STUDYING ECONOMICS
MAKING the MOST of LECTURES and STUDYING ECONOMICS

PREPARE for the lecture in ADVANCE.
- Skim read **ahead** in the textbook.
- Re-read your notes from the previous lecture(s)
- Re-read the textbook on the topic being discussed.

ATTEND the lectures.
- **Listen for the lecturers’ cues** (words such as, firstly, next, another reason, the main point, an important difference, fundamental to understanding, the crux of the matter, etc.).
- **Make outline notes.** For tips on how to take notes using the Cornell note-taking system go to: [http://www.econ.ilstu.edu/Mark_Walbert/Eco204/other](http://www.econ.ilstu.edu/Mark_Walbert/Eco204/other)

REVISE and CONSOLIDATE
- Go over the day’s lecture notes and highlight/mark any points of difficulty; fill in gaps where necessary.
- Commit important definitions to **memory**.
- Work through the individual components of definitions, theories, lines of argument, calculations, etc. to the point of **UNDERSTANDING**. This will be assisted by:
  - Reading the relevant part of the textbook and other texts on the topic;
  - Comparing what was said in lectures and what you have read;
  - Applying what you have learnt to everyday problems and issues of the world around you, including those raised in newspapers, on TV, etc.
  - Check that the **Learning Objectives** for each section have been achieved.

READ
- **Read, read, read.** The Library is there for your use. “Read for your degree.”

USEFUL WEBSITES ON STUDY METHODS
- [http://wsrv.clas.virginia.edu](http://wsrv.clas.virginia.edu)
- [http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/stydhlp/html](http://www.ucc.vt.edu/stdysk/stydhlp/html)
- [http://iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides/attmot4.htm](http://iss.stthomas.edu/studyguides/attmot4.htm)

FOR PARTS OF THE COURSE OR SECTIONS YOU FIND DIFFICULT: do the work and do the asking
- At Varsity, the onus is on you to ‘make it happen’, but there is also plenty of help available. It is **your responsibility** both to do the work and to do the asking.
- Add appendixes to your notes, made from your textbook and other sources. The purpose is to **UNDERSTAND** the ‘difficult’ sections, not to add ‘facts’. Try and find different explanations and examples for the ‘difficult’ material.
- Ask your tutor for help at the next tutorial period, or ask if you can see him/her at another time for assistance;
- Attend the weekly ADP tutorials. Please note that ADP tutorials are NOT an additional lecture or NOT like the regular compulsory tutorials. ADP tutorials are voluntary tutorials to help you clarify any areas of difficulty. See the Economics 101 Notice Board/RUConnected page for the times. You are required to go to the ADP tutorial with your questions prepared in advance and you **must take your notes and a textbook**.
- Speak to your lecturer - immediately after a lecture has ended is a good time;
- Ask other students taking Economics 1; start a ‘Study Group’ with one or two Res friends.

**Logging on to RUConnected**

RUConnected is an interactive, on-line resource that will be used in the Economics 101 course to:

- Communicate important dates and upcoming events to the class
- Provide some lectures slides and other resources for essays and tuts
- Quickly answer questions you may have as you go along (via the forums)
- Provide interactive resources, like ‘mini movies’ and audio files

It is thus very important that you log on to the site as soon as possible in the course. Just follow these simple steps and you will have access to a wide variety of student resources:

There are two ways to access the course site:

1. From the RU home page, select “RUconnected” (under the Admin & Support column).

   **Log in using you Rhodes email username and password.**

   Under Course categories, click on *Economics and Economic History* and then on *Economics 101 2017*

2. In each case, you will be presented with a page that requires you to enter an *enrolment key*: **eco101-2017** (it is a password that enter only once to enrol in the course).

3. You will then be registered to receive all correspondence posted on RUConnected.
4. Please ensure that you check both RUConnected and your emails regularly.

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**MAKING USE of the TEXTBOOK**

1. Textbooks need to be **SKIM-READ, READ** for detail and **STUDIED**. Unlike courses taken through ‘distance Universities’, where the textbook and study guide are the main sources of inspiration, at Rhodes you are offered a lot more. Nevertheless, do not for a moment imagine that it means that using the text and all the resources that go with it is not very important.

2. Before going to lectures **Skim-Read** the relevant part of the textbook. It is not necessary to take in all the details, understand the line of argument or all of the diagrams. Think of it as ‘preparing the soil for planting’. Most seeds do not take root easily in ‘hard ground’. To skim-read in advance is a preparation to more easily follow and understand what the lecture is about.

3. Once you have attended the lecture(s) **Read** the textbook for content. At the first ‘reading for content’ you may still not understand everything that is being said; that would be a ‘normal’ experience. As you go, highlight or mark the points or sections that you do not follow. **Read** right through and then **Read again**.

4. The next step is to **Study** the book. Initially it may be necessary to commit some basic definitions to memory. It is vital that the terminology of Economics is properly understood. Some of the words that you have used many times in other contexts or in other ways will be defined more precisely or differently. You are actually learning a new language or, at least, learning how to use language in a different way. In Economics the path to success is not to ‘commit the subject to memory’. That is the sure road to disaster! **Concentrate on understanding Economics**. It is a method of thinking, a way of approaching problems, not a recipe.

5. It is not possible to cover everything that can be said about a topic in a lecture. The textbook has much more than will be presented in lectures, but also there will be some areas that need additional explanation or more detail, so **use other texts as well**. The Library has many good texts.

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**PREPARING for TESTS and the FINAL EXAMINATION**

Begin your preparation **WELL IN ADVANCE**. Economics is mostly about understanding, and not short-term memory.

**PLAN** your study programme using the syllabus outline. Do not spend a disproportionate amount of time on the introductory section; the ‘real’ core and emphasis is the later parts
of the course. Ask your lecturer whether the exam covers the entire syllabus.

Work through the course using the Learning Objectives to check your progress. Make sure that you can **EXPLAIN** the subject matter. Try explaining it to another Economics student.

It is usually useful to look at the format of previous examination papers. However, Beware! The course content changes and frequently the way in which questions are phrased also change, especially when a new text is prescribed or when a new lecturer takes over a course or even a particular section. To access previous exam papers go to [http://www.ru.ac.za/library/exam/economics](http://www.ru.ac.za/library/exam/economics), or select “exam papers” from the Quick links on the Rhodes website.

For some advice on how to prepare and write essay type exams visit the Iowa State University Center for Teaching Excellence at: [http://www.cte.iastate.edu/tips/essay.html](http://www.cte.iastate.edu/tips/essay.html)