

Study Skills: Study Groups

Student Success Center
Eastern Illinois University



What is a study group?

A study group is a small group of students with similar goals who meet regularly to review course material and prepare for exams.

Why should I form a study group?

- ◆ Research shows students learn more from teaching each other
- ◆ Maximize your time efficiency by dividing up large tasks into more manageable chunks
- ◆ Confirm your understanding and comprehension by explaining ideas to others
- ◆ Find answers to your questions from peers
- ◆ Avoid falling behind in class by regularly reviewing material
- ◆ Enhance your knowledge of the subject area
- ◆ Studying doesn't have to be a boring, solitary activity. Make it fun and meet new people.

Making the most of your study group:

- ◆ Only include students who are fully willing to participate
- ◆ Keep the group small (3-6 students is most effective)
- ◆ Plan to meet regularly—not just before exams
- ◆ Find a good location (classroom, meeting room at library, etc.) with helpful resources such as chalkboards and moveable furniture
- ◆ Hold each member accountable to prepare for study sessions ahead of time (assign each person to review certain material to teach)
- ◆ Make a list of questions your group has and meet with instructor for clarification
- ◆ Review of what you have learned at conclusion of study session
- ◆ At end of each study group, determine what you will review next session and assign each member a specific task to complete

Share Solutions

Test Others

Unite for Success

Don't Delay

You Are Not Alone

Goal-Oriented

Respect Each Other

Organize for Learning

Understand the Process

Participate Often

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Productive Study Group Activities

Review Lecture Notes

- ◆ Meet regularly after class to share and compare notes.
- ◆ Your teammate may have picked up on something you missed.
- ◆ Orally reviewing notes is an excellent way to begin to learn the material and identify any questions you have.
- ◆ Use chalkboard to illustrate any concepts or problems
- ◆ Create visual organizers to aid in learning & review (matrixes, outlines, concept maps, etc.)

Reading Review

- ◆ After each member has individually read the assigned reading, discuss each chapter—
How does the reading compare with the notes?
- ◆ Assign sections of the reading for team members to summarize and teach to the group

Instructor Meetings

- ◆ Your study group should meet with the course instructor to answer questions & seek assistance preparing for exams. This sends a message to the instructor that you are serious about doing well in the course

Sample Problems

- ◆ Work on sample problems independently and in groups
- ◆ Write a list of steps for completing the problem & take turns explaining how to solve problems
- ◆ Decide on a few problems to work independently to confirm understanding
- ◆ Utilize chalkboard to ensure everyone understands how to work problem

Exam Preparation

- ◆ Assign each team member certain sections to review and teach
- ◆ Ask each team member to create a study guide for his/her section
- ◆ Formulate sample test questions and take practice exams simulating the testing conditions (amount of time; without books, notes, etc.)
- ◆ Review practice exams to determine why any problems were answered incorrectly

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