

Subject: Biology class: more advice about studying

I've been asked about "how to study for this class."

Hopefully you are doing the first item: always come to class, take notes, and read the chapters in the book in a timely fashion (best practice is to do this both before and after lecture), but these are just the easy part of what you need to be doing.

First, when I talk to students, they are mostly using "shallow" study methods, like memorization, highlighting, etc., but what you'll need for this class, particularly for lecture (and to do well in the future at your transfer institution and beyond), are **deep** study methods.

**These are more time-consuming and more difficult to do than the shallow ones.

Dr. Stephen Chew is both a great college-level instructor (recognized by the Carnegie Foundation in 2011 - http://www.usprofessorsoftheyear.org/Winners/Previous_Natl_Winners/Chew_Student_Introduction.html) and a researcher who studies how we learn.

His short videos on successful (deep) studying:

<http://www.samford.edu/departments/academic-success-center/how-to-study>

Dr. Chew's short presentation about "Components of a Successful Academic Mindset"

<http://education.uw.edu/sites/default/files/Components%20of%20a%20Successful%20Academic%20Mindset.pdf>

Comments about how 1 person uses what Dr. Chew says:
<http://palumbop.wordpress.com/2012/05/16/dr-chews-study-habits/>

Also at this website is a 2 page pdf (derived from one at UPenn) with some specific suggestions.

Another study (recent, with UCLA students) shows that trying to multi-task reduces the ability to learn:
<http://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/dont-multi-task-while-you-read-this>

(Note: the students were just asked to recall specific words, not what they mean or how they may interconnect. Your learning in this class **must** include all of those, not just recall.)

Note: everyone will be learning lots of new words this semester. Those of you who know some Spanish (or other Latin-based language) sometimes can have an advantage as a lot of Biology terms have Latin word roots, so you can be quicker at getting to a definition than those without that knowledge.

Finally, if you really want to know more about how to study better, there is a lot of literature.

One book that may be quite useful is:

What the Best College Students Do by Ken Bain.

I hope this has been helpful,

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