Greetings!

It’s that time of the semester when we start taking midterms, for most, a stressful time. Here at the ASC, we wanted to provide you with a packet for helping you be more successful with midterm season. Below, you will find the topics this packet will be discussing.

The general topics include:

- Midterms
- Exam Preparation
- Bloom’s Taxonomy: Understanding Different Levels of Learning
- Study Strategies (Reading/Note-Taking/Problem-Solving)

The first section of this packet is designed to help you understand what the two types of midterms are and also to teach you how to assess your own midterm grades. The other half is focusing on study skills you can utilize to increase your critical thinking skills and academic success.

The key to learning is through critical thinking and repetition. The more you are exposed to content, the better you will retain the information. Also, learning the root as to why you might be experiencing a difficult time on tests (which seem to be asking you more difficult questions than are presented to you during lecture or in homework); by learning about Bloom’s Taxonomy-6 Ways of Thinking, it will hopefully help you gain a ‘visual’ on the different ways we learn and need to study. Therefore, the aim for this packet is to give you tangible tools to help you in enhancing your academic skills. We want these handouts to make meaning for you and hope to find this beneficial!

Take time to reflect upon what you want to improve upon academically and complete subsequent pages on your own and/or with the assistance of an Academic Coach from the Academic Success Center (ASC). If you want to schedule an appointment with an Academic Coach, call (515-294-6624).

-The ASC Academic Coaching & J2S Team

Created By: Bree Mead—Academic Coach (Spring 2016)
What Is A Midterm?

There are two different kinds of midterms:

1) **Professors** tend to refer to their mid-semester exams as ‘midterms’. They could be the first of two cumulative exams for the course (the other being the ‘final’ exam) worth significantly more points than other exams in the course. They could also be the same weight as the other exams in the course and simply be in the middle of the semester.

2) The **Registrar’s Office** asks that a ‘Midterm grade’ be reported for any student who is currently earning a C- or lower at mid-semester. This packet is focused on the assessment of midterm grades.*

**Points to Remember:**

The purpose of a ‘Midterm grade’ is to identify how students are doing in their courses to identify where improvements are needed. Midterm grades are not recorded on your permanent record or transcript. They are designed to help students assess their mid-semester standing and make changes, if needed.

- Midterms are released approximately two weeks before the semester drop deadline so that students are able to make an informed decision on whether or not to drop a course.
- Professors are not required to submit Midterm grades.
- Submitted Midterm grades may not be accurate. It may not be based on all points in the class. For example, it may not include attendance points, the latest assignment, or take in account if your professor will curve the class. It is important to communicate with your professor to find out what scores were used to calculate your midterm grade.
- You can find your midterm grade report in AccessPlus > Grades and Transcripts > Grade Report.

**WHAT ARE MY CURRENT GRADES?** (Fill out after completing below calculations):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Current Grade</th>
<th>Grade Desired</th>
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**Anticipated GPA:**___________
Midterm Grade Assessment

The first step towards improvement is to identify where you stand in your individual courses. Take a minute to look at your syllabi to identify what grades you received on your course assignments and tests.

It’s important to understand that this might not be a completely accurate representation of your current grade. For a more accurate idea of your current course grade, we recommend you speak with your professors.

**EXAMPLE MIDTERM GRADE ASSESSMENT**

**Course:** *Intro to Sociology*

**Step 1:** Compare your course grades with what you could have earned:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Name</th>
<th>Points Received</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Self Analysis Paper</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Theory Paper</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Theory Test</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Interaction Paper</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Interaction Test</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>A) 175</strong></td>
<td><strong>B) 260</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 2:** Calculate your course grade percentage!

\[
(A ÷ B) \times 100 = \text{?}
\]

\[
(175 ÷ 260) \times 100 = 67.3\%
\]

**MEETING NOTES/NEXT STEPS FOR THIS COURSE**

Create some action plans to ensure you will do better next time. Here are some examples:

- “Professor said I can retake the test I received the lowest grade in.”
- “I’m going to start attending SI sessions for this course.”
- “Tuesday I will start making flash cards for Chapters 3 & 4.”

**TO CALCULATE POSSIBLE GPA**

Visit the online GPA calculator to determine your anticipated GPA: [http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/gpa-calc/gpaCalculator.html](http://www.registrar.iastate.edu/gpa-calc/gpaCalculator.html). You will need to enter your ‘calculated’ letter grade and number of credits for each course!
Not Satisfied With Your Grade?

Below you will find some helpful suggestions for resources to help improve your grades. Whether it is meeting with your professors, advisors, or utilizing one of the many resources provided by the Academic Success center, there is a beneficial option for everyone!

1) MEET WITH YOUR PROFESSORS!

Sitting down with your professor can be a great way to identify where you struggled in past and what your options are to improve your course grade.

When you meet with them, consider asking them:

- What exactly is my Midterm grade based on?
- What tips do you (professor) have to help me learn the material?
- Will there be any extra credit opportunities?

Explain to them that you really want to improve in their course and want to understand the material; you just need some help getting there.

2) TAKE ACTION NOW TO AVOID YOUR MIDTERM GRADE TURNING INTO YOUR FINAL GRADE!

Talk with your adviser and your professors about where you’re at in each course, how you might be able to improve, and whether dropping a course is the best option.

If you want to drop a course...

1. Before dropping a course, be sure to know if you have reached your drop limit (see ISU Catalog for details on drop limits). Dropping all of your classes is called ‘withdrawal’ and involves a different procedure than the one below.

