



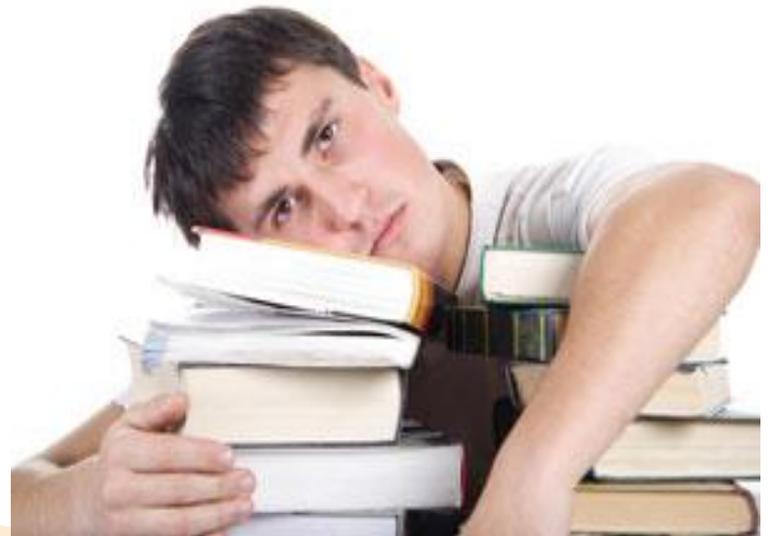
Refining Your Learning Skills

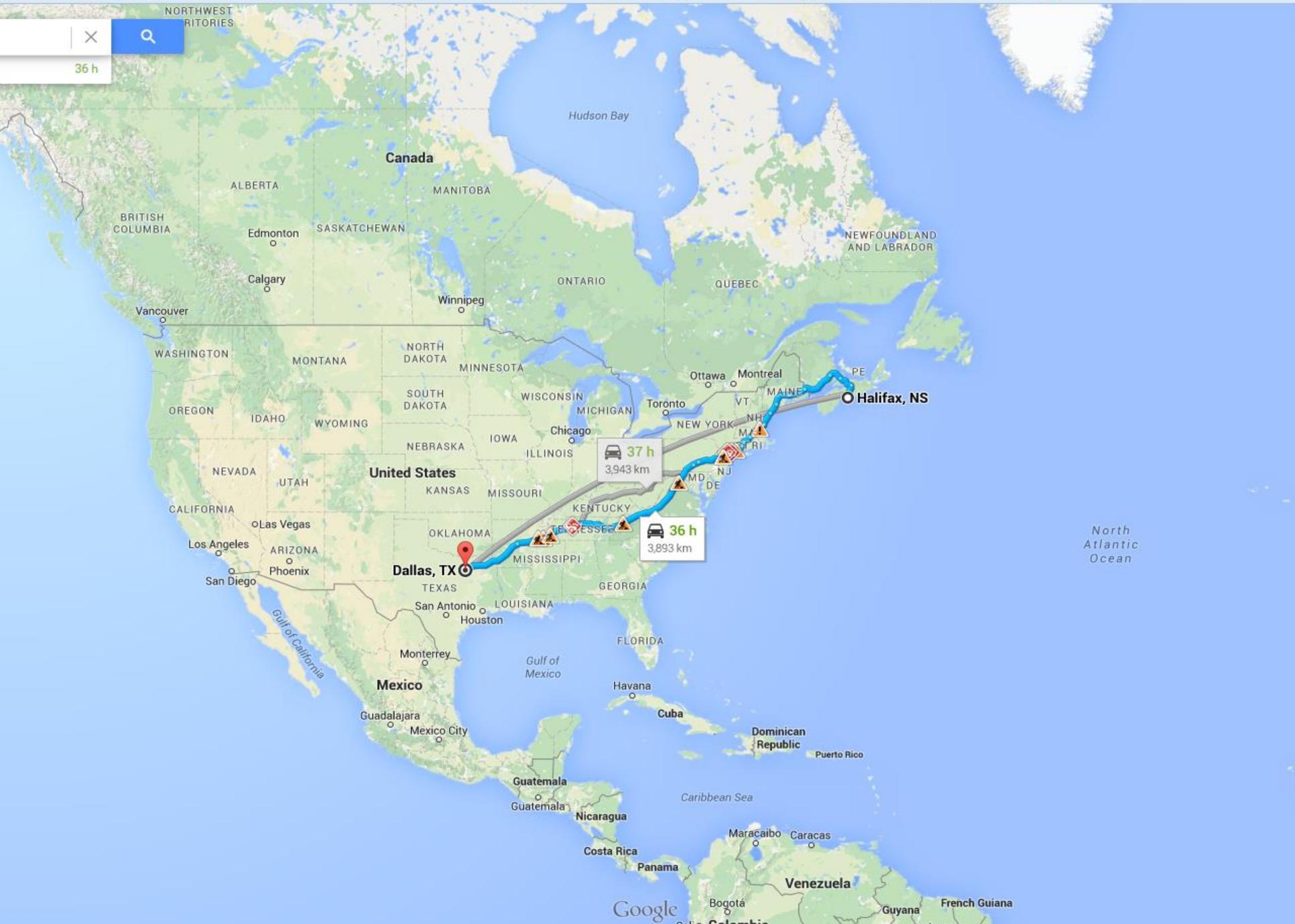
A Second Chance for Academically Dismissed Students

