

Chapter 6: Can Someone *HELP* Me?

Using the Available Resources

Students of all ages, skill levels, and majors need help at some time during their academic career. Statistics show that this is particularly true of students taking math courses. It is, therefore, important not only for students to know *what* resources are available to them, but *how* to utilize these resources to receive maximum benefit. Below is a list of typical resources available on any college campus in general and CCBC in particular. In addition, suggestions for how these resources may be used are provided.

Professor's Office Hours

Every faculty member at CCBC is required to designate one hour each week to be available for every course being taught. These hours will be specified clearly on the syllabus provided at the start of each semester. This time can be stated in terms of individual hours or blocks of time where the professor will be available to the students in one or all of the courses being taught that semester. Be sure to note these times and whether they are convenient for you. If they do not fit your schedule, speak with the professor to determine if you may set up appointments outside of the specified times.

Instructors' one-on-one attention

- One to the biggest benefits of the professor's office hour is the individual attention given to the student. In class, professors usually aren't at liberty to address every student's concerns due to time constraints or the complexity of the explanation itself. But during an office hour students do not have to 'compete' for the professor's attention.

Further explanation

- Oftentimes questions arise from the course or from your studying that can not be fully answered during the class period. Office hours provide you with a place to have questions answered and content explained further or in different ways so that you may understand it.

Personal connection

- Sometimes students feel that professors are unapproachable. This is a very detrimental idea. Stopping by the professor's office, even when you don't have a question or concern, you will find that they have families, like sports, have hobbies, and are in general people just like yourself. Seeing your professor outside of the classroom will make them more relatable. This may be the difference between your willingness to ask questions when you need help, or unnecessarily suffering in silence.

Tutoring Center

These centers are found at CCBC in the Student Success Center on each campus. Assistance for your courses is provided on a by-appointment, or walk-in basis, in a one-on-one, small group, or open-space setting, and provided by professional, para-professional, or peer group staff. CCBC also offers online tutoring to all students taking any math course at the college. Regardless of the type of tutoring you need, these services are provided free of charge to you. Using this service in a proper and appropriate way can prove very beneficial to your success in your class. However, relying too heavily on these services may have the opposite effect. When using this service be sure to consider the following information carefully.

Hours of Operation

- Be sure to know when tutoring is available for students. This will help you plan when and how often you are able to visit the center or go online to get help.
- For online tutoring, tutors are available at certain times throughout the day. These times may be different from those at the tutoring center on campus. You should know these hours as well, especially if you are comfortable with a computer and can benefit from the online tutoring format.

General Questions

- The staff in the centers and online is familiar with the courses you are taking and the material covered in the classes. They should be more than capable of answering any questions you have concerning the content of the course. In addition, they will most likely be familiar with the professor as well and may be able to provide assistance in understanding the expectations they may have of you.

Content, Homework, and Test Preparation Assistance

- Visiting the tutoring center is not a substitute for attending class. Therefore the tutors should not be used as professors. If you have missed a class, it is your responsibility to do all you can to catch up on your own. This means getting notes from a classmate, reading the appropriate textbook sections, and even attempting the assignments *before* coming to the center. The tutors are there to *help* you understand the material, not to *teach* it to you.
- When you do have a question concerning the homework you should seek help by using specific questions to direct the tutors to where you need help. This will help the tutor to provide the appropriate assistance. The tutors operate under the assumption that they are not to do any problems for you, but rather to demonstrate through the solving of similar problems the procedure needed to find your solution. This is done through as many examples as necessary in order to reach the goal of having you to solve the problem on your own, without assistance.

- If you have a test scheduled in your course, the tutors are an excellent source for clarification of material. Although the staff is not there to review, or quiz you on the content, it can be used to as a standby resource while studying on your own or in a small group. If a review sheet is provided, the tutors most certainly are there to assist you in recalling material from earlier in the semester and making connections to that of more recent classes.

Study Areas

- The tutoring centers also provide table space in open areas for studying and computers with specialized software for your utilization. More private cubical type desks are also sometimes available. All of these areas should still provide easy access to the tutors on staff.

Companion Website

Most current textbooks have websites that have additional material or resources that were specifically designed to support the textbook used in your course. Be sure to note that not all of these resources are free to you but may still be worth the investment if it will improve your chances of success. Consider what you need to be successful when you are making the decision.

Example Assignments

- Oftentimes there are additional practice problems, chapter projects, sample tests, and review sheets provided for students.

Online Tutors (usually for a fee)

- Some publishers have teamed with online tutoring companies to provide 24-hour homework help or question hotlines. Again, be sure to check if there is a fee for these services.

Supplemental Software (if not already provided with the textbook)

A CD is sometimes available that may contain any or all of the following:

- Lecture videos
- Online textbook
- Digital Tutors
- Practice Problems
- Solutions Guides

Library

Most libraries provide the following for student use.

Study areas

- These may include tables or booths in common open space, or smaller rooms that can be used as group work areas. Depending on the area being utilized you may work alone or with other students. Just remember to be aware of the

other students that may also be studying and gauge the amount of acceptable noise you make accordingly.

Computers

- CCBC provides access to multiple computers both in the open space and computer rooms. These computers may be used to complete any assignment that requires research, word processing, or the use of certain software.

Textbooks

- Current and past textbooks for your math courses are kept as resources for the students. If you have not purchased a textbook, lost it, or just need an alternate one, you may review the ones provided in the library.

Library Personnel

- Any of the staff in the library should be able to direct you to any number of additional resources available to help you with your course. Most of them have worked there for many years and are familiar with the types of questions past students in the class have asked. Therefore, they should be able to direct you to the right place when you seek help.

In addition to the above areas that prove to be the most beneficial to students, there are other resources available to students at CCBC. They include the academic advisors, life planning counselors, and student government, groups, and associations. These services can provide a variety of assistance not only for your classes but for your general experience as a student as well.

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Review Questions

1. Where can you find your professor's office hours? What are your professor's office hours for the math course you are taking now?
2. What are three reasons why you might want to take advantage your professor's office hours?
3. Where is the Student Success Center located on your campus? What are the hours of operation?
4. What are three reasons why you might want to go to the Student Success Center?
5. What are some of the additional materials or resources textbooks can offer on their websites?
6. Does your textbook offer additional materials or resources online?

7. Where is the library located on your campus?

8. What type of resources does your library provide?