



Using Your Strengths in Academics

INTRODUCTION

Use this document as a guide for using your top five strengths to help you succeed in academics and life on campus. Copy and paste this information into your Discovery Notebook for easy access. If you feel stuck in your academics, explore the options given here.

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STRATEGIC THINKING

Analytical® in Academics

- Evaluate your study habits, note-taking, reading comprehension, etc. Note the differences when you're successful and when you're not.
- Data and evidence are a source of security for you. Carefully examine your options in all areas of your life; this will ensure confidence in your future decisions.
- Identify your biases before taking sides on an issue. Evaluate your thinking before challenging others.
- Consider joining the board game club or taking classes that include pro and con discussions. Discuss options with an academic advisor.
- Collaborate with people who have strong **Activator®**. You can help them make wise, considered decisions. They can help you turn your analysis into action.

Context® in Academics

- Before starting a new project, ask your professors for examples of excellent work so you can see how others successfully approached the assignment.
- You will want to understand the root causes of today's conflicts, alliances, financial policies, treaties, and trade agreements. Consider courses in history, indigenous studies, religion, philosophy, economics, and politics.
- Prepare for exams by replicating successful study techniques that worked for you in the past.
- If you have a hard time with change, find a mentor with powerful **Maximizer®** talents who can help you to improve on your existing methods and habits.
- The demands of higher education are high. Think about how you have coped with anxiety or stress in the past. If you are still struggling to feel better, consider meeting with a [counselor](#).

Futuristic® in Academics

- Write a description of your desired future and post it where you will notice it frequently. Look at your description often and connect what you are learning to where you want to go.
- Consider joining a student group that believes it can have a positive effect on the future. See if the group's mission statement aligns with your values and purpose, such as [SGA](#).
- You inspire friends and classmates with your images of the future. When you articulate your vision, describe it in detail with vivid words and metaphors so that others can better comprehend your expansive thinking.

- Partner with someone with a strong **Activator®** This person can remind you that you do not discover the future; you create it with the actions you take today.
- Know what is expected in each of your classes so you will be able to plan your University years. Visit your academic advisor to help you plan your courses.

Ideation® in Academics

- Understand the fuel for your **Ideation®** When do you get your best ideas? Re-create these settings as often as you can.
- If you get bored quickly, make small changes in your academic, work, or home life. Experiment. Play mental games with yourself. All of these will help keep you stimulated.
- Look for complementary partnerships on campus. A mentor with strong **Analytical®** talents will have the objectivity to challenge your big ideas and will support you to explore them further.
- Choose classes and majors that involve creative projects rather than just exams or term papers. Discuss this with your Academic Advisor.
- You are a natural fit with research and development; you appreciate the mindset of visionaries and dreamers. Feed your **Ideation®** talents by spending time with your imaginative peers.

Input® in Academics

- Identify areas of specialization within your major, and actively pursue more information about them. Connect with faculty who work in those areas.
- What is your learning style? You may like collecting information through reading, through people, through listening, through doing. Consider this question when selecting a professor when choosing classes.
- Seek out a mentor with **Focus®** or **Discipline®** talents who can help channel your interests productively and organize everything you've discovered.
- Let people know that you enjoy answering their questions and researching their pressing issues. Use your **Input®** talents to connect with classmates, and look for a [leadership role](#) on campus where you can use what you collect.
- You are naturally curious. Make time to read books and articles that stimulate you to sustain your **Input®** talent.

Intellection® in Academics

- When do you do your best thinking? Alone or with others? In a quiet or noisy environment? In motion or sitting still? Find your best atmosphere to think, and make sure that you give yourself all the time you need to reflect.
- Follow your intellectual curiosity and allow yourself to ask the questions that naturally come to you. Being inquisitive will help you refine your approach to learning and studying.

- Find other students who like to talk about the same issues you do. The enjoyable exchange of intellectual conversations will stimulate your thinking and that of others.
- Keep a journal and record your thoughts regularly. You could even include a section for personal journaling in your Personal Discovery Notebook. Writing might be the best way to crystallize and integrate your ideas.
- Explain to others why you need time for introspection. Although it might seem to others that you are slow to act, being introspective allows you to refine your ideas; thus, for you, it is productive behavior.

Learner® in Academics

- Identify your learning style. Monitor your progress. Pay attention to how you change and grow throughout your University experience.
- Find ways to track your learning progress to keep yourself motivated. Celebrate your successes and support your drive to know more.
- Partner with classmates or friends who have strong **Activator®**, **Focus®**, or **Achiever®** talents who can help you complete unfinished projects and become even more productive and purposeful in your education
- Stay tuned to the [Coffey Break](#) and the [SAB Calendar](#) for upcoming events on campus. You will enjoy hearing and learning about a variety of different topics.
- Honor your desire to learn and try something new. Take advantage of the [Friesen Center](#) and consider the many different ways you can get involved in the campus community.

