# UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN INDIANA™

## Academic
# SURVIVAL
## GUIDE
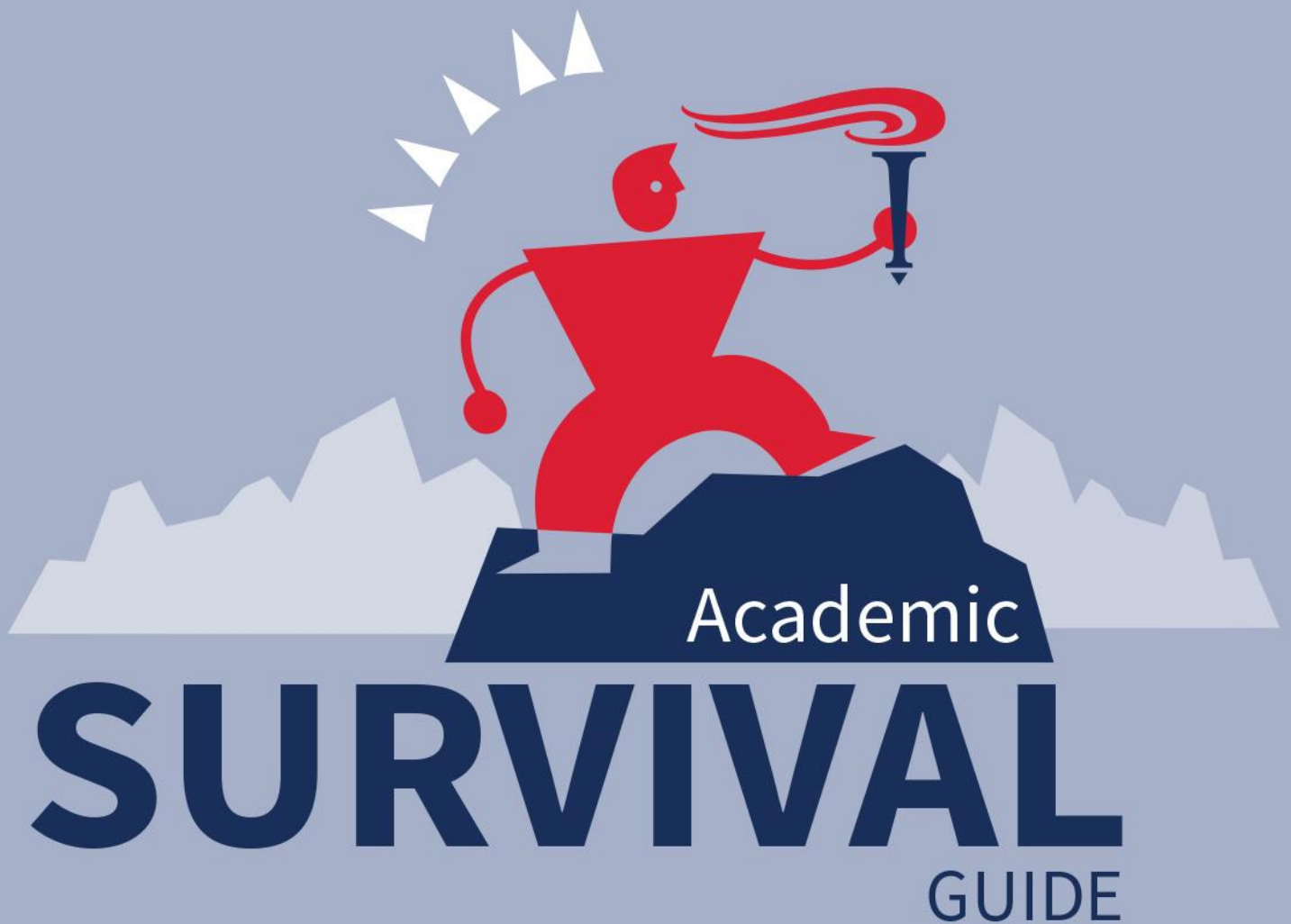
Academic Skills Office • (ED 1111A)

Dear USI Student,

This Academic Survival Guide contains helpful information to assist you academically during your time as a student at the University of Southern Indiana (USI). The document is a publication of the Academic Skills Office. Our mission is to enhance student success and the educational process at the USI. We provide academic support services through classes and other learning assistance programs, including tutoring, academic coaching, and supplemental instruction.

- We are student-centered and dedicated to assisting all students as they become self-confident, self-directed learners.
- We are developmental educators who promote learning as a process and individualize instruction by addressing both the cognitive and affective development of students.
- We seek to create a collaborative environment that is supportive of both students and instructors, to promote learning-centered activities, and to serve as a resource for the university community.

