Midterm Grade Reports

What is a “Midterm”?
You may be thinking that midterms are exams or papers that are completed in the middle or half way through the semester. This is what “midterm” means to a lot of people. At Iowa State University, however, the word “midterm” is also used to describe grades that are a C- or below. Instructors report these grade during week eight of the Fall and Spring semesters. You can check to see if you received a midterm by logging on to Access Plus.

Midterms are a good predictor of final grades in a course, meaning if you receive a midterm (C- or below) you are likely to receive a similar final grade if do not do something to change or improve your academic skills and habits.

What should you do if you get a midterm?

Set Goals
Take a hard look at the class and figure out what you want to get out of it. Break this long-term goal into smaller, more manageable short-term goals. Write your goals down and share them with others. By doing this you make your goals real and commit yourself to obtaining them. Also, the additional support you will have can make a big difference and help you stay motivated.

Get Organized
Now is the time to get organized and make a plan for how you are going to accomplish your goals. Take a look at your syllabus and create a calendar with all of your assignments on it, also include any co-curricular activities you may have. You can now take a look at this calendar and prioritize what needs to get done when. It is also a good way to avoid over committing yourself and to identify stressful times during the semester.

Stay Positive
Keep a positive attitude! Try not to get bogged down with the negative parts of a midterm. Think of this as a chance to start again, and to do better. When you have a positive attitude it is much easier to tell yourself that you can succeed.

Who Can Help?

You
While all of these services and people are here to help you, you have to be the one to use them. Ultimately you are the only one that can help yourself. Some changes you can make include:

- Setting goals, or updating your current goals.
- Identify what is affecting your success, and make change!
- Clean-up your messes (literal and figurative)—the clearer your mind and physical spaces are, the easier it will be to concentrate.
- Limit yourself to essential academic activities, and use social opportunities as rewards for work well done.
- Prioritize!!!
Your Instructors
Most instructors have scheduled office hours. This is a time that you can go in and talk to your instructor one on one to get some additional help. You can ask for clarification on class material, get help with a paper, and ask about an upcoming or previous test, or anything else that he or she might be able to help you with. The professors are there to help you; utilize their services.

Your Advisor
Your academic advisor is called an advisor for a reason; they are there to advise you. Use their services, and seek out their help. They may be able to point you in the right direction or offer some valuable insight.

The Academic Success Center
The Academic Success Center offers a variety of services designed to help you succeed in college. Check out our website for information about the following:

- **Tutoring** is an on-going supplement to classroom learning and is available for most undergraduate courses. Tutoring occurs in consistent groups of no more than four students. Tutoring sessions are held for two hours per week. A nominal fee is charged per hour and financial aid is available from a variety of sources. Tutors can help you clarify course content and meet your goals. You can apply on-line to get a tutor and to be a tutor, or stop by our office.

- **Supplemental Instruction (SI)** is a peer-facilitated study session available for select difficult 100-200 level courses. SI Leaders, who have demonstrated competence in the course, attend lectures and conduct three regularly scheduled, fifty-minute sessions to help students with course content and study skills. SI is free and participation is voluntary.

- **Academic Coaching** is a free service designed to aid students with individual academic difficulties. General topics include: time management, note-taking, reading, test-taking, and study skills. Coaches are graduate students and staff who can relate to a variety of today’s college experiences. Handouts are available from the ASC and online. Any and all students can benefit from a review of their academic habits.

Top Three Ways to Stay Motivated
1. You have half of a semester to go. You can still turn things around.
2. By staying motivated you will work harder. If you work harder you will improve. If you improve you will stay motivated. It is a happy circle.
3. You pay the same amount of money for a class you get an “A” in as you do a class you get a “D” in. Get the most out of your money!