

How to ~~survive~~ thrive in c

In a new environment, it is easy to feel lost — in the classroom, on campus or around the community. The following tips can help when students make the transition to the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at Oklahoma State University.

“Developing resources in and out of the classroom is important for students,” said Mary Ann Harris, CASNR student development coordinator.

Meet me at the library!

The OSU Edmon Low Library is one of those resources. It has three tiers of study areas to accommodate students’ needs: group study allows conversation, quiet study involves moderate conversation and silent study areas encourage no conversation, according to the OSU library guide. Also, meeting rooms are available upon reservation.

“Most of the time, I end up studying at the library,” said Chelsea Hummel, biochemistry and molecular biology sophomore. “The different-sized rooms are perfect for small or large groups. Or, if you are studying alone, it is usually quiet and easy to concentrate in the designated quiet rooms.”

Harris said study groups can encourage social interaction while facilitating academics.

Utilizing study groups, studying strategies, goal setting and adviser relations are among the topics discussed in AG 1011: Agricultural Orientation, a class devoted to enhancing students’ academic success and teaching them effective study habits.

“It is always interesting to learn about and from others as we discuss our personal approaches to studying,” Hummel said.

Students can benefit from the vari-

ous studying strategies and learning styles of others while working together, Harris said.

Group projects found in CASNR classes provide an environment for students to understand each other’s learning styles.

“Some students learn better when explaining material, while others gain knowledge by listening to the process over and over,” Harris said. “The interaction between students can promote academic growth for all involved.”

Beyond the Books

Plenty of learning happens outside of the classroom, said Harris. Students need to gain real-life experiences in every situation while in college.

“It is important to have extracurricular activities to support academics,” Harris said. “Many types of organizational involvement are available within the college. Professional associations, special interest clubs and honorary agricultural organizations are just a few of the opportunities.”

CASNR offers more than 30 different clubs and organizations for students to join. In addition to its own slate of officers, each club or organization is allowed two CASNR Student Council representatives. These individuals serve as liaisons between their respective groups and other college-sponsored clubs.

“Although diverse, each group promotes academic and social development,” Harris said.

The CASNR Student Council works as a link between CASNR and students studying across campus. Two CASNR student council executive members serve as senators for the student-run, campuswide Student Government Association. The senators

open communication between CASNR and SGA.

“Some students enjoy campus-wide activities, while others like to surround themselves with students of the same interests,” Harris said. “But it is hard to say which degree of participation is best. The individual comfort levels of students usually relate to their involvement.”

More than 300 clubs and organizations across the OSU campus are open to student membership.

“I like to be active in campuswide activities, such as SGA, because I can tell others about what CASNR has to offer,” Hummel said. “I can also learn from students with majors in colleges besides my own.”

Career Prep!

Students seek help in career placement and planning for the ultimate job search while an undergraduate, said Amy Gazaway, CASNR career services coordinator.

“CASNR Career Services offers assistance in résumé critiques, career fairs, company research, informative workshops and career-related resources,” Gazaway said. “Those resources include free résumé paper as well as portfolios, business cards and thank-you notes at a reduced price.”

CASNR Career Services encourages students to participate in career fairs to learn about internships as well as part-time and full-time jobs with agricultural companies and organizations on and off campus.

“Some students take on part-time or even full-time jobs while in college,” Gazaway said. “Hours worked can advance career-building skills. As students near graduation, the job search process becomes real. Through

college

By Stacy Whipple, Waynoka, Okla.

on- and off-campus jobs, students have the opportunity to improve interpersonal relations, time-management and competence levels, which are beneficial in all stages of life."

Students enrolled in CASNR can work in offices, college labs, farms and greenhouses. An extensive, university-wide search for student employment can be found through OSU Career Services.

Around Town

CASNR and OSU offer various opportunities to become involved in the Stillwater community.

"At some point of their lives, members of society should give back to the community," Harris said. "Service learning is important to the development of students. It is a great balance of giving back to the community of which you are a part. A neat aspect of being involved in the community is that both sides of a project grow from the experience."

Organized activities include The Big Event, Into the Streets, Relay for Life and Habitat for Humanity. Through these events, students are able to work with community members who need assistance.

"College is a great time to collaborate with community members and start to understand the importance of that alliance," Harris said. "Working to improve the overall look of a city or just attending a community-sponsored event can benefit a student."

Various Allied Arts performances, social gatherings emphasizing diverse cultures and community-linked campus activities can be found in an OSU Mortar Board, a planner produced by students with students in mind.

"Cultural awareness is an important aspect of developing people beyond their natural comfort zone," Harris said. "There is no better time than college to explore the world because unique resources are around campus and the community, just waiting to become an experience."

More than staying in shape

It is important for students to remember their health affects various aspects of college, including grades as well as involvement.

"Most college students find themselves lacking in efforts to maintain a proper health routine," said Marilyn Hutchison, who has been a registered nurse for 31 years. "The best advice would be to drink plenty of water, get adequate amounts of sleep, take multivitamins, eat fruits and vegetables, and exercise at least three times a week to ensure the best performance in college."

Students can seek help with fitness and nutrition at the OSU Colvin Recreational Center.

"Working out at the Colvin is a different experience each time," Hummel said. "Sometimes I like to just play some casual basketball, but other times, I go to take a break from school and get some serious exercise."

The CRC offers indoor and outdoor courts

and fields, an indoor track, machine and free weights, dance studios, multipurpose rooms and two swimming pools for student enjoyment. A rock-climbing wall, golf simulator and state-of-the-art technology also can be found in the CRC. Staff members serve as personal trainers and assistants for those seeking health advice.

"While students should strive to maintain their bodies physically, it is also important to balance emotions and stress levels," Hutchison said. "A strong support system including friends and family can encourage growth and provide guidance in times of struggle."

The OSU Seretean Wellness Center offers a health education program to address health issues and concerns. The program features peer educators, trained to promote positive health behaviors, increase awareness of campus and community resources, encourage the use of critical thinking during decision-making processes, and create a support network for students.

Building a support network and developing a positive attitude can benefit a student's experience in a new environment, such as college. Striving to be active personally, on campus and within the community will help students thrive in college and years after graduation. ☺

For more information on student development or involvement opportunities, visit the Student Success Center located in 103 Agricultural Hall.

