

Orientation & Study Skills Manual

Chattahoochee Valley Community College

Michael E. Williams



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PREFACE - TO THE STUDENT

Welcome to Chattahoochee Valley Community College! You have selected the right college to continue your education. Whether you are enrolling in a certificate or degree program or just taking courses for enrichment, Chattahoochee Valley Community College has a quality academic program and a highly trained faculty committed to providing you with the very best education. The administration, faculty, and staff are truly delighted you have selected *your* community college to begin your studies in higher education, and all of us look forward to working with you and helping you achieve your educational goals.

During your time with us at Chattahoochee Valley Community College, you will take a number of courses in your program of study. No course, however, will be more important Y 100 - Orientation/ Study Skills. Designed to provide a transition between your previous academic experiences and college studies, PSY 100 will assist you in learning about college life, the responsibilities of a college student, and college policies and procedures. You will also learn about many of the challenges facing students in higher education, particularly those facing *you* during your first two years of study. Additionally, you will learn how to manage your time more effectively, how to achieve goals, how to determine your learning style, how to plan your course of study, how to use the library (Learning Resources Center), how to take notes, how to prepare for examinations, and how to apply critical thinking skills in decision making. After reading this brief description of the course content of PSY 100, you will see that the course will help prepare you to be successful in other courses you will take here and possibly elsewhere.

As a student in PSY 100, you will be expected to attend all class meetings, participate in class discussions, and complete a course notebook project. You will also be expected to read all text assignments and turn in your project on time. Your course grade in PSY 100 will be based on your notebook project grade and class attendance.

Beginning with the first class meeting, you will see that PSY 100 will be one of the most helpful courses you will take while attending Chattahoochee Valley State Community College. Keep in mind that the primary goal of the course is to help you get off to a good start in higher education. To get the most out of this course, prepare yourself for each class meeting. Before coming to class, read over the text assignments, review your notes, and complete any assigned written exercises. While in class ask questions and participate in discussions.

Before attending your first PSY 100 class, take a few minutes to reflect on your educational and career goals. Think about how you will achieve them. Remember, dedication and hard work are an important part of the process. PSY 100 will help you learn just how important dedication and hard work are in achieving your goals.

Again, welcome to Chattahoochee Valley Community College. You've chosen an excellent college, one that will help you expand your mind, strengthen talents you already have, and plan for a productive life.

Michael E. Williams, Ed.S.

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The dedication, hard work, and professionalism of these colleagues have made PSY 100 a worthwhile course for the students of Chattahoochee Valley Community College.

Michael E. Williams, Ed.S.
Chattahoochee Valley Community College

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COURSE SYLLABUS

PSY 100: ORIENTATION/STUDY SKILLS

Instructor: _____ Location: _____ Phone: _____

Office Hours: _____

Class Meeting Dates: _____

DESCRIPTION: PSY 100 is designed to introduce the student to college life, responsibilities, rules and regulations. **Prerequisite: None. Students must register for PSY 100 during the first semester of enrollment at the College. Exceptions must be approved by the Dean of Instruction.**

TEXTBOOKS: *College Catalog/Student Handbook*, current edition.

MATERIALS: Notebook, ball point pen.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

Students enrolled in PSY 100 **must** be able to receive and assimilate presentations of course content, directions, and procedures in written, verbal, tactile, and/or visual demonstration format as presented by the instructor. In addition, students **must** be able to respond in written, verbal, tactile, and/or demonstration format to evaluation procedures as presented by the instructor with regard to course content and requirements.

COURSE COMPETENCIES

Upon satisfactory completion of this course, the student must have, in the instructor's judgment, a reasonable mastery of the following:

- (1) The ability to survive the challenges of an academic environment.
- (2) The ability to manage time more effectively.
- (2) The ability to apply critical thinking skills in decision making and life-long learning.
- (3) The ability to identify important information thus improving study habits.
- (4) The ability to take examinations without experiencing test anxiety.
- (5) The ability to take effective notes as a result of improved study habits.
- (6) The ability to use a library as a means of enhancing the learning process in an academic environment.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon satisfactory completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- (1) **Identify ways to become assimilated into the college environment**
 - (1.1.) Identify various learning styles.
 - (1.2.) Identify learning styles.
 - (1.3.) Define the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in higher education. **(Project)**
- (2) **Know how to manage time more effectively. (Project)**
 - (2.1.) Identify ways to conceive, believe, and achieve goals.
 - (2.2.) Implement goals through time-management strategies.
 - (2.3.) Identify ways to avoid procrastination.
 - (2.4.) Determine how scheduling subsequent quarters helps ensure goal attainment. **(Project)**
 - (2.5.) Identify how to maintain balance in life's schedules.
- (3) **Use critical thinking skills in decision making and life-long learning.**
 - (3.1.) Identify the six categories of formatted questions.
 - (3.2.) Identify the four problem-solving steps by asking the appropriate questions.
- (4) **Take examinations without experiencing test anxiety.**
 - (4.1.) Prepare for examinations.
 - (4.2.) Take objective examinations.
 - (4.3.) Take essay examinations.
- (5) **Take effective notes as a result of improved study habits.**
 - (5.1.) Learn hints for effective note taking.
 - (5.2.) Take notes using a prescribed format.
- (6) **Use a library as a means of enhancing the learning process in an academic environment. (Project)**
 - (6.1.) Locate in *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* a citation and give the subject.
 - (6.2.) Locate a current periodical and find the article on microfiche.
 - (6.3.) Take an assigned subject and go to the Internet and print out an article or abstract on a given subject.
 - (6.4.) Use and identify resources within each of the following: *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, *The World Almanac*, *Who's Who in America*, *Dictionary of American Biography*, *The World Atlas*, and *Facts on File Yearbook*.
 - (6.5.) Print out citations from the SIRS (Social Issues Research Service) and the Government Reporter.
 - (6.6.) Read Library of Congress book classifications, arrange them in order, and identify the letters in the classifications.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

