

Chapter 7

Adjusting to College Life

*or, Abandon All Hope,
Ye Who Enter Here*

*by Jennifer Ross and Jill Santoro,
updated by staff*

In this chapter:

- Your Room, Sir...
- Making Friends
- Go with the (Cash) Flow
- Health
- Now That You're in Cookeville,
What Can You Do?
- Cooking in the Residence Halls
- Making Your First B (or Lower)
- Baumstark's Guide to Studying
- Time Management Tips



*Cassie Tesauero, Kayla Hughes, and Christopher Wagner ('10)
need a little help figuring it all out.*

So you've found yourself in Cookeville, at Tech, and you don't know what to do. You're worried about moving in, getting to know people, having no time, and finding something to entertain you on the weekends. Look no further—here's your roadmap to making your dorm room habitable, not flunking out when you get sick, avoiding money woes, nourishing yourself, and locating the best coffeehouses in town.



Congratulations! Your high school days are over! (Applaud as much as you'd like—we'll wait.) Welcome to Cookeville—the home of TTU, The Dog House, the pink elephant, Hidden Hollow, Big O's, and your immediate future. This chapter isn't like the rest of the *Handbook*. We won't be talking about models, values, or HPEO. Instead, we'll talk about what can help you as you enter college—in other words, the really important stuff.

Your Room, Sir...

For most of you lucky freshmen, let us be the first people to say welcome to the dorms. See that tiny area containing all your earthly possessions? It's yours, all yours. Call it disgusting, call it hell on earth, but believe it or not, you will soon call it home. Here are some ideas to make it more comfortable—really!

Decorations

It doesn't matter if your roommate has decorated her side of the room in Martha Stewart pink and was thoughtful enough to bring you a matching comforter-rug set. Decorate your side so that you feel comfortable. If that means you bring the comforter you've used since your first bed, so be it. Hang your favorite Van Gogh print or that Justin Bieber poster your "best friend" bought you. String Christmas lights in August, if you like. And never doubt the ability of small plants to add life to your space.

Space: the limited frontier

Your room can be described in several ways: tiny, lacking, bare, empty, claustrophobic... small. But you can fit everything you need in this space. The secret to making it work is organization. If you need a desk to study, do not put a television, stereo, and Wii on it. Just put what you need there: a lamp, your computer, and maybe an organizer. If you and your roommate coordinated efforts and brought a TV, mini-fridge, and microwave, they stack nicely. A shoe organizer works wonders if you have a hundred pairs. Hang all your clothes in the closet, saving drawer space for important stuff, like food or towels.

For an easy way to calculate the available space in your new home-away-from-home, try this simple equation. We've always found it quite accurate.

$$\text{space} = - \left(\frac{\text{overpriced textbooks} + \text{dirty laundry}}{\text{laundry basket shoved under bed}} \right) (\text{amount of mold}) + \# \text{ of stackable objects}^* \\ - \left[\# \text{ of times parents visit} \left(\frac{\# \text{ of Chef Boyardee cans at Kroger}}{4} \right) \right] + \text{clean laundry}^*$$

*dependent on student's dexterity and height of ceiling
**assume zero

Bathroom

Unless you're in the new dorms, one interesting new challenge awaiting you is the bathroom down the hall. Inside you will notice a very large, very public showering facility, but it's nothing to be afraid of. Two necessary elements for successful showering in the dorms are a bucket with drainage holes (to carry your shampoo, soap, and other bathing sundries) and a pair of shower shoes. These shoes not only allow you to make a fine fashion statement, but they can also protect you from a case of athlete's foot.

Making Friends

So you've come all the way to Cookeville by yourself. It's perfectly normal to be a little jittery about making new friends. After all, this might be the first time in years that you have been in a place where no one knows you. Don't worry! You'll make all sorts of friends even if you aren't an extremely extraverted person (did you



Stop! Have you forgotten any essential dorm supplies?

- Paper towels
- Shower shoes
- Trash bags, even if they're just Kroger shopping bags
- Broom or Swiffer
- Laundry bag or hamper
- Toiletries
- Bed sheets
- Egg shell mattress pad (for extra comfort)
- Pillow
- Bathrobe
- Towels
- Alarm clock, preferably with a battery backup
- Flashlight
- Laundry detergent
- Surge protector
- Dishes and utensils
- School supplies
- Extra socks and skivvies

If Only Gollum Had Known...

