

The LSA Newnan Advising Center has been setting up a "Strategies for Success" website (<http://www.umich.edu/~lsastudy/>), and they solicited advice from the Econ 101 and 102 profs to include in their "Course Specific Study Strategies" section (<http://www.umich.edu/~lsastudy/courses.html>). This sounds like useful information for everyone, not just those seeking it out from the Advising Center, so I've collected it here in this document.

Much of the advice written for Econ 101 applies to 102 and vice-versa, so I'm providing both here.

Advice (written by Adam Stevenson) for preparing for Econ 102:

- 1) **"Skim ahead"**. Before class, look at the textbook (or, if the lecture is off book, look at the lecture notes) and get the main ideas. What are the topics, what are the issues, and what are the main questions? What will the graphs look like, what will the equations look like? What's the point of the material we'll discuss in class?
- 2) **Go to class, and take notes on what's said, not what's on the screen**. The lecture notes on the screen are posted online. Try to write down what's said, because that's a different angle on the same stuff. The idea is to maximize the number of ways you can hear something explained.
- 3) **After class, read for detail**. Now that you've skimmed once and heard the lecture, read the textbook carefully and in depth. Taking notes on the textbook is a good idea. Writing down what's unclear (to ask your peers, GSI, or professor) is essential. In my own experience, I then took condensed notes on those textbook notes, which amounts to one more round of detailed reading, and produces another resource for studying, which gives another way of seeing how to explain the material.
- 4) **Do the homework**. Many exam questions are based directly on homework questions, so you've got to understand these.
- 5) **Get feedback as soon as you can**. Look up answers to exams as soon as they're released. Look at homework answers as soon as they're released. Ask your GSI questions as soon as they say something you don't understand. The sooner you get the feedback, the more solid the material will be in your mind. There is a set of chapter quizzes on the publisher's textbook website that also gives immediate feedback .
- 6) **Study for comprehension, prepare for expansion**. When we give exams, we EXPECT that you know definitions and equations. We'll ask some questions about these things, but not many. Most exam questions will ask you to build on these things. GIVEN a definition, what can you conclude? WHEN an equation holds, what is the relationship between these two variables? IN EQUILIBRIUM, this sort of change implies what? Said differently: we expect that if you're a UM student, you can memorize textbooks and old exams very well. We ask for analysis and critical thinking on tests, not just memorization.
- 7) **Every equation has a graph, every graph has an equation**. How are they related? A lot of the difficult parts of 102 involve a transition from the "mostly graphical" approach of 101 to the "mostly math" approach of 401. Be comfortable with your algebra - none of it will be extraordinarily difficult, but you're going to do a lot of it.
- 8) **Ask questions!** They are a sign that you're thinking. Which is a good thing.

9) **Read the newspaper!** Partly, you need to do this for the article response assignments. But you'll also notice that every week, as you read the paper, there'll be more and more articles where you think, "hey we just learned about this in Econ 102!" This is one of the major rewards of taking the class.

10) **Study in groups.** It's easy to get lost in the logic of some economic arguments. Studying in groups forces you to say the arguments out loud (and draw the graphs and equations). This way, when you make a mistake, your peers can catch you. When they make mistakes, you can catch them. This relates to the "get feedback as soon as you can" item above. The Michigan Economics Society (MES) typically provides a service to help people form groups.

11) **Read the syllabus.** Most of your questions about the structure of the class are answered there. A corollary: the syllabus says that you should bring a calculator to exams. Do so.

Advice (written by Jan Gerson and Paula Malone) for preparing for Econ 101:

0) If you placed into Math 105, take it before you take Econ 101.

1) Read the text before lecture.

2) Copy the online lecture slides into your coursepack before lecture.

3) Attend lecture.

4) Listen attentively, respond to prof's questions, and ask questions when confused in lecture.

5) Take notes in lecture as if there were no PowerPoint.

6) Rewrite these notes and redraw any graphs after lecture.

7) Focus on the concepts and how to represent them in a graph or with equations.

8) Make notecards if it helps.

9) Do the homework soon after lecture, without first referring to the solutions.

10) Go to office hours immediately if you need help.

11) Take one practice test and work it after lectures. Take the remaining practice tests timed after you've prepared for the exams.

12) Pay attention to current events and try to frame them according to what you've learned in class.

13) If you're not performing up to your expectations, work with your GSI and prof to improve the way you study economics and take exams and quizzes.

14) Enjoy the class. And pretend you enjoy it even if you don't.