

COUNSELING CONNECTIONS



MISSION COLLEGE Counseling/Matriculation/Student Success

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Surviving And Thriving In Tough Times

by Ray Charland, Counselor

Everyone knows that things are tough right now and aren't likely to improve for a while. The economy is in a hole, the stock market is down, unemployment is up over 8% nationally and worse than that in California, and lots of homes are in foreclosure. You may have been laid off, or had your hours cut back at work. So let's explore how to survive, and maybe even thrive, in these tough, scary times.

Being a successful student is a challenge, even when you aren't worried about the economy or keeping your job. None of us learn well when we are anxious or fearful. Our brain chemistry changes, and it's harder to understand and remember information. Plus, you also have family and other relationships that are impacted by job and money worries. If your family depends on your financial contribution, and your job is at risk, it's a lot of pressure on you. And that makes life as a student more difficult.

Let's look at some things you can do to help you survive these challenging times. Right now is an excellent time to re-examine your values, and clarify what TRULY matters in your life. When times are easy and things are going well, some of us slip

into believing that all kinds of things are important—things like having the latest iPhone, the best sound system in our car, or video gaming equipment. But this is a very different economy for most of us, and we need to look at what really matters. **Let's examine 4 areas: health and well-being, friends and family, goals, and finances.**

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First of all, it's especially important that you take good care of yourself. Staying healthy is a top priority, and there are lots of things you can do that don't cost anything. In fact, some can even save you money. Eating healthily will help you stay healthy and feel better, and everyone knows by now that means eating more fruits, grains and vegetables, and less meat and fried foods. Guess what, it's usually cheaper to eat more rice and veggies and less meat!

Drinking plenty of water is important, and you don't really need bottled water. Our water here at the college is healthy, as is your water at home. Quit paying \$1.25 for bottled water and use the drinking fountain, or simply refill one of your water bottles at home, over and over. That could save you several dollars a week.

Another health (and savings) tip is to cut back on buying coffee drinks. That \$3 or \$4 a day adds up to \$80 in a month! What if you cut back to one latte a week? Or bought coffee in the cafeteria for \$1.25? Or brewed coffee at home, and brought some with you? And speaking of bringing things from home, you could do what many of our parents once did – pack a lunch, rather than buy a sandwich or hot lunch. I see many students in the cafeteria already doing that. I happen to think that the food in our cafeteria is tasty, and is priced right. But if money is tight, you could try packing a lunch at least once or twice a week, and save more.

Another key aspect of staying healthy is getting regular exercise, and it doesn't need to cost anything. Some of you may have a gym membership – is that something you could terminate if you needed to in order to save? Mission College has very good fitness equipment, and by taking a WHP class, you can get very inexpensive workouts. And of course, you can do pushups, crunches, and knee bends for free at home.

Sleep has received lots of attention in recent years, and researchers

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now tell us that everyone needs 7 to 9 hours of sleep a night to function at our best. You can do a quick “sleep audit” by jotting down on a 3x5 card what time you turn out the light, and what time you get up, for 5 days in a row. And notice what you are doing that keeps you from getting sleep. Some people are working two jobs, out of necessity, while others are taking care of kids and doing homework. But beware if you are spending time playing games, spending time on Facebook, or other things that aren’t moving you closer to your goals, things that are interfering with getting enough sleep. You may want to make some changes.

After self care, the next priority is nurturing and developing your relationships and friendships. Friends and loved ones can be a tremendous help in surviving tough times. We can encourage one another, spend time together, listen, and let each other know we care. Beyond that, we can help each other in a variety of ways, like sharing rides, helping with childcare, studying together, and letting each other know about job openings. It’s ok to ask for help, and it feels good to be able to help our friends. If you don’t have good friends, I encourage you to set a goal of making some new friends this semester. Friends contribute to your well-being.