For more information on any of the topics covered in this guide, you can meet with one of our professional staff members or a peer tutor or peer academic coach.

Please feel free to visit us at any point during your time here at USI.  We are always here to help support your academic success!

Academic Skills
Education Center,
Room 1111A
812-464-1743
Academic_Skills@usi.edu

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**Tutoring is available in selected subjects during fall and spring semesters Mondays-Thursdays from 9:00 am-9:00 pm and Fridays from 9:00 am-3:00 pm.  Tutoring is available in selected subjects during summer terms Mondays-Fridays from 8:00 am-4:30 pm.  For specific information, please check with the front desk in Academic Skills or visit our website: www.usi.edu/university-division/academic-skills.**

# Adjusting to College Classes

Expectations of students change once you start college. While a few of the differences between high school and college are structural, most involve your personal freedom and responsibilities as a college student. **You** will be in charge of setting your priorities and managing your time.

**Class schedules**: Your college schedule might be different each day and have breaks between classes. You might have evening classes or classes that meet for half the semester. Be sure you know your schedule and have a plan for efficiently using time between classes.

**Class sizes**: Some of your classes might be very large lectures. To make it more personal, form study groups with some of your classmates and meet with your professor during office hours.

**Studying**: You will be expected to complete much of your work (reading textbooks, writing papers, working problems, studying for tests) outside of class time. Plan to spend 2-3 hours on homework and studying for each hour you are in class.

**Professors**: Your professors will probably expect you to keep track of your grades, submit assignments on time without being reminded, and initiate contact with them if you have a problem or regarding an absence. (Do not expect them to track you down to ask about missing assignments, to give you handouts you might have missed, or to give you frequent updates about your grade.)

**Syllabus**: Most classes provide a syllabus that outlines course guidelines. Professors expect you to read and be familiar with the syllabus and consult it as necessary for information about course policies, assignments, grading guidelines, and dues dates.

**Grades**: Many classes base your grade on a few major assignments: tests, quizzes, and papers. While your effort is important for learning the concepts that the professors will evaluate, you will not often be given a grade based on your effort—only on the results of that effort.

# Navigating College Classes

**Know how to use Blackboard**. Blackboard is a course management system. Not all instructors incorporate Blackboard into their courses, but many do. Often assignments and grades are posted there. Make sure you know how to log on and navigate each instructor's site. Visit USI Information Technology's site for help and a link to log-in instructions:

> **www.usi.edu/it/blackboard-online-help/faq-for-students#what**

**Check your USI email account**. Email is a convenient way for instructors to communicate with students. Either check your USI account frequently or set it up to forward to another account. For forwarding instructions, visit

> **https://www.usi.edu/it/eagles-mail-help/#8**

**Use appropriate classroom etiquette**. Go to class and pay attention. Turn off your cell phone and don't text during class. Address your instructor and classmates respectfully.

**Communicate professionally with your instructors**. Address them by their titles, both in person and in emails, unless they tell you otherwise. If you are not sure of their title, "Professor" is a safe option.

**Be aware of academic honesty standards**. Did you know that submitting the same paper for two different classes is considered plagiarism? Or that helping someone else cheat is also considered cheating by you? Be familiar with the rules on academic dishonesty, which can be found in the USI bulletin:

> **bulletin.usi.edu/mime/media/view/2/146/Student+Rights+and+Responsibilities+%28April+2013%29.pdf**

**Be familiar with citation styles.** Many classes assign research papers which require sources. Make sure you know which citation style your professor expects you to use (MLA and APA are the most common) and follow it. Here are a couple of websites that can help you cite your sources:

> **https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/**
>
> **https://style.mla.org/works-cited-a-quick-guide/**
>
> **https://apastyle.apa.org/index?_ga=1.202906708.455801815.1461788822**

# Adapting to Online Instruction: Tips for Success

**Connect with your peers and instructor(s).** The online space need not be an isolating one. Interactions with your peers and your instructor are critical to you having a positive, engaging experience. Check your email and login to Blackboard frequently. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Email your instructors in a timely manner if you have questions about assignments, etc.

**Understand the expectations.** Your course will be either synchronous (at a specific time, requiring you to be online with the rest of your classmates) or, it will be asynchronous, where you are provided the materials and can learn on your own time. Whichever method your course is delivered through, be sure you understand the expectations and hold yourself accountable for the work you need to complete.