If you work on campus at all, remember: your I-9 card is your "precious." Frame it. Stroke it lovingly between classes. Do whatever it takes, just always know where it is.

really think that we could go an entire chapter without throwing in the MBTI?). Instead of just sitting quietly before and after class, introduce yourself to the people around you. Try creating a study group to get to know people and help with your classes.

One of the best opportunities to make friends this year may be your assigned partner for the semester: your roommate. Being friends will make life much easier. Invite him or her to go to dinner, a movie, or a recital. Find things in common that you enjoy. But in a less than ideal world, roommates can make your life... less than peachy. Sometimes you just have to admit defeat and cut your losses. In that unlikely event, talk to your Resident Assistant (RA) about your options. An RA can help you work out your problems and, if necessary, move you into a different room. If you're in Honors Housing, see Mr. Clark for help.

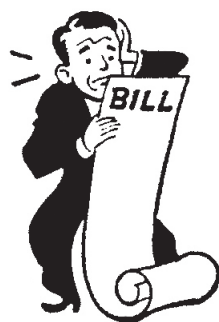
Most importantly, you need a room where you feel comfortable turning on the music, studying, or just staring at the ceiling. If you're in your room reading, watching TV, or listening to your favorite music, leave your door open. (This isn't a good idea if you're studying!) Inevitably, someone will walk down the hall and, being unable to help themselves, look in. They'll notice the mint-condition Donatello or Luigi you've had since you were four years old, and bingo! You suddenly find yourself in a conversation about the difference between power and honor.

Get involved

Getting involved with campus activities is a great way to make friends, defeat boredom and homesickness, and even improve your resume. Be a part of the university, not just an observer. There are hundreds of groups on campus, including interest-related clubs, fraternities, sororities, and religious- and major-related organizations. If you have a religious affiliation, there is probably a representative group here on campus. And, of course, Honors has numerous active committees that you can join and participate in. See the TTU website for other organizations on campus.

Go with the (Cash) Flow

Money. Just behind the Force, it's the biggest ruling power in your life. When you have money, the very thought of your wealth makes you happy. When you're drowning in debt, you are driven to writing haiku about the evil Golden Arches and the hypnotic effects of Wal-Mart. College is, for many students, their first experience in handling money.



Balance those books

If this is your first experience with a checking account, one thing cannot be stressed enough: balancing your checkbook is a good thing. In fact, most banks and parents think of it as a necessity. Every time you write a check, record it.

Those of you who have an ATM/debit card may be in the habit of "guesstimating" your balance. **This is not a good idea!** Your ATM receipts may not be up to date. If you don't want to carry your checkbook around to record your purchases, at least keep the receipts; then record and balance your transactions once a week (or more often depending on your spending). This will give you a realistic view of where your finances stand, or at least a reliable reminder of your status.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from credit cards

The day you arrive at Tech, you will start getting applications that scream "6 months at 0% financing!" and "3% cash back!" We know they are tempting. But before you start filling out applications and trying to remember how to spell your mother's maiden name, talk to someone who has credit card debt.

If you get a credit card, can you trust yourself with a climbing credit limit? Not if you are spending more than you were before. Remember: you don't have a cent more than you did. If your parents give you an "emergency credit card," emergencies

do not include the latest Sims expansion pack or dinner on Interstate Drive. Credit cards plunge many college students into serious debt that lasts beyond their college years, making it difficult to get credit or a loan when they really need it.

Notice how you spend

By making a creative budget for the income you have, you can still take care of those needs and wants. Start by figuring out how you spend or save your money each month; consider groceries, restaurants, entertainment, travel, gasoline, school supplies, textbooks, household supplies, clothing, and incidentals. Also, total your income from parents, your job, scholarships, etc. Use the figures from your budget to guide your spending. For some people, it's helpful to start each month by putting the allocated amount of cash in a labeled envelope for each category, so they can make sure they do not overspend.

When budgeting your money, be realistic. You shouldn't go out to eat six nights a week. If you're a freshman living in the dorms, you must have a meal plan, which provides a set number of meals per week. Keeping food in your room is

Coffee Shops

Perk Up: In a strange location on the edge of the Hobby Lobby parking lot. But it's good, and there's a drive-through window.

Poet's: Offers some soups and sandwiches for lunch, and some excellent desserts. On the Square in downtown Cookeville.

Sweet Sallies: Delicious cupcakes or coffee on Oak Street partnered with a quiet place to study.

