



Getting Started: Considerations for Nursing Students

Beginning a nursing program is exciting and overwhelming! So, what do you need to know to support your success? Consider the following suggestions to help you plan for success! (Check out detailed tip sheets for each item below on the Academic Success Coach's webpage: <https://www.nursing.arizona.edu/academic-success-coaching>)

Time Management: You need to have a system to keep you organized.

- Select a planner that includes monthly, weekly, and daily options.
- Create a time budget by using a 24-hour, 30-minute time block, week at-a-glance template to account for work, personal and school obligations.
- Eliminate extra commitments.
- Plan meals for healthy eating.
- Recruit extra help as needed.
- Select one day a week to plan all activities for the following week.
- Make your plan and stick with it.

Organization & Notetaking: Consider how you will store and organize your notes.

- The benefit of using a 3-ring binder for each course is that you can easily add or remove items. Use notebook dividers with 1-16 tabs to organize material by week for the duration of the semester.
- Notes should initially be in a format that make it easy to self-quiz, like **Cornell notes**.
- Concept maps are great for seeing the big picture, details, and relationships between information.
- Charts can organize material and clarify the similarities and differences between items.
- Notes can be taken electronically, but remember, written material is generally remembered better.

How to Study: There are many methods for studying. The key is understanding how the brain learns and then adapt strategies to fit. Consider the following order for engaging in your study:

- The brain wants to connect new information to existing knowledge: read the objectives first and ask questions about what you already know and what you need to learn.
- Scaffold information (systematically build the knowledge base): introduce yourself to the new material by reading through the PPT slides and turn each slide into a question to be used for self-quizzing later.
- Read the textbook: This is foundational to build your knowledge base, answer questions, and fill in information. Important to do this before the lecture! Take notes that answer your questions and address the objectives and the PPT slides you previously reviewed.
- Time for lecture: Only take notes on new material that you have not previously taken notes on. This is the time to listen, get clarification, and pull it all together.
- Always read through your notes right after taking them. In 24-hours, quiz through your notes to see what you have forgotten so you can create a study plan for the next couple days.
- Review several times during the week by self-quizzing through your PPT slides, lecture, and textbook notes. To self-quiz objectives, write them out first from memory, then check for accuracy. Consider making 1-3 concept maps from memory on specific course material.
- Use multiple senses as you study: visual (reading), audio (listen to textbook being read), kinesthetic (notes, concept maps), talk it through with a study buddy.

Writing: APA writing is so much easier using a writing template like PERRLA. There is an annual charge, but well worth it. Check it out: www.perrla.com

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