

# Professors give students hints on passing their math classes

By Shannon Clary  
Staff Reporter

The math faculty gave students important tips on how to become successful in math, through a workshop.

On Oct. 3, three math faculty members held a workshop called "How to Succeed in a Math Class".

It was aimed to help students become more successful in math. Barbara Hunter, Terry Meerdink and Allan Walton were present to answer questions.

The atmosphere was very informal and the students were able to decide what was going to be discussed.

The first issue discussed was note taking. Many students believe they should copy down everything the teacher writes on the board.

The best advice the faculty had was not to write down every single word, but ahead of time read over the textbook, while taking notes.

Then when it is being taught in class it is not necessary to write mindlessly, the student will already have a general idea of what is being taught.

Another important issue was studying. The most important thing to remember about studying is to do it consistently, and not just the night before the test.

Also, to go over the notes and do practice problems from the book.

"Think of it like a game. If you practice a lot you will do well," said Barbara Hunter, a math professor.

Asking questions will get a student very far in the class. The faculty said the best students are not necessarily the ones who get the highest grades, but the ones who ask the most questions. Also, being there every day will help students be successful. When picking a math class make sure you can be there every day and you have time on your own to study.

The best piece of advice however has nothing to do with studying or note taking.

"Have confidence. People have a lot of anxiety. At Highline we have resources available. Believe that if you want to succeed, if you're willing to put effort into it, you can do extremely well," said Allan Walton, a math professor.

A good attitude will also help a student in math.

Stopping the negative talk such as "I hate math" and "I can't do it" will help a student feel more positive in math.

"It's acceptable in our society to say you hate math. Society needs to overcome that, it's all about attitude," said Terry Meerdink, a math professor.

Meerdink had an answer for why she thinks students have trouble in math.

"It is a vicious cycle. Teachers and parents don't stress it enough as they do reading and writing," Meerdink said.

Also, there is that constantly asked question of "When will I even use math in the real world?" Meerdink has an answer for that too.

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"You use math so much in the real world. It's all used out there. It gives you a logical way of thinking, even if it's not about math," said Meerdink.

She believes when students start having trouble in they don't receive enough encouragement. Her best advice is to start with lower level math classes and work your way up to the higher levels.

The math department is there to show support to anyone who shows they care.

The math department has many more workshops scheduled.

The next one is on Tuesday, Oct. 16. It will be about Student Success Stories in Mathematics, the time is TBA.

On Wednesday, Oct. 24 there will be an Overcoming Test Anxiety workshop at 2:30 p.m. the math resource center. All workshops will be held in the math resource center.

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