

Academic Recovery: The Road Back to Academic Success

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There are many reasons why students fall out of “good standing” in their academic pursuits (see Factors Limiting Success side bar). When this happens, thoughts that it may be impossible to recover are common. These thoughts can lead to general feelings of negativity toward school, pushing a student further and further away from his or her academic interests. Whatever the reasons are that led to unsatisfactory academic progress, there is hope for bringing that GPA back up and regaining satisfaction in one’s academic pursuits. Embracing the following 12 Steps to Academic Recovery after a period of academic struggles can help guide you away from self-defeating thoughts. With these affirmations in place, and once a real commitment is made, you can begin to find success again in the classroom and beyond.

The Road to Recovery—12 Steps to Academic Recovery—J. Oelschlager, Psy.D.

The following 12 steps serve as a Guide and Commitment to the Recovery Process:

1. I accept that my academic life has become unmanageable and is interfering with my ability to achieve my goals.
2. I recognize that I have developed counter-productive and/or self-defeating attitudes that interfere with the achievement of my academic goals.
3. I will engage in an ongoing inventory and/or self-exploration to identify these counter productive behaviors and self-defeating attitudes.
4. I will not allow my pride or feelings of vulnerability to interfere with being honest with myself regarding my difficulties.
5. Once identified through honest exploration, I will implement a plan to make a positive change in these behaviors and attitudes.
6. I will challenge my tendency toward denial, excuses, placing blame and rationalization for my academic difficulties.
7. I will positively seek assistance from Florida Tech Academic Support Services (for tutoring, etc.), CAPS (for supportive counseling, study skills training, etc.) and academic advisers when I cannot modify my behaviors and attitudes.
8. I recognize that there will be a tendency to revert back to past behaviors.
9. To prevent these relapses, I will admit to myself and another person the exact nature of my academic difficulties.
10. I recognize that my tendency to engage in short-term thinking and immediate gratification is a roadblock toward my long-term academic and career goals.
11. I will not forget the past that resulted in my academic difficulties, but will be forgiving of the past so that I can move forward in a positive direction.
12. Having developed a realization regarding my academic difficulties, I will make an attempt to carry this message to my peers who may be struggling academically as I did.

Factors Limiting Success:

Do your grades and motivation suffer as a result of any of these or other related factors?

Lack of Strong Academic Goals/Direction

- No clearly defined goals for future
- Unsure of interests
- Concern about fit with chosen major

Time Management Problems

- Unsure how to schedule time efficiently
- Too many hours in social engagements
- Procrastination tendency
- Working too many hours in outside job

Poor Study Skills

- General inefficient approach to studying
- Poor organizational skills
- Poor note taking abilities
- Difficulty understanding course content

Personal Issues

- Overwhelming stress
- Relationship problems
- Emotional difficulties
- Family problems

Health-Related Problems

- Substance use
- Disability
- Chronic fatigue
- Sleep issues
- Attendance due to health

Use a Map While Travelling the Road!

Although you may have a general destination of recovery, it's easy to get lost without a map. So, following a commitment to the recovery process, mapping out a plan and strong follow through with that plan will guarantee success! Because everyone has different factors contributing to poor academic performance and different obstacles in the face of recovery, a personalized recovery plan is essential. You'll want to set specific goals in writing (your map!), check-in with yourself regularly (as well as someone else, see below) on your progress toward your goals and adjust your efforts where needed, and anticipate roadblocks. Continually referring back to the 12 Steps to Academic Recovery will help guide you when roadblocks do emerge.

What the scientific research says about a structured recovery (that is, having a map):

Data suggests that students involved in a formal academic recovery program aimed at goal setting, developing time management skills, organization, and balancing academic and social demands, have significantly better academic performance the semester following being placed on academic probation than do students not involved in an academic recovery program. (Source: www.lyncburg.edu/x4251.xml)

Research also suggests that counseling for personal issues can assist in enabling a student to return to academic success. Past research at Florida Tech Counseling and Psychological Services revealed a five year graduation rate of 86% for those who received services at CAPS vs. 51% for all students enrolled in 1998.

Don't Travel the Road Alone

Because everyone who struggles academically does so for different reasons, counselors at CAPS can assist you in developing a personalized plan for your academic recovery. Moreover, once you've developed your plan counselors are good sources of support in your efforts to implement your plan; they can help you maintain focus and be realistic in your efforts toward recovery. With the aid of your map, counselors can provide you with the skills necessary to efficiently navigate the terrain.

The Road Awaits You Now

Don't wait to start your academic recovery; the sooner the better. Although "academic recovery" implies significant academic problems, strategies geared toward maximizing academic success can be implemented with even slight deviations from the road to graduation. Being proactive at the first signs of academic trouble may prevent one from getting lost on their journey.

If you need assistance with starting your recovery, call or stop into the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) office on campus today.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

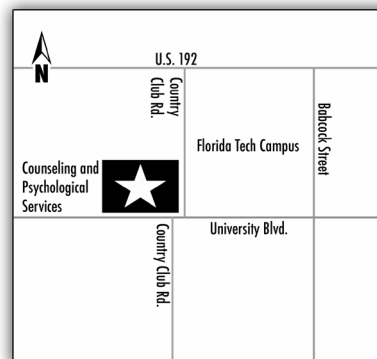
CAPS is a counseling facility operated by Florida Institute of Technology's School of Psychology. Its goals are to promote the best possible academic, vocational and emotional health. Our services are available to students and their immediate families. Counseling services are available on campus at CAPS (674-8050), off campus at the Women's Center (727-2200) or through your private health care provider.

Center Hours

Monday–Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. • Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Location

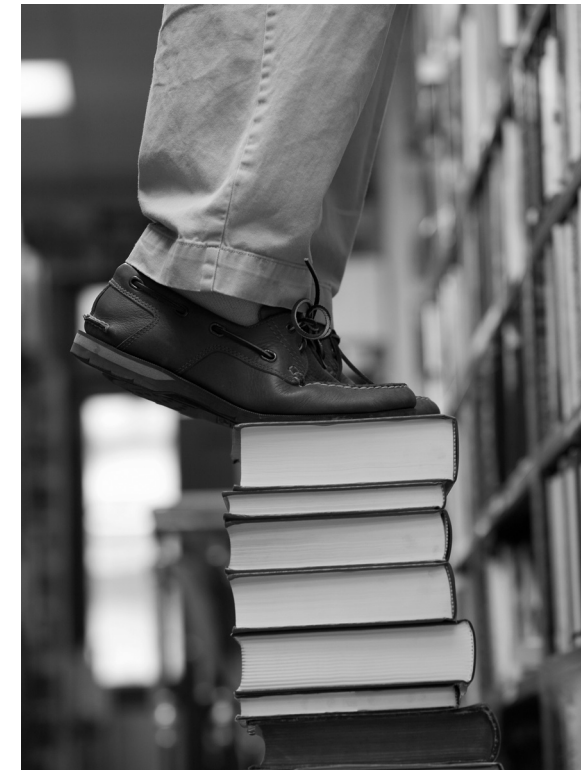
Intersection of Country Club Road and University Boulevard, west of Babcock Street



For additional counseling, academic success resources and helpful articles, visit www.fit.edu/caps or call 674-8050.

PY-462-807

Academic Recovery



Florida Institute of Technology
Counseling and Psychological Services