2. Check if you will maintain full-time status as it can affect scholarships and financial aid, so check these things before dropping below full-time status. You may be able to add a second half course to stay full time.

3. Check AccessPlus to determine the number of drops that remain. Freshmen are allowed five dropped courses (after the first week of the semester) and transfer students are allowed four drops.

4. Check to see how dropping this class might affect your degree program. Consult the 4-year degree plans.

5. If there are any issues involving Steps 1-3, talk to your academic adviser. If you have completed Steps 1-3 and find no problems, get an Add/Drop slip from your academic adviser as well as their signature. (Note: You can make multiple schedule changes on one Add/Drop slip.)

6. Take the Add/Drop Slip to your instructor and have him or her sign it. Take the completed Add/Drop Slip to 10 Enrollment Services Center for processing. You will lose one of your drops, and a fee will be charged to your U-Bill (after the first week of classes).
3) IDENTIFY SOME REASONS YOU MIGHT BE STRUGGLING OVERALL?

- Time Management
- Project/Paper Planning
- Goal Setting
- Motivation
- Note-Taking Skills
- Test Anxiety
- Reading/Writing Skills
- Stress Management
- Exam Prep
- Procrastination
- Goal Setting
- Note-Taking Skills
- Test Anxiety
- Reading/Writing Skills
- Stress Management
- Exam Prep
- Procrastination

Handouts to address these problems areas:

You can find handouts at the Academic Success Center Website (http://www.dso.iastate.edu/asc/)

4) ASK FOR HELP! EVERYONE CAN USE NEW TIPS AND TRICKS TO BEING SUCCESSFUL IN COLLEGE.

MAJORS: Thinking of changing your major?

- To explore different majors and career options call the Student Counseling Service front desk (515-294-5056) and tell the receptionist you would like to sign up for Individual Career Counseling. Alternatively, you can sign up for Individual Career Counseling in person by visiting the Student Counseling Service front desk (located in the waiting room on the 3rd floor of the Student Services Building).
- To change your major set up an appointment with your academic adviser.

TUTORING: Consider getting a tutor for a difficult course.

How much does it cost?

- We understand that affording a tutor can be a concern. Our goal is to maintain tutoring services at a low cost reflects this concern. The costs for tutoring are:
  - $5 administrative fee per semester.
  - $4 per tutoring session.

- Students may be eligible to receive financial assistance to aid them with tutoring costs.

How are tutor groups organized?

- Tutoring groups consist of two to four students. Students meet with their tutor two times for one hour sessions, for a total of two hours of tutoring per week.

Ready to request a tutor?

- You can request a tutor by filling out an online application: http://www.dso.iastate.edu/asc/tutoring/getatutor
- If you have questions, please call 515-294-6624 or e-mail tutorsrv@iastate.edu
SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION (SI): Consider attending SI for a difficult course.

How Much Does it Cost?

- SI is completely free and voluntary. You can come and go as you please. However, our assessment shows that students who regularly attend SI may receive up to ½ letter grade high than those who do not.

How are SI sessions organized?

- SI sessions meet at scheduled times. They are facilitated by SI leaders, students who have previously taken the course and demonstrated success. Each SI leader facilitates three 50-minute sessions a week using collaborative learning methods.

Ready to attend an SI session?

- Find the schedule online http://www.dso.iastate.edu/asc/supplemental to determine if your class is offered

ACADEMIC COACHING: Need to work 1:1 with a coach to focus on strengthening your academic skills?

- Set up a FREE appointment with an Academic Coach in the Academic Success Center by calling 515-294-6624
- Academic Coaching involves one-on-one meetings with students seeking help in evaluating and correcting academic challenges. Students at any level are encouraged to seek academic coaching to develop skills that can improve areas of their lives such as time management, note taking, study skills and test taking.

Need Help With Anxiety And Stress Management?

If you feel your anxiety is severely affecting your ability to succeed academically, you can call Student Counseling Services (515-294-5056) to explore other anxiety management techniques including an individual appointment with a staff member or biofeedback.
Most students express frustration that either their tried-and-true high school study techniques just aren’t cutting it in college, or their new professor creates tests that are way too hard and are nothing like what they talked about in class. The reason for this is that the teachers are expecting you to engage in higher levels of thinking. How can you engage in them though without understanding that they exist?

Before we discuss study strategies, here at the ASC we believe in empowering our students to be able to better understand how they learn. Hopefully, as a result, your studying strategies will be even more intentional and effective!

Bloom’s Taxonomy is an amazing resource that is traditionally used by teachers but now we are giving you insight into it so that you can be empowered to get the most from your learning here at ISU!

**Handout Descriptions and Uses**

**Bloom’s Taxonomy Handout**

**Description:**
This handout will introduce Bloom’s Taxonomy, a theoretical framework, which breaks down our we think and learn material into 6 different levels.

**Ways to Use It:**
Traditionally used by teachers to help them strategically create questions at each level of thinking to help get their students to engage in deeper critical thinking. It can give you the inside scoop to better understand that disconnect you might be experiencing between the questions they ask you in class vs. what’s on the test.

**Breaking Down and Applying Bloom’s Taxonomy Handout**

**Description:**
This handout will allow you to dive deeper into understanding all 6 levels of thinking within the Bloom’s Taxonomy pyramid. It includes information association with each level, such as key words and common questions one might find on homework/tests, and specific study strategies to use!

