

Active Study Methods



Key Terms | Vocabulary: Create flashcards that include the following information:

Side A) Term | Side B) Book definition and/or Definition in your own words; Real-life examples

Cycles | Formulas | Timelines: Create a facts sheet. Review and then on a clean sheet of paper, test recall by rewriting the facts from memory. Repeat as needed. (You can laminate the sheet for free in [Makerspace in Bender Library](#) and use the backside as a dry erase board.)

Long Essay Prep (Prompt Given): In bullet point form—create a working [thesis](#) and [outline](#). Provide evidence under each body paragraph. Provide explanation of how evidence connects to/proves thesis. Over several days, rewrite outline until you’ve memorized it. If time allows, give the essay a timed practice run.

Long Essay Prep (No Prompt Given): Consider the guiding questions and themes from your lectures and readings. Then, write questions that ask you to compare and contrast the concepts covered and quickly outline your responses, providing evidence and real-world examples. Be prepared to encounter a set of real-life circumstances that will demand a course of action, which you will have to [determine and defend](#) based on what you have learned in the class.

Related Concepts: Compare and Contrast Charts, Venn Diagrams, [Mind Maps](#)

STEM-Related Practice Problems: Redo old exam/homework/textbook questions. Complete questions skipped during the semester. Write out order of operations for problem types until memorized.

General Strategies:

- In pairs: Provide terms/concepts and ask for definitions/explanations. Reverse that by providing definitions and asking for terms. Next, try identifying the term from an example of the term in action.
- In study groups: Analyze and draw connections between important concepts. Consider the following: How do the topics/central figures/themes intersect throughout the semester? Cause and effect relationships? Alike? Opposites? Other?
- Solo: Check your knowledge by writing down everything you know about the terms/concepts/ideas. Ask yourself, how is it all connected? Check notes for accuracy.
- Trouble on last exam? Meet with your professor to review old exams and identify a step-by-step approach to breaking down the instructor’s questions.

*Adapted from Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center | www.smu.edu/alec