During the semester the student will be expected to:

- (1) Attend all class meetings.
- (2) Participate in class discussion of topics presented by the instructor.
- (3) Complete all assigned projects: time management, degree progress sheet, policies and procedures, and library project.
- (4) Hand in the workbook on time. (A letter grade will be deducted for late workbooks.)

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Students can earn a total of 236-246 points in the course. **Projects must be turned in on time for full credit.** The instructor will deduct twenty points from the project grade if it is turned in late. For each excused or unexcused absence, the instructor will deduct points from the total possible points for attendance. The instructor will determine the final course grade by totaling project and attendance points. (See page 6 for additional information about how your grade will be determined.)

Letter grades (A-F) carry the following numerical values: 90-100 **A**; 80-89 **B**; 70-79 **C**; 60-69 **D**; 0-59 **F**.

Questions about grades should be directed to the instructor.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend and be punctual for all the classes for which they are registered. When absences occur, it is the student's responsibility to arrange with instructors to make up any missed assignments. (The instructor will define his/her make-up work policy). It is the decision of the instructor as to whether students will be permitted to make up assignments missed and whether their absences are excused. Failure to attend class may result in a grade of "FA" (failure to attend). For additional information about class attendance, students should see the *College Catalog/Student Handbook*.

INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

Students are expected to review and abide all institutional policies and procedures as set forth in the *College Catalog/Student Handbook*. Copies of the *College Catalog/Student Handbook* are available in the Office of Admissions.

REQUESTS FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

The College is committed to assisting students with various disabilities in keeping with the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.). Any student who has a disability (physical, emotional, or learning) and who is in need of assistance with admissions, registration, orientation, or any other phase of college life should contact the A.D.A. Coordinator at (334) 291-4991 (*College Catalog/Student Handbook*).

HOW YOUR COURSE GRADE WILL BE DETERMINED

You will receive two grades - one for your notebook project, one for attendance, and one for the final examination.

Your notebook project will consist of the following:

- a cover sheet (5 points)
- a table of contents (10 points)
- ACT-ASSET summary sheet (10 points)
- current class schedule (10 points)
- degree progress sheet (10 points)
- draft of next semester's schedule (10 points)
- semester (monthly) calendars (10 points for each month of the semester)
- class notes - time management, note taking, test taking, critical thinking (40 points)
- library orientation project (70 points)
- policies and procedures exercise (21 points)
- career inventory (20 points)

The total point value for the project, depending on the semester, is between 216-226 points. Your instructor will tell you the first day of class how many points the notebook project will be worth. For additional information about the notebook project, see page 109.

Additionally, you will be graded on attendance. If you attend all class meetings, you will receive 20 points. Points will be deducted for the following:

- 4 points for each absence - excused or unexcused - for classes that meet a total of five times (M-W-F classes)
- 3 points for each absence - excused or unexcused - for classes that meet seven times (T-Th classes)
- 2 points for each absence - excused or unexcused - for classes that meet a total of ten times (evening classes).

Thirty points will be deducted from the notebook grade if it is turned in after the deadline.

Total possible points - between 225-246.

GETTING STARTED

Getting Started

Introduction

Deciding to attend college is a big decision for most people. Whether you are eighteen years old and a recent high school graduate or thirty years old and working full time and raising a family, taking that initial step to continue your education right after high school or picking up where you may have left off earlier in your life can be the most difficult one. At Chattahoochee Valley Community College (CVCC), the administration, faculty, and staff are committed to helping you take that initial step toward continuing your education. Each step of the way—from completing an application for admission to applying for graduation—we will be available to answer your questions, provide assistance, and offer encouragement. Getting started is truly the most challenging part of the process of continuing your education at the college level. You will have many decisions to make. However, we will be available to help you when you need it.