In tough times like these, it’s important to have big goals, and to stay focused on them. This is not the time to give up. Goals, especially important ones that mean a lot to you, are like a strong magnet. They pull you towards them with the force of attraction. So now more than ever, you need those goals to help pull you through times of discouragement or fear. Even in the hardest of times, you can continue to make some progress toward your goals. Losing a job might seem like a disaster when it happens, but for some it has created the opportunity to go back to school, and

pursue a new, more fulfilling direction.

Reducing expenses and saving money are always important, and even more so now when times are tough. You might be thinking, “I’m already barely making it on a part-time job, helping my family, buying books. How can

I cut my expenses?” An important step is to track your “money coming in” and “money going out” for at least a week. Two weeks is better. Then you can examine more closely what expenditures are discretionary, meaning they aren’t absolutely required. For example, your rent has to be paid, but you don’t have to buy a soda to drink with lunch.

To help find areas to save money, here are some questions to consider:

- Could I watch a DVD movie at home or at a friend’s house instead of going to a theater and paying \$9.50 for the ticket, plus \$6 for popcorn and \$3 for a soda? If so, you could save \$20 or \$30 for two people.
- Do I really have to have internet access on my cell phone plan? Does my work require it? Cutting that expense could save you as much as \$200 per year.
- Could I share an apartment with a friend, instead of living alone? If you have a house, could you rent out a room?
- Could I use the bus or ride a bike (or car-pool) instead of driving?
- Could you pack a lunch a few times a week? We mentioned it earlier, but it’s worth repeating. This can save you \$6 or \$7 each time you do it, especially if you drink that bottle of water from home along with lunch.
- Have you paid any late fees, or over-drawn fees recently? Those are very expensive. Pay on time or early, and keep track of your checking account balance. The banks would love your money, but we want you to have it.
- How much do you pay for car insurance? For most students, it’s a lot. Try raising your deductibles, and you’ll save money. Yes, it means that if you do have an accident, you’ll pay more (like the first \$500, instead of \$250), but a lot of people pay for small accidents themselves any how, rather than have their rates go up. Check it out.
- Have you ever shopped at a Thrift store? My wife loves finding great deals on fashionable clothes at the Goodwill. You’d be surprised at the quality you can find, and you can’t beat the price.
- What free fun have you enjoyed this week? Have you smelled a rose? Watched a sunset? Hugged a friend? Walked in a park?



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Editor:

Donnelle C. McGee
(408) 855-5042
donnelle_mcgee@wvm.edu

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You'll find hundreds of free and very low cost things to enjoy wherever you live.

Clearly there are hundreds of ways to save money, and if you Google "ways to save money", you'll see millions of listings. Here are a few of those websites to get you started:

<http://www.101waystosavemoney.com/>,

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/general/gen14.shtm>,

<http://www.collegescholarships.org/student-living/save-money.htm>

<http://www.careoncredit.com/knowledge/101-ways-to-save-one-dollar-a-week.html>

Saving money while living well can become fun in itself. You may discover that living more simply actually gives you more freedom. As you reduce your monthly expenses, you will be able to save more money for things that are truly important to you, such as completing college or owning a home. You will reduce the stress you feel, and have more time for friends and family. You can survive and thrive in tough times, and even enjoy a better life in the process.

Campus News Gigantic College Fair

**Come meet with more than 150
college admission representatives.
Learn about admission requirements,
financial aid, and majors.**

WHEN:

THURSDAY, APRIL 30TH, 2009

TIME:

**9:30 AM - 12:00 PM
&
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM**

This event will take place at Mission College. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, please visit: www.mission-college.org and click on Events. Sponsored by Mission College in partnership with WACAC (Western Association of College Admission Counselors)

Financial Aid Update

by Katy Fitzgerald, Financial Aid Advisor

What Can I Get For A Dollar?