**Ways to Use It:**
You can be the detective and use this resource as an insider’s secret to decoding what the questions your teachers are asking you really mean? You can use this by looking at a prior test. See which level questions are present and now compare that to the study strategies you used. Do the levels of questions being asked on the test and your study strategies match up? If yes, great! If not, now you know tangible study techniques to get you to think at those higher levels of thinking!
What is Bloom’s Taxonomy?

Bloom’s Taxonomy is a theoretical framework around the 6 different levels of thinking: Remembering, Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating, and Creating. Teachers use it to help create their tests and course learning outcomes by making sure they are asking specific questions from each level in order to get you to think at those specific levels. The higher you move up the pyramid, the deeper you will learn the concept because you are engaging in deeper critical thinking.

Why a Pyramid?

This pyramid represents the magnitude of learning that occurs. The lower levels represent lower understanding of materials. The higher levels represent higher levels of critical thinking of materials. Ideally when you are studying, you want to aim for higher levels of thinking instead of just sticking to the first two levels.

Note: Sometimes the lower levels are the preferred level of thinking for some classes, i.e. anatomy where you strictly need to just memorize 100s of terms to be successful!

Description of Each Level:

Level 1—Remembering: Can you memorize the information?
Level 2—Understanding: Can you explain ideas or concepts?
Level 3—Applying: Can you use the information in a new way or apply it to a math problem?
Level 4—Analyzing: Can you distinguish between different parts?
Level 5—Evaluating: Can you justify/critique/evaluate why it is that way in your own opinion?
Level 6—Creating: Can you create a new product/equation/argument?

Benefit of Understanding and utilizing Bloom’s Taxonomy as a College Student:

By showing you Bloom’s, we are trying to show you that there are different ways of thinking and learning your material. The next handout, Breaking Down and Applying Bloom’s Taxonomy, will show you tangible ways to apply this theoretical framework to your studying as a college student. We want to make sure that the ways in which you are studying are intentional and engaging you in those higher levels of critical thinking within the Bloom’s Taxonomy pyramid, so that way you are not just always using flashcards (level 1—Remembering).
Breaking Down & Applying Bloom’s Taxonomy

When you are studying, do you find yourself studying by simply reading and re-reading your notes/flashcards? Does this make you feel like you are just memorizing and regurgitating information like a robot? Often, these study strategies may not be enough. It is important to be efficient and effective while studying, understanding the material on a deeper level.

This handout breaks down each level of the Bloom’s Taxonomy Pyramid by providing you the definition and both key words and common questions associated with each level. You can use these parts to be a detective and look for them in your homework and tests. It will help you identify what levels of thinking your teachers are trying to get you to engage in. Also, both individual and group study strategies are provided per level to give you study strategies to engage you with increasingly critical thinking at that specific level. The aim is to help you be more intentional with studying.

**Level 1: Remembering**

*Exhibit memory of previously learned material by recalling facts, terms, basic concepts, and answers.*

**Key Words:** Choose, Define, Find, Label, Match, List, Recall, Select, Name, Omit, Show, When, Who

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Questions:</th>
<th>Individual Study Strategies</th>
<th>Group Study Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What/Where is?</td>
<td>Practice labeling diagrams</td>
<td>Check a drawing that another student labeled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you show...?</td>
<td>2) List characteristics</td>
<td>1) Create lists of concepts, equations, and processes that your peers can match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How/When did ___happen?</td>
<td>3) Utilize and quiz yourself with flashcards for diagrams, words, or equations</td>
<td>3) Place flash cards in a bag and take turns selecting one for which you must define a term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which one?</td>
<td>4) Take a self-made quiz on vocabulary</td>
<td>4) Do the above activities and have peers check your answers</td>
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<tr>
<td>How is/Who was...?</td>
<td>5) Draw, classify, select, or match items</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you list three...?</td>
<td>6) Write out the textbook definitions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why/When did...?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can you recall/select...?</td>
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**Level 2: Understanding**

*Demonstrate understanding of facts & ideas by organizing, comparing, translating, interpreting, describing, & stating main ideas.*

**Key Words:** Classify, Compare, Contrast, Illustrate, Interpret, Summarize, Translate, Explain, Demonstrate, Infer

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Common Questions:</th>
<th>Individual Study Strategies</th>
<th>Group Study Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How would you classify/compare/contrast...?</td>
<td>1) Describe a process/reaction/event/concept in your own words without copying it from a book or another source</td>
<td>1) Discuss content with peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State in your own words/Rephrase the meaning...?</td>
<td>2) Provide examples of a process/etc. from either your text or own experiences</td>
<td>2) Take turns quizzing each other about definitions and examples of the concept and have your peers check your answer(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the main idea of...?</td>
<td>3) Write a sentence using the word</td>
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<tr>
<td>Which statements support...?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explain what reaction/event is happening...?</td>
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<td>What can you say about...?</td>
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<td>Which is the best answer...?</td>
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<td>How would you summarize...?</td>
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**Level 3: Applying**

*Solve problems to new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different way.*

