

STUDY SKILLS

“How to study” is not a topic often covered in college courses. Most would assume that students’ study skills are already fine tuned for active learning; however, this is rarely the case. Learning in any form requires an *active participation* for real intellectual absorption. Many students think that if they go to class, stay awake through lecture and read the material assigned, then they are doing all that needs to be done to learn. Going through the motions of learning is not actually learning. To truly learn, one must engage the material, critically think about the information presented, and dedicate it to memory.

CONCENTRATION

- Set the stage for learning: It’s important to have a place to study where there are few distractions. Ultimately you know where and when you work best and it’s up to you to dedicate this time to school work.
- Be mindful of distractions such as AIM, the TV, roommates, and snacks.
- Do not attempt to multitask when studying. Catching up with a friend from high school while reading an Orgo lesson is not a good idea.
- Divide your work into doable pieces. Set goals for completion and reward yourself when done.

MEMORY

- It’s crucial to memorizing terms, ideas, or formulae that you understand them first. This will make remembering them much easier and more effective.
- Use flashcards. They’re not just for French vocab anymore. Repeatedly going over them reinforces memory and learning.
- Get friends to help or quiz you.

TIPS FOR BEING A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT

- Set goals and meet them. Tell others what your goals and let them hold you accountable.
- Accept responsibility for your behavior. Don’t fall into the habit of letting your circumstances affect you; rather you ought to affect your circumstances.
- Get to know your instructors. Sometimes this isn’t as easy as it sounds, but it’s very much worth the effort.
- If you’re having difficulty with a course, deal with the problem sooner rather than later. Trying to wait it out and see if it gets better is not the best idea and you will most likely get behind and find it very hard to catch up.
- Participate in class. This goes along with being an active learner.
- Develop good study habits and do all the assignments and required reading.
- Be prepared for class. Read the material before the day’s lecture. This will ready your mind for the topic covered by the instructor.
- Take good notes. See the *Note Taking* flyer.
- Motivate yourself. Having a good attitude and the desire to do well is invaluable.

TIME MANAGEMENT RESOURCES AVAILABLE:

- Your academic adviser is always available for advice on time management.
- Contact Angela Ruddle (410-516-8216) in OAA about study consulting.

TEXTBOOK READING

- Read the materials assigned *before class*. This will aid your understanding of the lecture and help you in taking your notes.
- Highlighting
 - Use your highlighter sparingly. The point is not to highlight the entire text, but rather the main points.
 - Use a variety of markings. Create your own system to distinguish from main points, important facts, etc.
 - Review what you've highlighted.

EXAMPLE STUDY METHOD: SQ3R

- Survey
 - Quickly preview chapter title, headings, or titles in your notes to get a sense of the main points. This will help organize the contents while you read or review.
- Question
 - Turn the chapter title, headings or lecture title into questions. This will bring to mind information you already know about the topic and prepare yourself for what you are about to read.
- Read
 - As you read, notice if your questions are answered. Do this for each section of the reading or of your notes.
- Recite
 - After reading the first section, look away from the book or your notes and recite the answers to the questions. If you are unable to do this, reread more closely.
 - Jot down some notes about the text, nothing too elaborate.
- Review
 - Cover notes or text and recall the major points.

MATH STUDY SKILLS

- Problem Solving
 - Understand the question or problem being asked.
 - Find a way to use what is known to solve what is unknown.
 - Carry out this procedure.
 - Check the work.
- Attend all classes. Math is cumulative. It continually builds on concepts learned in lecture.
- DO the problems assigned. Math is learned by carrying out the arithmetic processes.

SCIENCE STUDY SKILLS

- Don't be afraid to ask questions either in class or at office hours.
- General principles:
 - Attend lecture and take notes looking for the main ideas. Try to see how the information goes together and how the facts support the theories. Science should be learned in clusters, not isolated facts.
 - Ask the instructor or TAs questions, but don't go to them unprepared. Take problems or assignments that you have already worked on and get their help.
 - Start a study group.
 - Do all of the assigned problems or exercises.
- Working in the lab:
 - Read the lab procedures ahead of time!
 - Write down everything. Keep your data organized and neat.
 - Always keep the purpose of the exercise in mind.