

Case Studies Week 1

Case 1

Rod is back in college at age 29. He has just returned from a session in which his advisor suggested he take a special 6-hour orientation and how-to-study course. The program is offered on a voluntary, noncredit basis for all beginning students. "I've decided to skip that orientation course they recommend," Rod said to his friend Mitch over a cup of coffee. "It might pay off for those who are younger, but at my age it would be a waste of time. After all, I've had 5 years of business experience. I have my career all picked out, and I'm highly motivated to achieve. Besides, if the course were really worthwhile, they would make it mandatory and give us credit."

Is Rod making the right decision?

Case 2

Joyce, a reentry student, feels lost, uncomfortable, and inadequate after a difficult divorce. Her self-image is poor. She does not have the self-confidence to make new friends. To remedy the situation, she has decided to impress her classmates and earn their friendship through intellectual achievements. She will spend more time preparing for her courses than other students do.

Is her solution a good one?

Case 3

Jim, a very bright young man, received straight A grades in all the difficult mathematical courses in high school. He could have had his choice of colleges, but he was not interested because he had formed a very successful rock group. The group cut several records and enjoyed some top-flight bookings. Jim has also had some success as a songwriter. Despite this success, he is uneasy about his future. Will he eventually tire of the show-business environment? Will his group be able to survive over the long run? Recently Jim has had some thoughts about enrolling in college as a full-time student.

Should he do so?

Case 4

Linda wants to improve her self-image by losing weight. She also wants to fly home for Christmas knowing that all of her academic work is up to the highest possible level. She makes a contract with herself to lose 12 pounds and study 4 additional hours per week between now and her departure date.

What are her chances of success?

Case 5

Toby is a college Freshman. He is in an Upward Bound program designed to help minority students adjust and survive. Since he has a weak background in English, is a slow reader and hasn't yet developed sound study habits, Toby's advisor has suggested he take only makeup courses the first semester.

Do you agree?

Case 6

Martha has decided to major in history. She considers herself a good reader but knows that some other students have better reading and comprehension. Last week her advisor suggested she might consider taking a special reading course to increase her speed and comprehension. Martha discovers that if she takes the course, she'll have to postpone a course she really wants to take. She then decides to go to the library and find a book that will help her improve her reading skills, thinking she could accomplish the same results on a do-it-yourself basis.

Is she making the right decision?