

University of Rhode Island  
University College for Academic Success  
UCS 161  
Becoming a Self-Directed Learner

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**Office Hours:** You can find me most of the time in 403 Roosevelt Hall. Meetings are by appointment, but please don't hesitate to ask!

**Course description (from the catalog):**

Analyze and apply strategies for developing self-directed learning and personal leadership skills in college settings. Focus on metacognition, strategies for self-directed studying, problem solving, planning and work management.

**Course Credit and Grading**

1 credit course

Grading: A-F

**About this course:**

As a follow-up to UCS 160, UCS 161X focuses on further strengthening academic performance by developing a strategic approach to self-directed learning. To succeed in college, students need not only to be able to plan and study effectively but also to determine their own needs, analyze challenges, and devise their own solutions. Each week in UCS 161X, you will learn how to identify and apply needs-appropriate self-management, communication, studying and problem-solving strategies. You will be responsible for applying strategies from class to your other courses, analyzing their effectiveness, and refining your approach. Topics include:

- Developing metacognitive thinking skill
- Learning from failure and setbacks
- Identifying needs and connecting with appropriate resources to address them
- Communicating effectively with faculty, advisors, administrators, and support staff
- Making effective use of available learning technologies

**Learning Objectives:**

The goal for UCS 161 is to help you assert greater control over your own learning – to act with greater autonomy and self-efficacy and to be able to identify and strategically address academic challenges. Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Develop systematic approaches to responding to your academic challenges
- Work constructively with criticism and corrective feedback
- Identify your academic learning and support needs and connect with appropriate resources
- Communicate effectively with faculty and staff around your learning needs

**Course Text and other Materials:**

**UCS 161 is a one course.** The course text consists of 12 customized lesson modules, each with links to additional reading and video. Modules and all other supplemental materials will be available via Brightspace.

**Attendance policy for online meetings:**

Much of our learning together in UCS 161 will happen in class, so **attendance and participation in weekly meetings is mandatory.** If you must miss a class, you will need to contact your instructor in advance of the class to explain why you will be absent. If you have not contacted the instructor before class to explain your absence, it will be marked “unexcused”. **Unexcused absences will result in a zero for the day's attendance and participation.** For further details on how attendance and participation is graded, see the section of the syllabus on grading, below.

**Other course work and expectations**

Each week, you will be responsible for doing several things outside of class meetings.

**The Modules** Each week you will be assigned approximately 50 minutes worth of reading and/or

video. All reading and video content will be made available on Brightspace in the form of weekly lesson modules. You are expected to preview the module prior to our class discussion meetings. You should arrive at the meeting prepared to discuss the module content knowledgeably. **It is expected that you will come to the discussion each week with at least two ideas or two questions from your review of the module that you would like to discuss.** You are graded on attendance and participation, so being unprepared to participate can negatively impact your overall grade

**The open-module quiz** Each module has a corresponding 5-question multiple choice quiz. After your class meeting, you will return to the module and complete the corresponding open-module quiz. These quizzes are due by the start of the next weeks' lesson (See schedule). **Each quiz is worth 5 points toward your final grade.**

**The application and reflection assignment** Each week, you will choose from among the strategies discussed in that week's module and apply at least one of those strategies to your studying in other courses you are taking. You will then submit a written reflection of approximately 250 words detailing what you did, how it went, and what you learned from your activity. Detailed directions for these reflections will be posted in Brightspace. **Each weekly reflection is also worth 5 points.**

Your **final project** for this class is to submit a post-assessment in which you measure how you have progressed toward your goals. The final project will include an 800-850 word reflective essay detailing and evaluating your overall efforts over the course of the semester, and a strategic plan in outline format for continuing to make improvements in the semester ahead

Grading:

Points are earned as follows:	#	pts ea.	Total
Goal setting activity	1	5	5
Weekly quizzes	10	5	50
Weekly assignments	10	5	50
Final Project	1	25	25
Attendance and participation	12	2	25*
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			155

- **How attendance and participation is graded:** Your participation is a very important part of our class. In each class we will have a class activity that you will hand in at the end of class with your name on it. This will be our way of taking attendance.
- In the event that we do not do an activity in class, attendance will be taken using a sign in sheet.
- A point may also be added on occasion at instructor's discretion for exemplary activity. We will discuss this policy in class to make sure everyone is clear on what to expect

Your grade will be determined by dividing the number of points earned by total possible points to obtain a percent grade. Letter grades for the course are on the following scale:

A =	93-100	A- = 90-93	B+ = 87-89	B = 83-87	B- = 80-82	C+ = 77-79
C =	73-76	C- = 70-72	D+ = 67-69	D = 60-66	F = 0-59	

## Schedule

Below is a schedule of the lesson topics we will cover each week. Weekly deadlines for quizzes and assignments will be posted in Brightspace.