Strategic® in Academics

- Make full use of your **Strategic®** talents by scheduling time to carefully think about a goal you want to achieve and the path you will take to reach it. Time to contemplate is essential to strategic thinking.
- When you are looking for [Internships](#), play out different scenarios in your mind to help you decide which ones to explore further. List the various possible paths so you can give careful thought to each one.
- Your most significant contribution to a group may be to discover the best path to success. Because you can do this quickly, it may look like you're "winging it," but explaining yourself along the way will help others understand what you see.
- You likely have thought of multiple paths you can take to receive your degree. Meet with your academic advisor to see if there are courses that satisfy more than one area of your degree completion criteria.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Adaptability® in Academics

- Calm yourself before a stressful exam with positive self-talk. Embrace your ability to expect the unexpected. Visit [ACE](#) for more information. [Tips on dealing with test anxiety](#)
- You are comfortable with change, and you can provide stability for those who don't cope as well. Visit ACE for more information.
- You will need to keep your vision on long-term goals at times. Partner with friends or professors who have strong **Futuristic®**, **Maximizer®**, or **Discipline®** talents.
- Consider [off-campus studies](#) to connect with your desires for change and the unexpected.
- Cultivate your reputation as a calm and reassuring person when others become upset by daily events.

Connectedness® in Academics

- Look for links between your coursework and the bigger picture. Ask yourself what life lessons you are supposed to learn through your studies and the challenge they present
- Talk with a mentor about the connections you see between your classes, your major, your values, and your mission. Consider meeting with your academic advisor to explore these connections.
- Look for friends with strong **Communication®**. They can help you find the words you need to describe your vivid examples of connection in the real world.
- Use your **Connectedness®** talents to break down walls that prevent knowledge sharing across [clubs, groups, and organizations on campus](#).
- [Volunteer](#) for organizations that will allow you to serve people.

Developer® in Academics

- Choose classes with field-studies or work-integrated components that involve working with people. Experiential learning will allow you to see others' tangible growth experiences. Consider co-ops and [internships](#).
- One of the best ways to reinforce your learning is to teach others. Offer to tutor and mentor other students. Sign up to be a tutor for the [ACE](#).
- Remember to develop yourself. You cannot give what you do not have – it's OK to put your needs first. Find a mentor or professor who will help you focus on your development.
- You have a talent for noting people's progress and for helping others become even better at what they do. Look for [volunteer opportunities](#) that connect with developing others.

- Consider getting involved in [SAB](#). You'll enjoy being part of a team and working with others toward a common goal.

Empathy® in Academics

- Your **Empathy®** talents are a valuable asset in [student organizations](#) or study groups. To keep everyone moving toward the group's goals, give voice to what others are feeling.
- When thinking about your major, consider fields that give you a chance to change lives. Your **Empathy®** talents will likely make you successful in any area where you can have an impact on others.
- Practice refining the words you use to name the feelings you experience and observe in others
- Develop routines at the end of each day that allows you to decompress. If you do not, you may find that at times your **Empathy®** talents will drain you.
- Be sure to take care of yourself and find healthy ways to release your emotions. If you are feeling intense and persistent anxiety or depression, consider meeting with a [counselor](#) for additional information on how to stay mentally and physically healthy.

Harmony® in Academics

- Consider getting involved with events at the [MAC house](#) and connecting with others from different countries and cultures. You might enjoy helping others get to know and appreciate one another.
- You may enjoy classes in which you learn practical skills and obtain practical knowledge. Consider courses that involve experiential learning (the communication courses are a great place to start).
- Use your **Harmony®** talents to build a network of mentors with differing perspectives. Rely on these people when you need expertise. Your openness to their diverse views will help you learn.
- Academic challenges can weigh heavily on your mind. When you are struggling, talk things through with friends you trust. Ask them what they do when they're worried about their academics or feeling personal stress. Consider leveraging supports like [ACE](#) and [free counseling](#).
- When studying in a group or working with others, stress the value of reaching consensus. Help others to see the practical side of things – this is the starting point of agreement.

Includer® in Academics

- Consider taking classes in which you will study particular groups of people, like Sociology or History. You will enjoy learning about diverse cultures and backgrounds. Discuss your options with your academic advisor.