**Manage time wisely.** Online instruction give you a lot of flexibility in terms of when you study, but for each course it is important to schedule time in your personal calendar to study and complete assignments. Use the schedule you had for your in-person courses as your online schedule.

As noted above, some instructors may want to meet synchronously at the time you had been meeting in class so treat those blocks of time as class time, stick to them, and let friends and family know you are unavailable during those times.

**Establish a good workspace.** Find a quiet place with a good internet connection, access to power, and freedom from distractions.

**Stay organized.** Organize your files in a way that makes sense to you. Keep a copy of anything you submit in the event that a technology problem requires you to resubmit it—even discussion posts. Take good notes while you are reading or watching online lectures just as you would in your campus classes. Keep a close eye on assignment due dates.

**Additional resources for online classes:**

Best Practices for Zoom Video Conferencing: https://www.usi.edu/media/5625682/best-practices-for-using-zoom.pdf

Blackboard App: https://www.usi.edu/online-learning/icp/services-for-students/

Blackboard FAQs: https://www.usi.edu/it/blackboard-online-help/faq-for-students/

Using Microsoft Teams for Collaboration: https://www.usi.edu/media/5625678/microsoft-teams-the-basics-of-collaboration.pdf

VoiceThread FAQs: https://www.usi.edu/online-learning/icp/services-for-students/

# Managing Your Time

College is full of deadlines that YOU are responsible for meeting. By taking an active approach to time management, you will be better able to meet the multiple demands on your time.

**Prioritize**. Keep up with the class syllabus, make lists, and be aware of key deadlines.

**Use schedules**. Keep a monthly or semester calendar with major deadlines clearly marked. Use a daily or weekly schedule to keep track of homework and mark out time for study and review, as well as all other necessary activities.

**Anticipate the unexpected**. Things will come up—sometime class-related, like extra reading assignments, and sometimes life-related, like illness, roommate issues, or car repairs. Build in extra time to your schedule so you have flexibility to deal with these demands on your time.

**Break projects into manageable parts**. For papers, presentations, tests, or other large tasks, outline the steps you will need to take to complete it and schedule specific times for completing each step.

**Break study time into manageable parts**. Your brain is unlikely to stay highly focused for more than a couple hours at a time. Build some short breaks into your study schedule. For example, you could study for 30 minutes then take a 5 minute break (but be sure to limit your break to the amount of time you establish).

**Take advantage of small blocks of time**. Review notes or complete short homework assignments in between classes. Recall everything that you can from the last lecture as you walk to class. Think about possible test questions as you wait in line for lunch.

**Avoid multitasking**. Almost no one is good at doing two tasks at once that both require focused attention. You might think that you are, but almost everyone overestimates his or her ability to multitask. Focus on completing one task at a time, and choose study locations that minimize distractions. This includes putting your phone away.

**Say "no."** You don't have to accept every invitation to socialize. Block out some time for fun in your weekly schedule and stick to it.

## Course Requirements

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Course | | | | | |
| Instructor | | | | | |
| Tests % | | | | | |
| Projects/ Other Assignments % | | | | | |
| Attendance | | | | | |
| Late Work | | | | | |
| Makeup Work Policy | | | | | |

# Semester Schedule

| | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Week 1** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 2** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 3** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 4** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 5** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 6** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 7** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 8** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 9** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 10** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 11** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 12** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 13** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 14** | | | | | | | |
| **Week 15** | | | | | | | |
| **Finals Week** | | | | | | | |

