

# Academic Success Workshop

## Textbook Tactics

The Learning Center  
California State University, Fresno



Courtesy of: the Learning Center at California State University, Fresno

# Five Steps

- Environment
- Preview
- Read
- Mark
- Review

# Environment

- Find a comfortable place to study (but not too comfortable!)
- No distractions.
- If it is too loud, wear earplugs.
- If you are uncomfortable with silence play soft instrumental music.

# Preview

- Before you start reading, think about the “big picture” of the chapter.
- Note the chapter headings, subheadings, the number of pages, key-terms, and exercises.
- Break the chapter into manageable sections.
- Make an outline of the chapter

# Reading

- Read at a steady pace
  - It may help to read aloud, so you see and hear the words.
- Develop your ability to concentrate
  - ASW Art of Relaxation may help you learn how to relax and focus.
- Make a note on anything you read that is confusing.
  - Ask questions in class or make an appointment with professor.

# Mark

- There are three marking tactics:
  - Annotation
  - Highlighting
  - Underlining

# Annotating

- As you actively read, annotate important ideas or questions in the margins of the textbook.
- Rewrite ideas in your own words.

# Highlighting

- Highlighting helps you build your vocabulary and review important content
- Also remember to only highlight important content and not to over-highlight.

# Underlining

- If you want to give a special emphasis to a particular word or idea, then you can underline that word or idea.
- Underlining can serve as a supplement to highlighting.
- It can also serve as an alternative to highlighting if you don't like to highlight your textbooks.

# Review

- To review your textbook:
  - Review your markings
  - Make and review flashcards
  - Work on building your vocabulary
  - Do exercises found in textbook
  - Study with a tutor
  - Study with a group

# Textbook Reading Strategies

- Repeatedly review your highlighted key-terms and flashcards to store important concepts into your long-term memory.
- The more concepts you learn, the more expertise you gain.

# Flashcards

- Write down key-terms and other important information on one side of the card.
- Then write down definitions or other information on the other side of the card.

# Textbook Reading Strategies

- As you go through your flashcards, sort them into two piles:
  1. Known
    - The cards that you understand and know
  2. Unknown
    - The cards that you don't understand and know
- Focus on learning the cards in the unknown pile until all of your cards are in the known pile.

# Textbook Reading Strategies

- To further strengthen your understanding of the material you can also:
  - Tutor or be tutored
    - Note: tutoring is FREE on campus at the **Learning Center**
  - Organize or join a study group
  - Work on the exercises and other material presented in the textbook

# Types of Recall

## ● Recognition

- Easiest form of recall because you only need to say that you've seen something before.

## ● Cued recall

- Also easy because something, like the answer choices on exams, helps, or cues your recall of the information.

## ● Free recall

- Most difficult form of recall because it requires effort to learn information and store it into long-term memory; recall is not cued.

# Strategic Reading

- The most important thing to remember when reading your textbook is that the quality of your studying is more important than the quantity of your studying.