- Consider volunteering during orientation as an [alpha group leader](#) or another event where you are welcoming people to campus.
- Your friendliness and approachability can unite groups and teams. Consider signing up for an intramural where you can achieve as a group.
- Look for roles in which you are continuously working and interacting with people. You will enjoy the challenge of making everyone feel important.
- Look for opportunities to bring together people of diverse cultures and backgrounds. Consider volunteering or taking part in events put on through the [MAC house](#).

Individualization® in Academics

- Pay attention to how your style of learning, studying, writing papers, and taking tests compare with others'. Collaborate on the best ways to tackle assignments and projects using everyone's input.
- Tell your friends and roommates about the great talents you see in them and encourage them. Help them understand and maximize the power of their unique strengths.
- You move comfortably among a broad range of styles and cultures, and you intuitively personalize your interactions. Make full use of these talents by leading or contributing to [campus clubs](#) or [volunteering with community organizations](#).
- Study and research people that you consider to be successful. Make a note of the uniqueness that made them successful.

Positivity® in Academics

- Consider choosing courses taught by professors with affirming teaching styles. Your classes need to be exciting and meaningful. Consider discussing your class choices with your peers and your academic advisor.
- Use your naturally optimistic outlook to give your friends and roommates a boost. You will be able to tell when they are [feeling overwhelmed or tense](#) about school, work, money, or relationships.
- Play sports or consider cheering on the foresters. Supporting a team with your **Positivity®** talents will benefit both you and the team.
- Get involved in a [club or group](#) that needs an optimistic leader who can motivate others through fun, energy, and excitement about the group's goals.
- Make sure that your praise is always genuine – never empty or false. Authentic actions will help you build long-lasting, real relationships.

Relator® in Academics

- Establish various lines of communication with friends in your classes – verbal, text, e-mail, social media – this will increase your engagement in the course material.

- Talk to your trusted circle of friends about how they see you. Ask them what they think your most exceptional talents are. You highly value and trust your best friends' opinions, and they can give you a new perspective on yourself.
- Get to know the professors and counselors who take an interest in you. Their involvement in your University experience will help you feel like you belong and stimulate your academic achievement.
- Consider finding a mentor with a strong **Belief®**.
- You are a giver, not a taker. But sometimes you need to recharge your battery. Identify close friends you trust and can open up to during troubling times, and lean on them for the support you need.

INFLUENCING

Activator® in Academics

- Your success hinges on being fully engaged. Choose courses that involve hands-on activities, lively verbal exchanges, or exciting experiments. Your **academic advisor** will be able to help you find dynamic classes.
- Timing is essential – strategically use your desire to act in the proper moments
- You may come off as intimidating or impatient to others – ensure you tell them the purpose for your action
- Identify formal and informal leadership opportunities to get involved with, such as the **SGA** – you have a lot of drive and initiative to create impact
- Make appointments with professors and teaching assistants to confirm expectations, clarify course requirements, and establish deadlines. Knowing what to expect will save you a lot of trouble later.

Command® in Academics

- Play the lead role in shaping your degree. You can take charge of your education by strategizing with an advisor or professor.
- When choosing your major, think about how you can use your **Command®** talents to make a difference in the lives of others.
- Find a mentor with strong **Woo®**, **Strategic®**, or **Empathy®**. This person can help you identify and bypass unnecessary hurdles that can slow you down.
- Consider running for a leadership position on campus.
- Participate in activities and classes that require you to persuade people to embrace your ideas, plans, solutions, or philosophies.

Communication® in Academics

- When presenting in class, make a note of when your professor and classmates are primarily engaged. Draft your next presentation around these highlights.
- Look for friends, professors, or classmates to be the audience you need to talk things through.
- You have the talent to find words for people's emotions. Pinpoint the key issues your friends/classmates are trying to communicate, and give voice to those feelings.
- If you enjoy writing, consider volunteering to be a **tutor** at the **ACE** or writing for the **Huntingtonian**.
- Find leaders or professors on campus whom you admire for their ability to draw people in with their words.

Competition® in Academics

- What are your most meaningful academic goals? Design a system to keep track of your progress on reaching them. Measuring your achievement will motivate you to achieve the highest levels of productivity, mastery, and quality.
- Continuously monitor your grades and class standing. You will be more engaged in your classes when you know the score.
- Engage fellow competitors in Intramurals. You will enjoy a friendly rivalry and getting fit as well.
- Consider running for a leadership position on campus through [SGA](#). Competing to win in something will energize you.
- Remember that not everyone assigns the same emotional intensity to every activity as you do. Make sure to demonstrate that you accept and respect other people's reasons for being involved.

