

HELPFUL STUDY TIPS

(1) ATTITUDE TOWARD STUDY

- (a) **Confidence in Your Ability:** You must have confidence in your ability to learn. Do not become disturbed if some grades are low. Remember, only a few students can excel in every subject. Study is like any other work – do it *thoroughly* and you will succeed.
- (b) **No Short-cuts:** In learning, there are no "short-cuts", but some methods are more effective than others. There is no substitute, however, for "quantity time".

(2) CONTROL STUDY CIRCUMSTANCES

- (a) **Time and Place:** Study at a regular time and in a regular place, far removed from television and other potential distractions. Phone calls should not be made or received during study periods – *turn off your "smart" phone and log off Facebook and Twitter!* Clear your desk of any items not needed explicitly for studying.
- (b) **Ventilation and Light:** Keep your study room properly ventilated and well-lighted. Avoid glare on book or paper. Don't take too comfortable a chair or too comfortable a position; either will induce drowsiness. For the same reason, allow at least a half-hour to elapse after meals before beginning your study period.

(3) USE STUDY TIME WISELY

- (a) **Study Schedule:** Plan a study schedule and observe it exactly. Have regular periods of study, rest, recreation, meals, etc. Such regularity is needed for sufficient study. Knowing **WHAT** you are going to study and **WHEN** saves time. For some students, beginning with the easiest or best liked subject(s) works best (to gain momentum or an initial "feeling of accomplishment"). Other students might find beginning with the most difficult or least liked subject(s) works best (when they have the most energy and ability to concentrate). *Discover what works for you and establish a routine.*
- (b) **Study Soon After Classes:** Study as soon after your classes as possible. In one study period soon after class, you will learn more than in several study periods later. Review your class notes while the subject matter is still clearly in mind. Begin assignments while your knowledge of them is still accurate. Since written assignments usually require more time than reading or study assignments, sufficient time should be provided to do them thoroughly and completely.
- (c) **Switch Time:** Don't steal time; switch times. When unexpected events arise that will take away a planned study period (e.g., plant trips or evening exams), determine at once when you can make it up; then re-arrange your study schedule and follow it. Try not to put off an assignment until the "last minute" – leave some "margin for error"!

(4) STUDY TECHNIQUES

- (a) **Discuss with Other Students:** Some time should be spent discussing the laboratory and homework exercises with other serious, mature students. The exchange of ideas will be helpful to them as well as to you. **HOWEVER, DO NOT COPY THE WORK OF OTHER STUDENTS WHEN COMPLETING ASSIGNMENTS SUBMITTED FOR GRADING.**
- (b) **Keep up:** Read the assigned text material *before* each class, and work the assigned homework exercises *as soon after lecture as possible*.
- (c) **When Memorizing:** Some material unavoidably needs to be memorized. In such cases, read over the entire matter repeatedly, thus memorizing the *sequence of ideas* rather than merely words (or, *specific solutions to specific problems*).
- (d) **Utilize Instructional Objectives:** To improve memory power, develop the habit of “self-recitation.” Using the course outcomes as a guide, write your own question for each objective and then proceed to answer it.
- (e) **Repetition:** Each week you should devote some time to a thorough review of the entire subject matter taken thus far, relating the material recently studied with what went before. Be faithful to this practice and examinations will be straightforward.

(5) USE THE COURSE RESOURCES

Take advantage of the course resources. Utilize the course staff office hours to get answers to your questions. “Live” contact is always preferable to indirect contact (e.g., via E-mail or telephone). Use the course web site and on-line videos – research has proven that these are very effective tools for helping you learn the course material.

(6) SUMMARY

Keep yourself strongly motivated by relating your studies to your aims and ambitions in life. Often remind yourself why you are in school, why good reading is important, and why good study habits are necessary. Cultivate an interest in your school work, think about it, talk about it. Be convinced too, that you are now setting the pattern for your future – *life-long learning is an important key to success in engineering!*

“Be a doer, not an excuse maker” – Ben Carson