**Key Words:** Apply, Choose, Experiment With, Solve, Plan, Organize, Develop, Build, Identify, Utilize, Construct

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<th>Common Questions:</th>
<th>Individual Study Strategies</th>
<th>Group Study Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How would you use...?</td>
<td>1) Review each process you’ve learned and then ask yourself: “What would happen if you made a subtle or a complete change to something in the problem/situation?”</td>
<td>1) Practice writing out answers to old exam questions on the board and have your peers check to make sure you don’t have too much or too little information in your answer</td>
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<tr>
<td>What examples can you find to...?</td>
<td>2) If possible, graph a process &amp; create scenarios that change shape or slope of the graph</td>
<td>2) Take turns teaching your peers a process/equation/concept while the group critiques the content</td>
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<tr>
<td>How would you solve ___ using what you’ve learned?</td>
<td>3) Utilize the ‘StepBYStep’ Process to formula/equation</td>
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<tr>
<td>How would you organize ___ to show ...?</td>
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<td>How would you show/apply your understanding of ...?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What approach/plan/equation would you use to...?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What would result if...?</td>
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<td>What elements would you choose to change...?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What facts would you select to show...?</td>
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<td>What questions would you ask in an interview with...?</td>
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### Level 4: Analyzing
*Examine and break info. into parts by identifying motives or causes. Make inferences and find evidence to support generalizations.*

**Key Words:** Analyze, Classify, Examine, Relationships, Simplify, Test For, Theme, Function, Conclusion, Distinguish

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<tr>
<th>Common Questions:</th>
<th>Individual Study Strategies</th>
<th>Group Study Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can you identify/List the parts of...? How is ___ related to ___? Why do you think ...? What is the theme/motive/function...? What inference can you make...? What conclusions can you draw...? Who would you classify...? How would you categorize...? What evidence can you find...? What is the relationship/Can you distinguish between...?</td>
<td>1) Analyze and interpret data from the reading without looking at the authors interpretation and then compare it with your own 2) Analyze a situation and then identify the assumptions and principles of the argument 3) Compare and contrast two ideas or concepts; you could use a Venn Diagram 4) Create a map of the main concepts by defining the relationships of the concepts using one- or two-way arrows</td>
<td>1) Work together to analyze and interpret data in the text without reading the authors interpretation and defend your analysis to your peers 2) Work together to identify all of the concepts in a paper or textbook chapter, create individual maps linking the concepts together with arrows and words that relate the concepts, and then grade each other’s concept maps</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Level 5: Evaluating
*Present/defend opinions by making judgements about information, validity of ideas, or quality of work based on a set of criteria.*

**Key Words:** Assess, Disprove, Justify, Recommend, Support, Measure, Criticize, Judge, Conclude, Defend, Evaluate

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Common Questions:</th>
<th>Individual Study Strategies</th>
<th>Group Study Strategies</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you agree with the actions/outcome? What is your opinion of...? How would you prove/disprove..? Assess the value/ importance of? Why did they (the character) choose...? What would you recommend/rate...? How could you determine/prioritize...? Based on what you know, how would you explain...? What information would you use to support the view...? What data was used to make the conclusion...? How would you compare the ideas?</td>
<td>1) Generate a hypothesis or design an experiment based on information you are studying 2) Create a model/graph/argument based on a given data set/information 3) Create your own study guide that show how facts and concepts relate to each other 4) Create questions at each level of Bloom’s Taxonomy as a practice test and then take the test</td>
<td>1) Each student puts forward a hypothesis/idea/opinion about a concept and creates an experiment/ argument to test it out; Peers critique them. 2) Create a new model/study guide/concept map that integrates each group member’s ideas</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Level 6: Creating
*Compile information together in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions.*

**Key Words:** Adapt, Change, Develop, Design, Create, Discuss, Modify, Solve, Test, Plan, Predict, Formulate, Invent

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<tr>
<th>Common Questions:</th>
<th>Individual Study Strategies</th>
<th>Group Study Strategies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What changes would you make to solve...? How would you test/improve...? Can you predict the outcome if.../ What would it be? Can you propose an alternative..? How would you adapt ___ to create a different...? How could you change/modify the plot/plan...? What could be done to minimize/maximize...? Can you invent.../What would you design...? What could be combined to improve/change...? Suppose you could ___what would you do...? How would you estimate the results for...?</td>
<td>1) Provide a written assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of your work or understanding of a given concept based on previously determined criteria</td>
<td>1) Provide a verbal assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of your peers’ work or understanding of a given concept based on previously described criteria and have your peers critique it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from and Credit to: [Biology in Bloom: Implementing Bloom’s Taxonomy to Enhance Student Learning in Biology](https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.08-05-0024) | Alison Crowe, Clarissa Dirks, Mary Pat Wenderoth | CBE Life Sci Educ. 2008 Winter; 7(4): 368–381. doi: 10.1187/cbe.08-05-0024
THIEVES Reading Strategy

How do you read? Most students open the book to the page number and go—they do not have a sense of what they are about to learn in the chapter or how the information connects.