# Sample Weekly Schedule

## Week of September 21-27

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8:00 a.m. | Get ready/eat breakfast | Get ready/eat breakfast | Get ready/eat breakfast | Get ready/eat breakfast | Get ready/eat breakfast | | |
| 8:30 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 9:00 a.m. | Review/Prepare | KIN 192 (9-10:15) KIN 134 (2nd 8 weeks) | Review/Prepare | KIN 192 (9-10:15) KIN 134 (2nd 8 weeks) | Review/Prepare | Keep studying! Plan to study 2-3 hours for each hour in class. That means for a 15 credit-hour schedule like this one, you should spend at least 30 hours each week reading, reviewing notes, and working on papers and projects. | |
| 9:30 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 10:00 a.m. | CMST 101 (10-10:50) | Break | CMST 101 (10-10:50) | Break | CMST 101 (10-10:50) | | |
| 10:30 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 11:00 a.m. | MATH 114 (11-11:50) | Review/Prepare | MATH 114 (11-11:50) | Review/Prepare | MATH 114 (11-11:50) | | |
| 11:30 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 12:00 p.m. | Review | ENG 101 (12-1:15) | Review | ENG 101 (12-1:15) | Review | | |
| 12:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 1:00 p.m. | Lunch/break | | Lunch/break | | Lunch/break | | |
| 1:30 p.m. | | Lunch/break | | Lunch/break | | | |
| 2:00 p.m. | SOC 121 (2-2:50) | Attend SI session | SOC 121 (2-2:50) | Study | SOC 121 (2-2:50) | | |
| 2:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 3:00 p.m. | Work | UNIV 101 (3-4:15) | Work | Personal time—laundry? shopping? | Work | When you add time spent in class with time for studying, a full load is the equivalent of a full-time job. | |
| 3:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 4:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 4:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 5:00 p.m. | Go to Rec Center/other exercise/entertainment | | | | | | |
| 5:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 6:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 6:30 p.m. | Dinner | Dinner | Dinner | | Dinner | Don't immediately pull out your phone when you have a short break. Your brain needs down time (with no distractions from electronics) for processing information and reflecting on what you have learned! | |
| 7:00 p.m. | Work on reading assignments and homework for the week. | Work on long term projects—term papers, library research, final projects, etc. | Review older material to help prepare for upcoming quizzes and tests. | Work | | | |
| 7:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 8:00 p.m. | | | | | Entertainment/ Socializing | | |
| 8:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 9:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 9:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 10:00 p.m. | Start winding down and get some rest! Research shows that almost all of us need 8 hours of sleep each night for our brains to function at peak levels. | | | | | | |

# Weekly Schedule

**Week of _____**

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8:00 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 8:30 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 9:00 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 9:30 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 10:00 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 10:30 a.m. | | | | | | | |
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| 12:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
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| 1:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 1:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 2:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
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| 3:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 4:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 4:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 5:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 5:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 6:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 6:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 7:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 7:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 8:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 8:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 9:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 9:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 10:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |

# Weekly Schedule

**Week of _____**

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8:00 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 8:30 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 9:00 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 9:30 a.m. | | | | | | | |
| 10:00 a.m. | | | | | | | |
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| 6:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 7:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 7:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 8:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 8:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 9:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 9:30 p.m. | | | | | | | |
| 10:00 p.m. | | | | | | | |

# Combatting Procrastination

As you try to avoid procrastinating, remember that you are fighting against your brain's natural reactions to situations that involve uncertainty, delayed rewards, and repeated use of willpower. While there are no quick fixes, here are some actions that can help.

*Change your attitude:*

1) Focus on your motivation—internal motivation is more consistently effective than external.
2) Find ways to exert self-control over your tasks because actions arising from your own deeply held interests and values do not deplete your willpower.
3) Use positive self-talk; be conscious about the positive progress you are making.

*Change your habits:*

4) Use routines to limit the number of choices and decisions you make during a day.
5) Choose effective study environments: limit distractions, use schedules, and make to-do lists.
6) Get enough sleep—a rested brain makes better decisions.
7) Eat healthy meals—the brain needs energy to function correctly and make good decisions.
8) Learn to study efficiently: take good notes, find small chunks of study time each day, complete practice tests, etc.

*Change your actions:*

9) Break the task into parts.
10) Ask for help if you feel uncertain about the task.
11) Relax.
12) Put your goal in writing (for example with an "implementation intention statement").
13) Use the "study wedge" technique—set a timer (10 or 15 minutes is a good starting point), work, take a timed break (try 5 minutes), repeat.
14) Give yourself rewards!

## Implementation Intention Statement

| | |
|---|---|
| I will: | |
| This task is connected to my interests and values in this way: | |
| Steps required are: | |
| My time frame for achieving this is: | |
| A hurdle I will face is: | |
| I will eliminate this hurdle by: | |
| My reward for achieving this is: | |

