

HOW TO TELL IF YOU'RE AT HIGH RISK FOR GETTING AN F IN ONE OF DR. MELTON'S COURSES

The following is a list of warning signs that you're not going about this course in the right way. Avoiding these behaviors is no guarantee of a passing grade, but by avoiding them, you certainly improve your opportunity to earn a passing grade.

Ask yourself the following questions:

Do I blow off class, either on occasion or frequently?

Am I late to class, either on occasion or frequently? Does this cause me to miss the weekly quizzes sometimes?

About those weekly quizzes . . . do I sometimes, or usually, fail them?

Do I fail to study for the quizzes at all?

Have I failed to grasp that while, individually, these quizzes count for very little, collectively they count for a lot?

Do I sometimes, or usually, fail to put in, on average, at least five hours of time per week studying for this course, not counting in-class time?

While in class, do I spend any time texting? Surfing? Gaming? Napping? Daydreaming? Talking with other students?

Do I take only a few notes, or none at all, instead just relying mainly on what Dr. Melton has put on the course outline?

When Dr. Melton asks me a question, is my usual response—probably because I haven't read the material or else I haven't been paying attention in class—either "I don't know" or "Could you repeat the question, please?"

When Dr. Melton asks "Any questions?" do I have questions but don't ask them?

When Dr. Melton asks "Can you make a 100 on the upcoming quiz?" am I worried that I don't understand the material well enough to make a 100, but I don't let him know?

Do I blow off reading any of the following materials that are available on the website?

- The syllabus?
- The handout on "Things to understand about taking a college history course" or "Things to understand about taking a college political science course?"
- The handout on "How and Why to Take Notes in College?"
- The "Instructions for Taking the Mid-Term Exam?"
- The "Guide for preparing for an essay/short answer exam?"
- The Sample essay/short answer exam?

Do I skim the above handouts but then fail to go back and re-read them and use them as resources as needed during the semester?

Do I ask Dr. Melton questions that he has already clearly answered in the syllabus or on another handout?

Do I blow off reading (or re-reading) the material on the other links that Dr. Melton goes over in class or assigns for homework?

Do I fail to study the course outline outside of class?

Do I fail to think about the “questions to think about” on the course outline?

Do I fail to write practice answers for the possible essay questions on the course outline? Do I fail to have other students “grade” the practice answers? Do I pass up opportunities to “grade” other students’ practice answers?

Do I figure that I can pass the mid-term or final exam by studying the course outline (and my notes, if any) for a few hours the day or two before the exam?

If, on the rare occasion that I must miss class for good reason, do I fail to get class notes for the class I missed from at least two classmates?

Do I fail to check Dr. Melton’s web page before class every day?

Do I figure that if I do badly in this course, I can make up for it before the course ends by doing an extra credit assignment?

Do I figure that this course, and my performance in it, doesn’t really matter, since it’s only a stepping stone to the job or life or career that I’m really interested in? That this course is just an inconvenience to me and my life?

*If you answered “yes” to one or more of these questions, you’re at high risk for failing this course. And if you fail this course, then the **F** will remain on your transcript forever. Graduate program admissions committees will see it. Potential employers will see it. You’ll have to explain it. You’ll be competing with people who don’t have F’s on their transcripts to get jobs and places in graduate programs. Best not to have these problems to begin with. Address the above problems so that you have the best chance possible of passing this course.*