STUDY SKILLS SUGGESTIONS

TIME MANAGEMENT

1. Know when, where, how, and under what conditions you study most effectively. Have a regular place to study that is well-lit and free from distractions. Try to schedule study during peak hours of alertness.

2. Learn to overcome procrastination
   - Prioritize your activities.
   - Break a large assignment down into more manageable steps.
   - Plan ahead by using a timetable; set deadlines for each step of the assignment.
   - Get the first thing done.
   - Use a reward system.
   - Get others involved; when others know about your deadlines, they can be supportive.

3. Prepare a monthly schedule.

4. Prepare a weekly schedule (this should reflect your routine for each day of the week). Don’t forget to include PLRS Cycle. Keep your schedule flexible.

5. Keep a “To Do” list of your daily assignments and activities. Get a notebook habit.

6. Study a little on each class day—create a study habit.

7. Be realistic.
   - Make the study time fit the class.
   - Know how long it takes you to complete a task; don’t underestimate.
   - Don’t overcommit yourself; learn to say “no.”

8. Schedule your work in blocks of time - around an hour.

9. Take breaks to promote concentration. Study for 50 minutes and then take a 10 minute break. Before continuing your studies, briefly review what you covered prior to the break.

10. Make sure to balance the different aspects of your life.
    - Get regular exercise.
    - Get adequate rest.
    - Eat well-balanced meals.
    - Include fun and recreation.
**READING**

1. *Adjust your reading speed* to the type and difficulty of the material and your purpose of the reading.

2. *Read in phrases* (thought units) rather than word-by-word (isolated facts) to increase speed and comprehension. Be able to identify *main ideas* and *supporting detail*.

3. Survey/preview your materials before reading:
   a. Introduction
   b. Summary
   c. Study or discussion questions
   d. MAIN HEADINGS, subheadings
   e. *Italicized words/bold print*
   f. Tables, graphs, and figures
   Get an overview of the information and look for *associations* and *relationships* among the concepts.

4. *Create questions* from headings to help guide your reading.

5. *Summarize* and *verbalize* information *periodically* as you read.

6. *Organize/structure material* to ensure retention-using *outlines*, *structured overview*, *mindmaps*, and *charts*.

**LISTENING/NOTETAKING**

**Listening:**

1. *Be prepared.* Read/survey textbook assignments and review your last class notes before going to class. Preparation helps keep you from feeling overwhelmed by too much new material and helps make you more aware of the *main ideas* and *supporting detail*.

2. Listen and look for *signals or cues*, such as *transitional words* and *nonverbal communications*.

**Notetaking:**

1. *Title* and *date* each set of lecture notes.

2. *Be selective*; don’t write everything down. Write in *phrases* rather than complete sentences.

3. Use a uniform system of *abbreviations* and *symbols*. 
4. Don’t worry about missing a point—leave a space and try to keep up with your instructor. Get the missing information later.

5. Record all important facts, dates, and diagrams/charts.

6. Review and edit your notes after class (PLRS Cycle).

**EXAMS**

**General Study Tips/Advance Preparation:**

1. *Review regularly* to avoid cramming. Schedule regular reviews.

2. Find out all about the exam:
   - Type (essay, multiple choice, etc.)
   - Number of questions
   - Areas of concentration/emphasis

3. Make sure you *understand* the material to be covered on the exam. If you don’t, *seek assistance*.

4. Try to *predict exam questions*.

5. Cramming leads to confusion and blanking out. If you must cram, *cram selectively*.


7. Review by using different techniques—flashcards, recitation, creating charts, outlines, etc.

8. Use previous exams and quizzes for review.

**Exam Day:**

1. Have a *positive attitude*. Tell yourself, “I will do the best that I can do.”

2. *Be rested*.

3. *Relax*—tension is a block for good performance.

4. Bring all necessary *materials/tools* to class.

**General Exam Strategies:**
1. *Read* the directions carefully and *skim* over the exam before reading.

2. *Budget* your time.

3. Read each question and all its alternatives carefully.

4. Do easier questions first.

5. *Guess* if you don’t know an answer. Never leave a blank.

6. Allocate enough time for *reviewing* the exam before turning it in so that you can make any corrections/additions or to reconsider difficult questions.

7. When the exam is returned to you *go over all mistakes* to note your weaknesses and to find out why you were wrong.

**Objective Exams:**

- First impressions are usually the best answer unless you can specifically state why you are changing it.

**Essay Exams:**

- Organize your thoughts in a brief outline before you begin to write.

- Include an introduction, body and conclusion in your answer.