

Planning for College Success



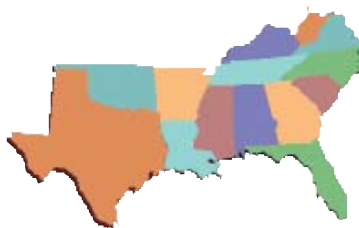
A Curriculum Model developed by
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This publication is funded by the Postsecondary Education Consortium at The University of Tennessee College of Education, Center on Deafness through an agreement with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs Grant Number H324A010003. The Postsecondary Education Consortium (PEC) is one of four Regional Postsecondary Education Centers for Individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The Centers strive to create effective technical assistance for educational institutions providing access and accommodation to these students. Together, the Centers comprise the Postsecondary Education Programs Network, or PEPNet.



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PA # R01-1880-035-007-02

❖ Introduction ❖

Hello and welcome to college! We want to help you do the best you can do while you're here. One way we want to do that is PCS - Planning for College Success. We plan to sit down with you and figure out exactly what you need to do well in college. You will work one-on-one with a counselor to plan for your success. The program will include short-term goals and long-term goals, weekly activities for you to complete, documentation of accomplishments, and information about how to get other services that are offered on campus.

The PCS program can really help you adjust successfully to your new life at college, but it requires that you do your part. Regular meetings will be scheduled between you and your counselor, and you will need to make time to come and participate. We know you are going to be busy as you begin classes, but the time you spend on PCS will help you succeed. That means getting better grades, planning your time effectively and not getting stressed out.

We are excited about this new program and look forward to working with you!

Best wishes

The beginning is the most important part of the work. – Plato

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Minds are like parachutes. They only function when they are open. -Sir James Dewar

❖ PCS Contractual Agreement ❖

Counselor's Responsibilities

- Be available to answer questions the student has about the university and the PCS program
- Attend meetings regularly with the student and to show up on time.
- Call the student as soon as possible to reschedule if the counselor cannot come to a scheduled meeting.
- Read the student's work from this workbook regularly and provide feedback that will help the student.
- Give a warning to the student if he or she is not following the program, provide documentation and discuss the situation with the student. If the student feels modifications are necessary, they can be discussed at this time. If the student is still not following the program, he or she may be dropped without further notice from PCS and will not receive the stipend.
- To provide relevant and helpful information to the student as needed and/or when requested.
- To provide one-to-one counseling with the student to help the student adjust to college life.

Student's Responsibilities

- Ask questions when you are unsure about something.
- To regularly attend meetings with the counselor and to show up on time. An appointment page is provided for you on page 6. Write down when you are scheduled to meet with your counselor on that page to help you remember.
- Call the counselor as soon as possible to reschedule if you cannot attend a scheduled meeting.
- Come to the meetings prepared. If your counselor gave you an assignment the last time you met, make sure you bring it with you to the next meeting, and sign the page to show it is done. The counselor will look it over and give you feedback and comments and sign it as well.
- Stay in this program all the way through until the end of the semester.
- Discuss any problems or frustration with this program with the counselor.
- Bring this booklet with you to all meetings with the counselor.
- Take responsibility for your decisions and actions.

Student/Date

Counselor/Date

There is nothing wrong with making mistakes. Just don't respond with encores. – Anonymous

❖ When I'm Meeting With My Counselor ❖

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Week 1					
Week 2					
Week 3					
Week 4					
Week 5					
Week 6					
Week 7					
Week 8					
Week 9					
Week 10					
Week 11					
Week 12					
Week 13					
Week 14					
Week 15					

- + = We both kept the appointment
- ✓ = I called the counselor to cancel/reschedule appointment
- * = I didn't show up for the appointment
- # = Counselor cancelled/rescheduled the appointment
- = Counselor didn't show up for the appointment

Experience enables you to recognize a mistake when you make it again. -Franklin P. Jones

Student signature

Date completed

Counselor comments and feedback: _____

Counselor signature

Date

❖ Goals – Setting Them, Reaching Them ❖

Goals are very important, especially for college students! If you don't know what your goals are, you will have a hard time staying in college until you graduate. Your goals may change over time. Take a few minutes to think about your goals, and write them down below. Use more paper if needed.