# Discovering Your Learning Style

**3  Most Like You**          **2  Sometimes Like You**          **1  Least Like You**

| | |
|---|---|
| | 1. I learn best when I see information. |
| | 2. I learn best when I hear information. |
| | 3. I learn best when I have hands-on experience. |
| | 4. I like pictures and illustrations. |
| | 5. I like to listen to CD's and hear stories. |
| | 6. I like working with people and going on field trips. |
| | 7. I like books and photographs. |
| | 8. I enjoy listening to music for pleasure. |
| | 9. I enjoy sports. |
| | 10. A good textbook and effective visual aids are important to me. |
| | 11. I learn best in class when hearing rather than reading. |
| | 12. I learn best when I can take objects apart and put them back together. |
| | 13. I remember what I see more than what I hear. |
| | 14. I remember information best when I recite the information aloud. |
| | 15. I learn best by doing and working on models. |
| | 16. I have a strong sense of fashion and pay attention to details. |
| | 17. I am talkative and love to tell stories and jokes. |
| | 18. I use a lot of gestures when communicating. |
| | 19. My study space is generally neat and visually attractive. |
| | 20. My study space is generally messy and disorganized. |
| | 21. I do not spend much time sitting in one place to study. |
| | 22. I like logical and rational assignments. |
| | 23. I like creative and open-ended assignments. |
| | 24. I learn best when it is quiet and organized. |
| | 25. I learn best when music is playing. |
| | 26. I learn best when there is physical activity and action. |
| | 27. I like structure and work steadily to complete projects. |
| | 28. I like flexibility and often I procrastinate. |
| | 29. I like to break problems down and solve them in small steps. |
| | 30. I like to look at the big picture. |

**Scoring:** The highest total indicates your predominate style.

Total your answers to items 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19 and 24          _____ Visual Learning Style

Total your answers to items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20 and 25          _____ Auditory Learning Style

Total your answers to items 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21 and 26          _____ Kinesthetic Learning Style

Total your answers to items 19, 22, 24, 27 and 29          _____ Left Brain

Total your answers to items 20, 23, 25, 28 and 30          _____ Right Brain


My primary learning style is _____.   My primary brain dominance is _____.

# Applying Learning Styles to Your Study Habits

### An Auditory Learner

- Prefers listening to lectures
- Prefers conversations and discussions
- Prefers team and group projects
- Prefers learning language skills, including foreign languages
- Outside noises may be distracting
- May need to sit toward the front of the classroom to effectively hear

### A Visual Learner

- Prefers to use charts, diagrams, and pictures to learn information
- Prefers videos and films to learn information
- Prefers to visualize concepts and ideas in their minds
- Prefers to read information on a page
- Prefers to see information displayed (blackboard; presentation slides; etc.)
- May need to sit toward front of the room to clearly see information displayed

### A Kinesthetic/Tactile Learner

- Prefers working in teams and groups
- Prefers to be able to actively move and enjoys physical exercise
- Prefers to work with their hands (labs; puzzles; etc.)
- May need to take routine breaks when studying
- May find it helpful to develop study groups outside of classroom

### Left Brain Dominance

- Objective and rational
- Solves problems by looking at parts
- Makes lists
- Good planners
- Prefers objective tests

### Right Brain Dominance

- Intuitive and risk-taking
- Creative
- May daydream and procrastinate
- Prefers flexibility and options
- Prefers subjective tests

Reference: Sprenger, M. (2008). *Differentiation through learning styles and memory*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

# Reading to Learn

Have you ever found yourself reading a few pages in a textbook chapter or an article only to discover when you finished you had no idea what you just read? Effective reading requires thought and planning in order to comprehend, learn, and remember information.

- To be successful in college, students must be able to read, comprehend, synthesize, and process large amounts of information.
- The type of reading and thinking necessary for academic excellence at the college level is generally much more intense and rigorous than that required in high school courses.
- A successful reader is an active reader who utilizes before, during, and after active reading strategies necessary for learning information across the academic disciplines.
- Try using a multi-step reading/study system such as SQ3R. You'll discover that by having a plan you will become an active reader which will, in turn, improve your effectiveness as a learner.

## PRO(Active) Reading Strategies

| **Preview—** <br> Before reading, skim for | <ul><li>Title</li><li>Author and credentials</li><li>Date of publication</li><li>Author's tone</li><li>Patterns of organization</li><li>Headings and subheadings (outline them and turn them into focus questions)</li><li>Length</li><li>Special print features and graphics</li><li>Words you don't know</li></ul> |
|---|---|
| **Read actively—** <br> During reading, read to | <ul><li>Make connections</li><li>Answer focus questions</li><li>Dialogue with the author</li><li>Take notes</li><li>Monitor comprehension</li><li>Look up words you don't know</li><li>Pay attention to author's clues and locate main ideas</li><li>Recognize organizational patterns</li><li>Jot notes in the margins</li><li>Visualize the ideas as you read</li></ul> |
| **Organize the information—** <br> after reading, review by | <ul><li>Writing summaries, outlines, or maps of the most important ideas</li><li>Creating a study sheet</li><li>Reciting main points</li><li>Highlighting important information, using 2 colors</li><li>Writing page summaries at the bottom of the pages (using recall phrases)</li></ul> |

# SQ3R – A Reading/Study System

**S        SURVEY**

Before you read, survey the chapter for 10-15 minutes by reading the title, introduction, headings, subheadings, concluding paragraph, summary, review questions and captions under pictures, charts, graphs or maps. Outline the chapter headings and subheadings using Roman Numerals. This helps you see how the chapter is organized and what the most important topics are so you can start comprehending as soon as you start to read. Always do this before attending a lecture.

