Six Easy Steps to Improve Math Performance

FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES, SEEK OUT HELP, PRACTICE, AND YOU WILL CHANGE THE ODDS.

1. Understand Why Students Struggle: Characteristics of College Math
   - The curriculum progresses twice as fast as it does in high school.
   - Most of the deep learning takes place outside of class.
   - Math requires sequential skill learning.
   - In addition to understanding the math, students must be able to complete assignments in a set time period.
   - Students must demonstrate that they understand the concepts, not just mimic the problem solving.
   - Math is a foreign language.
   - Each instructor teaches differently and does not always consider how students learn best.

2. First Things First: Take a Math Study Skills Evaluation
   - To determine your strengths and weaknesses in mathematics, go to www.academicsuccess.com/stdyskil/index.php.
   - To learn about your results, go to SACC to meet with a math study skills consultant, who will show you how to improve your habits.

3. Take Effective Notes: Here's How
   - Divide your page into three.
   - Record keywords/concepts in the left column.
   - Record examples of each problem in the middle column.
   - Record explanation/rules—the reasons for each step—in the right column.

Sample Note Page

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEYWORDS</th>
<th>EXAMPLES</th>
<th>EXPLANATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integers</td>
<td>-2, -1, 0, 1, 2</td>
<td>Positive and negative counting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rational Numbers</td>
<td>2/3, 3/8, 5/6</td>
<td>A quotient of two integers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Ten Steps for Completing Math Homework
   - Review related textbook material.
   - Review appropriate lecture notes.
   - Do homework neatly.
   - Write down every step of the problem.
   - Understand the reasons for those steps.
   - For difficult problems, repeat the steps above and review similar problems. Or call another student, see a tutor or teacher, or start a study group.

Interested in starting a study group? Go to www.baruch.cuny.edu/sacc/collaborative.htm to learn how.

- Always finish by working problems successfully.
- Recall or write down important concepts.
- Make up note cards for difficult concepts.
- Don’t get behind in your homework!