



SOME POINTERS ON DOING WELL IN THIS COURSE...

Lectures and Notetaking

- Regular attendance in both lecture and discussion is essential.
- **You should take some notes (either by hand or by computer) at some point—whether during class or when you review the slides and supplemental notes.** Things look quite clear on the slides, but research has found that the material is retained more effectively at exam time if one takes notes in one's own hand.
- Rather than trying to take down the professor's "words of wisdom" verbatim, you will learn more by trying to *paraphrase into your own words*.
- Although it may seem that you are able to multi-task well, reality is different. It has been found that learning is, in fact, greatly diminished if done while engaging in extraneous activities such as surfing the Internet or gossiping with neighbors. It is rare that there is something so juicy that it can't wait until after class!

Discussion Sessions and Class Participation

- It is helpful to have assigned chapters of *Contagious* read before these are addressed in discussion.
- *Quality* and *consistency* of participation are more important than quantity.
- To make sure you get credit for class participation, you should be sure to flash your participation ID sign after these are distributed.

Textbooks

- The handout titled "Expected Textbook Preparation" lists issues from the textbook that we may not cover in class. You should know this material for exams.
- You should be able to answer the study questions from *Contagious* on exams and be able to generalize the application of the ideas involved.
- Exams do *not* emphasize definitions or trivia. **You should read to understand the ideas and their applications.**
- Much of the material is covered both in class and in the textbook. Depending on your individual learning style, spending time on the textbook coverage of this material may or may not be a good use of your time.

Studying

- To effectively prepare for exams (and use course ideas in your career), is important to *understand* the ideas involved, their relationship to each other, and how these apply to real organizations and settings. Memorizing definitions and trivia is generally not useful. **Study aids that emphasize this low level of learning (e.g., Connect+) are not good use of time.**
- Studying with others may be helpful, but time spent on "quizzing" and other forms of low level learning is not well spent. Your emphasis should be to understand, relate, and apply.
- It is *not* advisable to "divvy up" study questions among group members, each bringing in answers to those assigned. This is about understanding, not memorizing.

Exams

- **Research shows that regardless of what kind of exam you eventually end up taking, those who pretend to be studying for an essay (rather than multiple choice) exam will tend to do better.** If you challenge yourself to be able to explain and discuss in your own words, you will learn better.
- Exams are designed to differentiate between those who understand the material well and those who do not. As such, some exam questions are designed to “tempt” those who try to “bluff” their way through the exam without sufficient and meaningful study. The fanciest and most complex multiple choice answer is not necessarily the correct one! Beware of a large number of “buzz” words that do make sense together.
- Exams questions will often require you to *reason* your way to the correct answer based on course ideas.
- It is useful to take the sample exam to see if you are comfortable with the types of questions that will be asked, but it is generally not useful to attempt to “study” from previous exams. Questions will not be asked the same way again.
- Having a good night’s sleep and a good meal before an exam is essential.

Project Proposal

- Completing the project proposal is not a linear process. First, you may want to think of some general ideas of interest, then rest on it, bounce a few ideas off a friend for feedback, and then come back several times.
- It is perfectly fine to make adjustments to the ideas in your proposal as your research and analysis progress. You are not committed to what you originally wrote.

Secondary Market Research for Project

- We will discuss various methods of using databases to find relevant articles, reports, and other sources for making managerial decisions. This process is often one of trial and error where you think of potential synonyms for terms to describe a topic of interest and identify more general and more specific terms as needed.
- For projects, it is generally necessary to search *more broadly* than on a specific product or service of interest. If you are introducing a new product or service, there clearly will not be existing reports on this, and you have to think more broadly. This is also useful in seeing the bigger picture. If you are proposing a gadget to help baseball players improve their performance, for example, you may want to search on sporting goods generally in addition to baseball.
- Sources used should be of sufficient quality and objectivity. Firm web sites are essentially glorified advertisements. Any fool can set up a reasonably professional looking web site. Material written by professional journalists and other analysts who do not have a personal stake are likely to be more objective. Note that sources should be sufficiently current. Some countries and industries change very rapidly! (More on this in the blue handout on secondary sources.)

Applications Papers (Last step of the project)

- As the term implies, this is an *applications* paper in which you should *closely tailor* course ideas to the idea in question.
- **Ideas should be sufficiently developed to be meaningful. One of the most frequent comments made on papers is “Any specifics?”**
- Direct quotes should be minimized. It is better to paraphrase into your own words.
- Your reasoning and assumptions should be clearly articulated.
- Although enthusiasm is encouraged, analysis should be objective. The purpose of the paper is to give an objective assessment, not to “sell” your idea. Sensationalistic and “clicheous” terms such as “revolutionary” or “game changing” should be avoided.

Research Participation

- It is helpful to register for Experimentrak immediately so that you will be notified when studies become available. Registering for the system does not obligate you to sign up for a specific study at that time.
- There is often heavy demand for studies early in the semester and toward the end. There are usually a lot of unused openings during the middle part of the term.