

HOW TO STUDY FOR ECONOMICS COURSES

TAKING NOTES IN CLASS

- Before class: At least pre-skim related readings and review lecture notes from previous class; look at problems in the study guide; make note of new terms, concepts, measures, models, graphs, and theories; formulate questions.
- During class: Have questions in mind as the lecture begins; adapt a format which allows a wide left-hand margin for summarizing and editing your notes plus a narrow right-hand margin for recording your own insights, questions, etc.; be alert to assumptions underlying hypotheses and note how hypotheses are tested against observational data.
- After class: Review and edit your notes; use the left-hand margin to summarize material and list key terms; "test" yourself as soon as possible to recall lecture highlights.

READING THE TEXT

- Preview the material: Look at sub-headings, graphs, questions at the end of chapter; note new terms.
- Read **actively**: Formulate questions before you read (from lecture notes and preview) and then read to answer those questions; translate abstract concepts to specific instances; know what every term and symbol means.
- Analyze graphs thoroughly: What "economic story" is being told?; what are the assumptions?; note units of measurement on each axis; note direction (positive or negative) of the relationship.
- Recall: Test yourself immediately and cumulatively at the end of each section; then use a combination of marginal notations and underlining to summarize.
- Reflect: Set aside time to question and criticize what you've read — then make notes of those thoughts.

PREPARING FOR EXAMS

- Integrate and review lecture and text notes; make a list of key topics, concepts, problems, theories, models, and terms.
- Review via ACTIVE RECALL rather than just passive re-reading.
- Re-work homework questions and workbook problems.
- Practice using the information in the form that will be required by the test format; predict test questions and problems and practice answering them.
- Realize that various test questions will ask you to know, comprehend, apply, and analyze what you've studied.

TAKING EXAMS

- Glance over the whole exam quickly, assessing questions as to their level of difficulty and point value; set time goals for each section accordingly.
- Begin to work the questions which are easiest for you; the others will be easier when you've "warmed up."
- Maximize partial credit possibilities by attempting all questions.
- Save time at end of exam for re-reading and editing.
- Analyze returned tests to prepare for future ones.