



HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR SCHOOL YEAR

Bethune SOS Seminar

Presenters: Sophia, Talia, Sarah

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- Note: This presentation contains hyperlinks to websites. The presentation will be posted online under the Bethune College Workshops webpage: <https://www.yorku.ca/colleges/bethune/events-workshops/workshops/>



MEET OUR MENTORS

Sophia L.

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Overview

- Why This Year Matters
- Reflecting on the Past
- Developing Goals
- Skills for Student Success
- Academics
- Social Skills
- Personal Life
- Q&A





Why This Year Matters

1st Year _____

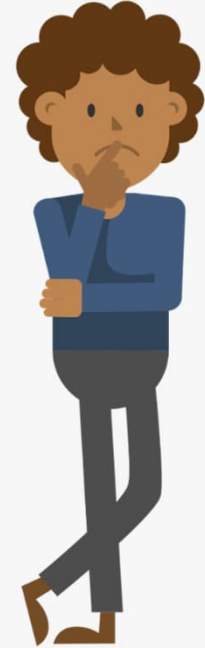
- **Transition period**
 - It may take some time to adjust to university life and find your rhythm.
- **Trial-and-error period**
 - You may discover that you may not enjoy your major. It is easier to explore courses in your first year to help you determine your academic and professional interests.
- **Set a strong foundation**
 - Mastering material from 1000 and 2000 level courses will significantly improve your learning experience for upper-year level courses.

2nd, 3rd, 4th... Year _____

- **Optimization time**
 - Once you figure out what works best, stick with it and try new things. University isn't just about attending lectures and writing finals.
- **Deep dive into your studies**
 - You are beginning to take courses that focus on one particular part of your area of study. There's often a wide selection, so start exploring!
- **Future plans**
 - Start considering your next steps. Professional schools, graduate studies, employment. These may need certain requirements and experiences you can develop during your undergrad.

Reflecting on the past

- **Ask yourself the following questions;** What worked well last year? What didn't work?
- **Identify strengths and areas for improvement**
 - E.g. You may have done really well in the past but you found that you spent a lot of time studying and you want to maximize your time because you want to join a club or play a sport



Developing Goals

- **What do you want to accomplish this year?**
 - **Use the S.M.A.R.T system:**
 - S = SPECIFIC
 - M = MEASURABLE
 - A = ATTAINABLE
 - R = RELEVANT
 - T = TIME-BASED/BOUND
- **Write down your goals**
 - Writing helps with recall.





SMART Goals

EXAMPLE SCENARIO: STUDENT WANTS TO IMPROVE GRADES

- **Specific** = *I will improve my grades by developing effective study habits and using campus resources such as Peer Tutors and PASS sessions.*
- **Measurable** = *I aim to increase my GPA by 0.5 points by the end of the semester and attend at least 5 PASS sessions this semester.*
- **Attainable** = *I will set aside 2 hours every day for focused study time and create a study schedule. If a concept taught in lecture is unclear or I am struggling with practice questions I will reach out to my professors, TAs and tutors as soon as possible to clarify my questions.*
- **Relevant** = *Improving my study habits and using available resources will help me understand material better and perform well on my assessments which translates into academic success.*
- **Time-based/bound** = *I will continuously be mindful of the grades I am receiving throughout the semester to put in additional work if needed to meet my goal by the end of the semester.*



Skills for Student Success

- **Time Management** e.g. develop a schedule, prioritize tasks, avoid procrastination
- **Adaptability** e.g. account for challenges and changes in your schedule
- **Problem-Solving** e.g. critical thinking will help when overcoming challenges
- **Motivation** e.g. self-care and treating yourself will maintain productivity and focus
- **Effective Communication** e.g. clarification is key
- **Seeking help** e.g. from your family Peer Mentor, Peer Tutors, Academic Advisors, etc...
- **SCLD outlines the following Academic Skills:**
 - Critical Thinking
 - Presentation Skills
 - Collaboration
 - Managing Academic Stress
 - Writing Skills

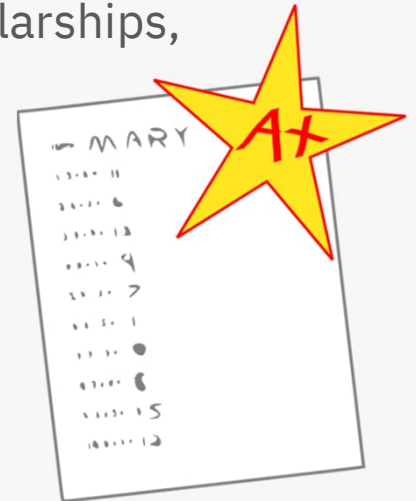
Academics

Developing academic skills can help with...

- **Knowledge and Skills:** critical thinking, time management, problem solving
- **Undergraduate opportunities:** co-op, research, exchange
- **Future Plans:** career opportunities, graduate and professional school
- **Scholarships and Financial Aid:** renewable entrance scholarships, continuing students scholarships, etc...

How to succeed academically?

