Read the assigned textbook material before class. This way, you’ll be prepared to participate in class, and questions that come up during reading are likely to be addressed in lecture if you pay attention. If not, ask questions in class when the question is freshest.

- Skim the chapter previewing the graphs, images, section headings, and charts
- Read carefully a second time (some find it useful to read aloud—though not in the library).
- Review Key Terms (chapter words in bold). Can you define the terms in your own words?

Attend Class. Although attendance is not required, you will do better if you attend class regularly. By going to class and comparing your notes with the material in the textbook, moreover, you will see the material that received emphasis and that which did not. This knowledge then helps you to study strategically for exams (i.e., minimize studying on low probability questions; maximize studying on high probability questions).

Rewrite Your Notes after Class. Rewriting your notes after class may seem like tedious work, and it will be if you simply rote copy without trying to understand what you’re doing. Through a deliberate process of rewriting, however, you will be able to fill in gaps in your notes or expand on aspects that were less clear. Rewriting works best when it closely follows after class. In this way, your thinking and recall are still fresh. This is also an excellent time to compare your notes with the content of the textbook looking for content that was emphasized and minimizing textbook information that was not emphasized.

Study in Proportion to the Grade you Want. The old rule of thumb used to be 1 hour of studying per week for each credit hour for the GPA you want. So if you want an “A” in a 3 hour class, you’ll need to put in about 12 hours of study per week for that one “A.” For full-time students who wish to excel, that means studying is a full-time job….as it should be.

Form a Study Group. Study groups, contrary to popular belief, benefit both the good student and the weak student. The benefits to the weak student, who wishes to learn and tries to be a contributor, should be obvious. To the good student, however, he/she will find themselves “teaching” the weaker members of the group. Nothing clarifies one’s own understanding like teaching does.

Do the Homework and Practice Problems. You don’t know what you don’t know until you try to apply what you think you’ve learned to an actual problem. Do the homework and practice problems and when you work in groups, be sure you understand the solutions.

Take the Practice Exams as if they were real. The practice exams are posted to give students an idea for the style and level of questions asked. Be sure you can finish the exams in under the time allotted for the actual test. Also, record your answers, making notations of any answers of which you were unsure, or were guessing. Honest weakness assessments give you vital feedback about subject areas that you need to study more in the textbook and your notes.

Use Office Hours. Use my office hours or email to ask questions or to get help with subject problems. Regular office hours do not require an appointment and are a resource for students to use.