

A Ten Step Program to Academic Success **Intro Biology (Biology 131)**

Here are some study suggestions from Professor George Hoffmann, which I have modified to make more relevant to our course. I believe you will find useful in your studies:

(1) Read all assignments **prior** to the lectures. In Introductory Biology 1, it is especially important that you **read and study the class notes** that are provided on the internet. When notes are provided, the text book i(Campbell) s less important and should be used to help fill in gaps. On the other hand, there will be assignments where there are not specially prepared class notes and in this case, the reading from Campbell and other assignments is critical.

(2) Write down questions you may have on the notes and other readings and bring these to class. Be certain that your questions are answered in class or an office hour.

(3) Attend all classes and be in condition to learn. Since you will already have the notes, you should not need to write very much in class except as we further develop certain aspects of the material. You should be thinking about the material and what it means, and about asking and answering questions. Partying the night before a class is likely to reduce your capacity to learn.

(4) Within a day of class, outline the main points of the class based on the handout notes, other readings, and class discussions. Note anything you are still unsure about. It is a good idea to put these outlines in a notebook separate from your classroom notebook or at least in a different section. These outlines should contain all material covered in class, supplemented with material from the text, in clear, easily readable form, with headings and complete examples.

(5) Later in the course, I will assign problems. Work all assigned problems and incorporate them into your notebook in clearly readable form. Do this before I give out the answers. In my experience, students who simply review the solutions without attempting the problems do very badly on examination problems. Re-work selected problems of each kind in the week before an exam.

(6) Keep a glossary in a separate section of your notebook. Each page of the glossary should have a single letter heading. As you encounter technical terms when transcribing your notes, add each term and a clear, concise definition to the glossary. For example, a page headed "G" may contain such terms as gene, gene regulation, gamete, genotype, genome, genetic drift, and in the order that these terms appeared in the course. Use the text to confirm or clarify definitions based on the class notes. The class content will be the guide to which terminology you are expected to know. While

you should read all assignments in the text carefully, you will not be expected to know specific terminology from the text that is not introduced or discussed in class.

(7) Thoroughly review all notes for the course and your glossary not less than once per week.

(8) If you study on a nearly daily basis, you should not need to cram for your exams. It is my experience that those who rely on cramming typically do very poorly as the semester progresses and time becomes more at a premium. They also do poorly on the final exam.

(9) Keep a log of the time that you spend studying intro. If you wind up talking with friends or falling into other distractions, be aware that you are not studying and do not count this time. The log should show a minimum of nine hours of high-quality study time per week exclusive of lectures and review sessions. You should reach the nine-hour total **without counting more than two hours on any one day**. Thus, you should do concentrated study in genetics at least five days per week.

(10) If you are unsure about your progress, ask me to check your log of study time, transcribed notes, and glossary in an office hour.