the ratings you will be doing of yourself.

Rating	Equivalent emoji
I am not so ready or sure	
Yes, I am ready.	
I rock this! I really know how to do this	

2. Assess your digital tech resources and know-how. Read down the column of Indicators and for each indicator, make a checkmark or “x” in the column on that row that represents your self-assessed level of readiness or

technology know-how. When you get to the last 3 rows, follow the instructions on how to calculate your total.

Indicators			
1. I know the differences between face-to-face, online, and hybrid courses and the meaning of asynchronous, synchronous, remote.			
2. I know the various student accounts, logins, and passwords I need to succeed at my college, and where to find out how to set them up.			
3. I have a laptop or tablet OR know where to arrange access to one on campus.			
4. I know how to log on to the campus library.			
5. I know what a learning management system is and how to find my classes on the main learning management system at my college (Canvas).			
6. I know which browsers work best with the learning management systems I am using (Canvas, or other).			
7. I know how to take a screenshot or scan, and save it to my computer.			
8. I know how to upload assignments or other files to my learning management system (Canvas Quizzes, Assignments, and Discussion Forums).			
9. I know how and where to locate assignment feedback from my professor in the learning management system (Canvas).			

10. I know how to use computing clouds, like Google Drive, OneDrive, to work with other people on documents or files.			
11. I know how to use Zoom or another similar technology to attend a remote class, meeting, or student hours virtually.			
12. I know where to find an online copy of my course syllabi.			
13. I know how to address my instructor and how to contact them.			
14. I know how to write an email that is appropriate in an academic setting.			
15. I know where to get help for technology issues related to my student accounts or learning management system, or to get hardware that I might need to borrow.			
16. I know how to organize group work that may need to happen remotely either fully or partly.			
17. I know how to take notes when I read or listen in class, using low or high tech tools (pencil and paper, phone, or laptop)			
18. I use a low or high tech calendar or planner to plan out my weekly homework and class time. (paper calendar or digital planner)			

Subtotal: Counting down each column, add up number of checks or x's you made in that column. (Ex. You made 5 checkmarks in Column 1 for items 1-18: write that number in the first column on this line. Do the same for Columns 2 and 3.)	Total # of checks in this column=	Total # of checks in this column=	Total # of checks in this column=
Value of each column: Multiply the number of checkmarks in each column by the number noted here. (Ex. You wrote 8 in Item 19 Column 2. Multiply 8 by 2 and write in 16. Do the same for Columns 2 and 3, multiplying by the number noted.)	Checks in this column x 1=	Checks in this column x 2=	Checks in this column x 3=
Your Digital Tech Audit total: Add up previous rows multiplied totals and write in the shaded area.	Column 1 value + Column 2 value + Column 3 value =		

3. Review your results.

Your Digital Tech Audit number is 18-29?

You may benefit initially from using campus resources that offer training and support for the technology used in college courses. These might include the campus learning and tutoring center, helpdesk/information services, and learning management system help. You can consult these also if you need to borrow hardware. You will want to go through the Week Zero training module for the main learning management system (see your courses' online sites for access or ask your professor). You might also consider taking face-to-face classes initially for the face-to-face support on how to engage the digital technology and web-enhancements you may

need for your classes.

Your Digital Tech Audit number is 30-42?

You seem moderately ready for the technology expectations of many college courses. If you need to borrow hardware or review how to use the learning management system, consider the Week Zero training module in your courses' online sites or ask your professor. You might also consider trying a hybrid class which has both face-to-face and online time.

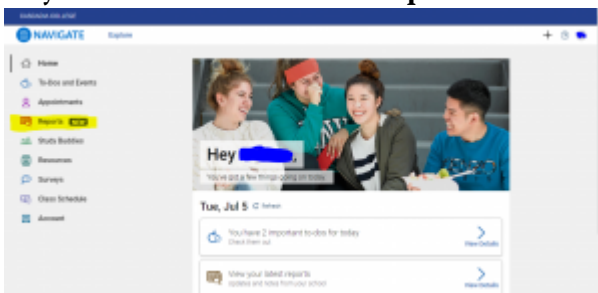
Your Digital Tech Audit total is 43-54?

