

Chapter 0: How to Learn Well

Whether you're a first-semester freshman or a seasoned upper-classman, we can all get better at becoming reflective learners. Let's review some strategies that can serve you well in STAT 212 (and perhaps your other courses) this semester. These strategies are largely sourced from the article, "[Optimizing Learning in College: Tips from Cognitive Psychology](#)."

Get Organized!

- **Have a to do list** (physical copy or online tool) that you can use to budget your time and/or identify goals for each day.
- **Schedule a weekly check-in** (perhaps on Sundays) to review what's due and identify what days/times you will dedicate to which classes and assignments.
- Figure out **where you will go between classes** to be productive. Those passing hours can easily slip away if you don't have a plan to work during these times.



Preparing for Class



- **Look ahead before class.** Taking just 5-10 minutes to preview the notes or slides for the next class can make your class experience *remarkably* more productive.
- **Answer (or ask yourself) comprehension questions** as you do this preview. In our class, read the reflection questions at the end of each section!

During Class

- **Go to class. Seriously, do it!** There are many good reasons, but here are three. 1) Most students report focusing and engaging more than they do when only watching a recording. 2) It helps you create routine and avoid falling behind. 3) Social routines like class attendance are linked to better mental health.
- **Engage in class.** Don't just be a passive listener. Consciously think, write things down, and interact with others during think-pair-share or activity times.
- **Turn off distractions.** Put your phone on silent or airplane mode. Don't open other browser tabs.



After Class



- **Review last class's notes** before the next class. Read (perhaps out loud) and star the difficult pieces you may want to review again before the exam.
- **Teach it.** Think about how you would summarize what you learned to someone else. In our class, try answering the reflection questions out loud to yourself or with a friend after we complete each chapter!

Prepare for Exams Well

- **Try the Pomodoro technique.** Focus for 25 minutes, then break for 5 minutes. During those 25 minutes of focus, put your phone away. For every 3 or 4 pomodoro sessions, give yourself a longer (15-30 min) break!
- **Treat Homeworks like Quizzes.** Study before each homework. Put your notes away (except maybe a cheatsheet) and set a timer. Sit up at your desk, or perhaps go to a café or library.
- **Office hours are the ultimate college hack.** Organize your questions and come talk it out with us. Alternatively, make a study buddy and talk things out with each other!

Chapter 0 Reflection Questions

Make some commitments to yourself this semester. Don't just answer these in your head—write your answers down! Check in with yourself after the first week or two and consider if you want to make any changes.

0.1: How will I keep a to do list for myself this semester? (Calendar, whiteboard, word document, ...) When will I check-in with myself each week?

0.2: Which spots do I want to try out this semester between classes to get work done?

0.3: What percentage of classes do I want to aim to attend in person?

0.4: Am I easily distracted by my devices during class or while I study? Should I proactively try to reduce distractions during these times? Do I want to try the [Pomodoro Technique](https://pomofocus.io/)? (<https://pomofocus.io/>)

0.5: Is there a 30 minute time block after class or the next day that I can use to review the last class's material and to try out the reflection questions?

0.6: Do I want to try to find a partner to study with or work on assignments with? What do I need to do if I want to make that happen?

0.7: When are office hours, and which of those could I potentially attend? *See canvas home page!*

