

# Study Skills

Many students think that if they go to class, stay awake through lecture, and read the assigned material, then they are doing all that needs to be done to learn. Learning, in any form, requires *active participation* for real intellectual absorption. Just 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 is important to have a place to study where there are few distractions. Ultimately, you know where and when you work best and it is up to you to dedicate this time to school work.
- Be mindful of distractions such as Facebook, cell phone texting, TV, roommates, snacks, etc.
- Do not attempt to multitask while 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

- When memorizing terms, ideas, or formulae, understand them first. This is crucial and 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 are and ask for their help to hold yourself 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 is very much worth the effort.
- If you're having difficulty with a course, deal with the problem sooner rather than later. Do not wait it out to see if it gets better. This is not a good idea; 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.

## Textbook Reading

- Read the assigned materials before class. This will aid in your understanding of the lecture and help you take more effective notes.
- If you highlight, use that 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 you 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 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 fits 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.

## Resources Available:

- Contact Mrs. Day (410-516-8216) in OAA for information or help in any of the above or for information about study consulting.
- Your academic advisor is available to help you with any of the above (410-516-8216).