You seem quite ready for the technology expectations of many college courses today. You would probably be a good candidate for online and hybrid classes. Seek the resources you need on campus to borrow hardware or to review how to use to technologies.

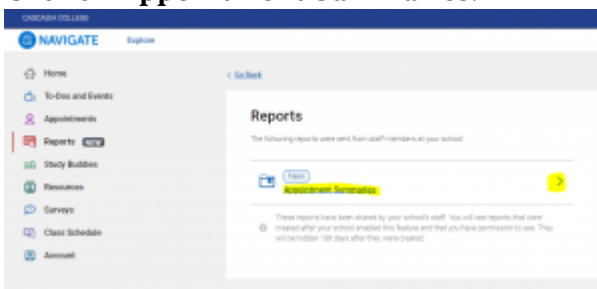
RESOURCE: HOW TO FIND YOUR ACADEMIC ADVISING APPOINTMENT SUMMARY IN NAVIGATE

Cascadia College COLL101 Team

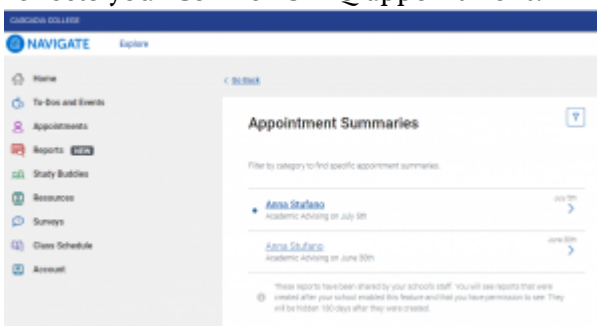
1. Log in at this link, with your @student.cascadia.edu email: [EAB Navigate log in](#)
2. At your **Home** screen select **Reports**.



3. Click on **Appointment Summaries**.



4. Select the Academic advisor name and date that reflects your Coll 101 STAQ appointment.



5. Expand the **Appointment Details**. These details are what need to be visible for your Artifact: **Attendees** will show your advisor's name and your name, and **Service** and **Course** will indicate COLL101 and College Strategies. (Note: Your advisor's message to you may show just above the Appointment Details. You may keep it on your screenshot but it is not required and may be covered up. The important information for the artifact is the **Appointment Details**.)

The screenshot shows the NAVIGATE system interface. On the left is a sidebar menu with options: Home, To-Do and Events, Appointments, Reports, Study Buddies, Resources, Surveys, Class Schedule, and Account. The main content area is titled 'Appointment Summary' and shows details for 'Frank Anna Thuteno' on 'Aug 09, 2022'. It indicates that the 'COLL 101-STAO assignment completed'. Below this is a section for 'Appointment Details' with a link to 'Appointment Details'. The appointment information includes: 'Class ID# 101-STAO-2022-08-09', 'Status: Confirmed Appointment', 'Location: Kinkaid Center', 'Status: Confirmed Appointment', 'Meeting Type: 1-hour (Green) Meeting', 'Date of Visit: 07/05/2022', 'Meeting Start Time: 7:30 am', 'Meeting End Time: 7:47 am', 'Appointment: 101-STAO-2022-08-09', 'Check-in Time: N/A', and 'Check-out Time: N/A'.

NAVIGATE Explore

Home

To-Do and Events

Appointments

Reports

Study Buddies

Resources

Surveys

Class Schedule

Account

Appointment Summary

Frank Anna Thuteno
Aug 09, 2022

COLL 101-STAO assignment completed

Appointment Details

Appointment Details

Class ID# 101-STAO-2022-08-09

Status: Confirmed Appointment

Location: Kinkaid Center

Status: Confirmed Appointment

Meeting Type: 1-hour (Green) Meeting

Date of Visit: 07/05/2022

Meeting Start Time: 7:30 am

Meeting End Time: 7:47 am

Appointment: 101-STAO-2022-08-09

Check-in Time: N/A

Check-out Time: N/A