

## Tips & Benefits for **Studying in a Group**

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Studying for a course with a motivated group of peers is very beneficial to the learning process. The key word there is “motivated”. Often students make the mistake and just use study groups as their socializing time. Utilize your valuable time and follow the tips and see the benefits of studying in a group below.

### **Benefits of Studying in a Motivated Group:**

- Studying in a motivated group reduces the potential to procrastinate. Your group-mates should meet consistently and hold you accountable to show up. Do not put off studying until right before the exam. Start studying now.
- It helps you learn the materials in a more efficient way. Students in study groups generally learn faster than those who study alone. If you do not understand a concept, you can ask one of your group-mates to explain the material to you/the group. You can also learn different perspectives which can help you lead to your own conclusions. Listening and asking questions will enhance your knowledge and develop your critical thinking skills.
- It will help you enhance your notes. You can compare your class or reading notes with others and fill in any gaps that you may have within your notes.
- It will help you learn more study strategies. Being a part of a group allows you to see other study methods. You may end up finding one that works best for you, for a particular course.

### **Tips for Studying in a Group**

- Keep the group small. All that is needed is two to five people. The bigger the group, the more difficult it is to keep everyone on track.
- Find group-mates that are as committed to achieving similar levels of success in the course.
- Set expectations right from the formation of your study group (Examples: Staying on task. What happens if there is an unmotivated/consistently unproductive group-mate?).
- Study with group-mates that are able to provide different perspectives that may offer alternative explanations and suggest new examples. This deepens the understanding of the material.
- Meet more often and for shorter periods of time. Marathon study sessions are less effective than shorter sessions held regularly.
- Prepare an agenda (it can be informal or formal) and expect group-mates to come prepared. Decide beforehand what will be studied the next session and what group members need to do to come prepared (Example: Questions/areas of concern the students have within the agenda’s topic). The expectation is that group-mates are studying outside of each study session. This will allow for a more productive session. One group-mate should not be the sole “teacher” in the group. The knowledge pool should be collaborative for maximizing your group study session.
- Set a moderator for each study session. This role of moderator can rotate between your group-mates or you can keep it the same. The role of the moderator is to keep you on track.
- Use good study strategies. Explain things to each other. Ask each other questions. Do problems. Work to understand the content.
- Strategies to avoid:
  - Do not just go over the class notes or re-read the readings. Get into them. Talk about examples, know how to apply the material learned in class or from the readings.
  - Do not just recopy notes.
  - Do not just memorize things that are not understood. Talk them out with each other.