

STUDYING TO BE SUCCESSFUL

Each person learns best in his or her own unique way. Some of us have been fortunate and found what works for us while the rest of us are still learning. It's a process that takes time but here are some tips that you can use to be successful not just in this class but in all of your classes!

NOTE TAKING

- Take notes in class and date them to make them easier to organize and follow.
- Be sure to put your notes in your own words so that you can understand them later. This may mean that you may have to rewrite your notes each day. This will not only give you a chance to add anything that may make the material easier to understand for you but can also help you learn and recall the information since it forces you to review it each day.
- Leave blank space on each page of notes to give yourself room to make additions and clarifications or examples you may learn in class.
- Organize your notes into information "chunks." The brain learns better when it focuses on small bits of information. When you study, study one note "chunk" before going on to the next one.
- Listen for key principals the teacher may emphasize with their voice (usually through volume) but may not write down on the board for you to copy.
- Add examples to clarify key terms. The majority of our test questions are in example form so don't just memorize a definition. Write down and understand how that term is used in real life examples.
- Study your notes for a few minutes nightly to ensure you understand what you wrote down from class. Add to your notes or clarify things while it's still in your head from that day's lecture. Taking some time each night to do this will make it much easier to learn the material for the test and prevent you from a marathon session of studying the night before a test or quiz.

READING FOR UNDERSTANDING

- Read actively and do not just look at the words. Nothing is worse than spending an hour reading something only to have no idea what you just read. Concentrate and try these following methods.
- Preview a chapter quickly before you begin so that you know ahead of time what you are going to be reading about.
- Review the material frequently. Pause at the end of each paragraph or section and summarize what you just read back to yourself in your own words.
- Try to avoid reading for long periods of time at once. Your chapters are divided into several major sections with bold headings. Try to limit your reading to one or two of these sections at a time. Then take a break and come back to the next section (chunking your reading).
- Do not ignore the pictures, diagrams, table and sidebars in your textbook. Those are there for a reason and often help you understand the major principles better. Plus, they are usually more interesting than just reading the text!
- Take notes or make an outline of each chapter as you read. If you can condense a 30-page chapter to a few pages of good notes, it is going to be much easier to review and remember. Also, keep a list of key terms and vocabulary as well as any questions you may encounter as you read.
- You may want to make a set of vocabulary flash cards for each chapter as you read and review them periodically. These are a great way to review for the test as well!