If you are a student with special needs, you should be aware that the College follows the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.). As stated in the *College Catalog/Student Handbook*, the CVCC “is committed to assisting students with various disabilities in keeping with the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.)” (1996-97 *College Catalog/Student Handbook* 42). Should you need assistance, contact the College’s A.D.A. coordinator at 334-291-4991. The A.D.A. coordinator will arrange a time for the two of you to meet and discuss your concerns and reasonable accommodations.

A word of caution concerning ADA: If you are a student with a disability, schedule a meeting with the A.D.A. coordinator preferably before the quarter begins so that reasonable accommodations can be made prior to the beginning of classes. If you cannot meet with the A.D.A. coordinator prior to the beginning of classes, arrange to meet with the coordinator before the end of the first week of classes.

Application Process

The first step to beginning study at CVCC is to complete an application for admission. You can obtain an application form from the Office of Admissions, and there is no application fee for processing your application. Be sure you fill out the entire application. **Failing to complete all questions or informational items will delay the processing of your application.** After completing your application for admission, you will need to attend an orientation/placement testing session.

Initial Orientation/Placement Testing Session

The purpose of the initial orientation/placement testing session is two-fold: to provide you with a brief overview of CVCC's purpose and programs of study and to administer a battery of tests to determine your placement in certain courses of study. **All new students are required to attend the orientation/placement testing session “except those enrolling within two years of their graduation from high school and scoring 480 or above on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) verbal and 526 on the SAT mathematics or 20 or above on the American College Test (ACT) English and 20 or above on the ACT mathematics” (1996-97 College Catalog/Student Handbook 22).**

Transfer students who have not had an English composition and/or mathematics course are also required to attend orientation/placement testing. Transfer students who have already completed preparatory courses in English and/or mathematics are not required to attend the orientation/testing session.

The orientation session lasts approximately three hours. During the first hour, you will receive a brief overview of the College and its programs of study. Following the overview, you will take placement tests in the following areas: vocabulary, English, reading, and mathematics. Each timed test is objective in nature (multiple choice questions) and takes approximately from ten minutes (vocabulary) to twenty-five minutes each (English, reading, and mathematics). Your scores on these placement examinations will be used to determine your course placement in English, reading, and mathematics. If your scores on these examinations fall below the established cut-off scores for each test, you will be required to enroll in preparatory courses. These courses are designed to help you eliminate weaknesses and prepare you to enter regular college-credit courses.

If your test results indicate a need to take preparatory courses, you *must* enroll in these courses your first semester at CVCC. You will be required to remain in these courses until satisfactorily completed. For additional information about the placement tests, see “Student Assessment and Placement” in the “Admissions” section of the *College Catalog/Student Handbook*.

After Testing

After you have completed your placement tests, you will receive an ACT—ASSET Summary Sheet (generally the same day you complete your tests). The Summary Sheet contains personal information from the ASSET Education Form you completed during orientation/placement testing session as well as your test results. You will be directed to take your Summary Sheet with you to registration. Your advisor will review the sheet with you and explain your tests results.

If your test results indicate that you must enroll in preparatory courses, you will be required to take these courses the first semester of enrollment at the College. Occasionally students cannot schedule all of their preparatory courses the first semester. In such cases, some students take one to two semesters to complete these courses.

After receiving your ACT—ASSET Summary Sheet, you are ready to go to registration, where an advisor will assist you in arranging your class schedule.

Before meeting with your advisor, consider the answers to the following questions:

- **How many classes do I plan to take this semester?**
- **Will I attend classes during the day, evening, or both?**
- **How many hours will I be working each week while attending college?**
- **What program of study will I be following?**

This last question deserves a great deal of your attention. Before meeting with an advisor at registration, consider the programs offered at CVCC. The information in the next section may help you decide which program of study you wish to follow while attending CVCC.

Programs of Study

Prior to completing your application for admission to CVCC, you may have already given careful thought to the selection of a program of study. If you have not as yet made that decision, explore the program options now.

CVCC offers three associate degrees—**Associate in Arts**, **Associate in Science**, and **Associate in Applied Science**. The College also offers programs leading to the **Certificate of Completion**.

Two of the three degree programs—**Associate in Arts** and **Associate in Science**—are designed to transfer to senior colleges or universities. Students who enroll in one of these two degree programs plan to complete the bachelor's degree at a four year college or university. Commonly referred to as “transfer-oriented” degree programs, the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Science consist of 64–66 semester hours of course work. Both degree programs contain elective courses, which should be selected with requirements of the senior institution in mind.

The College offers the following programs of study leading to an **Associate in Arts Degree** and **Associate in Science Degree**:

- **Art**
- **Elementary Education**
- **Health, Physical Education, and Recreation**
- **Liberal Arts**
- **Secondary Education**
- **Speech/Theatre**
- **Biological Sciences**
- **Business Administration**
- **Chemistry**
- **Computer Information Systems**
- **Criminal Justice**
- **Mathematics**
- **Music**
- **Pre-Agricultural Science**
- **Pre-Dentistry, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinarian Medicine**