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**University Learning Center:**

**Crash Course Study Skills #7**

**Study Skills**

Created by Megan Miller

**Overview of the Online Academic Makeover Workshops**

Thank you for taking an interest in the Online Academic Makeover Workshops! The University Learning Center at California State University, Fullerton is passionate about helping students learn how to learn. The goal of the online workshops created by the University Learning Center is to help students understand the value of fundamental concepts that are vital to student success throughout the college experience. In addition to the high impact practice of peer-to-peer tutoring, the online workshops enable students to learn student success secrets virtually anywhere at any point throughout the academic year.

To better support student learning, a workshop packet accompanies each online workshop. Each packet has a pre-reflection, guided notes, and a post-reflection. We encourage students to answer the prompts of the pre-reflection before viewing the workshop video. There are no correct or incorrect responses since the pre-reflection serves as a tool to help the workshop participant to consider themselves and focus on the workshop content that is most relevant to them. The guided notes are intended to help the workshop participant focus on the big ideas presented in the videos. Additional notes are recommended! The workshops are most effective when participants create meaning for themselves. The post-reflection is meant to be completed after the workshop video has been viewed. This section allows the workshop participant to check and see if they understood the main ideas from the workshop and make more personal connections while considering ways to apply what was learned.

The University Learning Center appreciates your interest in our online workshop series, and we hope you learn something new!

Happy Learning!

**The University Learning Center Team**

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**Studying for Exams Online Workshop Pre-Reflection**

1. How do you currently prepare for tests and exams? How effective do you feel your current strategies or techniques are?
2. What is a study schedule? Why would it be beneficial for students to create a study schedule for themselves?
3. Is cramming an effective and efficient method to prepare for exams? Can you learn when you cram?
4. How do you effectively ask your instructors or tutors for help? Describe this process?
5. What are you hoping to learn from the Online Workshop on Studying for Exams?

**Studying for Exams Workshop Guided Notes**

* By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail
* So today we are going to guide you through the process of creating a study schedule, reviewing effectively so that you master the material
* Learning takes time
* Encoding new information into solid memories is a physical process that does not happen overnight
	+ It requires multiple exposures or recollections which need to be spaced out
1. **A Study Schedule**
* Build your study schedule directly into the calendar you are already using for everything else
	+ It is crucial to figure out how you are going to balance your time between studying and finishing all the assignments and homework leading up to the test
* Figure out the exact dates and times of your exams and then add them to your calendar
	+ Include the location for the exam
	+ May not be held in the same classroom where classes were held
* Then, work backwards and schedule study sessions during the 3 to 4 weeks leading up to your exams during finals
	+ Schedule about 2 weeks for smaller exams and tests
	+ Schedule time to work on homework and group projects too
* When it comes time to sit down and study, try to replicate the test conditions as much as you possibly can
* Memory is context-based
1. Get as much information about the test as possible
	* Ask your instructor
	* Look at the syllabus
2. Find out what types of questions will be asked
	* Multiple choice
	* True/False
	* Short answer
	* Essay
3. Ask about what materials will be allowed
	* Scratch paper
	* Calculators
4. Get your hands-on practice tests
5. **Studying**
* Most of your studying will be done in your establishes study space
* Try and do 1-2 sessions in the classroom you will be tested in- or a similar class
	+ Memory is context dependent
* Spend some time studying under the same constraints that you’ll have during the test
	+ Set a timer to re-create the time limit
	+ Quiz yourself
* The best way to study for a test is to do it actively and focus on recall

**Recall**: force yourself to pull facts and answers up from the depths of your memory banks

* BUT how am I supposed to quiz myself in the first place-especially if my teacher did not give me any practice tests?
	+ Make your own quizzes
* Study guides will be your #1 resource for creating these quizzes
	+ Convert concepts into questions
* If you aren’t given a study guide, do the same thing with your notes
	+ Create questions out of headings, main concepts, case studies
* Facts and vocabulary items work great for flash cards
	+ You can study them from both sides
	+ This ensures that your brain can make the connection no matter where it starts
1. How to Effectively Ask for Help
* What is it- exactly- that I don’t understand
* “I don’t get this”
	+ The moment the students encountered a rough spot, they would disengage and let their brain give up
		- Do NOT do this!
* When you become confused, spend some time trying to solve the problem on your own
	+ Work through the problem until you know precisely where the confusion begins
* Write down the solutions you have tried so far
	+ This documents the problem and creates context for the person who will help you
		- It may help you solve the problem on your own

Rubber Duck Debugging: explaining the problem to a non-expert forces you to think about it from a different perspective which will often reveal the solution

1. The Cheat Card Exercise
* Most teachers aren’t going to let you bring a cheat card into the exam, but that shouldn’t stop you from making one
* Index cards are small
	+ There’s only so much we can put on it
	+ This limitation forces us to be choosy about what we put on the card
* Creating a note card is an active process
	+ We interact with the study materials
* Even if you can’t bring your card with you into the test, you spend a concentrated block of time selecting and writing down the most crucial information
1. Not Studying (At Least Some of the Time)
* Students believe that they should be spending all their time studying if they want to do well, but remember: how well you do is determined by:
	+ The time you put in
	+ The intensity of your focus
		- You must give your brain some time off
* When crafting your study schedule, give yourself time for breaks
	+ Short breaks during review sessions
	+ Longer breaks to destress and reward yourself with some high-density fun

**Studying for Exams Online Workshop Post-Reflection**

1. What did you learn from the Studying for Exams Online Workshop?
2. What was something from the Studying for Exams Online Workshop that surprised you or you found to be the most interesting?
3. Which of the concept, method, or technique discussed in the Studying for Exams Online Workshop do you think you would benefit the most from? Why?
4. Describe how you will apply what you learned from the Studying for Exams Online Workshop.