Your Cookeville Dining Guide

Student-friendly prices

Cinco Amigos: Good Mexican food with outdoor seating on Willow Avenue.

The Dog House: Hot dogs any way you can think to eat them. Next to World Foods on Cedar Street. Lunch only.

Gyro Dude: Fantastic falafel and hearty hummus to fulfill your Middle Eastern cravings on Willow.

Grandma's Pancakes: All sorts of pancakes, crêpes, and other breakfast dishes. Located on Willow, near the intersection with Jackson, but only open to 2:00pm.

Meadow's Pharm: Quiches, sandwiches, and fruit plates with good prices. Just off First Street.

Broad Street Deli: Grab a fast sandwich during a class break!

Creme City: They're back! Enjoy some delicious ice cream endorsed by our favourite ice cream connoisseur Dr. Barnes.

Christy's Cafe and Bakery: Wide selection of sandwiches and baked goods with the best tuna salad on Interstate Drive.

Taste of China: Your standard Chinese takeout and buffet, down the hill near IGA on Washington Avenue.

Blue Coast Burrito: For easy deli-style Mexican on Jefferson near the dead mall.

Royal House of Thai: Great Thai standards nearby: the corner of Mahler and 6th, near the southeast corner of campus.

Moogie's Barbeque (take-out): Good local BBQ on Spring.

32 Degrees: Froyo is all the rage near Jackson Plaza.

Made with Love: Sandwiches, soups, and daily meat-and-three specials. On Broad Street off the square.

World Foods: A real New York style deli--not a fake one. Located on Cedar.

The Country Chick: Simple sandwiches ranging from bologna to chicken salad, and soup. Charming and down-home, on Lowe and south of the Square.

iNoodle: A cozy Vietnamese noodle shop on Tenth Street.

Greasy spoons: Mini Burger at Spring and Willow, Village Kitchen at 10th and Park, East Side Grill just east of the Square, Dipsy Doodle on West Broad.

Friday night with friends

Mamma Rosa's: This Washington Avenue favorite offers familiar and delicious Italian fare. Good for large groups.

Taiko: Sushi and comforting hot noodle dishes. Depending on what you order, you can get out fairly cheap! On Broad Street in the old downtown area.

The India Palace: Indian food on First St. with a lunch buffet.

El Tapatio: This popular Mexican restaurant has two locations, on Willow and Jefferson Avenues.

Out with a relative who wants to spend money on you

Crawdaddy's: A little bit of New Orleans in downtown Cookeville, with patio dining available. Classic Cajun.

Nick's Restaurant and Lounge: Lovely fine dining atmosphere with the best vanilla ice cream pie in town. Large private rooms available upon request for special events.

Mauricio's: Northern Italian cuisine in a quaint house full of antiques. About five blocks from campus on Peachtree St. (Try to have a reservation.)

Spankies: American menu with steak, seafood, and salads. Just across the railroad tracks from the New Dorm.

Bobby Qs: If your host went to Tech back in the day, they'll probably want to eat here. Barbequed ribs, corn bread, and their famous key lime pie. Near IGA and Taste of China.

Cheap by day, fancy by night:

Cinderella lunches with Kari

Maddux Station: An innovative and constantly-changing menu. Stop by for lunch when prices are slashed. Across from the courthouse on the square.

Thomas Andrews: Great build-your-own pasta, various tasty hamburgers, and scrumptious appetizers on Broad in downtown Cookeville.

Char: A variety of daily meat specials, several good salads and side items. Located at the corner of Washington and Spring, on the square.



Groceries

Keep storage space in mind; dorm refrigerators are small. Don't buy in bulk just because it's cheaper; if you don't eat it all, it will just go to waste. If your freezer is small, it won't freeze things evenly, and a tub of ice cream will quickly become a large milkshake.

For all-purpose, general needs for your dorm "kitchen," pick up some mugs, microwave safe plates and bowls, utensils, a can opener, Tupperware, storage bags, and bag clips.

a cheap and easy supplement. Pasta-in-a-box is more than just a good meal; it's a staple. Instead of going to the theater, consider renting or checking out a movie from the Library Media Center. Don't automatically buy the book you've been craving; go to the library and borrow it. With a little creativity, there are plenty of ways to have a lot of fun on little to no cash. And remember that book of coupons you got in the mail? Use them.

