

# How to Succeed at Bryn Mawr

Lovingly prepared by **Peer Mentoring Services**

## **Health and Well-Being**

- Make sleep a priority. Staying up late before an exam won't help you as much as a good night's rest.
- Give yourself a reward for finishing an exam, paper or tough homework you've worked on. It can help you stay motivated!
- Clean! It can be very therapeutic. Plus, seeing a neat desk with well-organized study materials within reach can be quite inspiring.
- Don't beat yourself up! Figure out why you didn't do as well as you would have liked, and make sure to address it for the next paper, exam, or performance.
- Exercise! It keeps stressful things off your mind even for just a little while, and it gives you a boost of energy to tackle the day.
- Drink plenty of water and eat a healthy and balanced diet.

## **Time management**

- Plan your work by the week rather than by the day.
- Write down all of your to-dos, appointments and assignments in a wall calendar, daily planner, and/or online calendar so you don't miss deadlines and can use time wisely.
- When you are done a task, cross it out. It can be very satisfying!
- Learn when you're most productive and with what type of assignments and tasks.
- Be realistic with yourself about how much time you need to prepare or finish an assignment, project or reading.
- Be selective in your commitments and constantly reflect if they truly represent your interest and long-term goals. Don't be ashamed or afraid to stop doing something that isn't working for you.

## **Study Strategies/Test Prep**

- Set a timer for yourself in fifteen-minute increments. Each time it goes off, evaluate what you're doing. You can also use a timer to remind yourself to take breaks, which will help you be more productive.
- Study in small increments with frequent breaks to prevent burnout. Only study for 30-60 minutes without taking a break.
- Try studying in the same conditions as your exam. Research shows that people associate the material they learn with the space they study in and recall information better in that space.
- Separate home from school: study outside of your room so that your room is reserved for relaxing and sleeping. Try out different study environments to learn your personal preferences. You may want to study in a relaxed, cozy environment, or you may prefer an uncomfortable chair that motivates you to finish your work!
- Read notes from the last time the class met right before that class starts. It's a good refresher and gets you prepared for that class' topic right away.

- Find a study buddy. You can both encourage each other to get work done. However, watch out that you're actually motivating each other to study, rather than helping each other procrastinate.
- Make online flashcards. Try [flashcardmachine.com](http://flashcardmachine.com) or [quizlit.com](http://quizlit.com).
- Explain the material to someone else. Talk through the steps of a problem.
- Use acronyms to memorize vocabulary.

## Reading

- Look for important diagrams, charts, or graphs in the text.
- Practice skimming! You do not have to read everything. Make strategic decisions on what reading is most important.
- When reading a book, jot down what happens at the end of each chapter so you'll remember the major plot events, facts, or arguments.
- Use color-coded sticky notes when reading one or several books on the same topic. This can be especially helpful if you're writing a paper and need to refer back.

## Note-Taking

- Type up a study guide to help structure your notes.
- Type up or scan handwritten notes: this will make them easier to organize and harder to lose!
- Rewrite your notes to make them more clear and easier to understand. If possible, rewrite within a day or two of class to reinforce your memory of the lecture.
- Consolidate your notes into tables or graphs once a week.
- Color-code: using different colored pens helps key words and concepts stand out.
- If your professor is fine with you having a computer in class, consider typing your notes. Programs like Microsoft OneNote allow you to efficiently take notes, as well as neatly add comments and edit.

Don't forget to use your **resources!** Your **professors** are available for office hours, by appointment, and via email. You can also make an appointment with your **Dean** or **the Academic Support and Learning Resources Specialist** at 610-526-5375.