What can you get for a dollar? How about all of your enrollment fees waived, a reduction of your parking permit fee and for some students, the campus center fee. If you have just \$1 of unmet need, the Board of Governor's (BOG) Fee Waiver will waive those fees – this is a value of approximately \$325 per semester. And this program is available only to California Community College students. How can you take advantage of this great program? Well, if you're a current student or planning to be a student for this Spring 2009 semester you can either complete the short form version of the '08-'09 BOG Fee Waiver or the '08-'09 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Though the FAFSA may be the 'longer' application version, it's the version we highly recommend that students complete because you may even be eligible for additional financial aid under other programs. Why limit yourself? Students are encouraged to drop by the Financial Aid Office (E1-401) for information and applications or visit our website at www.missioncollege.org.

Speaking of FAFSA, did everyone complete the FAFSA for the 2009-2010 academic year? NO? Well just in case you thought it might be too late because of the March 2nd Cal Grant deadline, it's not. It's not too late to file for all the other financial aid programs like Pell Grant, Supplemental Grant, ACG Grant, Chafee Grant, BOG Waiver, Cal Grant Competitive Award, EOPS Grant, Work Study, and Stafford Loan. In addition, many scholarships require the FAFSA to be completed before further consideration.

Moving on to scholarships. For our 2009-2010 Mission College based scholarship program, we are extremely pleased that we had 200 college level applicants as well as 8 high school applicants. This is a 35% growth of applicants from the '08-'09 academic year. As you may know, there are scholarships that go unclaimed because there may not have been an applicant that met the donor's criteria. More applicants provide a more diverse applicant pool and actually make each applicant's odds of being awarded a scholarship BETTER. What? Trust me, it's true. Missed our March 5th deadline? We're sorry to hear that but there's always next year! And don't forget, we have information on many outside scholarships that come from all different kinds of organizations with deadlines that come and go year round. Come on by the Financial Aid Office and take a look through our scholarship binder.

Counselors Here To Help

This is the first in a series of profiles featuring Mission College Counselors and their unique stories.



Andrea Broussard

Working in the California community college system is a dream come true for me. My career originated in Santa Barbara, CA, where I attended Santa Barbara City College. At SBCC, I had the ability to participate in two study abroad programs in Washington D.C. and Malaga, Spain. These opportunities broadened my horizons and inculcated me to the fact that there are many different cultures and customs in this heterogeneous society. My love for traveling has expanded since these original journeys. My husband and I continue to travel, and I have been to 12 countries to date.

My career has taken me to five different schools in my short career. Beginning at SBCC and ending at Mission college, I have worked in many different capacities and understand the idiosyncrasies of different departments and projects. The majority of this time was spent counseling and mentoring students in collegiate athletics. In addition to these pursuits, I have worked in EOPS, Admissions and Records, and Admissions Outreach.

Having grown up in the athletic world, it is reasonable to say that I am an avid sports fan. I attended the University of Maryland, College Park for my undergraduate work. I traveled 3000 miles from home and never looked back. I believe that the experiences I learned during those two years have really set the tone for my life and career.

I strive for excellence in every endeavor that I pursue. I see every situation as an opportunity to obtain a greater understanding of whatever I attempt to pursue. I enjoy helping students succeed. I awake every morning excited and motivated to pursue my life's passion. I have been extremely blessed during my life and have achieved success in both my personal and professional life. I truly believe that with hard work and determination, you can accomplish anything!



Chau Nguyen

Mission College is very dear to my heart. Cherished memories overflow whenever I talk about my history with Mission. Eighteen years ago, I came to Mission as a student who spoke very little English. With the support from the EOPS and Financial Aid programs, I was able to be a full-time student while working as a work-study student at the Community Education Office. Little did I realize then that a work-study job would prepare me for a full-time job, leading to the counseling profession.

Although my first job at Mission was only as a work-study student, I took ownership of every assigned task. I worked extremely hard. I was asked to do everything except answer phone calls due to my limited English. However, this changed when the former Dean of Community Education, Phil Pabich, asked me to make a phone call and I responded with astonishment, "Me!" and he said affirmatively, "Yes, you." As an English learner, this opportunity increased my confidence tremendously. I felt that I could do anything.

