

Study Smarter, Not Harder

Harder Studying #1: The more time I spend studying, the better I will understand the material

Smarter Studying #1: Do NOT equate time spent studying with understanding of material – the time spent studying does NOT reflect your understanding of the material! Instead, think about...

- How you engage with the material (active vs. passive studying)
- How often you engage with the material
- The type(s) of study strategies you use

Harder Studying #2: Only focusing on what's next (leads to cramming, perpetual cycle of being behind)

Smarter Studying #2: Spaced repetition & studying multiple classes daily

- No class goes untouched for more than a couple days (even if you can only dedicate 30 minutes to a class) – study 2-3 courses per day
- Shorter intervals of more focused study time and seeing material more often (avoid marathon cram sessions)
- Review each lecture 3-5 times before an exam

Harder Studying #3: Testing yourself the night before the exam or not at all

Smarter Studying #3: Verbally assess yourself during/after every study session

- Look at a heading and/or learning objective and cover everything under it with your hand – can you explain/talk through all the information related to that heading without looking? Make connections? Apply info?
 - If so, that is a good indication that you understand the material
 - If not, you may only be familiar with the material (you recognize it when you see it, but you cannot retrieve the information from scratch)
- Help inform future study sessions (no need to keep studying something you know)

Harder Studying #4: Passive studying (re-writing word for word, re-reading, highlighting)

Smarter Studying #4: Use active study strategies

- Preview, review 3-5 times, engage
- Verbally assess yourself as a means of studying/explain or teach material to someone or something
- Summarize, make connections, put into own words, apply
- Use mnemonics, diagrams, stories, etc.

REMEMBER...

- Memorization does not equal understanding
- Layers of test questions = layers of studying (1st, 2nd, and 3rd order thinking questions)
 - Recall (definitions, formulas, terms, etc.)
 - Understanding (Can you explain the big picture? Details?)
 - Connect (How do concepts connect to each other? What happens if something changes?)
 - Apply (Can you apply the information to a clinical situation? Case scenario?)
- Develop a study routine and stick to it
 - Prepare for next week's exam(s) over the weekend so you can stay up to date with new lectures during the week.
- Make the most out of lecture
 - Write as little as possible & rate your understanding of each slide
 - Mark ideas/concepts that you missed/don't understand