Short-term goals

Ex.: 'make a B on the test'

Steps to reach goal

study with classmates

When

Wed. morning, Fri. night

You will write down short-term goals every week, beginning on page 24.

Medium-term goals

Ex.: 'get a part-time job'

Steps to reach goal

type resume
look at classified ads

When

this weekend
every Sunday

Long-term goals

Ex.: 'be a teacher'

Steps to reach goal

study hard and make good grades

When

now until I graduate

Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal.
- Henry Ford

Student signature

Date completed

Counselor comments and feedback:

Counselor signature

Date

❖ Rating Strengths and Areas for Improvement ❖

Circle the number that best describes you.

1 – Never 2 – Almost never 3 – Sometimes 4 – Most of the time 5 - Always

Listen carefully and accurately	1	2	3	4	5
Follow directions	1	2	3	4	5
Follow through on tasks	1	2	3	4	5
Accept praise and criticism well	1	2	3	4	5
Choose good friends	1	2	3	4	5
Know when to ask for help	1	2	3	4	5
Work in a team to accomplish a goal	1	2	3	4	5
Recognize when I feel upset	1	2	3	4	5
Describe why I feel the way I do	1	2	3	4	5
Come up with several solutions to problems	1	2	3	4	5
Set academic goals (example – make a B average)	1	2	3	4	5
Reach my goals (example – have a B average at the end of the semester)	1	2	3	4	5
Be a good friend	1	2	3	4	5
Keep my appointments	1	2	3	4	5
Do assignments on time	1	2	3	4	5
Talk to the professor when needed (example – if you don't understand the class information or need to ask a question) ..	1	2	3	4	5
Study for tests over time (instead of cramming) ..	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

Look at the ones you scored as 1, 2 or 3. List these on the next page under “areas for improvement.” List the ones you scored as 4 or 5 under “strengths.”

Student signature

Date completed

Counselor comments and feedback: _____

Counselor signature

Date

❖ Your Strengths and Areas for Improvement ❖

There are many areas for your life where you have strengths (things you do well) and areas for improvement (things you need to improve). These areas include intellectual, social, spiritual, physical, emotional, academic, among others. Take a few minutes to analyze yourself and write it down.

What are your strengths? (Use page 8 and come up with some of your own)

What are your areas for improvement? (Use page 8 and come up with some of your own)

What can you do to improve in these areas?

What are you willing to start working on today?

What are you going to do starting today? Write down a step-by-step plan of how you are going to work on your areas for improvement.

❖ Your Strengths and Areas for Improvement – continued ❖

What areas for improvement are you willing to work on some time during this semester?

Write down a step-by-step plan of what you plan to do to work on your areas for improvement.

Write down your progress in this space. If you need help, ask your counselor. You'll have a place later to write down your progress.

Student signature

Date completed

Counselor comments and feedback: _____

Counselor signature

Date

❖ Problem-Solving Steps ❖

* Nobody makes the right decision every time. But if you follow some simple steps when trying to solve a problem it will increase the chance that your decision will be the right one for you. Try it! It works! *

What is the problem that I need to solve? _____

What are some things I can do to solve this problem? (list all you can think of) _____

What would happen with each of these? (Examples of positive things might be that I would feel proud of myself or my friends would be happy. Examples of some negative things would be that someone might be mad at me or I would fail a course.) _____

For which ones would I like the results? For which ones would I not like the results? _____

Which one will give the most positive results and the least negative results? _____

❖ Problem-Solving Steps – continued ❖

* Now make a decision about which one you're going to try out. Many people can influence your decisions, but in the end, it is up to you. You have to decide which one is best for you and fits into your values and beliefs. *

Now write down what you did to solve the problem... _____

I'm glad I did this because... _____

I'm sorry I did this because... _____

If you followed all these steps, you will probably be happy with your decision. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you have two choices. You can either decide to live with your decision and make the best of it, or you can think about making a new choice that might end up the way you want.

You have the power to make your own choices. And as a college student, you will have to make choices all the time. Making decisions and solving problems require a lot of thought on your part. Following these steps will help you make choices you will be happy with!

