

**College of San Mateo**  
**Official Course Outline**

1. **COURSE ID:** COUN 124    **TITLE:** Effective College Learning  
**Units:** 3.0 units    **Hours/Semester:** 48.0-54.0 Lecture hours; and 96.0-108.0 Homework hours  
**Method of Grading:** Grade Option (Letter Grade or Pass/No Pass)  
**Recommended Preparation:**  
    Eligibility for ENGL 100, or ENGL 105
  
2. **COURSE DESIGNATION:**  
**Degree Credit**  
**Transfer credit:** CSU  
**AA/AS Degree Requirements:**  
    CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E5d. Career Exploration and Self-Development
  
3. **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:**  
**Catalog Description:**  
    A comprehensive examination of the sociological, psychological and physiological aspects of learning in the college environment. Students will develop self-awareness of internal beliefs, develop a basic understanding the physiological factors involved in learning. Students will examine the effects of stress, and address potential roadblocks to learning in the areas of college reading, writing and mathematics. Students will combine theory and practice to become successful learners and successful college students. A materials fee in the amount shown in the Schedule of Classes is payable upon registration.
  
4. **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):**  
    Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:
  1. articulate basic brain functions involved in learning.
  2. clearly define their own specific values, goals and motivation responsible for attending college.
  3. identify their own specific learning strengths and weaknesses, and develop a plan for improvement in college performance.
  4. identify specific study strategies to implement in their learning process.
  
5. **SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:**  
    Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:
  1. Distinguish between fixed vs growth mindsets and analyze how mindset attitudes and beliefs affect learning.
  2. Identify the components of self-regulated learning and explain how they contribute to academic success.
  3. Examine values and create short-term and long- term SMART goals to balance different areas of life.
  4. Develop an understanding of basic brain function as it relates to learning strategies.
  5. Explain how the brain processes information for storage in working and long-term memory.
  6. Describe active listening and reading strategies and analyze their application to learning.
  7. Apply active reading techniques to college reading assignments.
  8. Develop an understanding of college level writing expectations, and the writing process.
  9. Address common myths and beliefs about college level mathematics, and identify specific strategies to increase success in college level mathematics.
  10. Identify the effects of active listening on information processing.
  11. Differentiate note-taking methods, focusing on their application of memory concepts and their relevance in different learning contexts.
  12. Practice and demonstrate critical thinking skills in problem solving.
  13. Identify physical and psychological effects of stress, reflect on factors contributing to personal stress and formulate a stress management plan.
  14. Identify and utilize CSM resources to maximize success.
  
6. **COURSE CONTENT:**  
**Lecture Content:**
  - I. Mindsets and Principles of Successful Students
    - A. Fixed vs. Growth Mindsets
    - B. Supporting Research
    - C. Principles of Successful Students

# 1. Role of Metacognition to Improve Student learning

## II. Self-regulated Learning

### A. Theory of Self-regulated Learning

1. Behavioral Habits
2. Physical Habits

### III. Motivation

#### A. Locus of Control

#### B. Maslow's Pyramid - Hierarchy of Needs

1. Deficiency Needs
2. Growth Needs

### IV. Values, Goal-Setting, and Time Management

#### A. Examining and Balancing Values

1. Societal Expectations

#### B. Setting SMART Goals

#### C. Time Management

### V. Overview of Physiological Factors Involved in Learning

#### A. How the human brain processes information

#### B. Steps of Information Processing

1. Encoding
2. Storing
3. Retrieval

### VI. Learning Theories

#### A. Understanding Learning Theories

#### B. Assessing Your Learning Strengths and Weaknesses

#### C. Understanding your Learning Process

#### D. Learning Modalities in Relation to Information Processing, Brain Function, and Learning

### VII. Information Processing for Storage in Memory

#### A. Knowledge

1. Declarative/Explicit
2. Non-declarative/Implicit

#### B. Memory

1. Cognitive Psychology Definition
2. Neuroscience Definition

#### C. Capturing Information Through Multiple Sensory Experiences

#### D. Stages of Memory

#### E. Processing of Memories

#### F. Memory Improvement Strategies

1. Encoding for Storage

### IX. Reading to Learn

#### A. College Reading Expectations

#### B. Reading Myths

#### C. Assessing College Reading Skills

#### D. Reading Strategies

1. How to Read a College Textbook
  - a. Active Reading Techniques
  - b. Applying Critical Thinking Skills
  - c. Multi-sensory Expressions

