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Afternoon Workshops in Math Study Skills: Giving Students the Tools For Success in Their Math Courses.

Certain struggles and frustrations are common to students in all introductory undergraduate math courses. They all dread word problems, reading the book, and the exams. Many believe they are just plain bad at math, and this belief causes them to give up quickly when discouraged. The "Wednesday Workshops for Expanding Mathematical Skills" are workshops which guide students through the process of taking a mathematics course; to teach them how to learn math. The fundamental message to students is "Math is a Skill!". Math requires hours of practice, just like learning a new sport or a musical instrument. Once students start to appreciate this, they have a better idea of what it takes to succeed. They transition from being "bad at math" to being "out of practice", and realize that they can improve. One workshop focuses on note-taking, using the textbook, and doing homework, while another develops problem solving strategies. The most popular workshop gives exam preparation and test-taking tips. Attendance is growing, and a new website with workshop information, schedules, and an online survey for the participants is helping the workshops to become more accessible and helpful. (Received September 12, 2000)