A: Many students do *this* to pay for college

Q: What is work, Alex? Although you may need a paycheck, you are here to learn, not to rack up 40 hours a week at Burger Barn. Let your employer know that ASAP. Other things should come first, like English papers, sleep, and health. When you choose where and when to work, consider commuting time, car maintenance, and the hundred other things that pop up when you have a job.

Health

You're in a whole new germ pool, and Mom's not here to make you eat your veggies and go to bed. Follow these tips to stay healthy in college.

Eating

Though it can be easy to fall into the trap of eating a good portion of your meals from vending machines, healthy eating will make you feel more energized, improving your mood and concentration in class. You can usually find fresh fruit, salad bars, and yogurt in the Grill and the cafeteria. Likewise, when you're stocking your room with food for late-night study sessions, partake in the bountiful goodness of Kroger's produce section, not just the chips-and-beer aisle. From May to October, the Farmer's Market on Mahler Avenue sells locally-grown produce.

Exercise

The Fitness Center has a weight room, a track, a pool, racquetball/wallyball courts, and more. Your friends may even want to have weekly wallyball contests. For only one dollar, drop in on an aerobics, kickboxing, or yoga fitness class. If you don't know anyone who wants to go, try asking in the Honors Lounge. There you can also sign up to play intramurals with the ASG. You could also go walking and jogging around campus or hiking in the nearby parks.

Sleep

Believe it or not, sleep really does bolster your health. If you don't sleep enough, you lose the ability to focus. Your immune system weakens, too. Most students do an occasional all-nighter, but this should be the exception rather than the rule. **Try to sleep six hours, minimum.** And if better grades and a more active life aren't enough to convince you to sleep regular hours, think about how soft and comfy your pillow is. Now, do you want it to be lonely?

Sound mind

When we talk about health, we also need to consider mental health. TTU's Counseling Center is here to help you. It's confidential and free, and there is no need to feel embarrassed about going; it means that you are taking control of your own life and emotions. The Counseling Center, located in room 307 of the RUC, is there if you need to talk about relationships, classes, roommates, or personal problems. If you are not ready to take that step, try talking to your Big Sib, Zach Ludwig (the Honors G.A.), one of your professors, the Honors Directors, or a religious counselor, just so long as it's someone you can trust. **No matter what, find someone to talk to.**

Infirmary

Also known as Student Health Services, located on the East end of the Nursing building, the infirmary is home to free service, at-cost prescriptions, and soothing



unguents. The infirmary also offers flu shots every fall at a very reasonable price. It's better to spend your money in the fall than to catch the death plague during finals.

Safe sex

Remember high school sex education class? What about all those helpful public service announcements? STDs and unwanted pregnancies in college do happen. If you're going to have sex, be safe. Student Health Services gives out free condoms and information on birth control.

Personal safety

Although Cookeville is a small town, there is still potential danger. Use your common sense. Don't walk around campus by yourself after dark, especially in the poorly-lit areas. Don't park in the darkest area of the parking lot. There are blue emergency call boxes positioned around campus; if you're alone and don't feel safe, call 3234 (University Police). Also, keep the Cookeville Police Department in your cell phone just in case.

Now That You're in Cookeville, What Can You Do?

Cookevegas, Cookietown, your new home. Shouldn't you get to know it better before deciding to go home every weekend? Whether this is the smallest town you've ever seen, or it's the first time you've lived within city limits, Cookeville has something for everyone.

Performing and visual arts: music, films, and more

The Honors Program offers free weekend activities on campus. Most Friday and Saturday nights are movie nights in the Honors Lounge. Friday's movie is usually a comedy or action flick, while Saturday's is thought-provoking, with ample time for discussion afterward. The musically-inclined are welcome to start impromptu jam sessions in the Lounge. Musicians can perform polished pieces for Honors Recital Night. Formal, professional-quality recitals abound at little or no cost almost every week at the Bryan Fine Arts Center, where you can also hear the Bryan Symphony Orchestra and other outstanding TTU ensembles. TTU hosts visiting performers each year; recent concerts have included the Goo Goo Dolls, Vertical Horizon, Alvin Ailey Dance Theater, Blessid Union of Souls, Canadian Brass, Vince Gill, and Everybody Fields.

