

# Goal Setting

Setting conscious goals and working to achieve them helps you avoid the nightmares and capitalize on the rewards of college and beyond. College is an ideal time to begin setting conscious goals. First, you will need to differentiate between short-term and long-term goals. During your first semester, begin to test some of the short-term goals. It's okay if you don't yet know what you want to do with the rest of your life or what you should be majoring in. Be patient. Practice setting and fulfilling some short-term goals by means of the following process:

- 1. Determine your values.** Values are choices. People often choose values based on what others seem to value. A value system is constructed over time, using information from sources such as family, friends, religion, society, and school.
- 2. Come up with a Mission Statement.** A person needs to establish standards and principles that guide their many activities. Define your mission statement based on what is important to you.
- 3. Select goals: long-term and short-term.** State it in measurable terms. Be specific about what you want to achieve and when (not "improve my study skills" but "master the mapping system of note-taking by the end of October").
- 4. Ask whether the goal is achievable.** Do you have enough time to pursue it, and, more importantly, do you have the necessary skills, strengths, and resources? If not, modify the goal to make it achievable.
- 5. Be certain you genuinely want to achieve this goal.** Don't set out to work toward something only because you feel you should. Be sure that your goal will not have a negative impact on yourself or others and that it is consistent with your most important basic values.
- 6. Identify why this goal is worthwhile.** Be sure that it has the potential to give you a sense of accomplishment.
- 7. Anticipate and identify difficulties you might encounter.** Plan ways to overcome these problems.
- 8. Prioritize and devise strategies and steps for achieving the goal.** What will you need to do to begin? What comes next? What may you need to avoid? Set a timeline for the steps.
- 9. Link Daily and Weekly Goals with Long-Term Goals.** Weekly goal setting and planning allows you to keep track of day-to-day activities while giving you the larger perspective of what is coming up during the week.

**STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER  
202 LSF BUILDING  
219.785.5326  
WWW.PNC.EDU/SSC**

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