Maximizer® in Academics

- Choose your major based on your most considerable talents and your mission. Find specialized programs in your area of interest where you can use your talents and fulfill your development goals
- If you are struggling with a required course, find friends or classmates who are good at it and partner with them. Consider accessing [ACE](#) for Structured Study Sessions or Find a Tutor.
- Look for a [campus club](#) that allows you to improve your health, meet new friends, and boost your engagement on campus. You will enjoy making the most of the time you spend on extracurricular activities.
- Take on a leadership role that aligns with your mission. Use your **Maximizer®** talents to help group members see their abilities, and then position people where they can best develop and apply their strengths
- Study success. Deliberately spend time with people who have discovered their strengths. Do you have any professors who are doing what they do best? Talk with them about the power of their talents.

Self-Assurance® in Academics

- Get to know your professors and teaching assistants and what they expect from students in their classes. By understanding expectations, you can align your learning approaches with their goals.
- What ambitious goals would you like to accomplish before completing your degree? Go for the bold and exciting goals that may seem impractical to others but are achievable for you (with some heroics).
- How do you cope with mental stress? While confidence is the norm for you when something shakes your sense of security, you feel it more intensely. When feeling unbalanced, look to campus supports such as [counseling services](#) or academic help through the [ACE](#).

- Consider [off-campus studies](#) or going on a J-term mission trip. Your **Self-Assurance®** talents will help you to maneuver through a culture that is quite different from your own.
- Join [student clubs/groups](#) that stretch your talents and broaden your horizons. Dare to tackle the unfamiliar. You have the confidence to try new things. Invite some friends to take this journey with you.

Significance® in Academics

- Meet with your academic advisor to help you choose classes that allow independence, are relevant to your goals and desires, and in which you can be highly successful.
- Identify the specific talents you will use to make an extraordinary contribution to your classes, [campus clubs](#), or internships. Create opportunities to stand out.
- You are independent and prioritize projects based on the level of influence they will have on the people around you. Look for opportunities on campus where you can have the most significant impact.
- Make a list of goals, achievements, and qualifications you crave. Add the list to your Personal Discovery Notebook. Use this list to inspire you. Consider how your academic path can help you reach these goals.
- You value appreciation and affirmation. Tell the significant people in your life how valuable their feedback and support are to you. Their words can be very motivational.

Woo® in Academics

- Whatever you are doing, keep yourself involved with people. Study in places where there are other students around. Such as the HUB or a dorm. Balance your academics with extracurricular activities, so you have plenty of social time.
- Try to pick classes where you can talk and work with other students.
- What are your values? People with **Woo®** are natural campaigners. Campaign for people and causes on campus and in your community that aligns with your values.
- Consider volunteering to help with orientation as an [alpha group leader](#). You will enjoy meeting newcomers and visitors and assisting people in getting connected right away.
- Practice ways to engage others. Consider researching people before you meet them so you can find common ground.

EXECUTING

Achiever® in Academics

- Take a moment to appreciate your successes. You can look ahead tomorrow. Today, celebrate!
- Partner with someone who has strong **Discipline®** or **Focus®**. This person can help you use your energy as efficiently as possible.
- Join groups or clubs with members who have a strong work ethic. Working with others that share your drive will intensify your **Achiever®** [Check out all the Student Activities available on campus.](#)
- You likely have a to-do list. Try to pace yourself and not take on too many things at once. Go to the HUB or visit a Dorm Lounge.
- Even though you may feel like you don't need as much sleep as others, adequate sleep is essential to your health. Check out [tips on how to get a good night's sleep](#) and [how to maximize rest in college.](#)

Arranger® in Academics

- Prioritize your studies. You will likely be able to concentrate better and study more effectively when you have arranged your classwork most productively.
- Your mental juggling is instinctive, but make sure to give your friends, classmates, and professors time to understand your way of doing things when you present it to them.
- Consider blocking off time to make phone calls, meet with your friends, go for a walk, or head to workout at the Plex.
- Get involved with [SAB](#) or the [Friesen Center](#), and stay busy. Explore community service opportunities where you could help arrange routine activities, special events, or projects.

Belief® in Academics

- Choose courses taught by professors who are known for their strong beliefs, even if they clash with your own. Learning about the opinions of others will help you refine your own.
- Try to research, write, and speak about topics directly related to your beliefs.
- Consider connecting with a Faith Leader on campus.
- Make sure that you are balancing your educational demands and your personal life. Ensure you are making time for family and friends
- Collaborate with friends or classmates who have strong **Futuristic®**. They can help you create a vivid picture of where your values will lead.