Date	Topics
1 Sept 14	Becoming more self directed
2. Sept 21	Becoming a problem solver
3. Sept 28	Self Advocacy: Getting what you need to succeed
4. Oct 5	addressing challenges with motivation and procrastination
5. Oct. 12	Addressing challenges with studying
6. Oct. 19	addressing challenges with time management
7. Oct. 26	Building relationships with professors
8. Nov 2	learning from mistakes, feedback, and criticism
9. Nov 9	Minimizing worry; maximizing success
10. Nov. 16	Rest, recreation, rewards, and learning
11. Nov. 23	Thanksgiving
12. Nov 30	Leveraging learning technologies and online resources
13. Dec 7	Final project

## ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- **Covid Absence Accommodations:** Any student who indicates that they are experiencing symptoms of illness should not come to class. Please note that Health Services is not able to provide documentation for absence due to routine illness and will resume the practice of notification to the Dean's office for serious illness/injury that requires the student to miss multiple classes. Faculty have the flexibility to decide how best to accommodate student absences through the mechanisms detailed in 8.51.13 of the University Manual. Faculty are not being asked to implement multiple concurrent teaching modalities in their courses but may offer a remote attendance or recorded lecture option if desired and appropriate to the course. Students who request a vaccination exemption understand that they are not entitled to unique accommodations due to COVID illness or quarantine. Faculty are encouraged to clearly outline their class attendance/absence policies on their syllabus.
- **Anti-Bias Statement:** We respect the rights and dignity of each individual and group. We reject prejudice and intolerance, and we work to understand differences. We believe that equity and inclusion are critical components for campus community members to thrive. If you are a target or a witness of a bias incident, you are encouraged to submit a report to the URI Bias Response Team at [www.uri.edu/brt](http://www.uri.edu/brt). There you will also find people and resources to help.
- **Disability, Access, and Inclusion (DAI) Statement:** Your access in this course is important. Please send me your DAI accommodation letter early in the semester so that we have adequate time to discuss and arrange your approved academic accommodations. If you have not yet established services through DAI, please contact them to engage in a confidential conversation about the process for requesting reasonable accommodations in the classroom. DAI can be reached by calling: 401-874-2098, visiting: [web.uri.edu/disability](http://web.uri.edu/disability), or emailing: [dss@etal.uri.edu](mailto:dss@etal.uri.edu). We are available to meet with students enrolled in Kingston as well as Providence courses.

- **Academic Enhancement Center:** Located in Roosevelt Hall, the Academic Enhancement Center (AEC) offers face-to-face and online services to undergraduate students seeking academic support.
  - **STEM Tutoring** helps undergraduate students navigate a variety of 100 and 200 level STEM courses and a limited selection of BUS, STA, ECN, and CSC courses. The STEM Tutoring program offers free online and in-person peer tutoring. Drop-in tutoring will also be available in the library starting this fall! Students can select occasional or weekly tutoring appointments through the TutorTrac system beginning on September 13th, 2022. The TutorTrac application is available through URI Microsoft 365 single sign-on and by visiting [aec.uri.edu](http://aec.uri.edu). More detailed information and instructions can be found at [uri.edu/aec/tutoring](http://uri.edu/aec/tutoring).
  - **Academic Skills Development** resources teach students how to plan work, manage time, and study more effectively. In Fall 2022, Academic Skills Development programs are available both in-person and online. Academic Consultations are 30-minute, 1 to 1 appointments that students can schedule on Starfish with Dr. David Hayes to address individual academic needs. For more information on these programs, visit [uri.edu/aec/academic-skills](http://uri.edu/aec/academic-skills) or contact Dr. Hayes directly at [davidhayes@uri.edu](mailto:davidhayes@uri.edu).
  - **The Undergraduate Writing Center** provides peer writing support to students in any class, at any stage of the writing process: from understanding an assignment and brainstorming ideas, to developing, organizing, and revising a draft. Fall 2022 consultations are available through: 1) 25- or 50-minute in-person appointments and drop-in sessions, 2) synchronous online appointments, and 3) asynchronous next-day written feedback. Synchronous appointments hosted by WC Online are video-based, with audio, chat, document-sharing, and live captioning capabilities, to meet a range of accessibility needs. View availability and book online at [uri.mywconline.com](http://uri.mywconline.com). For more information, visit [uri.edu/aec/writing](http://uri.edu/aec/writing).