Since then, my motto for success includes determination, hard-work, and actively seeking opportunities rather than waiting for them to come. After graduating with a BA in Liberal Arts and a minor in Child Development, I took a full time job as a program assistant for the Community Education Program. I did above and beyond what was listed on my job description, such as being involved with the Institute for International Studies (IIS) Program. When Michael Byers, founder of IIS, left the program for a full-time counseling position at West Valley College, no one was available to do the immigration advising. This time, I didn't wait for the opportunity to come to me. I actively sought out and insisted that I could do the job. I spent many nights and weekends studying the two-inch thick F1 immigration manual and mapped out a plan on what I could offer the program. My motto did not fail me. I made my way up to be a coordinator/supervisor and immigration advisor for the program, which led me to my current profession: academic counseling.

I'm blessed to be where I'm today, especially surrounded by friends and colleagues who continue to support me. I hope sharing my story will encourage students to take ownership of what they do and always actively seek out opportunities. And I hope students never stop learning.

Art Department Brings Home Awards

by Lynne Todaro, Art Instructor



Mission College Student, Alysia GoRay

Mission College Art

Students have been exhibiting art and winning awards too. Art student Alysia GoRay won 3rd place for her art in an international competition for artists with disabilities called "Artability". The art was produced in Mission College's Metalsmithing class (ART 075). Some may recognize Alysia from our Student Art Sale, which is held at the end of each semester.

The following students, and former students, are showing art in the City of Santa Clara's 2009 Indoor Sculpture Exhibition: Francie Allen, Yuki Erdmann, Chai Ng, and Ruben de la Pena. Chai Ng received an Award of Merit, and her artwork is featured on the back cover of the brochure, and serves as a guide to the show.

Also exhibiting in the City of Santa Clara's exhibit are three Mission College Art Instructors: Kristin Lindseth-Rivera, Patricia Hulin and Lynne Todaro. Kristin and Lynne received awards of Merit, with Patricia Hulin taking a 2nd place award. This exhibit continues through July 31st, 2009, and is free to all. The art can be seen in the halls of the Santa Clara City Hall.

Art News

We will be holding our annual Artist Open Studios on Saturday and Sunday May 2nd and May 3rd. There will be live demonstrations of metal casting, blacksmithing, copper enameling and more - including some hands-on workshops. Mission Faculty will be on hand to answer questions about our program. The Student Art Exhibit will be in our gallery, and a separate Student Art Sale will take place on Saturday and Sunday only. Any Mission College student may participate in the sale, as long as they made the art they are selling.

New Learning Community At Mission

by Julaine Rosner, ESL Instructor



Julaine Rosner and Nanette Wylde

In the Fall of 2009, Mission College students will have the opportunity to participate in a learning community between the Child Development (CHD) and English as a Second Language (ESL) Departments. A learning community is a small

group of students who take two or three courses together. The topics for each course are connected, and the curriculum of each class supports the learning objectives of the other. Teachers in a learning community collaborate on lessons, assignments, and projects. Next semester at Mission, sections of these two classes will be linked: CHD 001- Child Growth and Development and ESL 940CC- ESL for Students of Child Development.

Students can benefit in several ways by participating in this learning community. First, the courses are on a related theme. ESL 940CC focuses on the academic language skills necessary for non-native speakers of English to succeed in Child Development courses. Students will be able to gain a deeper understanding of the concepts and vocabulary taught in each class. CHD students can use the listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills that they develop in ESL in order to help them succeed in their CHD classes. Another benefit to learning community participants is that students will be part of a cohort, or a small community of students that attend both classes. Cohorts can provide students with valuable support and a sense of belonging, which in turn supports their learning and success.

