

HOW TO STUDY FOR AN ENGINEERING COURSE

A. GENERAL

When you begin to take engineering courses (as opposed to pre-engineering and science courses), you are entering into a new “*culture*.” Certain things are expected in engineering courses and many faculty **ASSUME** you are aware of these expectations. This handout lists a few important points in studying for engineering courses.

- **ATTEND CLASSES**. Most of the important material is covered in class and if you get lecture material or verbal information from a colleague, this may or may not be accurate and in some cases may be hearsay.
- Know a responsible classmate to double-check information with and depend upon in case you do have to miss a class. Know other responsible classmates as part of your study group. Networking is very important.

B. AFTER CLASS

As soon as possible after class:

- Review your class notes: Make sure you understand the notes and double-check formulae, subscripts, exponents, symbols, etc. Clear up any problems or discrepancies **IMMEDIATELY** (**NOT** the evening before an examination).
- Work the homework problems, **yourself**, (assigned and suggested) promptly and make sure you understand the concept(s), problem and solution. Putting off problems until the night before they are due or before an examination is often **counterproductive**. When submitting problems make sure you work on engineering paper and follow the professor’s instructions as to format (See Handout entitled “Homework Rules and Guidelines”). Homework shall be presented in a professional manner such as you would do in working for a professional firm. Pay attention and be careful. If you are not careful with homework, how can you expect to do well on examinations?

C. WHEN PREPARING FOR EXAMINATIONS

Prepare for **ALL** examinations as if they were “Closed Book,” even if they are “Open Book.” “Open Book” examinations are usually harder than “Closed Book” examinations since faculty assume you have organized your notes, reviewed carefully and thoroughly, and can thus move quickly through the examination.

Although we recognize the pressures associated with examinations, try to present your examination solutions neatly and carefully. Faculty are more inclined to give partial credit, if appropriate, if they can follow the student’s work.

And, finally, maintain a professional attitude. Being “cool and casual” with respect to your attitude about class, homework, doing well in the course, etc., is a characteristic that is **NOT** appreciated in an engineering course.