

# PREP FOR CLASS = PREP FOR TESTS

T<sub>2</sub>L

Effective test preparation isn't just about studying hard a week before your test. It begins on day one of the semester and runs through the whole term. Here are some tips to keep in mind.

## Preparing for Class and Reviewing Regularly

If you review regularly, you'll do a lot better on tests. It's as simple as that. Why? Because your brain is programmed more to forget than it is to remember. If you don't give your memory a boost by reviewing material throughout the semester it's perfectly natural that you'll forget.

Research shows we learn in this ratio:

**40%**

What we retain when studying **before class**



- Completing course readings
- Watch an online tutorials
- Develop questions

**20%**

What we retain **during class** (by listening and participating)



- Listening attentively
- Participate
- Identify areas of focus

**40%**

What we retain when we review **after class** (one to seven days after)



- Review and re-organize notes
- Clarify what I understand vs. what I don't understand
- Go to tutoring/ study groups

So what do we mean by **regular review**? Thing of review in six stages:

1. Review your course material **before class**; consult your course outline often to know what readings come next. If you don't have time to read a full chapter, at least read the summary at the end of the chapter or review the D2L PowerPoint slides, if available.
2. **Participate in Class**. If you prepare for class, it will be easier to follow the lecture. By participating, you will have more chances to clarify concepts and remember course material.
3. Review your material within **24 hours** of getting it in the first place. It doesn't mean memorizing everything; review sessions can be 15 minutes long. This is also the time to make sure you understand your stuff and get answers for specific questions. This means attending your professor's office hours or going to tutoring at the [ASC](#) or [SLS](#).
4. You can review your material again **within a week**. A good time to do this is just before class.
5. **Every two or three weeks**, pull out your material and review again. You're going to have to go through more stuff than you did for review stages 1, 2 and 3 because the material is cumulative.

**If you don't review your material within 4 weeks you'll only be able to recall about 20% of what you originally learned. No wonder you have to cram for tests! You have to relearn 80% of the material.**

6. Go over material just **prior to being tested**. This step won't be so difficult, long, or scary.

### STUDY PRO TIPS:

1. Want to learn more about how to engage in active learning? Review the ASC tip sheet titled ***Climbing Bloom's Pyramid to Master Course Content***.
2. **Combine active learning with regular review and you'll be more successful on tests!**

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## Active Learning

In addition to reviewing regularly, you need to review effectively. Effective review means **active learning**.

Some of the ways you can review actively would be to:

- Make summary notes
- Create diagrams and/ or pictures
- Recite material out loud
- Test yourself by having a partner ask you questions, or making them up for yourself
- Relating the information to other material you learned

In class, you can learn more actively by:

- Taking notes
- Asking relevant questions
- Reviewing your notes from previous class beforehand, and making connections between pieces of information

## The University Study Cycle

Adapted from:

Yancy McGuire, S. (2015). *Teach Your Students How to Learn* (1st ed.). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC.

