What is something you do well? Take a minute to jot it down. I’ll wait while you get a pencil.

Okay, now, think about that skill. How did you become good at it? Write it down.

Did you write “practice” for your second answer? I bet most (if not all) of you did. For the past two weeks, I’ve been asking people these two questions and every single person said practice made them good at something.

No one gets good at something simply by listening to lectures or watching videos. You need to practice! Homework, lab assignments, and in class activities provide opportunities for you to practice. Take advantage of these opportunities.

Mid semester is nearly here and it’s a good time to evaluate how you are doing in classes and what steps you can take to improve. Set up practice and study sessions with your classmates. Talk to your instructors or to me.

We want you to succeed. We want you to be good communicators, managers, agronomists, and horticulturalists; and that means you need to exercise those skills. Yes, it requires extra time, and yes, it requires some critical thinking, and yes it requires discipline. But, in years to come when asked what you do well, maybe you’ll say ‘I’m really good at learning new skills.’

Now is the time to start planning your spring class schedule. Make an appointment to talk to your advisor.

Deficiency grades will be mailed to the current address that you have listed on Testudo. Please make sure your mailing address is accurate.

You must go into Testudo to update your information. IAA staff cannot do it for you.
Students interested in pursuing a degree or certificate in a turf grass management program and are currently employed by a MAAGCS member are eligible for the Mid-Atlantic Association of Golf Course Superintendents Scholarship.

The deadline for 2012 applications has not yet been determined. Applicants should be enrolled in at least one class in the turf management curriculum. You can download an application from the IAA Scholarship page.

Past recipients of the MAAGCS Scholarship are welcome to reapply.

Your midterm grades will be available through Testudo by the middle of this month. If you are receiving a “D” or “F” in any of your IAA courses, you will be notified by mail. If all your grades are satisfactory, you will not receive your grades in the mail; however, you may obtain your midterm grades through Testudo.

If you have a “D” or “F,” you are to meet with the IAA Director to discuss your options and solutions for success. Please call Carole Dingess at 301-405-4685 or stop by her office (Jull 2123) to schedule an appointment.

Also, discuss your options with your instructor and your advisor before making a decision. If you decide to drop a course, you must do so by 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, November 7, to receive a “W” for the course. After the 7th, you are committed to receiving a grade.

A "W" is used to indicate withdrawal from a course in which you were enrolled at the end of the Schedule Adjustment Period. This mark is not used in computation of GPA, but it is recorded on your permanent record.

If you are receiving financial aid, carefully check your financial aid agreement. Dropping a course may cause you to fall below the required credit load, in which case your financial aid will be canceled and you will be required to pay the university. Contact the Financial Aid office at 301-314-8313 to verify your required course load.

Institute Items, the IAA’s informal monthly bulletin, provides information about IAA students, faculty, activities, events, and deadlines.

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MAAGCS Scholarships Available

Early Warnings & Drop Dates

IAA Scholarship Winners

Congratulations to the following IAA students who won 2012 IAA Scholarships

Scott Hosier, IAA Development Fund Scholarship
Kristen Johansen, Cecil Massie Scholarship
Justin Patenaude, TESCO Scholarship
Matt Park, Shields Scholarship
IAA Students win Scholarships
by Coryn Alvarez

The sixth annual Dr. Ronald J. Seibel Scholarship proved to be competitive this year with 17 individuals applying. Scott Hosier, a second-year golf course management major, received the Seibel scholarship for 2012. Scott graduated from Pennridge High School in Pennsylvania, and works at Woodmont Country Club’s golf course. IAA director for 25 years, Dr. Seibel established the endowed scholarship when he retired in 1998.

Each candidate is scored based on financial need, academic record, leadership and community service and agricultural background and career goals. After the Seibel scholarship has been awarded, the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation (MAEF) awards additional scholarships. Three other IAA students were among the winners. Yasmine Baker, Zachary Decker and Collin Plumley also received MAEF scholarships.

Yasmine, Silver Spring, MD resident, is an Ornamental Horticulture major. She completed her internship at the Smithsonian and she is active in the IAA campus teaching garden.

Zack Decker, a first-year student, is majoring in Agricultural Business Management. He is from Elkton, MD where he graduated from the Cecil School of Technology and Rising Sun High School.

Collin, from Mt. Airy, MD, graduated from South Carroll High School in June 2012. He is pursuing Landscape Management.

Congratulations to these scholarship winners.

IAA Fall Open House

Invite your friends and colleagues to the IAA Fall Open House. If you know someone who is interested in the IAA, this is his/her chance to visit campus, meet students and faculty and ask questions.

Open House is Monday, October 8 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Share the link to our Open House as listed under “events” in our new redesigned website.

The prospective students and their families are invited to visit IAA classes and ask questions about campus life and courses. Please make our guests feel welcome and let them know what a great place the IAA is!

Honor Pledge

The Honor Pledge, which is used throughout the University, is a statement students should be asked to write by hand and sign on exams, papers, or other academic assignments not specifically exempted by the instructor. The Pledge reads:

I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination.

View Code of Academic Integrity at www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html

Gain Valuable Experience: Get Involved

There are various opportunities for you to get involved and engage in leadership here at UMD and IAA. Talk with Dr. Mathias about reviving the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Student Chapter. Speak with Ken Ingram about becoming an Officer in the Professional Grounds Management Society Student Chapter. Attend a Public Health Garden meeting or speak with IAA student Yasmine Baker about helping out at the garden. In addition to gaining valuable experience at these student clubs, it will open doors in other areas such as networking and obtaining scholarship opportunities. To learn about other ways to get involved visit: iaa.umd.edu/current-students/get-involved