

HOW TO DO WELL IN ECONOMICS CLASSES

The economist's view of the world and economic thinking can be a bit abstract, and it is very likely that you will find it to be different from the way you are used to thinking about societies. It is therefore very important that you

- **Understand that the class is *not* a memorization course!** If you try to cram the night before the exam, you will get a poor grade! Even if you did memorize everything that was said in class, you will not do well in the course! Why is that? Any "facts" that you might be able to memorize will be outdated in a couple of months or years, so it is inappropriate to waste your valuable time with them. Instead, the course will teach you various important *tools* that you can apply to future economic scenarios that will be of interest to you. We want you to be able to *understand* and to *apply* these tools - you cannot achieve this by sheer memorization but *only through practice*.
- **Spend enough time on the class!** As a rule of thumb, you should spend 3 hours outside class for each hour the class meets. If a class meets nearly 3 hours a week, you ought to plan to work an average of 12 hours per week. (3 hours in class, and **9 hours outside of class**.)
- **Come to class regularly, and keep up with the readings!** All of the topics in the course are generally closely related to each other, and in general rely on the material covered early in the semester. If you miss classes without making up the missed work, you will be lost later on. The material is generally too complex to absorb during the day or night before an exam! Solve the homework assignments! They are not meant to torture you, but to help you to practice your new economics skills, and to prepare you for the midterms and the comprehensive final.
- **Read the assigned readings *before* class and read them again after class; don't rely solely on your notes!** If you come to class unprepared, you are likely to get lost. If you have spent some time with the material before it is discussed you are in a much better position to identify difficult points and ask for clarification. If, on the other hand, you see the material in class for the first time, you will spend too much time digesting the new stuff, and not enough time thinking about it.

and most importantly:

- **Ask questions in class if you don't understand something!** If you have a question, it is very likely that some of your classmates have the same question, but don't dare to ask. There are ***NO*** stupid questions. Don't be intimidated to speak up in class. ***Your questions are necessary feedback for faculty*** to see if they are too fast or too slow. If nobody asks questions, they have to assume that everyone understands the material, and will go on to the next topic.
- **Come and talk to the instructor if you begin to feel lost!** Economics can be a bit tricky, and every semester we encounter students who are lost and too lethargic to do anything against it. Don't wait until the midterm or (even worse) until the final exam to seek for help; come as early as possible.