#### E. Reading Strategies in Relation to Information Processing, Brain Function, and Learning

### X. College Writing Strategies

#### A. Understanding Expectations for College Writing

#### B. Examining the Writing Process

#### C. Improving College Writing Skills

1. Editing
2. Punctuation
3. Basic Rules of Grammar
4. Transition Words

### XI. College Math Strategies

#### A. Your Math Mindset & Beyond

1. Fear of Math

- a. Assessing Your Comfort With Mathematics
    - b. Addressing Internal Beliefs
  - 2. Problem Solving in Mathematics
  - 3. Math Specific Learning Strategies
- XII. Active Listening
  - A. Obstacles /Distractions
  - B. Passive vs. Active Listening
  - C. Strategic Note-Taking
  - D. Active Listening in Relation to Information Processing, Brain Function, and Learning
- XIII. Critical Thinking
  - A. Problem Solving
  - B. Bloom's Taxonomy - Levels of Thinking
    - 1. Lower Order Thinking Skills
    - 2. Higher Order Thinking Skills
- XIV. Emotional Intelligence, Stress Management and a Healthy Brain
  - A. Emotional Intelligence
  - B. Managing Stress, Anxiety, and Being Overwhelmed
    - 1. The Brain and Stress
      - a. Sociological & Psychological Factors
    - 2. Rational-Emotive Theory
    - 3. Stress Management Strategies
      - a. Stress Management Resources and Practice
      - b. Finding Balance
      - c. Stress Management in Relation to Information Processing, Brain Function, and Learning
  - C. Improving Concentration
    - 1. Managing Internal and External Distractions
    - 2. Concentration Strategies
  - D. Mindfulness
  - E. Brain Health
    - 1. Nutrition
    - 2. Role of Exercise
    - 3. Sleep for Consolidation
    - 4. Brain Health in Relation to Information Process, Brain Function, and Learning

## 7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Typical methods of instruction may include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Activity
- C. Discussion
- D. Guest Speakers

## 8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

### **Writing Assignments:**

Reflection papers on topics such as: students' educational goals, educational experiences, learning strengths and weaknesses, intrinsic and external motivations, and stress management. Research papers on learning theory, & brain anatomy and function. Development of a personalized plan for improving college level study skills.

### **Reading Assignments:**

Reading is assigned from instructor developed materials, assigned textbooks, open-source publications, and related articles.

### **Other Outside Assignments:**

Students will complete instructor determined assessments and worksheets to help students develop an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses with learning.

## 9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Representative methods of evaluation may include:

- A. Class Participation
- B. Class Performance
- C. Class Work
- D. Exams/Tests
- E. Group Projects
- F. Homework
- G. Oral Presentation
- H. Papers
- I. Portfolios
- J. Quizzes
- K. Research Projects
- L. Written examination

10. **REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):**

Possible textbooks include:

- A. Skip Downing. *On Course: Strategies for Creating Success in College, Career & Life*, 9th ed. Cengage Learning, 2019
- B. Dale Schunk. *Learning Theories: An Educational Perspective*, 8th ed. Pearson, 2019
- C. David A. Sousa. *How the Brain Learns Mathematics*, 2nd ed. Corwin, 2014
- D. David A. Sousa. *How the Brain Learns*, ed. Corwin, 2016
- E. Carey, B.. *How We Learn - The Surprising Truth About When, Where, and Why It Happens*, ed. New York: Random House, 2015
- F. Boaler, J.. *Mathematical Mindsets*, 1st ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass - A Wiley Brand, 2016
- G. Downing, S.. *On Course: Strategies for Creating Success in College and in Life, Study Skills Plus*, 3rd ed. Cengage Learning, 2017
- H. Dweck, C.. *Mindset - the New Psychology of Success; How We Can Learn to Fulfill Our Potential*, Updated ed. New York: Ballantine Books, 2016
- I. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. *How People Learn II: Learners, Contexts, and Cultures*, ed. Washington D.C.: National Academy Press, 2018
- J. Oakley, B.. *Mindshift: Break through Obstacles to Learning and Discover Your Hidden Potential*, ed. New York: Penguin Random House, 2017

Other:

- A. Department and instructor designed handouts and handbook as deemed appropriate.
- B. Open source resources as appropriate.
- C. CSM College Catalog & Schedule of Classes (current academic year)

**Origination Date:** September 2020

**Curriculum Committee Approval Date:** October 2020

**Effective Term:** Fall 2021

**Course Originator:** Kevin Sinarle