

Study groups are:

- Student-created, student-led groups
- A way to encourage self-advocacy
- Helpful for making your own connections to course material
- A way to provide you with clarity on what you do and do not know
- A great space to work collaboratively with peers

Study groups should be used to:

- Share ideas and connections that make sense to you
- Create summaries of course material
- Practice explaining course material
- Quiz each other
- Brainstorm test questions

Study groups should *not* be used to:

- Only do homework
- Copy notes directly or give each other answers
- Force memorization of answers without discussion of or connections to the material

How to form a study group:

- Ask classmates or professor if anyone would like to form a study group. (Students in other sections of the same class may be looking for peers to study with.) Keep in mind that study groups are most effective when they have no more than five or six students.
- Find a day, time, and location that works for everyone. Coffee shops, dorm lounges, and the library are common places, but each person has a different idea of an effective study area. (If your group would like to reserve a library study room, click [here](#)). Study groups are most effective when they meet regularly.
- Discuss before the session a general focus or loose agenda so that all members can come prepared. You may want to choose a “facilitator” or “spokesperson” can help keep the session on track.
- Create a group message (text, GroupMe, WhatsApp, etc.) or google doc so that everyone can easily be in contact.
- If you have a group project in the class, your group members may be the people to form your study group with.

Helpful exercises and strategies:

- **Allow for organic discussions.** Have an idea of agenda, but allow for flexibility. It is better to spend a lot of time thoroughly understanding a little bit of information than it is to only develop a surface understanding of a lot of information. If you don't cover every item in one session, or if you go beyond the initial time line you set, that's okay.
- Have group members **generate a list of homework problems** they'd like to focus on before coming to the session. As a group, decide how to order the questions (if there are questions that the majority has highlighted, those would be good to start with), then work your way through the list. **Work on all questions as a group and discuss** as you go along.
- Have each member **pick no more than three parts of lecture notes** that they would like to review/clarify. Agree on an order of priority, then **discuss and review as a group.** Share ideas and connections to material. When the group feels comfortable, move on to the next question.
- Have each member **make a list of words or phrases** (not complete sentences) from lecture notes or homework assignments that they want to focus on. Do this before the session, and then generate a list as a group to find the most and least important areas of focus. **Use this list to guide that session's discussion.** This could also be done during or after sessions for next time, and for review sheets before tests.
- If reviewing for a test, **divide days of lecture notes amongst group members** in a fair way. Each member summarizes the most important parts of the lecture notes they are assigned, then the **group works together to create a review sheet.** Allow for other members to contribute to days that they were not assigned.
- **Form pairs and compare the week's notes.** Identify a few main points and summarize them in your own words. Regroup and put all of the summaries together to **create a comprehensive summary** of what that week's lectures covered. (This could be used for any increment of time.)
- When reviewing reading assignments, **form pairs and summarize what was read.** For longer readings, have each pair summarize a section. For shorter readings, have each pair summarize the whole thing. **Focus on the most important parts** of the reading, not everything. Regroup and put all of the summaries together.
- **Try to create some sample test questions** that mimic the style and content you will see on the actual test. (Ask the professor how the test will be structured if you are unsure.) You could also refer to old tests you've already taken, or ask the professor if he/she can provide sample questions.
- If working with diagrams/charts/etc., **have one student volunteer to create an outline** or begin creating a diagram/chart/etc., then work as a group to complete it. **Use your notes and each other's ideas to finish what was started.** You may also want **one person to create the entire image**, then **work as a group to explain it.** If there are any mistakes or questions, work as a group using notes and each other's ideas to address them.