Welcome, First Year Students!

Right now, your life is full of challenges, being away from home, making new friends and settling into classes.

The McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning is here to help! The center is your go-to resource for all kinds of educational support, such as tutoring, learning consultations and workshops.

To find out how Princeton first-years discover and benefit from the resources available at McGraw, just turn the page...
How am I going to get all of this done?!

Mac, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore!

So many things to do...
In class...

Maybe I'm not as prepared as I think I am...

I just don't see the big picture. I'd better go study now and try to make sense of everything.

Later that night...

What is the connection?

Main principles?

Supporting evidence?

Course themes?
MEANWHILE...

OHHH...I THINK TROUBLE...EVERYONE SEEMS TO KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING EXCEPT FOR ME...

WISH I HAD STARTED EARLIER... sigh...

2 WEEKS EARLIER...

MANY DAYS LATER...

UHHH... WHAT AM I DOING? I'M OUT OF MY MIND! WHAT'S IT GONNA TAKE TO BRING ME TO THE EDGE OF MIND? WRITE THAT OLD DRAFT!

D-DAY

ALMOST DONE!

AHHH... ONLY 5 MINUTES LEFT!!

MY PAPER WAS SO BAD...

NOW I HAVE TO STUDY FOR BIO...

WHY? I DIDN'T SET FINISH MY PROBLEM SETS THAT ARE DUE TOMORROW!!

I NEED A BETTER STRATEGY...
THE NEXT DAY...

HI DAN! CAN I ASK YOU FOR ADVICE?
SURE, SAGE! WHAT IS IT?
HOW DO YOU STAY ON TOP OF YOUR WORK?

I USUALLY BREAK DOWN AN ASSIGNMENT INTO SMALL MANAGEABLE TASKS. THE TRICK IS "A LITTLE BIT EVERY DAY, NEVER MISS A SINGLE DAY."

GET THE MOST OUT OF CLASS TIME BY PREPPING BEFOREHAND.
TRUST ME, YOU'LL THANK YOURSELF LATER!

BUT SOMETIMES I ALSO HAVE TROUBLE WITH INFORMATION OVERLOAD.
I WANT A MORE EFFICIENT STRATEGY!

RECENTLY I'VE BEEN GETTING EMAILS FROM THIS PLACE CALLED MCGRAW...

YAY... I THINK I'VE HEARD OF IT...

HI TIM! YOU'RE LOOKING A LITTLE DOWN TODAY...

WHAT'S WRONG?

WELL...
TIM'S STORY... IT ALL STARTED LAST WEEK

WHAT?! THE TEST WAS SO HARD. THE QUESTIONS LOOKED NOTHING LIKE THE H.W. PROBLEM SETS...

I DON'T GET IT! I STUDIED SO HARD...

...BUT WHY DO I FEEL SO UNPREPARED?

THIS IS WORSE THAN WHAT I HAD EXPECTED...

I'M SCARED TO ASK FOR HELP...

HAHAA... WHAT IS HE SAYING?

IT'S QUITE SIMPLE REALLY. SO HERE IT IS...

HOW DID YOU GET TO THE ANSWER? WAIT, I THOUGHT THE QUESTION SAID IT MUST APPEAR IN THE TEXTBOOK WEREN'T WE THERE?  C, D, 4 SMART?
... so yeah. I'm not sure I'm doing college right. Maybe it's just me...

It's not just you... We're all still adjusting!

Hi guys!!

Hi Leah!!

Guess what?! I handed in my paper a week early and completed all of my to-do list activities for today!

So now I have tons of free time to hang out with you guys!!

Well actually... the 3 of us didn't have the best week. We could definitely use some guidance...

So, did everyone have a productive week?

Oh, I have an idea!!

"Let's go to... McGraw Princeton's Center for Academic Support!"

I found out about McGraw when I attended their Write-a-Thon event yesterday...
I was up early getting a head start on my readings as usual...

When I received an email about a write-a-thon event.

Ding!

Hmmm... what is a write-a-thon? I'm intrigued.

Naturally, I was up for the challenge.

{Write-a-thon}
Add your piece to Principedia, the insiders guide to Princeton Academics. Come to Mathy Common Room on your own or with a team to write a principedia course analysis for a class of your choice. Good food, get gifts, and win prizes and a parking pass kind in the world academic!

Hi! What exactly is a write-a-thon?