What is THIEVES?
THIEVES is reading strategy that will allow you to get a bird’s eye view of the chapter before you begin reading it. It essentially is priming your brain to better retain and understand the importance and relevance of the information within your course. Be sure to ‘THIEVES it up’ before you begin reading your course content.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Questions to Ask Yourself</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What do I think the text will be about?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What do I think the author’s message will be?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What is my background knowledge?</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>H</th>
<th>Headings</th>
<th>Questions to Ask Yourself</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• How has the information been divided into smaller topics?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What are the smaller topics?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What do I think I will read in each section?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• How will the topics relate to the big picture?</td>
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<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Questions to Ask Yourself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• How does the introduction try to make me curious about the subject?</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>E</th>
<th>Every first sentence in a section</th>
<th>Questions to Ask Yourself</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What additional details can I find about the reading?</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>V</th>
<th>Visuals and Vocabulary</th>
<th>Questions to Ask Yourself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What visuals are used?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What do they tell me about what I will be reading?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Are there bold words that might be important? What do the bold words mean?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E</th>
<th>End of Article, End of Chapter Questions</th>
<th>Questions to Ask Yourself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• How does the author finish the writing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What questions will I be asked to answer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Thinking about all of the information, what do I predict I will be reading about?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>Summarize Thinking</th>
<th>Questions to Ask Yourself</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What do I think the author’s main idea will be in this text?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It’s kind of like using a map!
If I were to plop you somewhere in the forest and point to a mountain peak and tell you to get there, your experience would be stressful. Just like reading without using THIEVES beforehand, you will not know what landmarks/topics to look for. You also wouldn’t know how long it would take you to reach your destination, or even really what it looks like. However, using THIEVES beforehand will help you identify those ‘landmarks’ and your ‘destination’ for the chapter. This, in turn, will make your reading and lecture hall experiences less stressful because you will not be ‘lost’. With it, you will know what information the chapter will be uncovering, how long it will take you to read it, and you will see how the content all connects together.

BONUS: Using this technique should only add on a few extra minutes to your reading time!
Create class notes that will actually be useful for you come study time! Be sure to follow the steps in order. For more on how to use this method, refer to the next page!

### Cornell Note-Taking Method

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(STEP 2) RECALL COLUMN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use this side to:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) <strong>Identify places to revisit</strong>, gaps where you need clarification or questions you have from the lecture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) <strong>Write down any questions you might have</strong>. This way you can remember to ask your TA, classmate, or professor ASAP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) <strong>Create questions</strong> to study from based on note-taking column. <strong>TIP</strong>: Writing questions helps to clarify meaning, reveal relationships, establish continuity, and strengthen memory. Also, the writing of questions sets up a perfect stage for exam-studying later.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) <strong>Write down keywords</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) <strong>Make connections</strong> to other material either from your experience or from the textbook.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) <strong>Reduce ideas and facts</strong> to concise summaries and important topics.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(STEP 1) NOTE-TAKING COLUMN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Format</strong>: Before class, re-create the Cornell Note-Taking paper format like this example.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR.... (You could split your page into sections 1 and 2 and then save the Step 3 Summary box until the very end of your lecture notes!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Record</strong>: During the lecture, use the note taking column to record the lecture as you would normally.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BONUS**: How To Study From Notes

(See Reading & Note-Taking Combination Study Strategy handout on the next page, to learn how you could use these notes to study from)

### (STEP 3) SUMMARY

After class, use this space at the bottom of each page to summarize the notes on that page. By summarizing your notes in your own words, it is going to show you that you have a good understanding of the content. If you are having a difficult time summarizing your notes, re-read them and try again. Albert Einstein explained it well:

“If you can’t explain it simply, you don’t understand it well.”

**HINT**: Doing steps 2 & 3 should not take you more than 45 minutes!
Reading & Note-Taking Combination Study Strategy

Being exposed to the course material once is not enough. Repetition is key to making the information you learn really stick. By using this reading and note-taking combo, it will allow your brain to be exposed to the content 3-4 times, which you will greatly retain it!

**STEP 1—BEFORE CLASS: READ/THIEVES**

(1st Exposure to Content)

- **THIEVES & Then read**
  - Read before class using the THIEVES technique (NOTE: Though the ASC believes that effective learning comes from reading your textbooks consistently, we do recognize that not all students do it or have time. So, even if you do not typically read your textbook or always get a chance to read before class, use the THIEVES technique to prime your brain before class...it only takes a few minutes!)
  - On the same sheet of paper you will be taking your Cornell Method class notes, right down 2-4 sentences summarizing your thinking about what the author’s main idea(s) for this text. This will help get your mind ready for lecture (even if you only THIEVES before class and not read as well).

**STEP 2—DURING CLASS: Take Notes**

(2nd Exposure to Content)

- Attend class and take notes per usual. However you will be using the Cornell Note-taking Method. The page is split up into three sections like in the diagram to the left. You will only want to fill in the Note-Taking Column, where the star is at, during this time.

**STEP 3—AFTER CLASS: Review Notes**

(3rd–4th Exposure to Content)

- **Add and Edit Content:** Within 24 hours, reread your lecture notes. Make sure your handwriting is legible and the material will make sense in a few weeks when you revisit your notes for studying. (Don’t you hate it when you try to study from your notes and the context has been lost? Make sure to add anymore content which would make the notes more effective for you in the future!)
- **Finish Cornell Notes:** Complete the Recall column and Summary sections of your Cornell Notes.

**BONUS—BEFORE EXAM: Study Notes**

(5th + Exposure to Content)

- **Survey:** Read over your notes. Since you already added, edited, and used the Cornell Note-Taking Method, the notes you have to study from should be very useful and make meaning for you!
- **Questions:** Formulate questions based on the notes in the Note-Taking column.
- **Recite:** Cover the note-taking column with a sheet of paper. Then, looking at the question or cue-words in the question and cue column only, say aloud, in your own words, the answers to the questions, fact, or ideas indicated by the cue-words.
- **Reflect:** Reflect on the material by asking yourself questions. For example: "What’s the significance of these facts? What principles are they based on? How can I apply them? How do they fit in with what I already know? What’s beyond them?"
- **Review:** Spend at least ten minutes every week reviewing all your previous notes. If you do, you’ll retain a great deal for current use, as well as, for the exam.
It is important that we make sure we are critically thinking about the content we are reading. These three note-taking tips for when you’re reading for class will help keep your brain focused and better comprehending what you are reading!