The world of tomorrow belongs to the person who has the vision today. -Robert Schuller

Student signature

Date completed

Counselor comments and feedback: _____

Counselor signature

Date

❖ What is a Tutor? ❖

Sometimes new students need extra help to make the grades they want to make. If you start to have a hard time keeping up in class, or your grades start to go down, what can you do?

One helpful thing you can do is get someone to give you one-on-one help in studying and preparing for class – a tutor! This is usually someone who has already had the class you are in, and knows a lot about the subject. That way, he or she can answer questions you have and help you understand the class better.

You have to be willing to work with the tutor regularly, and keep all of your appointments with that person. But a little extra time every week will be worth it when your grades start to improve!

❖ When do I need a tutor? ❖

It is important not to wait too long if you need a tutor. If your grades start to fall and you don't understand the information the professor is talking about, you may need a tutor. Don't wait until the semester is half over – do it when you need help!

The education of man is never completed until he dies. -Robert E. Lee

Student signature

Date completed

Counselor comments and feedback: _____

Counselor signature

Date

❖ Making Choices ❖

Why don't people just make up their minds to solve their problems and move on? Many people do just that. But others put off solving problems for a number of reasons. One common reason is the fear of making a mistake.

Have you ever postponed making a choice because you were afraid of making a mistake? Use these guidelines to help you feel stronger and safer about your choices.

You make your best choices when...

- you have gathered all the information you can about the choices you have,
- you have thought of all the options there are to choose from,
- you have considered both the short-term and the long-term consequences of each option,
- you are prepared to accept the responsibility for your choice, and
- your choice feels right to you.

Here's an example of making a good choice:

Stephanie is a senior in college. She is majoring in Biology. There is a course that is required for her major that is scheduled at the same time as the Advanced Tennis class. She enjoys playing tennis and really wanted to be in the advanced class. Both classes are offered only one time per year.

She knows she would enjoy the tennis course much more than the biology course. However, if she decided to take the tennis course, it would mean she would have to postpone her graduation so she could take the biology course next year. But it would also mean she would improve her tennis game and she would have a better chance of beating her friend, who wants to be a professional tennis player.

After thinking a long time about her choices, Stephanie decides to take the biology course. Playing better at tennis is not worth putting off graduation for a whole year!

❖ Making Choices, continued ❖

You make your worst choices when...

- you base your choice on wrong or incomplete information,
- you don't know about all the options available to you, or you choose to ignore some of those options,
- you don't consider the short-term and long-term consequences of your choice,
- you refuse to accept the responsibility for your choice, and
- your choice doesn't feel right to you.

Here's an example of making a bad choice:

Stephanie finds out that Advanced Tennis is only offered one time a year. Since she really wants to improve her game so she can beat her friend at tennis, she signs up for that class, and then adds other classes related to her major. She knows her advisor told her to sign up for another required biology course, but it was scheduled for the same time as the tennis class, so she ignored it. He has always advised her well in the past, and she didn't feel good about ignoring him this time, but she really wanted to take the tennis class, so she blew it off.

Halfway through the semester, her advisor realizes what she has done and asks her why she didn't follow the advisor's advice regarding her schedule. Then she explains to Stephanie that the course is only offered one time per year, and this means she will not graduate for another year. Stephanie is angry and blames her advisor for the whole thing.

Remember: every time you take control of your problem, make a good choice, or solve a problem successfully, you gain experience. This increases the chances that you will take control, make a good choice, or solve a problem successfully in the future.

❖ Making Choices, continued ❖

What did you think about Stephanie's decisions? What would you have done?

When you are faced with an important decision, who do you turn to for good advice and correct information? List as many people (or sources) as you can.

How do you know when the information someone gives you (or you find yourself) is correct and complete? _____

Have you ever learned, after making a decision, that you acted on information that was wrong or incomplete? What happened? _____

What does not kill me makes me stronger. -von Goethe

Student signature

Date completed

Counselor comments and feedback: _____

Counselor signature

Date

❖ Responsibility – Internal and External ❖

Accepting responsibility is an important part of making decisions in life. If you do not recognize the power you have in making decisions, you may let other people make decisions for you. That means that you let other people determine what happens in your life. If you feel that others are responsible for things that happen to you, that is called external control. If you recognize that you control what happens to you, that is called internal control.

Read the situations described below, and make a decision about who is responsible in that situation and why.