Downtown Cookeville offers other opportunities to hear local music. Crawdaddy's, the House of Thai, Char, Dolche, Spankies, Cristy's Cafe and Bakery, and CooperArt have occasional live music; other shows pop up at various locations. The Cookeville Drama Center, Dogwood Park, and the Putnam County Community Center sometimes stage musical performances at a reasonable price. September's Fall Fun Fest downtown features two days of music on three stages—along with barbecue and dancing in the streets! And don't forget Dancin' on Dixie during the week of Welcome activities.

If you enjoy pictures with your sound, Cookeville has a twelve-screen theater and many video-renting opportunities. The Highland 12, located on Jefferson past the interstate, shows current wide-release movies. Be on the lookout for inexpensive Red Boxes to fulfill many of your rental needs.

Cookeville has plenty of live theater for you to see. On campus, the Backdoor Playhouse usually stages three shows a year (tickets are free or low-cost for students!). The ASG sponsors a Drama Troupe that performs a few times every year in the Derryberry Hall Auditorium. The Wesley Arena Theatre (just down 9th Street) and the Cookeville Drama Center (at the corner of Walnut and Broad) are within walking distance; student tickets for shows at these theatres are quite affordable.

If you're interested in art, the Joan Derryberry Art Gallery in the RUC hosts free exhibitions and lectures by visiting artists, and Bryan Fine Arts always displays

Your papers, please

Carry your Tech ID with you everywhere you go. It's your meal plan and hall access card, and provides discounts at many local and chain restaurants in town.



Cooking in the Residence Halls: The Honors Dorm Cuisine Compendium

It happens all the time: you're in your room, out of meal swipes for the week, and you're starving. Don't fret; your friends here at the *Honors Handbook* know how you feel, and we have a solution: The Honors Dorm Cuisine Compendium.

Wrap it up!

So many meals can be concocted with a lovely invention known as the tortilla. Fill this mysterious wonder with your favorite sandwich ingredients: peanut butter, jelly, and bananas; cheese and salsa; cream cheese and bell peppers; or whatever else you may have on hand—we're not here to judge.

Chili sauce, how I love thee...

Your favorite recipes and items can be transformed by adding a touch of spice or a flavorful sauce. Before you throw them in the nuker, try coating hot dogs in three-fourths of a cup of barbeque sauce made of two parts ketchup and one part chili sauce, a touch of Worcestershire sauce, and a little dry mustard. Add garlic powder (or crushed garlic, much healthier and available pre-crushed in a large jar) and a few other preferred spices into everything from instant mashed potatoes to plain tomato soup for a zesty addition to your menu. Plain yellow mustard is a helpful spice that is often overlooked; try mixing a little into your can of baked beans. And speaking of beans...

Jazz up those vegetables!

Green beans can be used as a carrier for flavorful additions such as salsa, or slivered almonds and a little lemon juice or mustard. Most veggies will play nice with each other, so put them together in a dish sometime. Add basil, dill, or cumin. Here are some other canned and frozen suggestions:

- Corn: add chopped tomatoes (salsa!), chopped black olives, and chopped green pepper.
- Peas (frozen peas are less mushy and a brighter shade of green than those in a can): add some minced onions and garlic with the aforementioned corn.

Say cheese

Cheese melts easily. Now take a deep breath and let that soak in. Remember that tomato soup? Slap some small chunks of cheese in there. Use it as a flavorful add-in (but not necessarily topping) for vegetables, such as green beans and broccoli.

So you've bought the infamous ramen

Buy ramen bricks, not cups. With them, you can fashion a fort, stabilize any wobbly furniture, and further extend your



When cooking, be considerate of your neighbors, especially when dealing with smelly foods.

cooking options. For all three items the first step is identical: toss out the flavoring packet.

Now you have 15 cents' worth of the hardest pasta to ruin. Cover in water, microwave for three minutes, drain, and top with something. Nearly anything will work; try a can of chunky soup, chicken in a can, or those small pre-cooked pork roasts.

Lunch or dinner ideas

For loaded mashed potatoes, cook instant potatoes according to package directions. Add a little extra butter, some cheddar cheese, bacon bits, and some seasoning. Stir it all up so the cheese will melt, and presto! It's like a loaded baked potato without the skin (because, really, who eats that part anyway?).

Canned chicken and tuna are great staples for your "kitchen." Try making an alfredo pasta mix topped with one of them. For a salad, chop up the canned chicken or tuna, apples, walnuts or almonds, and celery. Mix all together with mayonnaise (according to taste).

