Solutions for Success Workbook for iSchool Students

The challenges students face coming back to school as adult learners, and especially as working adults, can vary from academic readiness, to time management, finances, work obligations, family care, sudden family illness or injury, relationship issues and a host of other obstacles.

Many adult students experience some form of academic difficulty during their academic careers. For some students, academic difficulty may be minor, occurring only as they struggle with those one or two courses in their program that prove most challenging for them, or occurring when unanticipated life events throw them off course. For others, academic difficulty and obstacles may stem from lack of preparedness as adult learners -- skills which can be sharpened through self-reflection and a shift in priorities.

Improving your persistence to graduate is the ultimate goal of this self-paced workbook. We care about your success, and are here to assist in offering you the necessary personal and academic tools to help you fine-tune your approach to negotiating graduate school. This workbook was developed in alignment with SJSU's Four Pillars of Student Success.

Solutions for Success Student Outcomes

The workbook will help you to:

- Identify barriers to success and develop a personalized academic success plan by using a Growth Mindset.
- Understand academic progress policies.
- Develop a clear understanding of the various academic support resources provided by SJSU while identifying where to turn for further resources.

Please complete the self-reflection exercises in this workbook and then complete the short assessment/survey at the end.

Part 1 Why are You Here?

Self-Assessment: Identifying Motivations, Barriers and Goals for Change

Exercise 1: What are your motivations for being in school? *Check those that apply:*

- ☐ Family pressure
- ☐ Want to earn more money
- ☐ Scholarly inquiry

- ☐ Advancement at work
- ☐ Want to learn new technology

- ☐ Coworkers are in the MLIS/MARA program
- ☐ Explore career path

What are your long-term educational and career goals?

What are your current life priorities? *Some examples might be*

- ☐ Work/Job
- ☐ Family
- ☐ Outside interests

- ☐ Health
- ☐ Personal

- ☐ Education
- ☐ Money

My Top 3 Priorities are:

1.

2.

3.

Was graduate school within the top three?

When there are many more competing priorities besides school, success in graduate school will be challenging.

Exercise 2: Identify Barriers

Reflection

Check mark which barriers you currently face as a student:

Situational Barriers

- ☐ Transportation issues
- ☐ Lack of funding
- ☐ Lack of study space

- ☐ Lack of support from family
- ☐ Working too many hours
- ☐ Unexpected life event

- ☐ Lack of support from employer
- ☐ Childcare

Institutional Barriers

- ☐ Fee schedule
- ☐ Technology issues

- ☐ Classes I've chosen don't reflect my interests

- ☐ Problem with instructor

Dispositional Barriers

- ☐ Procrastination/ Decision making skills
- ☐ Emotional health/ Fatigue
- ☐ Lack of Confidence

- ☐ Study Skills
- ☐ Personal issues/Crisis management skills
- ☐ Time management

- ☐ Writing skills
- ☐ Physical illness
- ☐ Social life demands

Extension Activity: Discuss with your partner, close friend or family member a time when you have felt successful. What conditions helped you achieve this success? How were you able to overcome barriers that you faced at that time?

Exercise 4: Set Goals for Change

Write down 2 school-related goals you want to accomplish in the coming semester.

Before you write down your goals, try to think about:

1) What changes do I need to make to reach this goal?
2) What positive factors will help me reach these goals?
3) What obstacles do I have to overcome to reach my goals? (Working too many hours, financial aid, anxiety, unsure about career, etc.)

Questions to ponder: How hard do I want to work to achieve this goal? How important is this goal to me and to my priorities? Is graduate school right for me at this time?