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Agenda

- ▶ About Dalhousie University
- ▶ Context for Program
- ▶ Refining Your Learning Skills
 - Q & A
- ▶ Student-Identified Problems & Strategies
- ▶ Program Effectiveness
 - Q & A
- ▶ Design Elements
- ▶ Key Success Factors
- ▶ Student Voices
 - Q & A
- ▶ Summary





Dalhousie University



Dalhousie University

- ▶ Comprehensive, publicly-funded research-intensive university
- ▶ 18,500 students; 14% International; 55% F
- ▶ 180+ degrees, 12 Faculties
- ▶ Law, Medicine, Dentistry, Engineering, Architecture, etc.
- ▶ 1,100 professors; 1,121 acres of campus
- ▶ First to second year retention rate of 84%
- ▶ Goal:
 - 90% retention rate by 2018 to be U15 competitive

Mona Campbell Building



Halifax, Nova Scotia



Context

- ▶ Too many Engineering students were not making a successful transition from high school to first-year university
- ▶ Too many first-year students were dismissed
- ▶ Too many did not return for second year
- ▶ Visa implications for International students
 - Led to development of academic recovery program

2010	Faculty of Engineering, 14 students
2012	Management & Commerce
2014	Arts & Social Sciences, Computer Science
2015	EXPANSION

Refining Your Learning Skills

Description

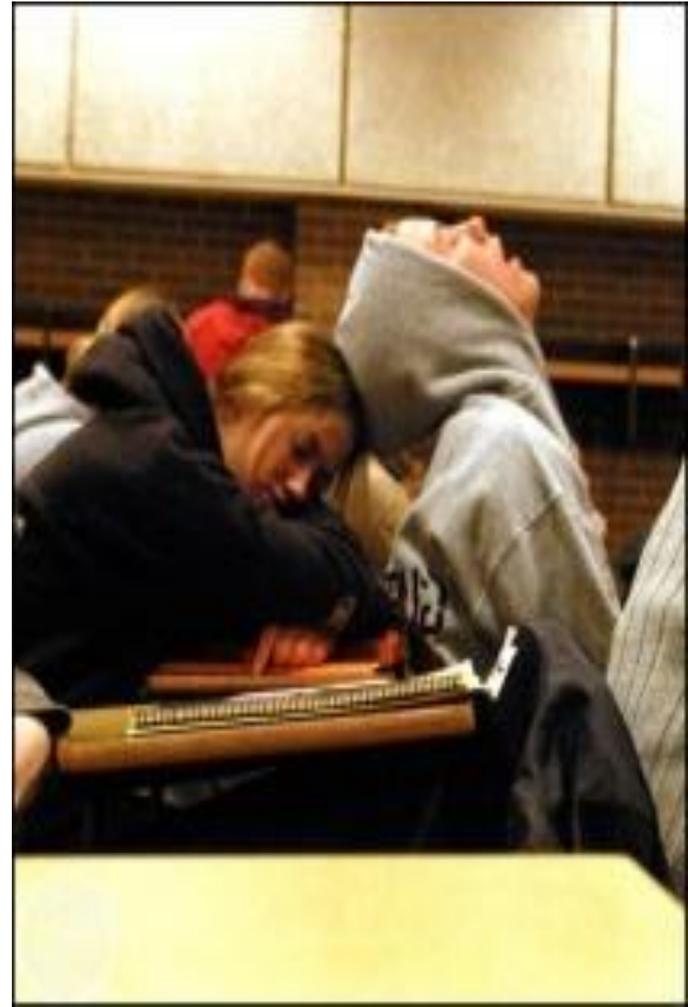
- ▶ 10 morning non-credit summer program
- ▶ 265 students since Summer 2010
- ▶ 80% or 212 passed; 212 returned
- ▶ Cohort by discipline (20 – 24 students)
- ▶ 30 hrs classroom plus daily assignments
- ▶ Practical, experiential, reflective
- ▶ Academically dismissed/probationary students
- ▶ 80% or B- required to pass
- ▶ Considered in appeal for readmission
- ▶ \$795