When in doubt, follow the recipe

While you're tinkering with your lovely microwave and fridge, you might want to try something bold, something daring, something with lots of instructions: a recipe.

The following sites have great ideas:

<http://www.sallyskitchen.com> — if you have access to a rice cooker, you must visit this site; it contains two dozen recipes that are prepared entirely in a rice cooker.

http://studenthousing.suite101.com/article.cfm/basic_college_dorm_room_cooking_tips — by and for college students, this site offers useful tips on general dorm cooking and features an easy recipe selection.

Additionally, lots of sites have sections specifically on microwave dishes. Try searching for "microwave" here:

<http://www.recipezaar.com>

<http://www.recipecottage.com>

<http://www.mealsforyou.com>

Final considerations

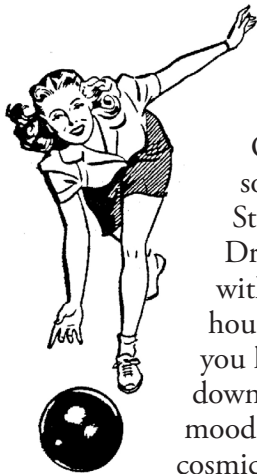
Don't use equipment for purposes other than those intended. Don't pop popcorn in a rice cooker; don't stir-fry on a popcorn popper. Remember to always clean up. Food attracts pests, so get in the habit of washing utensils, plates, and appliances as soon as you're done eating. And use soap! Finally, keep a fire extinguisher nearby, just in case...

student artwork in the lobby. Poet's displays and sells artwork. The Appalachian Center for Crafts, located on I-40 W at exit 273, is a hidden treasure. It showcases professional art and crafts and offers courses in a variety of media. A free shuttle bus operates between campus and the Craft Center. You can return to campus with inspiration for your own creations. Cheap Art Day is held in the Honors Lounge at the end of each semester, where you can paint, color, or make sculptures with everything from computer motherboards to toilet paper rolls.

Check out TTU's Center Stage events online at <http://www.tntech.edu/centerstage> to see or hear something new. Professional touring singers, dance troupes, poets, sculptors, and speakers can be brought to campus through Center Stage funding. Anyone in the Tech community can submit a proposal for funding an arts or multicultural event; talk to Dr. Barnes if you have an idea.

Nature

Fortunately for tree-huggers, Putnam County and the surrounding area are home to many natural attractions. Cane Creek Park, Cummins Falls, and Burgess Falls provide excellent opportunities to stroll, have a picnic, and play in nature. Cane Creek also has paddleboats for rent in the warmer months. Fall Creek Falls, Rock Island, and Center Hill Lake (with delightful trails beginning at the Crafts Center) are less than an hour's drive from campus. If you don't own a car, you can always walk over to Sherlock Park with a book or Frisbee. Two well-kept secrets on campus are Helen's Garden, a pocket of well-tended flowers behind Pennebaker Hall; and a quiet garden tucked away beside the Bryan Fine Arts Center. You can also escape to Dogwood Park, located just east of the Drama Center on West Broad Street.



Hanging out

There are some great little places to hang out around Cookeville, including Poet's in the restored downtown area. On campus you can enjoy a mocha and sit on a comfy sofa while you study at Starbucks in the RUC. If you crave Starbucks, but long to get off campus, head down to Interstate Drive. Head over to the Books-a-Million on Jackson and relax with some coffee as you browse for books until the late night hours. You can also visit Au Bon Pain in the Volpe Library. If you long for traditional Cookeville hangouts, try Ralph's Donuts downtown or the Village Kitchen on 10th Street. If you're in the mood for a retro evening, the bowling alley on Neal Street offers cosmic bowling on Saturday nights.

Making Your First B (or Lower)

So, you've made your first B and you're not sure how to feel or what to do. After receiving all As in high school and being granted the highest honor of having the math wing renamed for you, college was supposed to come easily, right? Well, don't fret, because it's not the end of the world for you. Many of your peers have also gotten a B or two (or more!). It's not the terrible tragedy that you might think it is, let us assure you. A B will not keep you from being the good student you are. But if you want higher grades in the future, try to identify where your studies went awry and develop an approach to help you improve (e.g., studying along with your class syllabus, attending only a smattering of campus events leading up to the deadline of your five-page psychology paper, or postponing the 13-hour director's cut LOTR marathon until after finals). On the other hand, you may also be super excited to have earned your B in Indifferential Inequalities in Nuclear Chemistry! If this is the case, keep beaming from ear to ear and continue on your merry way.

