Balancing the rigors of school with all of life’s other demands is challenging. If you’re falling behind or just want to change up how you approach your school work, this guide can help. Take a look and find tools that you can use to improve your study habits and ace your next assignment or exam!

**Time Management**
Managing your time is critical when you’re a student. Use the resources included to appraise your current time management practices and identify at least one area to improve. Be sure and try out the Weekly Hour Calculator to determine how many hours a week you need to allocate to be successful at National University.

**Reading Comprehension**
Ever find that you’re simply not remembering what you’re reading? Employ some of the tips and tricks included to improve your reading comprehension.

**Note Taking**
Whether you’re listening to a lecture or reading a textbook, proper note-taking is essential to succeeding in school. Take a look at the suggestions presented here and try out a new method of note taking.

**Test Taking**
Preparing for and taking tests can be a difficult task. Check out the resources provided and outline a potential strategy to study for your next test.

**Support Services**
At National University, you should never feel alone. Browse our support services and identify at least one to contact for assistance. The National University Library is one of these support services and we have created this *Study Skills Guide* for our students. Remember, we are here to help you. Your success is our goal!

http://nu.libguides.com/studyskills
Study Skills for Students

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A companion for the Study Skills Library Guide
http://nu.libguides.com/studyskills
168 hours in a week: the breakdown

- Class: 11 hrs
- Study: 22 hrs
- Commute: 5 hrs
- Sleep: 56 hrs
- Meals: 10 hrs
- Hygiene: 10 hrs
- Chores: 10 hrs
- Work/Family: 44 hrs
Time Management for Students

National University’s one-class-per-month format is unique but challenging. Familiarizing yourself with the accelerated class schedule and understanding how to manage your time can help you get ahead before you fall behind.

National University Class Calendar

The schedule for most classes looks like this:

- Week 1: Introduction, mid-term prep
- Week 2: Mid-term review and exam
- Week 3: Mid-term corrections, final prep
- Week 4: Final review and exam

As you can see, classes move extremely fast! Some of our students struggle in their first few classes because they are not prepared for how quickly papers and exams must be completed each month. Balancing these demands with the rest of life’s commitments can be difficult. Here’s a breakdown of what a typical week might look like.

There are 168 hours in a week. At National University, an average of 11 hours per week are spent in class or viewing required online class materials. Based on a recommendation of 2-3 hours of study time per hour spent in class, a minimum of 22 hours should be spent studying outside of class.

This means that at least 33 hours per week are dedicated to school, leaving you with 135 hours in the week. The average person spends around 5 hours a week commuting, 56 hours sleeping, 10 hours for meals, 10 hours for personal hygiene, and 10 hours for chores and errands. 44 hours a week are left for work, family, and personal time.

168 Hours in a Week

How do you spend your time?

Now that you have an understanding of what’s required of you as a National University student and how your schoolwork fits into your everyday schedule, you can better prepare for what lies ahead. By managing your time more effectively and using recommended study techniques to improve your school performance, you can find success both inside and outside the classroom.
**DATE:**

---

**TOP THREE GOALS FOR TODAY:**

1. 
2. 
3. 

---

**ASSIGNMENTS DUE THIS WEEK:**

---

**ASSIGNMENTS DUE NEXT WEEK:**

---

**SCHEDULE:**

Earlier

7 am

8 am

9 am

10 am

11 am

Noon

1 pm

2 pm

3 pm

4 pm

5 pm

6 pm

Later

---

*Today I am one day closer to completing my degree!*
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<tr>
<th>SUNDAY</th>
<th>TO DO</th>
<th>DUE DATES</th>
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**SQ3R Reading Method**

- **SURVEY**: Look over the text and write down titles, headings, and other important information.
- **QUESTION**: Formulate questions and write them down as you survey the text.
- **READ**: Actively look for answers to your questions as you read the text.
- **RECITE**: Speak the answers to your questions out loud using your own words.
- **REVIEW**: Reread your notes, highlight, take additional notes, or ask more questions.

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Reading Comprehension

How you read your class materials can have a big impact on how much information you remember. If you ever find that you’re having trouble remembering what you read, try using SQ3R. This is an active method of reading that will engage your mind and help you retain more information. SQ3R stands for: Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review.

Start by surveying the material you’re about to read before you really dive into the text. Look for titles, headings, subheadings, captions, and any other prominent information that will give you a general idea of what you’re about to read. As you survey the material, formulate questions related to what you’re seeing.

Also consider questions posed by your instructor or related to your assignment. Now, begin reading, but don’t just read passively. Instead, actively look for answers to the questions that you’ve raised. Next, recite these questions and answers. It is very important when reciting that you speak out loud, and that you use your own words. You can also take notes by writing down your questions and answers. This will further reinforce your memory.

When you finish reading and reciting, the last step is to review. Go over your questions again and see if you can remember the answers. If you forget an answer, reread the material to refresh your memory, and then recite the answer again. Reviewing is an ongoing process that you can repeat in the future. We learn through repetition, so the more times you review, the more you’ll remember.