Consistency® in Academics

- Set up and adhere to a **study routine**. You excel when your life has a rhythm to it.
- Make friends with someone who has powerful **Individualization®**. They can remind you when it's appropriate and essential to accommodate individual differences.
- You are naturally aware when things are out of balance, and you can quickly restore stability.
- Join campus or community groups that provide accommodations and supports for others, helping them show their true potential. Consider being a Note-taker with the **ACE**.

Deliberative® in Academics

- You are most comfortable in structured settings. Look for professors and classes that offer clear expectations, consistent weekly discussions, and the freedom for you to think about how to contribute ahead of time.
- Keep track of all your academic deadlines. For you, unknown deadlines may lead to unhealthy stress. When you receive a class syllabus, highlight the due dates of readings, assignments, papers, and exams.
- Before meeting with a professor, prepare thoroughly by making a list of all the things you want to discuss. Preparation will make you feel more confident.
- You inspire trust because you are cautious and considerate about sensitive topics. Look for leadership roles in organizations or student groups that deal with delicate issues or topics. Consider volunteering with **MAC**.
- Find friends or classmates with strong **Command®**, **Self-Assurance®**, or **Activator®**. While you carefully weigh the risks and rewards of each step you take, these partners can help you face tough choices more quickly and with confidence.

Discipline® in Academics

- When academic or social demands make you feel stressed or overwhelmed, consider breaking your daily to-do list into manageable sections, and leave yourself time to deal with the unexpected. Learn how to use a time-management system.
- When choosing your courses, as much as possible, pick a routine class schedule. Think of what times of day you are most productive for studying.
- If you are in a self-paced class or a class with minimal structure, develop some structure or system to make sure that you meet class requirements.
- You are a perfectionist at heart. Join a **campus club** where you can use your **Discipline®** talents to help plan major events.
- Help others add order to their lives. If you do it gently and respectfully, they will appreciate it.



Focus® in Academics

- When academic or social demands make you feel stressed or overwhelmed, consider breaking your daily to-do list into manageable sections, and leave yourself time to deal with the unexpected. Learn how to use a time-management system.
- When choosing your courses, as much as possible, pick a routine class schedule. Think of what times of day you are most productive for studying.
- If you are in a self-paced class or a class with minimal structure, develop some structure or system to make sure that you meet class requirements.
- You are a perfectionist at heart. Join a [campus club](#) where you can use your **Discipline®** talents to help plan major events.
- Help others add order to their lives. If you do it gently and respectfully, they will appreciate it. Take time to write down your goals and refer to them often. Discipline yourself to attach timelines and measurements to your goals to show your progress. Using goals and deadlines will help to build your confidence.
- Although you can concentrate for long periods, regulate yourself to avoid working to exhaustion
- If you find yourself becoming too focused on your academic goals, stretch yourself to set personal goals. Establishing personal priorities will bring a healthy balance to your life.
- When working with others in a small group, help them see how the pieces of a project fit together to accomplish the overall objective.
- Schedule your work in a way that allows you to focus your full attention on one project at a time. Be sure to leverage [ACE](#) to support your learning, and think about volunteering to help others with their academic goals.

Responsibility® in Academics

- What does it mean to be a responsible student? Make a list of the times your hard work and commitment led to your success. Use your past academic achievements to create a standard for yourself.
- Make an appointment with the [ERC](#) to talk about planning your career. Discussing your career will engage you in the educational process and energize you to follow through.
- Develop partnerships with friends or classmates who have strong **Relator®**. They can point out when your commitments are causing you to neglect those who mean the most to you.
- Partner with someone who is exceptionally talented in **Discipline®** or **Focus®**. They can help you stay on track and prevent you from becoming overloaded.
- Figure out how much time you can realistically devote to [clubs/activities](#), and what your priorities are. Saying yes too quickly might mean you have to say no to something else.



Friesen Center Tools
Contact erc@huntington.edu

Restorative™ in Academics

- Think about your university experience as a way to improve yourself. Cultivating your skills and knowledge might increase your motivation to find solutions, mainly when you reflect on your progress.
- Diagnosing problems and designing solutions can help your **Restorative™** talents to flourish. Meet with your academic advisor to find courses or internships that require troubleshooting and analysis
- Be careful not to get stuck, focusing on what's wrong with your relationships. Make sure your friends and roommates don't think that flaws and shortcomings are all you can see
- You define yourself by your ability to cope, but if you can't solve a particular problem, don't feel defeated. Look to your support system to help you through roadblocks, or [explore counseling services](#).
- Let everyone know that you enjoy fixing problems; it comes naturally to you.