

Biology 118 Study Tips

Day by Day Work

Quickly read through your textbook's assigned reading prior to each day's lecture, so that you have an idea of the general topic. Come to class every day & take some additional notes. We test you over what we discuss in class.

In class you'll hear more complete explanations of the key points to know. It's quality study time if you pay attention.

Copy some of text's key illustrations & put those illustrations with my lecture notes. Take notes from text when our notes are too simple or unclear, but don't try to outline everything in the book.

There are lots of topics we won't discuss, so skip the terms & topics in the text that we ignore.

Talk to the TAs or Email Us!

It's OK to ask questions in class. Please, you can request clarification or repetition if we talk too fast.

As you discover topics you don't understand, ask us questions, or use GOpst.

Come to office hours if you need help or make an appointment to see one of us at another time.

Don't wait for multiple failures on the exams to ask for help!

Organize! Short Cuts!

Keep your notes, in order, in a 3-ring binder.

Use color tabs or markers to label/organize key topics or days.

Study regularly & intensively for brief periods. KEEP FOCUSED!!

o This is better than hours of reading when you are half asleep.

USE some of the web links with your lecture notes! They tend to provide new graphics & animations that help you quickly.

It may be far better to do this than read the same material over & over but still not understand the notes or text.

Cramming is BAD. This is not a short cut! The course covers too much material to learn it just before an exam.

Summarize! Quality Study Time

QUALITY TIME IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN TOTAL TIME.

Write your new notes onto the margins of the lecture notes. Copy useful text illustrations & put them with your notes.

Learn how to use the concepts, and build flow pathways of related ideas. Basic concepts will help you answer detailed questions.

Finally, condense that information: make your own summary diagrams of key structures. Build your own simple flow charts or concept maps to integrate information across several lectures. Reduce each day's notes to 1-2 pages of key ideas.

Review old exams & quizzes to test yourself & find out what you know.

They can be a good study tool, but don't blindly memorize answers! Rewrite questions &/or answers to understand the topics.

Teamwork

We encourage you to study & review together. Form a study group that meets regularly.

Meet for 30-60 minutes a few times each week. Stick to business!! Explain material to each other. Debate topics.

If you can talk about physiology to your friends, you can take the tests & do well.

The best students are those who can explain things to someone else.

Taking Exams or Quizzes

Try to relax - fear is your biggest enemy. You make more mistakes if you are too nervous or upset.

If you are surprised by a question take a quick stop to calm down. Restart the test in another spot & go to the that problem later.

Read carefully. Be sure you understand the meaning of the question.

The terms "All, Always, Only, or Never" are very restrictive in their meaning - be careful when they are used in a question or as part of an answer.

The phrase "produced by" is NOT the same as "used by". For example you may use a computer, but most of us didn't make one from the component parts.

The word "may" is used to indicate that something might or might not occur.

There should be only 1 correct answer if we wrote the question correctly. We don't make exams with good & better answers.

If you think a question has 2 correct answers, you can ask me to check the test.

If I tell you the question has only one right answer, go over your reasoning again.

Often the right answer IS the simplest choice, don't reject it because it looks too easy.

Finally, mark you answers carefully. It's easy to lose points because of simple errors on scantron forms.