

Selective Reading

Reduce your reading load by becoming a selective reader. Some of the best advice students report learning while in college or graduate school is that they cannot read all of the assigned reading. Thus becoming a selective reader is an important factor for academic success.

Read Efficiently by close reading only important texts. Ask yourself:

- Is this text important to the professor?
- Is it important to me? Will I use it in a paper?
- Does it repeat previous material?

Read Selectively within texts:

- BE AN ACTIVE READER: choose carefully what you will read closely.
- SKIM THE TEXT whenever the author is off topic, providing supporting background or offering repetitious detail.
- BE BOLD: trust your instinct in regard to what material is important and what is filler.

Overcome Fears that interfere with your good judgment including:

Fear of classroom failure: "Everyone will know what's going on except me."

Ask yourself: do most of the students appear to complete all the reading?

Fear of failing in front of the professor: "The professor will know I didn't do the reading."

Ask yourself: can you become familiar with the material and say something in class without close reading absolutely everything?

Fear that even though something didn't get discussed, it will be tested: materials that have been focused on in reading and in class will be more heavily tested.

Ask yourself: is an extra point on an exam worth the extra hours of reading when there are high priority tasks to attend to?

Adapted from: Kornhauser, A. (1993). *How to Study*, (University of Chicago Press;
Pauk, W. (1989). *How to Study in College* (4th Ed.), Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin;
Reynolds, J.A. (1996) *College Success: Study Strategies and Skills*, Boston, MA, Allyn & Bacon.