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The balance between academics and extra curricular activities is vital in the life of any college student. Participating in these activities is important. While they could be a distraction, a healthy balance can actually lead to improved academic performance. According John J. Ratey of Harvard University, increased activity outside the classroom leads to positive effects in academic performance. He notes that “[p]eople who improved their fitness had an increased volume in the hippocampus and frontal and temporal lobes, the regions of the brain associated with cognitive functioning” (Ratey). This shows that there is a direct correlation between increased activity and improved academic performance. Therefore maintaining an appropriate balance between academics and extracurricular activities will result in improved academic performance.

Building a Strong Paragraph
A Four Step Guide to Communicating Effectively in Paragraph Form

The Big Picture
Writing strong body paragraphs is vital to writing a successful paper. Here are some steps to help you write a clear, cohesive, and focused body paragraph.

Follow the Steps

Step 1
Introduce the Point: Decide the topic of your paragraph and develop a solid topic sentence with an arguable claim that supports the thesis of the paper. (1 sentence)

To learn about creating a topic sentence, check out our topic sentence resource.

Step 2
Explain the Point: Expound on your topic sentence showing its context and importance. (1-2 sentences)

Step 3
Prove the Point: Construct several sentences that make a compelling case for your paragraph’s topic sentence.

Present your evidence: Include specific information from relevant sources to back up your claim, such as statistics, data from studies, scholarly examples and other types of information. Use direct quotes, paraphrases, or summaries from relevant sources. (1-4 sentences)

Unpack your evidence: Expound on the quote and show how it proves the topic sentence of your paragraph. (1-2 sentences)

Step 4
Conclude the Point: End your paragraph with a concluding sentence that pulls together the content of the paragraph and reasserts the importance of the paragraph in making the central claim of your thesis. Link the paragraph to the following paragraph by introducing the following topic and relating the two. (1-2 sentences)

In Practice

Step 1
The balance between academics and extra curricular activities is vital in the life of any college student. Step 2 Participating in these activities is important. While they could be a distraction, a healthy balance can actually lead to improved academic performance. Step 3 According John J. Ratey of Harvard University, increased activity outside the classroom leads to positive effects in academic performance. He notes that “[p]eople who improved their fitness had an increased volume in the hippocampus and frontal and temporal lobes, the regions of the brain associated with cognitive functioning” (Ratey). This shows that there is a direct correlation between increased activity and improved academic performance. Step 4 Therefore maintaining an appropriate balance between academics and extracurricular activities will result in improved academic performance.