Tips for Succeeding in Physics

Before Class:
- Take advantage of your syllabus! Take note of upcoming test dates and get an idea of what topics will be covered in the course.
- Skim your textbook for a preview of your lectures, identify the following:
  - What concepts are covered?
  - What theorems, equations, or methods are demonstrated?
  - What order is the information presented?
- Compare this to your course syllabus.
- Keep in mind you don’t have to fully teach yourself the material! This is just helping to create a framework to understanding the lecture. If you have gaps, don’t worry! They’ll get filled in later.

**Bonus Tip:** Skim your homework if posted before class to get an idea of the types of problems you will need to be able to solve in the class.

During Class:
- Attending class is extremely important!
- Take good notes (take a look at our Notetaking handout for more information about different notetaking styles)
  - Try to get examples and names of theorems written down
  - Focus on identifying what you need to know and then fill in the gaps later
  - Make connections between the theorems/proofs and examples in class
  - Make personal notes: If you need more clarification, make a note to ask your instructor or a tutor.

After Class:
- Set aside time to review your materials each day
- Fill in anything you missed in your class notes
- Make a reference sheet!
  - Include definitions, theorems, equations, etc.
  - Include a list of steps to explain to yourself how to solve the example problems

Attacking Your Homework & Test Prep:
- Study concepts before you start your homework!
- Read the problem completely
  - Can you identify what the question is asking and what equations or theorems might be needed to solve the problem?
  - Draw a diagram or picture whenever possible. Include forces, direction, angles to determine component forces, etc. to make your diagram a useful tool in helping you solve the problem.
- Determine a method to solve
- Check significant figures
- Start your assignment early
- Find similar examples in your textbook. Your professor may even have some suggested problems assigned for extra practice. It’s important to do these problems and then check to make sure they are correct.
- Identify similarities and differences between a group of problems
- Predict which questions could be fair game on an exam and test yourself!

Need Some Additional Resources at NC State?
- Go to ASC physics drop-in tutoring. No appointment necessary! Hours posted on the ASC website: asc.dasa.ncsu.edu
- Get involved in weekly group tutoring in order to collaborate with other peers in your class! Talking through concepts and example problems are an excellent way to learn.
- Make a 1-on-1 tutoring appointment.
- Want to talk more about general study techniques? Request a peer mentor through the ASC!
- Go to your professor’s office hours. Times and the location will be posted in the syllabus.
- Do you have a TA for the course? Go to your TA’s office hours or make an appointment to go over specific questions with them.
- Drop by the Physics Tutorial Center in Riddick 319A: https://physicstutorialcenter.wordpress.ncsu.edu/
- Have you found other people in your class who would like to form a study group? Your peers are one of your best resources! Want to get connected with others who are interested in forming a study group? Check out the Study Buddies feature in the GPS Mobile app: https://gps.dasa.ncsu.edu/studybuddies-for-students/