What if this doesn't apply to you, and instead you made lower than a B? There is still hope! TTU lets you repeat a course if you received a C or lower. Upon



Baumstark's Guide to Studying

(Stable Strategies for the Furtherance of Your Education)

by Lewis Baumstark

Not to stereotype Honors students, but odds are you breezed through grade school without having to work very hard. Most likely, things won't be a breeze anymore. (If this doesn't apply and you worked your petunia off to make those As, then keep up the good work. I salute you.) For (possibly) the first time in your life, you are the only person responsible for getting yourself out of bed on time, washing your clothes, and making sure your assignments get done. In a nutshell, be responsible; you're an adult now.

Using a planner

Keeping a planner—and actually referring to it—is a good idea. Record when assignments are due, recitals you may have to attend, Honors/ASG picnics, club meetings, etc. Prioritize the tasks, and *be specific!* (Instead of writing “professor conference today,” write “meet Dr. Dolittle at 4:00 p.m. re: last Tuesday's zoology problems.” That way you don't forget *why* and *when* you want to see *whom*.)



The proper care and feeding of professors

Some of your greatest resources are those creatures only imagined in high school—your professors. These people will be writing your job and/or graduate school recommendations in a few years. Make time to stop by, to ask questions about the homework, or to “talk shop,” especially if you think you are doing poorly in the class. They may confirm your suspicion but could also give advice on how to bring up your grades or even re-explain the material. *Don't drop a class without talking to your professor well before the final drop date.* Don't wait until the last minute!

How to Make a Really Bad Impression

Adapted from a list by Dr. Linda Giesbrecht-Bettoli, TTU Dept. of Psychology

1. Be consistently late to class and other appointments. This shows how much busier you are than others. Bonus points for distracting the class by skipping over a seat near the door in favor of one in a hard-to-reach corner.
2. Fall asleep in class. Professors know how much you value their class when you don't pick up some coffee to keep yourself alert.
3. Be casual about attendance. Ask, “Did I miss anything important?” when you see your professor. While you're at it, ask them for a recap before getting class notes from a friend. Make sure they know that you're not responsible for work assigned on days you're absent.
4. Always be ready with reasons why you are an exception to the established class rules, such as due dates and exams. This is especially useful when your reasons include procrastinating, keggers, and your grandmother who has died three other times this semester.
5. Do not read your assignments before class. This gives you the advantage of using class time to ask things explained in the reading and also allows you to adopt a look of pained confusion each time the professor refers to the text.
6. Keep your cell phone on in class. Better yet, answer your phone in class, make calls, and lead your fellow classmates in a lively game of Name That Tune when your cell phone rings.
7. Never bother with proper titles. Dr? Professor? Piffle, you don't need that nonsense. In fact, always address people with a doctorate as Mr. or Mrs. or better yet as “Billy” and “Sweetheart.”
8. Never use a professor's office hours or make an appointment. This allows you to waste calculus class time asking about algebraic concepts, and enthralls the professor when you suddenly plop yourself in their office with six questions while they're preparing a lecture for their next class.

Speaking of homework, try doing it!

Even if your professor doesn't grade it, do it. As an engineering student, I found that working homework problems is the *only* way to really learn the material. You can read the principles, but they won't take hold until you practice them.

Attending classes

After your 3:00 a.m. *Mass Effect* marathon, you'll probably be tempted to sleep through your 8:00 a.m. calculus class. Don't. Go to class every time it meets, even if it's at 2:00 p.m. on Friday afternoon. The professor has worked hard to prepare a lecture with information you need. And since you're in class anyway, ask questions; if something doesn't make sense during the lecture, it probably won't click later on, either.

Taking notes

If you do nothing else in class, take notes—your own notes. It will train you to follow a professor's line of reasoning, so (at least in the beginning) write down everything you can. Put a headline and date on every page; this will greatly increase their use to you when studying. If your notes tend to be disorganized, rewrite them with some semblance of clarity. This is a good way to accomplish the next point: re-reading them.

A useful note-taking style: divide your page in half, top to bottom (or better, use two facing pages at a time), record the practical/essential notes on the left, and put details, thoughts, applications, etc. on the right. You could also write some questions to ask your professor later.

