College Study Tips – a quickie guide

READING A TEXTBOOK
- Before you begin, browse the headings, bold print, italics, charts, photos & summaries
- Jot down questions before, during & after reading
- Look up definitions ASAP for terms you don’t know
- Create a quick outline with the main ideas & details
- “BE” with the book — good posture, highlighting, margin notes
- Refer to another textbook for clarification

NOTE TAKING
- Take notes as you read your textbook & during class lectures
- Rework (or computer generate) your notes
- Compare notes with a classmate or two — missing anything?
- Review notes after class & fill in the gaps when concepts are fresh
- Organize information into a meaningful method for YOU
- “BE” with the instructor — eye contact, ask questions, sit in the front

MEMORY
- Review notes frequently, in short bursts
- Use mnemonics (memory aids) — acronyms, rhymes, associations
- Create note cards & take them everywhere
- Convert textbook & lecture material into your own words
- Understand the material, rather than memorize it
- Browse notes quickly before bedtime - increases information retention

TEST PREPARATION
- Study with a classmate or a group — try Study Group Central
- When you don’t understand something, get help ASAP from tutors, classmates, or your instructor
- Do all homework assignments (even if it isn’t for a grade) — turn in on time
- Save all graded material and quizzes for review
- Review your notes prior to each class as if there will be a pop quiz
- Brainstorm potential test questions — do you know the answers?
CONCENTRATION

➔ Study in a quiet and comfy location – dedicate a space to studying
➔ Take short breaks (5:1 ratio...study 50 minutes & break 10 minutes)
➔ Have all study materials handy (dictionary, calculator, pen, paper, etc.)
➔ Find ways to make “less” interesting info “more” interesting
➔ Identify and minimize distractions (tv, cell phone, roommate, etc.)
➔ Study during your peak energy times (day person? evening person?)

TIME MANAGEMENT

➔ Commit to a method for recording your academic & personal activities – select a plan that works for YOU
➔ Use lists (ex. daily “to do”) to organize priorities and check things off
➔ Create and follow a master monthly schedule – be firm, yet flexible
➔ Write out short & long term academic goals – refer to them for some motivation when you need a boost
➔ Start papers & projects as soon as they are assigned
➔ Break down large tasks into smaller, manageable “mini” tasks

A WORD TO THE WISE

❖ You should study 2 hours per credit each week – Wow!
Ex. If you are taking 10 credits, then you should study 20 hours weekly, in addition to class time
❖ Some classes may require less (or more - Math) study time

MISCELLANEOUS

◎ TRY TO LIMIT: JUNK FOOD, CAFFEINE, NICOTINE & ALCOHOL
◎ TRY TO INCREASE: EXERCISE, HEALTHY DIET, WATER & A GOOD NIGHT’S SLEEP

★ Choose 1 or 2 ideas & try them out
   Idea 1:
   Idea 2:
★ If they work, keep doing them! If not, pick & practice new ideas!

For more info on college success tips, visit the CONNECT TO SUCCESS OFFICE
Located inside the Learning Commons, room #1262
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