To participate in this learning community in the Fall of 2009, students can enroll in ESL 940CC (section 83186) and CHD 001 (section 81258 or section 81257). For questions or comments, please contact the teachers: Julaine Rosner in ESL at 408-855-5317 or Julaine_Rosner@wvm.edu, or Nanette Wylde in CHD at 408-855-5088 or Nanette_Wylde@wvm.edu. Funding for this program has been provided by the Basic Skills Initiative.

What *Da* Problem Be?

by David Piper, Counselor/Instructor

Even though all of us suffer from math anxiety to some degree – just as anyone feels at least a little nervous when speaking to an audience – for some of us it is a serious problem, a burden that interferes with our lives, preventing us from achieving our goals. We feel that we shouldn't feel this anxiety, that it's a weakness which we should overcome, by brute force if necessary. When this effort doesn't succeed, as invariably it doesn't, the harsh self-criticism creeps in leading to a deep sense of frustration and often a severe loss of self-esteem – particularly if the stakes are high, as when career or personal goals are riding on a successful outcome. In light of this particular dilemma, some of us carefully construct our lives so as to avoid all mathematics as much as possible. We choose college majors, and later careers, that don't require any math, and let the bank or our spouse balance the checkbook. This approach has the advantage of alleviating the feelings of frustration and anxiety about math. However, our lives can become drastically constrained, for in our society fewer than 25% of all careers are, so-to-speak, "math-free," and thus our choices of personal and professional goals are severely limited.

Do you remember?

When I look at a math problem, my mind goes completely blank. I feel stupid, and I can't remember how to do even the simplest things.

I've hated math ever since I was nine years old, when my father grounded me for a week because I couldn't learn my multiplication tables.

In math there's always one right answer, and if you can't find it you've failed. That makes me crazy.

Math exams terrify me. My palms get sweaty, I breathe too fast, and I can't even make my eyes focus on the paper. It's worse if I look around because I'd see everybody else working and know that I'm the only one who can't do it.

I've never been successful in any math class I've ever taken. I never understand what the teacher is saying, so my mind just wanders.

Some people can do math – not me!

What all of these statements are expressing is math anxiety, a feeling of intense frustration or helplessness about one's ability to do math. What is not realized is that these feelings about math are common to everyone to some degree.

The fact is that mathematics has a tarnished reputation in our society. It is commonly accepted that math is difficult, obscure, and of interest only to "certain people," i.e., nerds and geeks – not a flattering characterization.

Alarming, many school teachers – even those whose job it is to teach mathematics – communicate this attitude to their students directly or indirectly, so that young people are invariably exposed to an anti-math bias at an impressionable age. It comes as a surprise to many people to learn that this attitude is not shared by other societies. In Chinese, German, Japanese or Russian culture, for example, mathematics is viewed as an essential part of literacy, and an educated person would be chagrined to confess ignorance of basic mathematics.

Young women continue to face an additional barrier to success in mathematics. Remarkably, even at the start of the 21st century, school-age girls are still discouraged by parents, peers, and teachers with the admonition that mathematics "just isn't something girls do." Before we became teachers, we would have assumed that such attitudes died out a generation ago, but now we know better. Countless numbers of our female students have told how friends, family members, and even their junior and senior high school instructors impressed upon them the undesirability of pursuing the study of mathematics.

Together these social and educational factors lay the groundwork for many widely believed myths and misconceptions about the study of mathematics.

Herein, as the Bard would tell us, "lays the rub."

Myths about math

1. It is easy for students to believe that doing math requires a math brain, one in particular which they have not got. Mathematics is indeed inborn, but it is inborn in all of us. It is a human trait, shared by the entire human group.
2. Some believe to be good at math; you have to be good at calculating and feel shamed when they are caught counting on their

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fingers. This is ridiculous. Why shouldn't you count on your fingers? What else is a Chinese abacus, but a sophisticated version of counting on your fingers?

