

The following tips were gleaned from three university wide conversations with students, faculty, and staff on fostering learner autonomy. Go to <http://www.sotl.ilstu.edu/castlAahe/autoWeb.shtml> to access notes from these meetings:

Undergraduate Students should be encouraged to do the following to be more autonomous learners:

- Be persistent and inquisitive;
- Follow curiosity and suspend judgment;
- Complete assigned reading, read in advance of class, and read beyond the class;
- Ask questions and participate;
- Attend class and participate;
- Follow directions;
- Develop priorities and re-order them as needed;
- Seek out-of-class experiences that connect in-class learning to your world out of class;
- Pursue honors and/or research opportunities with faculty and graduate students;
- Set high/realistic goals;
- Seek to become a life long learner;
- Show an interest in self-improvement;
- Avoid too much autonomy whereby you do not read the web pages/assignment or follow the directions as you think you already know all the information;
- Never be completely satisfied with what you know; there is always more to know; and
- Develop intrinsic motivation where you learn for the joy of knowing over extrinsic reward (grades, degree requirement completion).

Graduate Students should be encouraged to do the following to be more autonomous learners:

- Take more ownership of their learning than they did as undergraduates;
- Seek learning outside the borders of a class, major, department, or the university;
- Work more independently than undergraduates or develop this ability over the course of graduate study;
- Have no fear of seeking help if needed;
- Be more intrinsically motivated than extrinsically focused on grades (learn for the love of learning);
- Focus on becoming a life long learner and be more reflective about experiences;
- Develop proficiency in scheduling their commitments and in time management;
- Prioritize and re-order priorities as needed;

- Be proactive in seeking faculty time after they are prepared for such meetings;
- Seek additional enrichment opportunities (attend lectures, meetings, volunteer);
- Perform beyond what is minimally required for courses;
- Take advantage of resources prepared for them;
- Be self-reflective and motivated to learn;
- Be confident about their learning;
- Learn from their mistakes;
- Be willing and eager to participate;
- Adapt to the culture and academic environment of the department they are studying in;
- Possess excellent problem solving skills and have high fluid intelligence;
- Read for pleasure or enrichment and pursue other intellectual activities in their leisure (cross work puzzles);
- Be open minded and not judgmental; and
- Accept and embrace diversity.