

How to Master Biology

There are no tricks or short cuts when it comes to succeeding in Biology classes at UConn. "University-level Biology is difficult and there is no substitute for hard work. However, what is meant by "hard work"?

One component is **time spent on task**. When we speak of time, we should consider both the quantity of time spent and the quality of time spent. There is so much material to be understood that a substantial time commitment is required. There is time spent in lecture, but also time spent preparing for class, reading the assigned pages, upgrading notes, and studying for tests (which might cover as many as ten chapters). Yet, a student can devote a lot of time to these activities and still do poorly in Biology.

This is because the **quality** of time spent is also an important factor. Many students become discouraged when, though they spend hours and even days studying for tests, they still get unsatisfactory scores. Usually this occurs because what they do when they study is low-quality work. What are some examples of low-quality work? One example would be reading the textbook just to get the reading assignment out of the way.

A student who reads properly, on the other hand, reads with a critical eye, constantly asking him/herself questions like:

- "If I had to teach this to someone, could I do it?"
- "What if this process were screwed up somehow; then how would the results differ?"
- "The text's treatment of this topic differs from what I learned in high school (or what I learned in class today) what question could I ask in class that might clear this up?"

Another example of low-quality work is going over and over your class notes. This is an activity that assumes one will be tested in a low-quality fashion, i.e. with test items that require you to do nothing but recall and repeat. This is a false assumption. You will be asked to integrate concepts from different lectures, to apply the principles of biology covered in class to situations that were not covered in the lecture or text, to evaluate new situations in light of the material covered during the test unit.

High-quality work entails preparing for such questions. Preparing entails organizing the mass of new information in such a way that it helps you understand the way the concepts are related to each other.”

<https://courses.ttu.edu/biol1403-mdini/Regular/howtostudybiology.html>

Student account on studying Biology from UPenn:

[https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/lr/PDF/studying%20bio%20\(W\).pdf](https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/lr/PDF/studying%20bio%20(W).pdf)

Tips from the University of Georgia:

http://www.thebioedge.com/uploads/1/3/2/8/13289818/study_suggestions.pdf