

Studying for the Sciences

Knowing how to succeed in science courses can sometimes seem like an elusive battle. The amount of material covered in often short amounts of time can seem quite overwhelming, but by following the guidelines listed below you can help to increase your science class success. There are three main components in creating success in science classes: lecture, time management, and test preparation.

Lecture

Attend all lectures and make sure to be alert and awake

- Take very thorough notes in lecture

- If you do have to miss a lecture, make sure to get notes from at least two people for note-taking variety

Prepare for lectures

- Be aware of what will be covered in a lecture before you arrive

- If there is a lecture outline or PowerPoint slides available, read these over

Get a "note buddy"

- Swap notes with your buddy after each class

- Meet up with each other and "teach" each other from the lecture notes

Time Management

Start preparation early

- Be sure to start studying as soon as the semester starts; Utilize the first two weeks to get ahead

- Two days after you complete an exam, start studying for the next

Create and keep deadlines

- Establish a term calendar with all due dates, test days, study times, etc;

- Constantly update and set new deadlines for yourself as needed

Spend an hour each day reviewing your notes and make sure you do this daily

- Three 20-minute sessions each day

- Forty minutes reviewing lecture notes and 20 minutes to plan for upcoming lectures

Test Preparation

Create flashcards

- When going through flashcards create three piles...

 - *I don't know this term/concept/idea at all

 - *I kind-of know this term/concept/idea

 - *I definitely know this term/concept/idea

- Your goal is to get all the cards into the "I definitely know this term/concept/idea" pile

Reading should be additional when preparing for a test

- Use readings to make ideas clearer from lectures

- Understand all figures that relate to the lectures covered on the test

Application of the material

- Always think of ways to apply the material

- Use old tests as a way to guide how to apply the material

Adapted from: Dartmouth College Academic Skills Center. (2001). Retrieved October 18, 2007 from: http://www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/docs/study_for_sciences.doc

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