CHM

You can write a course analysis anytime, but write-a-thons give you a chance to work in groups to make a big impact.

Why don't you write a course analysis? You can find out more about Principedia on the McGraw website!

In the meantime, have a free t-shirt!

Principedia? You mean like Wikipedia?

It's similar! Principedia is a student-sourced wiki guide to learning in Princeton courses.

Students write detailed articles about classes they took in the past, focusing on course design, teaching style of the instructor and various learning strategies.

That's awesome! Students are teaching each other.
LEAH'S STORY CONT'D

SO LATER THAT DAY, I WENT ON [PRINCIPEDIA.PRINCETON.EDU]...

AND I WAS BLOWN AWAY BY ALL THE COURSES LISTED!

THERE'S EVEN ONE FOR DAY SPA... LOOK AT THE COURSES!

AND THERE'S HIS 241!!

EVEN HUMANITIES!!

SURE! IN FACT, WHY DON'T YOU GUYS SEE IT FOR YOURSELVES?

FOLLOW ME!

WHAT'S HAPPENING?!?! I SEE GUYS!!

LEAH HELP!!

GUYS, RELAX!

WE'RE INSIDE THE COMPUTER!!

WELCOME!

WORK
Breakdown of a Course Analysis Article

[Example—“PHY 101: Introductory Physics”]

I. Course Goals and Curriculum

- **Goal:** (1) Provide a background in Physics and (2) Nurture scientific thinkers
- Introduces the laws and principles governing physics with a focus on kinematics and thermodynamics
- Curriculum starts at a conceptually basic level and builds on previous material as course progresses.

II. Learning From Classroom Instruction

- **Lectures introduce the weekly topic.**

  - **When I choose courses for 2nd semester, I'll use what I've learned about how the course is organized.**
  - **It's so clear!**
  - **It even tells you which subjects the professor emphasized the most!**

  **Every week...**

  - **The first class** on each topic involves working through a handout.
  - **The second class** provides exercises for the concepts introduced in the first class.
  - **The third class** includes a weekly quiz.

  - **Students should finish it before answers are posted later in the week.**
  - **Handouts provide small experiments to show application of relevant concepts.**
  - **Prepares students for problems included in the written HW.**

  - **Students deepen conceptually understanding.**
  - **Students deduce concepts based on scientific reasoning rather than relying on the textbook.**

  - **Provides time for students to ask questions about their readings/problem sets.**

  - **The aim is to solidify and extend the week's content.**

  **Wow! I can see how each course component fits together.**
  **I wonder if someone wrote a course analysis for my class...**
  **It's so helpful to see how the course builds on itself.**
III. Learning For and From Assignments & Assessments

In preparation for exams, the best strategy is not to re-read the books or notes, but rather to attempt problems.

- Thoroughly explore questions prior to checking on the answer key.
- The course prepares you to use a comprehensive four-step strategy:

  - Sketch & Translate
  - Simplify & Diagram
  - Represent Mathematically
  - Solve & Evaluate

IV. External Resources

- Online Tutorial Videos
- Practice Quizzes on Khan Academy

V. What Students Should Know For Purposes of Course Selection

[Modified from the original PHY 101 course analysis written by Danielle Herman]
Hope you guys enjoyed the trip! Now consider what kind of support you need...

Do you want a more efficient reading or note-taking strategy? Or maybe some tips on time management?

Or maybe you want a more personalized approach to learning like I do!

So... are you ready to visit the center?

Since I can benefit from mastering large amounts of information and understanding where my class is headed, I’d better make an appointment with a learning consultant!

Hmmmm... I’ll go to McGraw later. I need to catch up on some shows on Netflix.

No, no! Here I go again...

I should go now! The semester is only going to get harder.

In high school, I never had to ask for extra help... what if I’m seen as a failure?

But look at Leah—she’s doing well in her studies, but still plans on using McGraw to maximize personal development!

I’d better check out a course review session!
OK, LET'S GO TO THE McGRRAW CENTER!

GREAT! LET'S HEAD OVER TO 328 FRIST CAMPUS CENTER.

WE'RE OFF TO SEE THE CENTER WHERE TEACHING AND LEARNING COMBINE...

LA LA LA LA

WHERE STUDENTS ACQUIRE THE SKILLS THEY NEED...

... TO SAVE THEMSELVES LOTS OF TIME!

ALMOST THERE!

THE McGRRAW CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING