Study Techniques

1. Read the assigned text before class. Active involvement in reading the text is important for comprehending the material. One frequently suggested method for reading textbooks is the SQ4R method.

   S=Survey   Briefly survey the chapter, noting the divisions, headings, tables and figures. Read the chapter summary. This provides an overview of the chapter content and a framework for organizing the material.

   Q=Question Turn each section heading into a question that you want answered. Also, try to guess questions that might appear on the exam.

   R=Read Read the chapter, section by section, trying to answer your questions.

   R=Recite Answer the questions and state the main points verbally. You may also write down the answers and key points for later reference.

   R=Record First, write the question and then write the answer to the question using only key words, lists, etc.

   R=Review Briefly look back over the material to assure that you have included all the main points. Reflect on the meaning and application of the major points.

2. Use 3” x 5” index cards. Write the questions on one side and the answers on the other side, and use them as flash cards. If you carry them with you, you can get through several cards while waiting for the shuttlebus, riding the elevator, walking to class, etc.

3. Work all assigned problems, and then work some more, even if the assignment will not be collected. In math and science courses where memorization is crucial, it is helpful to over learn the material. Small amounts of practice spread over several days is more efficient than one long memorization session.

4. Recognize the importance of regular review. Review class notes on a daily basis, and set aside review time for each course on a weekly basis.

5. Start studying the first day of the semester and keep up. It is easy to spend the first month of classes “adjusting” and “organising”, but often the result is falling very far behind in your work. That sets up the vicious cycle of dropping everything to prepare for an upcoming exam in one class, and following that routine for each class in turn. The best way to deal with such a cycle is to prevent it from happening.

Reference: Texas A&M University