### 1. Post-It Notes

**Use and Benefit**
- As you read, be sure to take pauses and write down quick summaries of what the paragraph is about: key facts, people, overall idea.
- This technique is beneficial for individuals who are renting their textbooks and cannot write or highlight with more than one color.
- This also can be helpful for open-book tests. If you create tabs and put in your own notes/summaries of the content, it will help make your testing or review experience more effective.

### 2. Writing in the Margins

**Use and Benefit**
- This is a great way to test your comprehension of what you’re reading paragraph by paragraph. In the margin next to the paragraph, write a quick blurb about what the section is about.
- It is very important to be able to make sure that you are understanding what you are reading and not just letting your eyes gloss over the pages. If you can see how the material connects to the other information in the book and also can paraphrase what the paragraph/chapter is about, it means that you are understanding your content.
- Before you go to class, skim over your margin notes to jog your memory.

### 3. Using a Highlighting System

**Use and Benefit**
- You want to make sure that your notes you are taking will work for you come study time. Do you feel like your pages become a sea of yellow highlighter?
- Create a highlighting system, each color representing something different: yellow=main idea, purple=secondary ideas, blue=examples, pink=keywords, etc.
- This is going to allow you to easily re-locate your important content when reviewing before class, class discussions, or even writing a paper about the reading.
Confused about Chemistry, Math or Physics, and not sure what to do about it? Here are some tips about studying, homework, and test-taking that you DO NOT want to miss! Advice directly from the professors themselves:

1. Complete your homework to learn the concept, not the specific problem. *(See ‘Step-By-Step’ Process)*

   Can you read a problem and understand what *kind* of question it is asking? Can you identify the formula in the problem? Before solving problems, study the concepts and make sure you understand them. Understanding the concept is crucial for working through the difficult problems you will be faced with!

   **‘Step-By-Step’ Process**

   - Take a piece of paper and draw a line down the middle. On the left column; you will break your problem down into steps, kind of like when we learned long division in 4th grade. Then in the right column, you will write down next to each step your *explanation* as to why you did what you did.

   **Benefits:**
   - It will allow you to understand why you are doing what you are doing *instead* of just plugging in information blindly.
   - You can bring your work into your TA/Professor and they will be able to pinpoint the exact place you got stuck and be able to explain the correct way to execute the problem. This will make your meeting more effective.

2. Homework as a Learning Aid:

   - Use your homework as a test of the concepts you have learning in class. Write out your homework in an organized way. This can be useful to you as you are trying to master more challenging problems or review of the test.
   - Find similar example problems in your textbook.
   - Use a different textbook or additional study material to work through the concepts.
   - Try to read through a group of problems and see if you can identify their similarities.
   - Do a couple problems every day and start your assignment early!

3. Make a Reference Sheet:

   - Extract the key information and formulas so that you can refer to them when necessary. This will also help you to prepare a notecard for the exam, if allowed by the professor.

4. Attending Class is Extremely Important:

   - Prepare for class by looking through your textbook. Skim over the ideas and recognize important concepts.
   - Use examples from class as practice problems! Cover the explanation and try to work through them yourself.

5. Practice Tests are an Important Study Material:

   - Take the test in a test-like environment. Use only the resources you will have at the time of the test, and in the time you will be allowed. Don’t look at the answers too quickly! Try to work through the problem yourself first.
   - Use these tests to figure out what kind of information you are missing and which concepts you do not understand.
   - Go through the practice tests and take questions to the TA or professor.
   - Look at the chapter objectives for a potential study guide.
Math Self-Help Skills

1. Read What The Instructor Will Be Lecturing On Before You Go To Class.
   - **Read slowly.** Reading mathematics is not like reading a novel or even history. Speed reading techniques are not appropriate. Every word and symbol is important to the meaning. Do not skip the symbolic part of the text. This is often the most important part. If you do not understand a symbol, look in the glossary or in the earlier part of the text. Symbols are often explained when they are first introduced. If you still cannot find out what a symbol means, ask!
   - **Read with a pencil in hand.** Every time the author does a problem, do it on your own—either before or after you read his or her explanation. This makes sure you know what steps have been shown and, more importantly, which ones were omitted.
   - **If there is something you do not understand, try to formulate a question about it.** Often if you can ask a specific question, you can answer it yourself. If you can’t answer it, you know what part of the instructor’s lecture requires your complete attention. Your question is ready if the lecture does not clear up your misunderstanding.

2. Understand The Concepts
   - **Don’t be satisfied with vague ideas about how to work problems.** Do the examples yourself, understand the concept illustrated, then try making up your own examples. Keep in mind that the questions on the exam may be very different from the example in the book.

3. Practice
   - **Be sure you understand the concepts before you practice.** Then practice will help you remember and give you confidence in your mastery. Force yourself to remember the methods as you work problems; don’t look back in the book.