Reading

Believe it or not, I didn't know how to read until I was a senior in college. Sure, I could read a good sci-fi novel or even my literature class material, but reading for retention was another, umm, story. Start by skimming, paying attention to what you'll be reading, and making an outline of each section. This pre-wires your brain to accept the specifics, which you'll read next while taking detailed notes. Read one or two sections at a time, especially if the material is long, so you don't overload your neural network. At the very least, make notes in the book margins or highlight key ideas. Question marks in the margin are signals for concepts you don't understand.



Studying

So now you've done your homework, taken killer notes, and have read the material. Enter planned study time. You will learn better if you study as you go, instead of waiting until the night before the exam. But when you do sit down for extended study sessions, do homework/book problems (especially for classes with a mathematics emphasis) and look over the main concepts. Group study helps you fill in your blind spots in the material, but it's no substitute for private study. Meet on a regular schedule (weekly is good) at a set location. Study rooms in the library can be reserved in advance.

Tutoring resources

You're in calculus, and integrals are harder than you expected, or you're having grammar trouble with your English essay. Visit your professors first; often they can clarify your confusion. But perhaps you've already talked with them, and you're still unclear. Instead of panicking about your sure-to-plummet GPA, look around. Tech and the ASG provide many free resources. Certain departments offer tutoring by majors in their respective fields. Upperclassmen in the Physics Club hold help sessions for homework and labs. The ASG Tutoring Committee helps Honors students in a wide variety of subjects. They schedule regular Q&A sessions for the chemistry exams, and are available for individual assistance. If you're struggling with anything, contact the chairs of the committee; they'll find someone to help!

Storage

Keep all homework papers, tests, old quizzes—any paperwork from class—and file them. Use three-ring binders, boxes, or even stacks. Just make sure you can find them when study time comes around!

A final word (or two): Keep up.

Keeping up in your classes isn't really that hard. However, it will take determination, especially if you are used to coasting through your high school classes. Just remember that it's easier to learn your class material one day at a time, rather than six weeks at a time. I swear it on my engineering degree.

Ways to lower your GPA

Most Honors students here whose grades drop below 3.5 give these reasons for their performance—and none of the reasons involves intelligence. Common sense, maybe; high I.Q., no.

1. Cutting classes.
2. Not doing homework, or waiting until the last minute—or later.
3. Getting addicted to time-consuming computer or role-playing games.
4. Taking too many courses and not being able to study adequately for all of them.
5. Not keeping a calendar or planner, thus losing track of when tests are scheduled or when important meetings occur.
6. Being too proud/ashamed/timid to ask for help or reinforcement from teachers/classmates/friends/peers/Honors tutors.
7. Not forming study groups.

The ASG has free tutoring to help you. Contact the Tutoring Committee or the Honors Office.



And speaking of scheduling, that reminds us...

Thou shalt take an Honors course every semester until thou hast completed thine Honors requirements. See Honors contracts (Appendix B) if thou needest.

the first repeat attempt, the grade you are given replaces the original, but successive attempts will be weighed in with your GPA; the last attempt stands as the grade in the course. However, you cannot go elsewhere to retake a course in order to improve your score. There is no cap on the number of hours you can retake, so don't agonize over anything—except study plans to improve your grade. Just plan ahead to find the best time to fit in those classes again. After you complete the course with a satisfactory grade, fill out a Course Repetition form from the TTU website and turn it in to Records and Registration (http://www.tntech.edu/images/stories/records/forms/Course_Repetition.pdf). You can now just frolic among the flowers, and continue to study up a storm, in your spare worry-free time.

Time Management Tips

College students list time management problems as one the biggest reasons why they don't succeed. Sure, we all want to spend time gaming or talking with friends. But ultimately, we need to spend some time studying. Learning to manage your time wisely will allow you to spend more time learning *and* playing.

Pick out your best time for studying. Determine whether you study better in the morning or night and adjust your schedule accordingly. Study the hard stuff first; don't procrastinate. You process information more quickly when you first begin studying. Be sure to take a break or two while you study; get a snack or check your e-mail. This keeps you from becoming fatigued, and your brain will still be processing information during the break. Just be sure to keep the break short. Maximize your opportunities for study. If you know you'll be going to the laundromat or the Fit, for example, bring along some notes to study while you're there. Make sure you have time to sleep and eat. Pulling time away from these activities is not helpful; it only makes your studying less effective. Also, make certain you go out and have some fun. Make it part of your time management schedule.