Situation	Who is responsible?	Why?
You are late to class because your friend was talking to you about a problem she has about a boyfriend.		
The professor gave a pop quiz and you failed it because you forgot to study.		
You had an appointment to meet with your counselor yesterday but you were not feeling well and decide to stay home. The next day you see your counselor and she seems upset that you didn't show up or call.		
It is your day to present in class. The interpreter is a sub you have never met and he has a hard time understanding your signs. He asks to read over your notes before you begin so he will do a better job voicing, but you refuse. He doesn't do a good job.		
You have skipped four times in a class, but show up on test day. There is no interpreter there. The professor tells you the interpreter has been cancelled for that class.		

Life grants nothing to us mortals without hard work. - Horace

Student signature

Date completed

Counselor comments and feedback: _____

Counselor signature

Date

❖ E-mail and World Wide Web ❖

E-mail

E-mail (short for electronic mail) is a very easy and convenient way to contact your professors, counselors, and fellow students. As a college student, you have access to your own e-mail account. If you have a question about an assignment or an upcoming exam, you can send an e-mail message to your professor to get an answer. This may be a lot faster than scheduling a meeting with your professor and getting an interpreter.

If you have a computer at home that has a modem, you can check your e-mail from home! If not, there are places on campus where you can go to check for e-mail messages.

World Wide Web

You also have access to the World Wide Web, which is a terrific place to find information on almost any subject! You can do research for a paper, learn how to write a resume, or look for a job all on the World Wide Web. If you have a computer at home with a modem, you can access the World Wide Web from there. If not, you can use the computers here. If you aren't computer literate, now is the time to learn!

Think of three things you would like to learn more about on the World Wide Web and set a deadline for finding that information:

Topic	By when	Your initials
1)		
2)		
3)		

Do, or do not. There is no 'try.' -Yoda

Student signature

Date completed

Counselor comments and feedback: _____

Counselor signature

Date

❖ Goals – Revisited ❖

It has been some time since you wrote down your medium-term goals and long-term goals. It is important to review your goals periodically to see how you're doing and if you want to revise your goals.

Medium-term goals

Steps you are taking

How's it going?

New or revised goals:

Long-term goals

Steps you are taking

How's it going?

New or revised goals:

Student signature

Date completed

Counselor comments and feedback: _____

Counselor signature

Date

❖ Getting Better Grades ❖

There are many things that you can do, starting right now, to make sure you have grades you will be happy with. Here is a list of some suggestions. At the end is a place for you to add in your ideas.

- Study! This is one sure way to get good grades. Whether you study on your own or in a group, it will help you understand the information that will be on the test. Make sure you choose a place to study that is free of distractions, such as a telephone, television, or friends and family.
- Stay organized - buy and use a daily calendar.
- Write down your homework assignments, meeting time with counselor, and upcoming tests.
- Keep a to-do list. As you get assignments, add them to your list. As you complete assignments or tasks, mark them off. This will help you stay organized, help you not forget important things you have to do, and will make you feel good about everything you have accomplished!
- Go to class every time, and sit up front so you can see the interpreter clearly.
- Keep active physically. This helps you perform better mentally. So don't forget to exercise regularly!

Your ideas: _____

Student signature

Date completed

Counselor comments and feedback: _____

Counselor signature

Date

❖ Time Management ❖

As a college student, you may find it difficult to balance everything in your life. Sometimes it is difficult to get everything done. It is important for you to manage your time so you can do well in school, at work, and in your personal life. It is easy to forget to plan time for having fun as well! But if you work all the time and don't relax and have fun, you will become burned out and won't enjoy school as much.

But how can you do it all? You've got to manage your time well. One way to do that is to make and use a to-do list (see page 23). This will help keep you on track. It is also wise to not over-extend yourself. Before you agree to do a lot of activities that take up your free time, it is smart to stop and think. Will these activities prevent me from having enough time to study for exams? Or will they interfere with my leisure time? These are important questions! Think about these activities:

Activity	Is this important to you?	Why or why not?
Beginning work on paper due at end of semester		
Having a lunch date with my friends every week		
Working 20 hours a week at my job		
Other:		

Student signature

Date completed

Counselor comments and feedback: _____

Counselor signature

Date

