

# Embarking on the Journey—5 tips for a good start

Have you ever started on a long hike only to realize that you neglected to bring enough water or that you wore the wrong shoes? Preparation can make the difference between an enjoyable trek through the woods or a miserable *I-can't-wait-for-this-to-end* journey. Your academic journey is not very different. Good preparation in the beginning of the semester can reduce stress and anxiety later on.



## Tip #1: Get a planner (and use it)



Time management is the *not-so-secret* ingredient to college success. Knowing how to allocate time for your spiritual life, social life, and academic life will help you to maintain balance. A planner can be a helpful tool in managing time well. If you opt for a paper planner (highly recommended), look for one with both a monthly (or semester) and a weekly overview.

- Get out your syllabi and your planner. Choose a separate colour pen for each class.
- Write your major assignments and exams in your planner. Also write in any events that will take you away from campus or limit your study time.
- Do you have multiple assignments due at the same time or near an event? Create a plan to stagger work on each assignment.
- Next, use the weekly overviews to write in readings and other smaller assignments. For bigger assignments, start scheduling in time to work on them a few weeks in advance of the due date.

## Tip #2: Develop a study routine (and stick to it)

Once you've filled in your calendar, you can start to plan your week. Block out times of the day that you are in class, at work, or have other commitments. Then aim to block off 1-2 hours of study time per week for each credit you are taking.

Number of Credit Hours	Estimated time needed for studying
3 credit hours	3-6 hours
6 credit hours	6-12 hours
9 credit hours	9-18 hours
12 credit hours	12-24 hours
15 credit hours	15-30 hours

Fall 2009	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 AM	CHEM 101 LAB N1 (30376)		BIOC 107 LAB O19 (30399) BE CW 102		
9:00 AM		CHEM 101 LEC N1 (30344) C EL 60		CHEM 101 LEC N1 (30344) C EL 60	BIOC 107 SEM E12 (39837) SEM E16
10:00 AM					MATH 113 LAB K7 (30326)
11:00 AM	BIOC 107 LEC A1 (32934) M1 EL 001	MATH 113 LEC N1 (31287) TL B 2	BIOC 107 LEC A1 (32934) M1 EL 001	MATH 113 LEC R1 (31287) TL B 2	BIOC 107 LEC A1 (32934) M1 EL 001
12:00 PM		BIOC 122 LEC A1 (30981) MC L 4		BIOC 122 LEC A1 (30981) MC L 4	
1:00 PM	BIOC 100 LEC A1 (31818) TL 12		BIOC 100 LEC A1 (31818) TL 12		BIOC 100 LEC A1 (31818) TL 12
2:00 PM		CHEM 101 SEM L12 (30355)			

Don't underestimate the time you will need. Please note: Your study time will be more effective if you are able to block off 4-5 one-hour study sessions throughout the day rather than one long block of time.

### Tip #3: Know where to find help (and use it as needed)

Taking a new journey can be a daunting task. If you were going on a wilderness trek, you would likely consult maps, expert trekkers, equipment suppliers, and others who have hiked the path. Your academic journey is no different. We don't expect you to come to Briercrest knowing everything you need to successfully navigate this journey. We are here to help you along the way. Here are some places to go for support:

Where to go:	What you will find
Professors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Help with course specific assignment expectations</li><li>▪ Answering questions about course content</li></ul>
Academic Resource Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ General help with format guides, writing organization, time management, test preparation, etc.</li><li>▪ Connection to tutors, group study sessions, and academic coaching</li></ul>
Writing Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Writing support</li></ul>
Archibald Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Help with library resources</li><li>▪ Help with evaluating sources for credibility</li><li>▪ Help with getting resources not available in the Archibald Library</li></ul>
Counseling Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Mental health and well-being resources</li></ul>

### Tip #4: Transition to academic writing (see #3 if you need help)



You will quickly find that many of your Briercrest courses require a fair amount of writing. If you did not have a lot of writing instruction in high school, or if you have been out of school for a while, you may appreciate some extra help. There are several resources available to you.

- Academic Honesty Course: All new students are required to work through the modules on Canvas. This resource is designed to help you learn to avoid plagiarism.
- ENG 100/ENG 101: It is highly recommended that new college students take ENG 100/ENG 101 in their first year. Both courses will help you hone your writing skills.
- Format Guides: Get familiar with the [Briercrest format guides](#). These give basic information on how to cite your sources and format your papers. Another helpful resource is Purdue OWL's [website](#).
- Research Papers 101: This series of step-by-step instructions is available [online](#) or in the Academic Resource Centre.

### Tip #5: Read professor feedback (and apply it)

Carefully read professor feedback on marked assignments. This feedback can help you improve future papers and assignments. If you aren't sure what a comment means, ask your professor. Professors desire to help you grow as a scholar. Find their offices and visit them often. Many students report that relationships with professors are one of the highlights of their time at Briercrest.