**Q        QUESTION**

While you are surveying, turn the title, headings, and subheadings into guide questions to answer while reading. Use *what*, *why*, and *how*. This will help you stay focused and creates interest and purpose. It will result in better attention and improved comprehension. We're not thinking if we're not asking questions!

**R        READ**

When you begin to read, keep your questions in mind and read to find the answers. Read only a section at a time and recite after each section to see if you can answer your questions. Reduce your speed for difficult passages and reread parts which are not clear. This step will keep your mind from wandering and you should understand and better remember what you're reading.

**R        RECITE**

After you've read a section, orally ask yourself questions about what you have just read and summarize, in your own words, what you read. Take notes from the textbook but write the information in your own words using the note-taking method you prefer (i.e. Cornell notes, summary note cards, annotations in the margins). Underline or highlight the important points but only after you've read a section and have decided what is important. Use the method of recitation that best suits your learning style. The more senses you use the more likely you are to remember what you read: see it, say it, hear it, and write it.

**R        REVIEW**

This is an ongoing process and the best way, along with reciting, to move information into long-term memory. Set aside time each week to review so that you are distributing your learning. Reduce your notes and textbook information by making study sheets, developing visual organizers, and/or making flash cards. Develop mnemonic devices for material which needs to be memorized.

# Improving Your Comprehension

| Problems | Strategies |
|---|---|
| Have difficulty concentrating | 1. Take frequent breaks.<br>2. Read difficult material when your mind is fresh and alert.<br>3. Use guide questions (SQ3R).<br>4. Stop and write down distracting thoughts.<br>5. Move to a quieter place.<br>6. Stand or walk while reading. |
| Words are difficult or unfamiliar | 1. Use context clues.<br>2. Analyze word parts – look for Latin or Greek roots that will give meaning for the word.<br>3. Skim through material before reading. Make and look up meaning of difficult words. Jot meanings in the margin or on 3 x 5 cards.<br>4. Use glossary or margin definitions if available. |
| Sentences are long or confusing | 1. Read aloud.<br>2. Express each sentence in your own words.<br>3. Look for key words – subject and verb.<br>4. Break long sentences into shorter sections. |
| Ideas are hard to understand; complicated | 1. Rephrase or explain each in your own words.<br>2. Make notes.<br>3. Locate a more basic text or video that explains ideas in simpler form.<br>4. Study with a classmate, discuss difficult ideas.<br>5. Search the Internet for simple explanations of the ideas presented in the text. |
| Ideas are new and unfamiliar; you have little or no knowledge about the topic and the writer assumes you do | 1. Make sure you didn't miss or skip introductory information.<br>2. Get background information by:<br>   a. Referring to an earlier section or chapter in the book.<br>   b. Referring to an encyclopedia.<br>   c. Referring to a more basic text.<br>   d. Referring to the Internet. |
| The material seems disorganized or poorly organized or there seems to be no organization | 1. Read the Table of Contents – it's an outline of the book and each chapter.<br>2. Pay more attention to headings.<br>3. Read the summary, if available.<br>4. Try to discover organization by outlining or drawing a concept map as you read. |
| You don't know what is important; everything seems important | 1. Survey/preview the chapter.<br>2. Ask and answer guide questions (SQ3R).<br>3. Locate and underline topic sentences. |

References: McWhorter, *Guide to college reading* and Quick, Zimmer, Hocevar, *Making reading relevant*.

# Improving Your Note Taking

Taking notes during a lecture can be frustrating. Getting organized is the best way to deal with the rush of incoming information. Here are a few tips:

<u>Before class</u>

- Read the assignment.
- Make a list of questions that you have about the reading.
- Keep notes in a three-ring binder. It allows you to insert handouts and rearrange our own notes.
- Be prepared to pay attention; minimize distractions.

