

Ask Yourself

Do you . . .

- Get enough sleep most of the time (7-9 hours/night)?
Chronic sleep deprivation (5-6 hrs/night) impacts learning and memory.
- Plan your time to allow for regular review of class/textbook notes?
Distributive study improves retention and recall.
- Routinely multitask (in class and/or while reading/studying)?
Has a negative impact on learning/concentration/academic performance.
- Study where it's noisy or otherwise distracting?
Impacts reception/retention.
- Over-extend yourself?
Can cause stress. Can impact sleep. Not enough time to study.
- Cram before tests?
Can impact long-term retention; we remember best the first and last 20 minutes of any study session.
- Use academic resources (tutors, LAs, professors, Learning Specialists, workshops, Writing Center)?
Excellent for reinforcement and rehearsal and strategy development.
- Eat foods high in fat and sugar?
High-fat meals divert blood away from the brain, leading to drowsiness/decreased mental energy; sugar is a brain-drainer.
- Drink alcohol or use recreational drugs within 5 days of an exam?
Impacts memory; learning new information; attention/concentration.
- Over-use caffeinated products (coffee, energy drinks, etc.)?
Can increase insomnia, anxiety, headaches, heart rate.
- Make time for relaxation and exercise?
Increases serotonin (feel-good neurotransmitter) and reduces cortisol (anxiety hormone).
- Find out what you don't know/understand BEFORE the test?
It's very sad and anxiety-producing to find out what you don't know DURING the test.
- Practice the performance?
We learn best by asking questions.