**How to Survive College Classes**

Studying Habits - out of Class

If there is a summary of the material in the book or in my notes, I would read the summary first and then move on to reading the study material I might have: more notes, powerpoints, books, webpages, etc…

I’ve found it helpful to take breaks in between study sessions. The reason breaks are so important is because they let your brain relax, let the material sink in, and give you a stress relief. Do whatever makes you comfortable; what I would do is play video games, watch YouTube, nap, or a myriad of other things I love to do.

If the amount of material I’m studying is small, I would study the entire thing, take a 30 minute break, and study the material entirely again; repeated as necessary.

If the amount of material is large, I would study small parts of it at a time, then break for 30 minutes, continue studying where I left off; repeated until the material is studied completely.

Also, have a highlighter handy to accent things you find to be important.

It’s a good idea to use the internet for cross-referencing or for clarifying the study material. One source may not be enough, especially when the website is questionable, in such cases it would be a great idea to find another website to see if the information matches. If there is still confusion, contact your peers or professor.

What I’ve found to be exceedingly helpful is to use what I learned from class into my daily life in whatever way I could. For example, if I was learning about metabolism I might joke around and say, “I can’t wait for lunch; gotta get my cellular respiration going!” It’s kinda silly but it helps A LOT. The key to this is to use it in a way that it makes sense to you; by doing this you are cementing your understanding of whatever it is that you are learning.

Also, tutor peers if you feel comfortable, it helps to understand the material better.

I would study at least twice a week, and at most once a day. You don’t want to burn yourself out, but you also don’t want to feel uneasy when the test comes around. *DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE!* You need to be able to let the material sink in so that you can have a true understanding of what you’ve learned; if you feel comfortable with it then you might be alright studying the DAY before (*not the night before; cramming is not good*), otherwise you should study at least 3 days before and then again the day before the test.

Note Taking – in Class

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|  If at all possible write down your notes instead of typing them away in an electronic device. It requires more attention to write things down so it helps to understand the material better. Also, it makes it more personable for you mind to relate to notes you write vs notes you type. |  If you are going to type your notes down, use multiple colors (as I have done here), **embolden** keywords so that they stand out, *italicize* critical information that needs special attention, underline titles for easier grouping, use CAPS LOCK if necessary. |
|  |  There is no wrong way to take notes; personally I like to write my notes down and separate different subjects of the notes by lines, so, for example, if I was writing on the top-left about mitosis, on the top-right about meiosis, and right below both I wrote about punnet squares, I would divide all three subjects of the material by lines (in this case it would look like an upside down T).  |

 Use highlighters. Whether you wrote down your notes and are reviewing them or if you are reading from the book, have highlighters handy to accent important things even if they are only important to you. It will help with finding things easier, and if you more than one highlighter, you can highlight one area with one color and another area with another or you can highlight certain things with one color and other certain things with another.

 If you would rather pay attention to the teacher, instead of taking notes of every single thing, it would be wise to note at least the things you think would be important, not just things that might end up on the test. You need to find a connection between your life experiences and the material being taught, so noting things that you find interesting, along with noting testable material, will help greatly.

 ***FOCUS.*** If you are around people who like to chat about anything other than the material being taught, your attention will shift, even if just slightly, and your understanding of the material may suffer. You should sit as close as you can to the front, and center, of the classroom. Sitting in the middle and in the back of the class can lead to not paying enough attention and missing important details. It’s important to relax, but when you are in class you gotta stay on topic.

 Doodling, although it shifts the focus to a certain degree, may help you remember the material a little better later when you are studying at home.