<u>During class</u>

- Sit near the front of the room, in the middle.
- Choose a note-taking system to use, such as the Cornell Note-taking method or the outlining method. See the following websites for examples and explanations:
    - **https://asc.calpoly.edu/ssl/notetakingsystems**
    - **https://howtostudy.org/resources_skill.php?id=9**
    - **https://www.redlands.edu/globalassets/depts/student-affairs/academic-success/skills-worksheets/1five_methods_of_notetaking_2015.pdf**
- Be selective.
    - o Learn to identify main points and not get bogged down in the details. Many instructors present several major and minor points in a lecture. Note these, but don't include the explanatory material and examples.
    - o If you remember reading the information, you don't need to put details in your notes.
    - o Write key words; don't try to write in complete sentences.
- If it's on the board, write it down!
- Always write facts and formulas in your notes.
- If the instructor slows down, he or she is giving you time to put it in your notes.
- If the instructor increases his or her volume, write it down.
- Leave a few spaces blank as you move from one point to the next so that you can fill in additional points later if needed.

- Review your notes as soon as possible after class. Fill in any missing information by using your textbook or by studying with a classmate.
- Mark up your notes:
    - Use colored highlighters or pens. The use of color helps people retain 50%-80% more information than notes in black and white.
    - Underline or highlight key statements or important concepts.
    - Use asterisks or other signal marks to indicate important information.
    - Note relevant pages of the text beside the corresponding information in your notes.
- Rewrite or retype your notes.
- Cut and paste to put notes in logical sequence.
- Meet with a classmate to compare notes.
- Studies have shown that 80% of new material can be recalled if you review your notes within 24 hours of class.

Other helpful hints

- Use your own words.
- Use symbols and abbreviations.
- Listen through the entire class.  Many instructors "wrap up" their lectures with a condensed summary of the most important points of the lesson.
- Ask questions.
- Take notes on paper. Research shows that students who write out their notes learn more than those who use laptops for note taking.

**Cornell Method of Note Taking**

| Chapter/Topic/Objective: | | Date: |
|---|---|---|
| | | |
| Main Ideas/Key Points: | Notes: | |
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| | | |
| Summary: | | |
| | | |

# Successful Test Preparation

## Helpful tips

- Attend class sessions regularly
- Complete all reading and homework assignments
- Highlight textbooks
- Review your notes as soon after class as possible
- Organize your notes and rewrite/retype notes to help with long-term memory*
- Design flash cards and study cards*
- Design your own practice tests*
- Create a study group with other students*
- Visit Academic Skills (ED 1111A) and work with a tutor or academic coach

*Complete these as much as possible by recall from memory without using your book or notes. Research suggests that you can remember information better if you try to retrieve it—whether by putting the book aside and recalling it, trying to answer questions about it, or by discussing the topic with someone.

## Five Day Study Plan

| 5 Days before Test | Overview all material. | Identify questions and problem areas. | Study at least 2-3 hours. Take a 5-10 minute break after each hour. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 Days before Test | Briefly review all material. | Thoroughly review and rehearse the first 1/3 of the material in detail. | Study at least 2-3 hours. Take a 5-10 minute break after each hour. |
| 3 Days before Test | Briefly review all material. | Thoroughly review and rehearse the second 1/3 of the material in detail. | Study at least 2-3 hours. Take a 5-10 minute break after each hour. |
| 2 Days before Test | Briefly review all material. | Thoroughly review and rehearse the final 1/3 of the material in detail. | Study at least 2-3 hours. Take a 5-10 minute break after each hour. |
| 1 Day before Test | Final review of all material. | Study at least 2-3 hours. Take a 5-10 minute break after each hour. | No need to cram since you have been preparing for several days. |

## Night Before the Test

- Get at least 7-8 hours of sleep
- Do not cram
- Relax and review the material

## Before the Test

- Eat a small meal
- Limit caffeine
- Relax and calm your nerves

# Test Anxiety Scale

Taking tests can bother everyone. Some nervous and anxious feelings are very normal and are experienced by many people. However, when the anxiety is excessive and directly impacts performance, a person may be experiencing test anxiety. The test anxiety scale below is designed to identify anxiety that might be impacting a person's performance on tests. Answer each item truthfully. Mark "True" if the statement is generally true for you. Mark "False" if the statement is generally false for you. The scoring key is at the bottom.