4. Keep Up With Assignments (Whether They Are Graded Or Not)
   - **The pace is much faster in college** and keeping up to date with assignments helps you to better understand what is going on in class. Mathematics is not a spectator sport. The only way you can learn mathematics is by doing it. Following are some suggestions for getting the most out of the time you spend on homework.
     - **Understand the purpose of homework.** Homework in mathematics classes is assigned to help you understand certain concepts and to help you build certain skills. Homework is not assigned to you because it is important to get the right answers. Your instructor already knows the answers.
     - **Try to understand the process, not the specific problem.** Classify problems in the assignment by problem type. Although this is often done for you by the directions, it is not always. Do each assigned problem and
then check it in the back of the book. Try to figure out why you missed the ones you did instead of just working toward the answer. A similar problem may be on a test or quiz.

- **Mark homework problems you still do not understand** and get help with them before the next class. The next lecture may build on a concept or skill you did not understand in the homework. When you do get help, make notes on what you learned, so that you can study them for the test.

- **Before closing the book, look back over the assignment and try to explain to yourself** what the assignment was about, what each kind of problem was asking, how you got the answers and what the answers tell you. This process will help you understand the material and will help you discover what you don’t understand.

- **Keep your homework in a convenient and neat notebook** so that you will be able to find questions or difficulties you have quickly and easily. This will also provide an invaluable study guide for tests.

**5. Ask Questions**

- **Do not hesitate to ask questions.** Ask your instructor for help after you have tried to pull class notes and textbook explanations together for review and still don’t understand. Write down specific problems so you have them ready; don’t be vague and say you just don’t understand.

**6. Don’t Hesitate**

- **Get help right away.** Tutoring and help sessions are available. The longer you wait before getting help, the harder it will be to get caught up. Most of the time when you feel lost, it is just one concept that you are missing, so get help quickly. One missed concept in a math class will make the rest of your math career a hardship. Don’t feel embarrassed to ask questions and get help; even the best mathematicians have felt completely lost at some point.

**7. Suggestions For Preparing For And Taking Math Tests**

- **Keep a list of things to remember** - problems stressed by the instructor, definitions, terms, diagrams and graphs, formulas.

- **Keep up with the work** - some courses can be passed by cramming, but math isn’t one of them. Skills in math, as in sports, must be practiced.

- **Study copies of old exams, chapter tests from the book, or make up your own.** Then practice them with the same limits as the real exam.

- **Get a good night’s sleep** before the test so that you are rested and alert; a quick review before the test should be a summary only.

- **Arrive at the test early** so that you can be relaxed when the exam begins.

- **Quickly look over the test and budget your time** - don’t spend too much time on any single problem or section of the test.
• **Do some work on each problem** - try to work at least part of each problem because partial credit is better than none.

• **Check your answers** and look for careless mistakes during the last few minutes of your test time (budget this important time).

### 8. Suggestions For Word Problems

• **Solving problems is a practical art**, like swimming or playing the piano; you can only learn it by imitation and practice. There is no magic key that opens all doors and solves all problems. The major goal in solving word problems is to translate the written words into a mathematical equation that we know how to solve.

• **Read the problem for a general sense of what’s about**; sometimes putting it into your own words help. Then re-read it to pick out specific information:

  1. **What you are asked to find?** Usually you choose a variable to represent one unknown and other unknowns will be represented in terms of the first.
  2. **What information is given?** Make a list, then organize it into a diagram, picture, or chart.
  3. **What are the relationships among the information given and the information to be found?** Sometimes it helps to think of similar problems from arithmetic and the formulas needed there.

• **Translate the information into an equation** - get into the habit of doing this for easy problems. The longer problems will not seem as difficult.

• **Solve the equation you have written and label your answer** – then find any other quantities to be found.

• **Return to the original problem and check your answer(s).** Do they make sense in the original problem and answer the question posed in the problem?

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*Adapted from On Your Own in College by William C. Resnick and David H. Heller.*

Texas A&M University
Student Counseling Services, 2016
http://scs.tamu.edu/?q=node/92
When it comes time to study for a test, do you pile all of your materials on the table in front of you and then just stare at it and possibly feel overwhelmed and do not know where to start? These handouts are provided within this packet because we also wanted to give you an idea early on in the semester some effective and structured ways to prepare for your exam, whether it be through study plans or study guides you can create. Check these out and see which one would work best for you!

**Handout Descriptions and Uses**

**5 Day Study Plan   Handout**

**Description:**
A 5 Day Study Plan designed with having you do on average 2 hours/day studying. Everyone has at least 2 hours a day to study! This will help organize yourself when it comes to preparing for exams in a non-intimidating time length.

**Ways to Use It:**
You can use this as is or feel free to modify it to fit your needs—whether that is making it shorter or longer in days or time, or if you have any additional preparation and review study strategies to implement.

**7 Day Study Plan   Handout**

**Description:**
A 7 Day Study Plan designed with recommended study strategies per day. This is a great study plan to use for larger, more comprehensive tests that will take you longer to study for instead of just 2 hours per day.

**Ways to Use It:**
You can use this as is or feel free to modify it to fit your needs—whether that is making it shorter or longer in days or time, or if you have any additional study strategies to implement.

**Create Your Own Study Guide (Level of Understanding) Handout**

**Description:**
You can track your comfort with a class’s weekly topic. Every time you study, you update this form and then when it is time to study for a test, you can utilize this to see what areas are stronger and weaker, making your studying therefore much more intentional with where you spend your time.