Topics

1. Thoughts & Feelings
2. Time Management
3. Learning from Lectures & Note Taking
4. Coping Strategies
5. Goal Setting & Academic Integrity
6. Procrastination & Alternative Thinking Strategies
7. Learning Styles
8. Assertive Communication & Exam Anxiety
9. Exam Preparation & Survival Tips
10. The Future

Problems Identified by Students

- ▶ Technology Addiction
- ▶ Lack of sleep; sleep problems
- ▶ Can't say "no" to friends
- ▶ Too much socializing
- ▶ No schedule
- ▶ No "to do" list
- ▶ Low expectations
- ▶ Lack of persistence
- ▶ Lack of motivation & commitment



Student-Generated Coping Strategies

- ▶ Give parents access to bank account so they can monitor when I visit liquor store.
- ▶ Don't post photos to Facebook. Turn off FB.
- ▶ Share schedule with parents and friends.
- ▶ Print off assignments; go to library; leave computer at home; set limiter on computer.
- ▶ Keep motivational pics and lists on bathroom mirror.
- ▶ Dream about my future & the life I want to live.

Dreamboard

Skating in Sweden



Australia



Iron Ring



Time Wasters DO's

- Keep a to-do-list
- Reward yourself at the end of your study session
- Plan out your day
- Take short breaks
- Chip away at each assignment
- Leave the house if you are getting distracted
- Push yourself to do two more questions when you feel like taken a break
- Set up an automatic response on your phone for messages
- Limit use of Facebook to a set time a day, maybe only half an hour daily

Time Waster DON'T's

- Don't stay up late
- Don't let friends drag you down
- Don't try and remember every task, write them down
- Don't take too long of a break
- Don't go out the night before something is due the next morning
- Don't QUIT!
- Stop using smoking as an excuse to take a break

B+

Goals

- Graduate
- Get a Job In Australia
- Travel to South East Asia

I Feel Good about These changes!

- 1) Doing assignments before I hangout with Friends
- 2) Getting To Class Early
- 3) Taking Responsibility

Working On:

- 1) Being Positive
- 2) Stay on task
- 3) Give up

Effectiveness

Management/Commerce Students
15% of those dismissed never return
For the 85% who return...

	Returned to Good Standing	Probation	Dismissed	GPA Change
Dismissed and readmitted after Refining (n=21)	52%	33%	14%	+1.50
Dismissed and readmitted without Refining (n=28)	32%	28%	40%	+.69
Dismissed and readmitted after sitting out a year (n=10)	10%	40%	50%	

Effectiveness

Engineering Students

Good Standing	Probation, etc.	Dismissed
53%	17%	30%

Engineer Students' Performance Relative to Grades

Grade	% of students	Good Standing	Probation Etc.	Dismissed
90 - 100	28%	68%	21%	10%
80-89	50%	41%	22%	36%
70-79	13%	22%	30%	48%
45-69	18%	30%	19%	50%

Program Design & Improvement Process

- ▶ Input from Faculty advisors, academic advisors, instructors, and students
- ▶ Pre and post instructional staff meetings
- ▶ Ongoing research and improvement
- ▶ Daily student reflection/feedback
- ▶ End of course student feedback
- ▶ Follow up with students
- ▶ Follow up with Faculty advisors

Key Success Factors



- ▶ Students are “ready”
- ▶ Timing avoids competing with other courses
- ▶ Structured to support success and change
 - No phones, laptops, tablets
 - 9:00 am start
 - Tough love
 - Assignments due every day 9:00 am
- ▶ Combination of Head, Heart, Hands
- ▶ Psychologists, advisors, faculty as instructors

Key Success Factors

- ▶ Face-to-face honest sharing with peers and instructors
- ▶ Holistic approach
- ▶ Daily reflective & practical assignments
- ▶ Daily feedback
- ▶ Caring, committed instructional team
- ▶ Conditional readmission
 - Reduced workload
 - Meetings with advisors
 - Intrusive advising



Student voices (Identities protected)

I fought tooth and nail to get out of taking this course. On the first day, I was angry and just put my head down and wanted to get out of here. On the second day, I realized that I was going to learn a lot here. I started looking at myself, my sleep patterns, time management, not taking anything seriously, doing assignments in one hour when I should have been putting in four. I have been to the library for the first time—it's an amazing facility! I'm saying "no" to friends and turning off my phone.

Man, this course is the best thing that ever happened to me.

Matthew



- ▶ I didn't think this course would benefit me in any way. I was totally wrong. It was a life-changing decision to come to this course. I used to be lazy, but I've changed.

Gillian





I never experienced failure before. I've been privileged. Then I got dismissed. I was crying in the secretary's office.

But now I know that no one can have a successful life without facing failure. This course has helped me move on feeling stronger.

Justin

Summary

Nothing succeeds like success.



**DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY**

Inspiring Minds

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