Study Skills:
Study Groups
Academic Success Center
Iowa State University

What is a study group?
A study group is a small group of students with similar goals who meet regularly to review
course material and prepare for exams.

Why form a study group?
♦ Research shows students learn more from teaching each other
♦ Maximize your time efficiency by dividing up large tasks into more manageable chunks
♦ Confirm your understanding and comprehension by explaining ideas to others
♦ Find answers to your questions from peers
♦ Avoid falling behind in class by regularly reviewing material
♦ Enhance your knowledge of the subject area
♦ Have fun and meet new people

Making the most of your study group
♦ Include only students who are fully willing to participate
♦ Keep the group small (3-6 students is most effective)
♦ Plan to meet regularly—not just before exams 😊
♦ Find a good location (classroom, meeting room at library, etc.) with helpful resources
  such as chalkboards and moveable furniture
♦ Hold each member accountable to prepare for study sessions ahead of time (assign each
  person to review certain material to teach)
♦ Make a list of questions your group has and meet with instructor for clarification
♦ Review of what you have learned at conclusion of study session
♦ At end of each study group, determine what you will review next session and assign each
  member a specific task to complete

Share Solutions
Test Others
Unite for Success
Don’t Delay
You Are Not Alone

Goal-Oriented
Respect Each Other
Organize for Learning
Understand the Process
Participate Often
**Productive Study Group Activities**

**Review Lecture Notes**
- Meet regularly after class to share and compare notes.
- Your teammate may have picked up on something you missed.
- Orally reviewing notes is an excellent way to begin to learn the material and identify any questions you have.
- Use chalkboard to illustrate any concepts or problems
- Create visual organizers to aid in learning & review (matrixes, outlines, concept maps, etc.)

**Reading Review**
- After each member has individually read the assigned reading, discuss each chapter—how does the reading compare with the notes?
- Assign sections of the reading for team members to summarize and teach to the group

**Instructor Meetings**
- Your study group should meet with the course instructor to answer questions & seek assistance preparing for exams. This sends a message to the instructor that you are serious about doing well in the course

**Sample Problems**
- Work on sample problems independently and in groups
- Write a list of steps for completing the problem & take turns explaining how to solve problems
- Decide on a few problems to work independently to confirm understanding
- Utilize chalkboard to ensure everyone understands how to work problem

**Exam Preparation**
- Assign each team member certain sections to review and teach
- Ask each team member to create a study guide for his/her section
- Formulate sample test questions and take practice exams simulating the testing conditions (amount of time; without books, notes, etc.)
- Review practice exams to determine why any problems were answered incorrectly