**Ways to Use It:**
You use this after every lecture for the same class. You input the topic(s) you learned, the date it was introduced, the pages in the textbook, and then rate how comfortable you are with understanding the topic. After each time you study content, update your comfort level of the topic(s).
When you have a large amount of material to study for a test, commit yourself to about 2 hours per day of very structured study time.

**FIRST ➔ GET ORGANIZED**
The 5-Day Study Plan begins with dividing the material you need to study (i.e. chapters in your text and corresponding lecture notes) into 4 equal parts: A, B, C, D (with “A” being the older material and “D” being the most recently covered material). For example, if chapters 1-8 of your Psychology text will be on your upcoming test, you can divide them as follows: A= Ch. 1-2, B= Ch. 3-4, C= Ch. 5-6, D= Ch. 7-8.

List your four groups of study materials here:

- A: ________________________________
- B: ________________________________
- C: ________________________________
- D: ________________________________

**Next ➔ SELECT PREPARATION AND REVIEW STRATEGIES:**

For each of your four groups of study materials (A, B, C, D), you will need to select 2-3 PREPARATION and REVIEW strategies. Take a look at the examples below (feel free to add your own!):

**Preparation:**
Each day you will prepare ONE section of material to review the following day. Preparing includes tasks such as:

- Making flashcards
- Taking notes from your textbook
- Creating a study sheet
- Organizing & summarizing class notes
- Predicting essay questions & their answers
- Predicting multiple choice questions
- Drawing a mind map/diagrams
- Listing practice problems and/or formulas
- Reviewing study guides

**Review:**
Each day (except for day 1) you will review the material you prepared previous. Reviewing includes tasks such as:

- Practicing flashcards
- Reciting main ideas from your notes without looking; writing notes from memory
- Quizzing yourself on the predicted essay or multiple choice questions
- Re-creating mind maps/diagrams from memory
- Completely practice problems and reciting formulae from memory
- Explaining concepts to study group members or classmates etc.
Create Your 5-Day Study Plan

Select 2-3 PREPARATION and REVIEW strategies for each of your four groups of study materials, and list them in your 5-Day Study Plan chart. Make sure that your review strategies complement your preparation strategies. EX: PREPARE strategies: create outline, make flashcards. REVIEW strategies: review flashcards, self-quiz on outline. Then, follow the plan, noting the rotation of the different groups of materials (A, B, C, D) and how much time is spent on each one.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Day 4</th>
<th>Day 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prepare Part A: 2 hrs</td>
<td>Prepare Part B: 2 hrs</td>
<td>Prepare Part C: 1.5 hrs</td>
<td>Prepare Part D: 1 hr</td>
<td>Review Part D: 25 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Part A: 30 min</td>
<td>Review Part B: 30 min</td>
<td>Review Part A: 15 min</td>
<td>Review Part C: 30 min</td>
<td>Review Part C: 15 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Review Part B: 15 min</td>
<td>Review Part B: 15 min</td>
<td>Review Part B: 10 min</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Review Part A: 15 min</td>
<td></td>
<td>Review Part A: 10 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL: 2 hours</td>
<td>TOTAL: 2.5 hours</td>
<td>TOTAL: 2 hours, 15 min</td>
<td>TOTAL: ~ 2 hours</td>
<td>TOTAL: ~ 2 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prepare:

Review:
7 Day Study Plan

Use this space below to divide up your work into sections to study. You can use this in conjunction with your week-at-a-glance handout to schedule specific times when you will be able to study each of those topics (and label which ones so you’re prepared when the time comes) listed below. This is ideal for bigger tests.

Day 1 → EVALUATE AND ORGANIZE!
   a. What grade do you need to get on this test? What grade do you want to get?
   b. What does the test cover?
   c. How caught up in the course are you (1 being not at all, 10 being completely)?
   d. What study materials do you have?
   e. What are you missing? Which are your weak areas?

Day 2 → Topics to Cover: __________________
    Recommended: A, B, C, D, E, F, G

Day 3 → Topics to Cover: __________________
    Recommended: B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I

Day 4 → Topics to Cover: __________________
    Recommended: D, I, J

Day 5 → Topics to Cover: __________________
    Recommended: G, I, J

Day 6 → Topics to Cover: __________________
    Recommended: G, I, J

Day 7 → General Review and Weak Areas
   a. Use the day before the test to review
   b. At this point no new information should need to be learned, focus on difficult or weak areas, or those areas you are not completely comfortable with.
   c. Get good rest

Test Day:
   a. Normal daily routine
   b. Eat a light meal
   c. Don’t over use/under use caffeine (do what you would do during as if you didn’t have a test that day).
   d. Minimal review of material (we tend to remember mainly the last things we read—so too much review could make you forget some of the material and only be focused on a specific topic/idea).

Example Study Techniques
(Mix & Match, Use Bloom’s Taxonomy Study Strategies, or Even Add You Own!)

A. Create an Outline
B. Re-read lecture slides, elaborate and add a note (Which lectures?)
C. Review class notes, rewrite key points
D. Compare/go over notes with a friend/study group, find out what you missed
E. Read chapter summary and key terms
F. Do practice test(s), in a test-like setting
G. Fill out/answer study guide, from memory first, then with notes/book
H. Compare lecture notes with those taken from text (and/or other outside resources) to see what points are emphasized in both sets of materials, and also the information that is not stated in one but the other
I. Visit office hours with questions
J. Other: _________________