- Avoid procrastination
- Seek help early
- Develop a study routine
- Use alternative/supplemental resources





Academic Resources

- **Professors and Teaching Assistants**
 - Office hours, email
- **Bethune College offers programs that support student success**
 - Peer Mentoring
 - Peer Tutoring
 - Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS)
 - Bethune Writing Centre
 - Skills Workshops
- **Other campus-wide resources supporting students**
 - Science Academic Advising
 - LA&PS PASS
 - YorkU Libraries
 - Student Community and Leadership Development (SCLD)



Social Skills

Developing social skills can help with...

- **Increased confidence:** better public speaking skills, presentations
- **Leadership roles:** elevate experiences on clubs, setting a positive example
- **Networking abilities:** meeting new people in your field, future research supervisors, learning more about what you may be interested in

How to succeed socially?

- Attend events
- Sign up for opportunities
- Put yourself out there!
 - Easier said than done, but a simple ‘Hi, my name is _____, what’s your name?’ goes a long way :)

Social Opportunities + How to Get Involved

- **At Bethune College:**
 - **Class-Representative** (1st, 2nd year)
 - **Peer Mentor, Peer Tutor, PASS Leader** (2nd, 3rd, 4th... year)
 - Attend Peer Mentor monthly social events e.g. Paint with Me, Arts & Crafts
 - **Orientation-Week Leader**
 - **Bethune College Council**
 - Run for positions, attend social events e.g. Montréal Trip, Blue Mountain Trip, formal
- **At the Faculty of Science:**
 - **Student Science Caucus**
 - **Science Student Ambassador**
- **Other Social Opportunities**
 - **Clubs/Organizations/Associations/Student Unions** ([YFS Club Fair](#) happening Sept 24)
 - **Attend Faculty/College facilitated events** ‘Coffee with Profs’
 - **Meet other students in courses outside your major/home faculty**

Personal

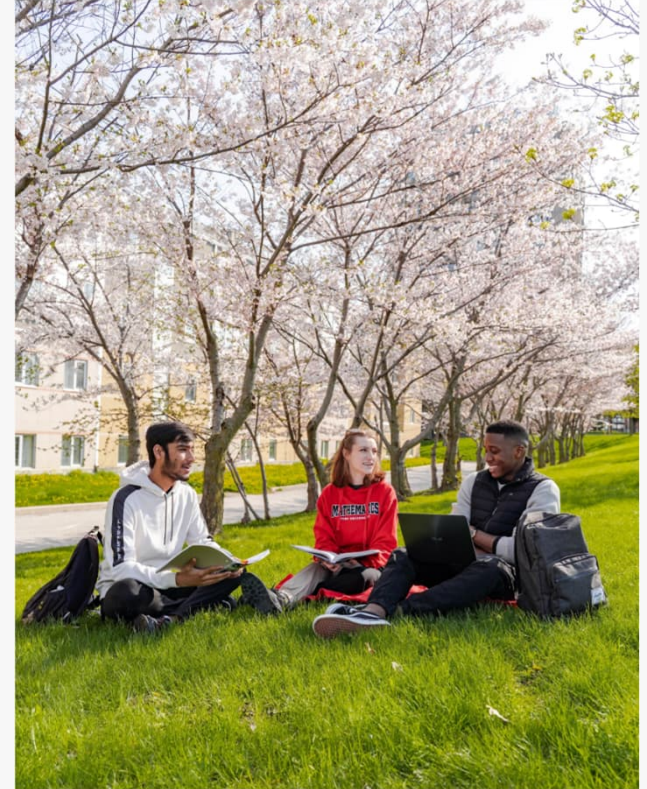
- **Put in work to see results**
 - Work on developing your skills, it may take time!
- **Take care of yourself!**
 - Diet
 - Exercise
 - Mental Health Breaks & Meditation
 - You-time



- **Seek support & guidance**
 - Friends, family, counselors
 - Mentorship (Peer Mentors, upper-year students, professors, TAs)

Resources for self-care

- Skills Workshops ([Bethune](#), [SCLD](#))
- [York Food Services: Nutrition](#)
 - Nutrition Counselling, dietitian
- [Tait Mackenzie](#)
 - Recreation programs, intramurals (with Bethune College as well), gym
- [Well Being](#)
 - Student Counselling, Health and Well-being
 - Bethune, Calumet, Stong's same-day Student Counselling, Health and Well-being services
 - [Good2Talk](#)



Summary

- **Your school year matters!**
- **To start, reflect on your past and develop goals.**
- **Work on yourself:**
 - Academically
 - Socially
 - Personally
- **Seek help! There are a variety of resources available on campus and online to help you.**
- **This year will be amazing!**





Advice from our Mentors



How do you work on your Skills for Success?

Time Management

Adaptability

Problem-Solving

Motivation

Effective Communication

Seeking help



What resources have you used the most frequently?



Are you involved in any clubs at York? How did you hear about them?

[York is home to over 300 student clubs and organizations!](#)

Through friends, social media, emails, tabling, YFS Club Fair (Sep 24)



HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?

Send us an email:

BCMENTOR@YORKU.CA

Visit:

bethune.yorku.ca