



# COLLEGE MATTERS

Tips to help you succeed in your academic college career

## Study Groups: Strategies & Tips for Successful Collaboration

### Benefits of a Study Group

- A support group can "pick you up" when you find that your motivation to study is slipping. The other group members can be a source of encouragement.
- You may be reluctant to ask a question in class. You will find it easier to do so in a small study group.
- Group members will listen and discuss information and concepts during the study sessions. These activities add a strong auditory dimension to your learning experience.
- One or more group members are likely to understand something you do not. They may bring up ideas you never considered.
- You can learn valuable new study habits from the other group members.
- You can compare your class notes with those of the other group members to clarify your notes and fill in any gaps.
- Teaching/explaining information and concepts to the other group members will help you reinforce your mastery of the information and concepts.

### Getting Your Study Group Started

- Get to know your classmates by talking with them before class, during breaks, and after class. When selecting a classmate to join your study group, you should be able to answer **YES** for each of the following questions:
  - **Is this classmate motivated to do well?**
  - **Is this classmate dependable?**
  - **Would this classmate be tolerant of the ideas of others?**
  - **Would you like to work with this classmate?**
- Invite enough of these classmates to work with you in a study group until you have formed a group of three to five.
- Decide how often, for how long and where you will meet. **Places to Meet:**
  - Carlson Library
  - Student Union
  - College study areas
  - Residence Hall Study Rooms
  - Dining Centers
- Decide on the goals of the study group and who will serve as leader.
- Clearly decide the agenda for the first study session and the responsibilities of each group member for that session.
- Develop a list of all group members that includes their names, telephone numbers, and email addresses. Make sure each group member has this list and update the list as needed.

## (Working in Groups: Strategies & Tips for Successful Collaboration cont.)

### **Possible Pitfalls of a Study Group**

*A study group can be a very positive learning experience. However, there are some things to avoid. Here are some cautions:*

- Do not let the study group get distracted from its agenda and goals.
- Do not let the study group become a social group. You can always socialize at other times.
- Do not allow group members to attend unprepared. To stay in the group, members should be required to do their fair share.
- Do not let the session become a negative forum for complaining about teachers and courses.
- Do not allow one or two group members to dominate the group. It is important that all members have an equal opportunity to participate.

### **Conducting a Successful Study Group**

**Test Each Other by Asking Questions:** Bring 4-5 sample test questions to each meeting.

**Practice Teaching Each Other:** Turn the material that you are studying into a list of topics and assign a specific topic to each person, who will then teach it to the group.

**Compare Notes:** Make sure that you all heard the same thing in class and that you recorded the important information. Ask others to help explain those things that are confusing to you.

**Brainstorm Test Questions:** Set aside 5-10 minutes to create test questions.

**Set an Agenda for Each Meeting:** Select activities or create ones to do as a group. Set time limits for each agenda item and determine a quitting time. End each meeting with assignments for each member.

### **SOURCES**

[www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/high-school/50432.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/high-school/50432.html)

[www.d.umn.edu/kmc/student/loon/acad/strat/grpstudy1.html](http://www.d.umn.edu/kmc/student/loon/acad/strat/grpstudy1.html)

[www.ucollege.ilstu.edu](http://www.ucollege.ilstu.edu)

**Learning Enhancement Center**

Carlson Library

Lower Level B0200 - Rathbun Cove

Phone: 419.530.2176

[www.utoledo.edu/success/lec](http://www.utoledo.edu/success/lec)