

Recovering From a Bad Grade or Bad Semester

Your first bad grade or semester can come as a complete surprise. You may feel discouraged or start to question your ability to do well in college.

College differs from high school in many ways. One being that the responsibility of learning falls upon you as the student rather than the instructor to teach you. Prior study habits may no longer work in this new environment.

So what do you do now?

- Recognize that you are feeling discouraged and this is a normal reaction to the situation.
- Change pessimistic talk into optimistic statements. Remember what you learned instead of how you were graded on it. Also, remember that the situation is temporary and you can prepare to do better next time.
- Learn from the experience. Students who are continuously unsuccessful tend to blame instructors or outside sources for their short-comings. Ask yourself what can be learned from your current situation. Next ask yourself what you can do differently next time.
- Read the professor or TA's comments and go back over the paper or test to see what needs to be done differently.
- Go to class and meet with your professors outside of class to ask for help with material you do not understand.
- Identify things that are keeping you from succeeding and create a plan to overcome them.
- Learn what resources are available to you and use them.
- Find one person on campus who cares about your success and ask them to help you.