|  |  |  |
|---|---|---|
| 1. While taking an important exam, I perspire a lot. | True | False |
| 2. I feel very panicky when I have to take a surprise quiz. | True | False |
| 3. During tests I find myself thinking about failing. | True | False |
| 4. After important tests, I am frequently so tense that my stomach gets upset. | True | False |
| 5. While taking an important exam, I find myself thinking of how smarter other students are compared to me. | True | False |
| 6. I freeze up on big tests like final exams. | True | False |
| 7. If I were about to take a big test, I would worry a lot before the test. | True | False |
| 8. During an exam I find myself thinking of things unrelated to course material. | True | False |
| 9. During an exam I frequently get so nervous that I forget facts that I really know. | True | False |
| 10. When I know I am going to take a big exam, I feel fairly relaxed and confident. | True | False |
| 11. I usually become depressed after taking an exam. | True | False |
| 12. I usually have an uneasy, upset feeling before taking a test. | True | False |
| 13. When taking a test, my emotions do not interfere with my performance. | True | False |
| 14. Getting a good grade on one exam usually does not seem to increase my confidence on future exams. | True | False |
| 15. When getting ready to take a test, I usually do not feel good about it. | True | False |
| 16. I sometimes feel my heart beating very fast during important exams. | True | False |

1. True
2. True
3. True
4. True
5. True
6. True
7. True
8. True
9. True
10. False
11. True
12. True
13. False
14. True
15. True
16. True

If seven or more of your answers match the scoring key then you may suffer from test anxiety.

# Top Ten Tips for Coping with Test Anxiety

1. Design a routine study plan. Try to block off the same amount of time each day to prepare for the exam. If possible, try to study in the same few locations and during the same time each day. This helps you to develop a routine.
2. Be physically prepared. Get plenty of rest—you will not be at your peak if you are tired and sleepy. You should also begin the exam on a full stomach. Healthy eating before the exam will help you sustain your energy and maintain focus.
3. Cramming is generally not effective and can cause you to increase anxiety and lose sleep. In fact, if you have developed a routine study plan, you will not need to cram anyway.
4. Review your notes as soon after class as possible. Doing so will help you transfer information into your long-term memory.
5. Consider creating flashcards or other devices to assist you study for the exam.
6. As you are about to begin the exam, remain calm and positive. If you engage in negative self-talk and tell yourself that you are going to bomb the exam, then chances are you will not do very well. Rather, engage in positive self-talk and remind yourself that you have prepared as much as you can and you are ready.
7. When the exam is first distributed, take a few seconds and preview the entire exam before beginning. See where the majority of points will be calculated for various questions.
8. Answer questions that you definitely know first. Skip questions that you are not confident about, and then return to those questions later. By answering questions that you know, you will build your confidence during the exam.
9. When anxiety occurs during the exam, turn the test face down and do not look at it for a few seconds. Take deep breaths and stretch your arms and legs. Once you have become refocused and the anxiety has decreased, turn the exam back over and begin working again.
10. Take the full amount of time to complete the exam. Review your answers entirely before submitting. This is not a race against other students in the class. If others finish early, so be it. Who cares? This has nothing to do with your performance, and, in fact, students submitting exams early may not have been as prepared as you anyway.

Reference: *How to beat test anxiety. (2012).* South Deerfield, MA: Channing Bete.

# What is Netiquette?

Netiquette refers to the social expectations and behavior norms for online interactions and communications. In the online learning environment, we should follow common social standards. Developing awareness of netiquette will help you succeed in online communication activities (emails, discussion forums, chat, etc.) and to get the most out of your online courses.

### General Netiquette Rules

- Be friendly and civil with each other
- Be forgiving of other people's mistakes
- Avoid abbreviation
- Avoid "text messaging" language (examples; LOL, NP, TY, emoji's, etc…)
- Avoid "ALL CAPS" (IT'S LIKE YELLING)
- Respect others' privacy and your own (be careful of personal or confidential information)
- Stay on topic, and write clearly and concisely
- Run a spelling and grammar check before posting anything publicly

### Netiquette for Discussion Board

- Read other's posts before making your own
- Post early in a thoughtful manner
- Post relevant information and contribute to a civilized debate
- Refer to others' posts when replying
- Cite information correctly
  To learn more about citing information correctly, please visit the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) website.

### Netiquette for Email

- Use clear and specific subject lines (include the class information, section #, class assignment, etc.)
- Include a proper greeting and closing
- Be professional
- Don't forward or copy another's email without permission

### Civility

As you interact with other people in the online environment, please remember that "The University of Southern Indiana embraces and celebrates the many differences that exist among the members of a dynamic, intellectual and inclusive community and strives to maintain an environment that respects differences and provides a sense of belonging and inclusion for everyone. Any form of discrimination or harassment, including sexual harassment and sexual misconduct, will not be tolerated." Civil Rights & Sexual Misconduct, University Handbook (2017).

Questions about the University's Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct Policies or Procedures can be directed to the Title IX Coordinator, Wright Administration Building Forum Wing, 812-464-1703.