Study Skills

Studying for an exam can be a very daunting task, especially if you haven't been preparing all semester long. Good study skills are valuable and will only improve your success in class.

1. Know your learning style. Develop techniques and strategies for compensating for possible differences between your learning style and your instructor’s teaching style.

2. Organize your study materials. If you organize your materials as you proceed through a course, you will retrieve information with greater ease later.

3. Set goals. If you don’t know what you want to achieve as a student, you won’t know how to get there or if you’ve accomplished things.

4. One of the most important first steps is getting motivated to read the assigned material before class. Even a brief skimming of the material will better acquaint and familiarize you with the concepts. With a brief read before class, the professor will be clarifying material to you instead of introducing it, which will be helpful when you have to go back to study for an exam.

5. Be an active reader. Be a text detective: ask your text good questions and it will yield good answers.

6. Try allocating a few days a week to spend either in the library or a quiet place for a few hours. During this time, complete as much work as you can for all your classes, whether it be paper assignments or reading assignments. Making this a habit will keep you in tune and alert to what's going on and what subjects you need to spend additional time working on.

7. Allocate your study time according to the length of the material to be covered and how well you understand the material. In that regard, you should give yourself at least three days before an exam to lay out a study plan. You should read/skim/review the assigned readings for that class that are relevant for the exam, as well as practice problems/questions in study guides or study sheets.

8. If there are concepts you don't understand, ask the professor, and try not to wait until the day before an exam to do this. You may also seek assistance from a tutor, a teacher's assistant or the Writing Center.

9. Another option is to review the material aloud with a classmate. This way you maximize your ability to understand the material while at the same time you open yourself to learning a different approach to something.

10. Attend review sessions up until the exam if you need clarification. The final day before the exam, you should be ready and able to review. If you're not prepared, don't panic. Just try to focus your attention to those areas that the professors emphasized the most.

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