

# Strategies for Success in Math Classes:

Note-taking,  
Study Skills,  
& Test-taking



# Note-Taking

# How to Take Notes

- If it's written down, put it in your notes!
  - This includes examples and diagrams.
- If it's said, decide whether it should go in your notes. You don't need to write down everything that's said, but you can't *only* write down what's written on the board.
- Keep notes in order in a 3-ring binder, either on notebook paper or on printed paper.

# How to Take Notes (continued)

- Use **color** to your advantage and do some color-coding!
- If you start to get behind, skip space and come back to it later.
- Be an ***engaged*** note-taker (e.g., think about what you're writing – if it doesn't make sense, make a note of it in the margins to ask about or to look at on your own later after class)

# How to Use Notes

- Soon after taking notes in class, spend time working through them. Add examples or questions, and highlight important parts.
- Review your notes daily, looking for connections between old and new material.
- Condense notes about topics you don't understand into a "cheat sheet" to study from, so you don't have to flip through all your notes to find those few topics.

# Studying

# What to Study in Math

- Textbook/Noteset
- Handouts and Worksheets
- Notes from Class
- Formulas and Example Problems
- Study Guides
- Graded Assignments and Assessments
- “Cheat sheet” mentioned earlier

# How to Study for Math

- Start preparing for exams early
- Organize your material by topic/lesson
- Flashcards or Quizlet (online flashcards)
- Review all material at least once a day

# More on how to study for math

- Organize a study group
  - Make sure you can work through the problems on your own!
- Understand every step you made in a problem
- Work through study guides several times.
  - \*By the end of your studying, you should be able to sit down and do ***all problems*** in the study guide on your own without notes.

# Other Tips

- Never get behind
- Get help immediately if you get lost (Resources include your professor, the Learning Center, classmates, EdReady study resources if in a developmental class)

# Test-Taking Tips

# Before Taking a Test

- Come well-rested and having eaten something nutritious
- Arrive on time or early
- Jot down memory cues/formulas on the test first
- Survey the test
- Read the directions!

# During a Test

- Do the easy questions first
- Skip and return to difficult questions
- If you can't solve a problem, put what you do understand about it. ("I don't know how to find  $x$  and  $y$ , but once I found them, I would need to plug them in and solve for  $b$ .")
- Write neatly

# During a Test

- Answers should follow the ABCs:
  - **A**nswer the question(s) asked
  - **B**e reasonable
  - **C**learly labeled
- Double-check that you have:
  - Answered all questions
  - Checked any answers you can, such as by plugging them into the original equation

# After a Test

- On a separate piece of paper, re-do problems that you missed. This will help prepare you for the final exam.
- Be a self-reflective learner
  - Identify *what* you did wrong; put a plan in place for *how* you will meet or exceed your goal(s) next time
  - Identify *what* you did correctly and celebrate those successes