3. The male is better than the female at mathematical thinking. Sadly, the legacy of generations of gender bias, like our legacy of racial bias, continues to shade many people's outlooks, often without their even being aware of it. It is every student's, parent's, and educator's duty to be on the lookout for these errors in thinking and to combat them with reason and understanding wherever and however they may surface.

Want To Succeed In Math?

by Zoya Kravets, Math Instructor

Has math been a stumbling block for you in the past? Have you been avoiding taking math in college? A solution has arrived! In the Fall of 2006, Mission College inaugurated the Math Achievement Pathway to Success (MAPS), and this program has been going strong since.

MAPS offers students a team approach to success in Elementary Algebra (Math 903M) during the Fall semester, and continues with Intermediate Algebra (Math CM) during the Spring semester. MAPS is designed for students who have had difficulty in their math courses in the past. Instructors and tutors collaborate to help you complete your algebra requirements and prepare you for college-level mathematics courses.

Students who enroll in MAPS receive increased hours of instruction and tutoring. The MAPS team believes that with the proper support services that any student, who is willing to succeed, can be successful in mathematics.

To enroll in MAPS, pick up an application in the counseling office (Room E1-301) or download one from the MAPS website <http://www.missioncollege.org/depts/math/MAPS>.

Students who enroll in MAPS are dedicated to attending class each day, as well as tutorial sessions after class. Students in the program make a commitment to work diligently, participate in study groups, meet with the program counselor, and take advantage of other campus resources to maximize their performance in mathematics.

For more information call the MAPS office at 855-5592, or send an email to maps@wvm.edu. MAPS will help you find your way in the world of math!

New Free One-Hour ESL Workshops

What: Comparative Adjectives & Adverbs

When: Wednesday 04/22 from 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Where: E3-601
Instructor: Lisa Bell

What: Common Sentence Errors: Run-Ons, Comma Splices, Fragments

When: Tuesday 04/28 from 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Where: MT-24
Instructor: Lora Glaser

"Green" is the New Black

by Theresa Tran, EOPS Counselor

What's the most fashionable trend in Hollywood and Silicon Valley alike? It's going "green" or becoming more environmentally aware. However, this isn't just a trend; it's here to stay. Global warming is changing the way we live, and we must adapt to keep our planet healthy so it can in turn support us. Along with personal changes to your own lifestyle, there are several ways you can contribute at Mission College. Join EcoLogic, the student environmental club that meets every Thursday. Here you can help with the campaign to raise awareness about the burrowing owls and also plan the first ever Eco Fair to take place on Earth Day, Wednesday, April 22. For more information, contact ecologic.egmc@yahoo.com.

If you are staff, consider joining the Green Leadership Team. These meetings are held monthly on Fridays. Some current projects for this team include enhancing the campus recycling program, introducing biodegradable plates and utensils for the cafeteria and Hospitality Management, and installing solar panels on campus. For more information, contact bob_miller@wvm.edu or theresa_tran@wvm.edu. Also, for the month of April, check out the green displays in the Global Awareness Center created by students in the biological sciences classes. And remember, reduce, reuse, recycle!

HOMESWORK HELP

has arrived for Mission College ESL students!

**Do you feel like this
when you do your homework?**



Bring your homework questions to Mission College ESL faculty in the Tutoring Center, and the teachers can guide you as you complete your homework. These drop-in sessions will help you to understand your coursework better and to succeed in your ESL classes.

When: Mondays 3:30-5:30 with Ms. Chigusa Katoku
Tuesdays 1:30-3:30 with Ms. Ann Harding
Fridays 1:00-3:00 with Mr. Noel Marianetti

Where? In TC-2 on the second floor of the campus center (above the book store).
Sessions are in the Technology Center Study Room.

How? Come to the sessions and register for IS 947 (section 83099). Teachers will help you on a first come first serve basis.

How much?

FREE!



**Come and
join us!**