

TIPS FROM SUNY CORTLAND NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS

- Get involved with a club, organization, or another activity on campus, especially the Non-Traditional Students' Organization (NTSO). It creates connections and relationships that only enhance the achievements non-traditional students strive for. Leadership roles especially look good on the resume. :-)
- Time management is very important. Doing homework in between classes and working on class assignments ahead of time may alleviate the time constraints non-traditional students face.
- Get to know your professor and/or advisor.
- Get to know other non-traditional students and/or traditional students on campus. It helps to have a familiar face or two that you can talk with.
- Take advantage of all of resources available on campus.
- Manage your time wisely from the beginning of classes.
- Get your books as soon as possible. I have got mine by ordering them through the bookstore so that they are there ahead of time. This is called "prepacks".
- You need to get to school early so that you can get a parking space and wait for the bus to classes. Waiting for the bus is a pain, but you can do some studying in that time.
- Get to know your teachers and talk with them one on one.
- Do all your papers on time.
- The professors at Cortland have been wonderful and very accommodating when I've had health issues that interfered with my studies. Don't be afraid to talk with them about specific circumstances that arise due to unforeseen circumstances. Most will do whatever they can to help a student who is serious about learning.
- Take the time to meet with the Coordinator of Non-Traditional Student Support. This person is a wonderful resource and an understanding person who can assist in dealing with the pressures of returning to school after time away, as well as being familiar with the special needs of nontraditional students.

MORE TIPS FOR NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS

- Appreciate your own experience. Your life experiences can help you provide insights to class discussions that other students may not have.
- Have a support network. Make sure your family knows how earning your degree may impact in terms of schedules, finances, and how you would like them to support you during this period of your life.
- Be a role model! Juggling multiple roles while pursuing academic endeavors puts you in an admirable position. Let your children see how important school work is to you, and know that the way you prioritize your time to achieve your goals can positively influence others.
- Sit down and make a detailed schedule of your schoolwork that includes the time you want to set aside for class reading, dates to complete rough drafts of papers by, and more. Enter the information into your calendar or planner, and stick to it. Communicate your schedule to your family, and reward your children for not interrupting your study time.
- Start off on the right foot. The way you study during the first few weeks of the semester is often an indicator of the way in which you will study during the rest of the year, so begin your good study habits right away.
- Stay motivated! Why do you want to finish your degree? Write a list or find a picture that reminds you of your goal, and place it somewhere you will see it often.
- Study in groups with your classmates – this is one of the best ways to ensure success in the classroom.
- Get to know your professors and don't hesitate to talk to them after class or during office hours – they will appreciate your initiative! Utilizing campus resources such as the Academic Support and Achievement Program (ASAP) office, Career Services and the Writing Center can also boost your academic performance.
- Check out grants and scholarships on web sites such as www.fastweb.com and <http://www.cortland.edu/finadv/menuscholarships.html> - specific financial aid opportunities exist specifically for adult students.
- Take advantage of campus activities such as performances in the Dowd Fine Arts Theater, the Tomik and Woods Fitness Centers, and Recreational Sports. They are fun and affordable ways to get your family involved in your school life. It is also a great way to meet people and expand your network.
- Make sure a family member or friend has a copy of your class schedule in case they need to get a hold of you in an emergency. They can contact University Police at 607-753-2112.