My Goal_____

Action Step 1_____

Action Step 2_____

Action Step 3_____

When will I accomplish these steps? _____

My personal reward upon accomplishment _____

My Goal_____

Action Step 1_____

Action Step 2_____

Action Step 3_____

When will I accomplish these steps?   _____

My personal reward upon accomplishment _____

Part 2 Train your Brain

Understanding Time Management and Habit Formation: Developing Academic Resiliency through a Growth Mindset
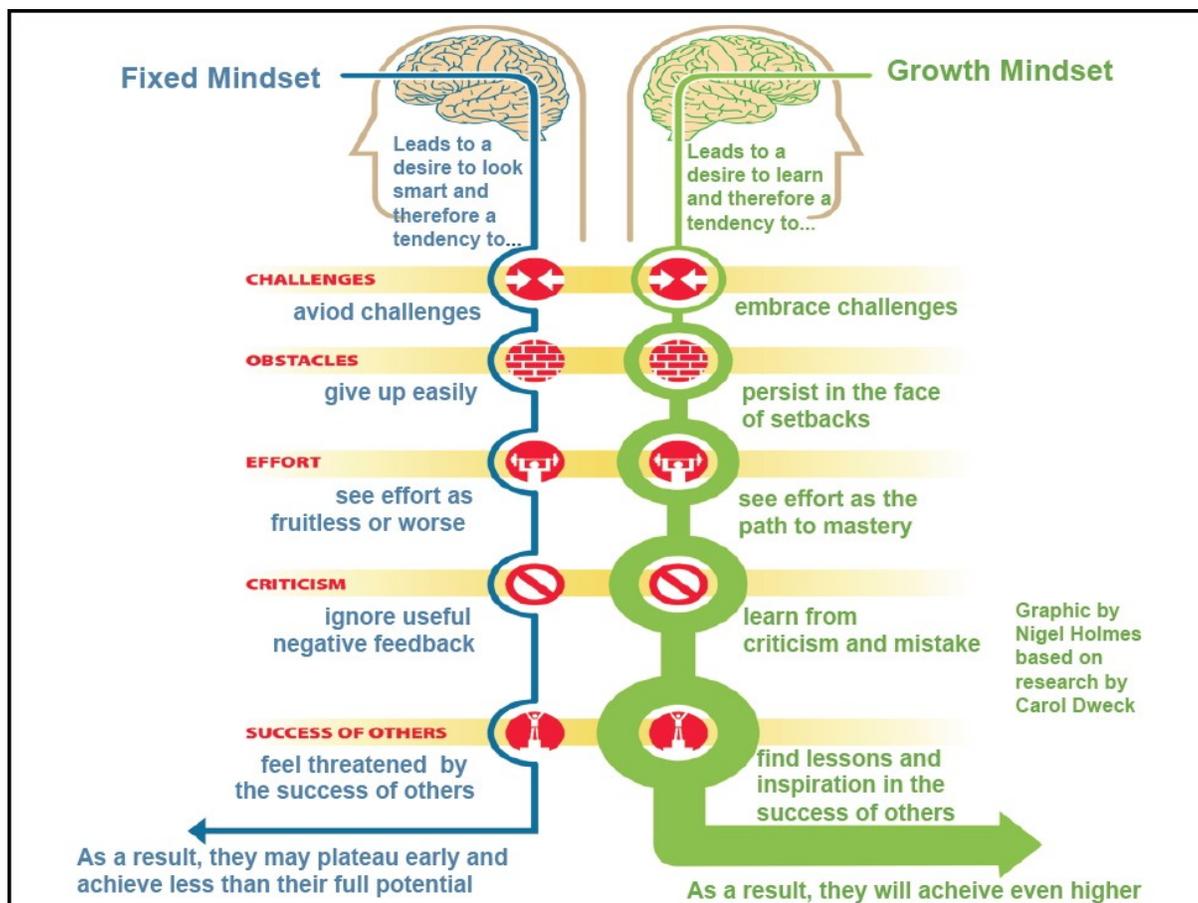
Stages of Change

Exercise 5: Think about the above graphic as it relates to a person who is thinking about weight loss. What motivational factors influence a person to get through the hardest first few stages of change? (Stages of Change: 1. Not ready yet, 2. Thinking about it, 3. Preparing for Action, 4. Taking Action and 5. Achieving your Goal.)

Think about what stage of change you are currently in right now for the two goals that you have identified in Exercise 4. Most adult learners are motivated by self-satisfaction, enjoyment and value. How will you know when you've reached the outcomes you desire? How do you want to be held accountable? How will you celebrate your milestones?

Developing a Growth Mindset (**video**) will improve your odds of success with any new habit or goal you would like to achieve.

Fixed Mindset — Leads to a desire to look smart and therefore a tendency to...

Growth Mindset — Leads to a desire to learn and therefore a tendency to...

CHALLENGES — aviod challenges | embrace challenges

OBSTACLES — give up easily | persist in the face of setbacks

EFFORT — see effort as fruitless or worse | see effort as the path to mastery

CRITICISM — ignore useful negative feedback | learn from criticism and mistake

SUCCESS OF OTHERS — feel threatened by the success of others | find lessons and inspiration in the success of others

As a result, they may plateau early and achieve less than their full potential

As a result, they will acheive even higher

Graphic by Nigel Holmes based on research by Carol Dweck

Part 3 Understanding Academic Policies and Developing your Support System

Students on [academic or administrative probation](), or who are starting to experience academic difficulties, have the responsibility to make strategic use of a range of support resources available.

Exercise 6: Place a check beside those resources you have already utilized.

☐ [iSchool's Technology Help Resource Center]()

☐ Personal counseling from your community health center

☐ [Self-HelpTips]()anda myriadoffreeAppsfordevelopingpersonalskills from [TimeManagement]() to [Mindfulness]()

☐ [Accessible Education Center]()

☐ [Veteran's Services]()

☐ [Career Counseling]() with iSchool's Career Liaison

☐ Course Planning Support from your iSchool [Faculty Pathway Advisor]()

☐ [Writing Tutoring by Appointment]()

☐ [INFO 203 How To Videos]()

Challenge: Highlight at least two of the above resources you can leverage in obtaining your goals from Exercise 4.

Part 4 Creating your Academic Success Action Plan

Exercise 7. For students on academic probation, utilize the iSchool Probation Calculator, and your unofficial transcript available through MySJSU, to explore how taking various scenarios of units, and achieving certain grades in those courses will impact the goal of bringing the cumulative GPA back to 3.0. Remember the quickest way off academic probation is to earn all A's in the semesters following.

Refer to the tips on our iSchool Degree Progress Planning page, and planning tools in the Advising Toolkit to inform your decision about how many units you should attempt to take in your plan, and when courses are planned to be on offer. **Academic Progress can impact your financial aid award package.** If you have questions about your financial aid status and the impact of taking fewer units on your award, please contact SJSU Financial Aid and Scholarships directly for advisement. iSchool Student Services will not be able to provide you with financial aid counseling. Using iSchool's Student Success Planner (**see tutorial below**), create an individualized plan for the coming semesters. (You should include time off for personal necessity, if needed, in your plan. See: Semester Leaves and the Seven Year Limit). There are pages for advisor notes, Goal Planning and Course Plans.

> Remember there are a myriad of FAQs and other resources available to you in the iSchool Advising and Administration Portal on Canvas.
>
> **IMPORTANT**
> **Quiz Survey Link**
> **Once you have completed this workbook please access the brief Assessment/Quiz, so that we may better evaluate this self-paced workbook.**