SQ3R is a great technique to use when you’re trying to learn material in-depth. Give it a try, and you may see a difference in how much you remember for your class.
## SQ3R Reading Method

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<td>Survey: Look over the text and write down titles, headings, and other important information.</td>
<td>Read: Actively look for answers to your questions as you read the text.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question: Formulate questions and write them down as you survey the text.</td>
<td>Recite: Speak the answers to your questions out loud using your own words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review: Reread your notes, highlight, take additional notes, or ask more questions.</td>
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OUTLINE NOTES

MAIN TOPIC 1:

SUB TOPIC 1:

DETAILS:

DETAILS:

SUB TOPIC 2:

DETAILS:

DETAILS:

MAIN TOPIC 2:

SUB TOPIC 1:

DETAILS:

DETAILS:

SUB TOPIC 2:

DETAILS:

DETAILS:
Note Taking Strategies

Two methods illustrated

Note Taking Tips

- Prepare
- Focus on main topic
- Answer questions
- Use colored pens
- Use highlighters
- Review your notes

OUTLINE NOTES

DATE: 2/19/15  COURSE: Geography

MAIN TOPIC 1: United States
  SUB TOPIC 1: California
    DETAILS: San Diego
    DETAILS: Los Angeles
  SUB TOPIC 2: Nevada
    DETAILS: Las Vegas
    DETAILS: Reno

QUESTION/ANSWER NOTES

DATE: 2/19/15  COURSE: American History

QUESTION
During the American Revolution, what did the colonists mean by "No taxation without representation"?

ANSWER
American colonists felt it was unfair for the British government to impose taxes when there were no American representatives in Parliament.

EVIDENCE
- Currency Act of 1764
- Sugar Act
- Stamp Act of 1765

VOCABULARY
- Treaty: A formal agreement between nations
- Tax: Money paid to the government for services

OTHER
- Original 13 colonies
- Patrick Henry's historic speech against the Stamp Act
Taking notes can make a big difference in your understanding of class lectures or readings. We will introduce two note taking methods as well as some hints and tips to help you take better notes.

There are many different note taking styles and methods. You may need to try out a few before finding the one that works best for you. To get started, here is a brief overview of two note taking methods:

**Outline Notes**

Outline notes organize content hierarchically, starting with the broadest concepts and narrowing down to more specific details. Use letters, numbers, symbols, and indentation to indicate the level of specificity of each entry in your notes.

**Question/Answer Notes**

Question/Answer notes encourage you to think critically about your class lectures or readings. Instead of trying to capture every detail, think about what questions are being raised. Then, identify answers to these questions, as well as any other important facts or vocabulary words that stand out.

No matter which format you choose, keep the following tips in mind:

- Avoid simply transcribing your lecture or readings – instead, focus on connecting major themes or answering questions.
- Use colored pens or highlighters when taking notes – assign a different color for vocabulary, equations, questions, or answers. This will help you study more efficiently.
- Taking notes alone isn’t enough – make sure to go back and review what you wrote.
- Leave plenty of room on the page. Not only will this make reviewing your notes easier, it gives you room to add more notes later.
- Try using pictures! Sometimes a simple drawing or graph can express an idea better than words – don’t be afraid to get creative!

It may take some practice, but the work you put into your notes will certainly pay off!
OUTLINE NOTES

DATE: COURSE:

☐ CLASS NOTES
LECTURE TITLE:

☐ READING NOTES
BOOK/PAGES:

MAIN TOPIC 1:

SUB TOPIC 1:

DETAILS:

DETAILS:

SUB TOPIC 2:

DETAILS:

DETAILS:

MAIN TOPIC 2:

SUB TOPIC 1:

DETAILS:

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SUB TOPIC 2:

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Test Taking Strategies
Study early & study smart!

TEST TAKING TIPS
You can do this!

1. Read the entire test before you begin answering questions.  
   T  F

2. Answer the easiest questions first, and then come back to the harder ones. This will help you better manage your time and prevent you from potentially losing easy points if you run out of time.  
   T  F

3. Circle, underline, or highlight special instructions.  
   T  F

4. For essay questions, write an outline for essay or short answer questions. Even just jotting down bullet points will help you organize your thoughts and structure your response.  
   T  F

5. On tricky multiple choice questions, read each answer carefully, then narrow down the choices by first eliminating answers that you’re sure are incorrect.  
   T  F

6. When taking a problem solving test, such as math or chemistry, always show your work. Even if you arrive at an incorrect answer, you could still get partial credit.  
   T  F

7. On any type of test, if you get stuck, write down what you do know. This can potentially trigger your memory and help you recall an answer.  
   T  F

If you answered True (T) to all of the test questions you earned an A!

These are just some of the ways that you can become a better test-taker. Check out the Additional Resources for even more test-taking tips.
Preparing for and taking tests can be challenging, but it’s a process that’s important to practice. The following tips can help make the test-taking process easier for you.

**Studying for a Test**

Studying early is the single best thing you can do to prepare for a test. Waiting until the last minute to cram for a test will only leave you stressed out and tired. Use your class and reading notes to make flash cards and quiz yourself. Flash cards promote “active recall”, which can increase how much you remember by more than 100 percent. Try reciting answers out loud. Using your sense of hearing can help you better remember and reinforce information.

**Test Taking Strategies**

- **Taking a Test**
  - Read the entire test before you begin answering questions. Answer the easiest questions first, and then come back to the harder ones. This will help you better manage your time and prevent you from potentially losing easy points if you run out of time.
  - Circle, underline, or highlight special instructions. This is especially helpful for essay questions so you can make sure that your answers contain all of the requirements stated in the prompt.
  - Speaking of essay questions, take a few moments to write an outline for essay or short answer questions. Even just jotting down some bullet points will help you organize your thoughts and structure your response.
  - On tricky multiple choice questions, read each answer carefully, then narrow down the choices by first eliminating answers that you’re sure are incorrect.
  - When taking a problem solving test, such as math or chemistry, always show your work. Even if you arrive at an incorrect answer, you could still get partial credit.
  - On any type of test, if you get stuck, write down what you do know. This can potentially trigger your memory and help you recall an answer.

These are just some of the ways that you can become a better test-taker. Check out some additional resources in the Study Skills Guide for even more test-taking tips at [http://nu.libguides.com/studyskills/test-taking](http://nu.libguides.com/studyskills/test-taking).
The staff at the National University Library are here to help you accomplish your academic goals. Your success is our success!

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