

Biology Major

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Schedule:

- Schedule labs later in the week. This accomplishes two things:
 - Cover material in lecture before lab, otherwise you are teaching it to yourself for the first time.
 - You don't have to make up a lab time when driving to and from ultimate tournaments (skipping Friday and Monday classes).
 - Be strategic about who your lab partner is. This is important for reasons I talk about under Study Tips.
- Schedule lectures and discussions around or after 11:00 – 11:30 AM on Mondays. On van trips home, you don't get back until Monday morning. This way you don't miss Friday *and* Monday classes. You are also done early enough to make practice.
- I like to take classes not immediately after each other, but also not dramatically staggered throughout the day.
 - I find it hard to do real quality studying in between classes.
 - Also if I have a test, it's hard for me to shift mindsets from one class to the next, so I review my notecards or notes before I go into an exam. If I have some last minutes studying to do before a test, or last minute homework due, time in between classes is good for this too.
- Take one fun class per semester. You have plenty of room in your four years to graduate. Taking one intellectually stimulating class that you enjoy not only is fun but also gives you a break from all the science.
- I also like to be done with classes by practice time. I don't like going to class extremely sweaty and smelly (although I know some people don't mind on the team). This allows me to be done with the day and focus on practice. I can also catch dinner with my teammates after, perhaps take a nap if I'm really tired, and study for the evening. Note: Naps can be taken before practice as well if you are on campus in Coffman Union. The chairs are so comfortable there I would pay to take a nap.

Classes:

- Physics
 - Do not take this freshman or sophomore year. This class, if I were to know what I know now about how to study, would be easy. But it takes a certain degree of critical thinking and it was very difficult for me to succeed in that class. Perhaps this is because it was one of my very first hard classes...but I still would not advise it.
- Organic Chemistry
 - The reason this class is hard for people is because they freak themselves out for it. It is a hard class like any other. I felt Orgo was easier than General Chemistry. If you put in the time (and granted, it

is a lot of time because it is a lot of memorization) you will do well (A or A-).

- Biochemistry/Microbiology
 - A lot (a lot!) of memorizing. Using mental case, you can put your notecards on your ipod and study in the van ride down to a tournament.
- Cell Biology/Genetics
 - Both of these classes are fairly easy. Genetics is a prerequisite for Cell Bio, but my personal opinion is you can take them at the same time. I think you could take Biochem and Micro with either of these two classes at the same time. But you should only take two a semester probably.

Study Tips:

- Everyone is different. I have the most energy and study the best in the morning. So I schedule my classes later (I've suggested this for other reasons above, but it happens to make sense for me). This allows me to wake up and study for the day on my own schedule. If I'm extremely tired for some reason, I take another half hour of sleep. If I've got a lot due that day, I wake up at five or six in the morning. It's better to sleep and work efficiently in the early morning than push yourself drinking coffee, working slow, and not retaining as much late at night.
- Although not scheduling class on Friday is a good way to not miss lectures over tournament weekends, I still do it because on non-tournament weekends it provides a structured 5-day work week for me. Otherwise, what usually happens is I work 4 out of the 7 days of a week, which is not enough time invested in studying in order to get the grades I want to get.
- Study on Saturdays and Sundays. Above I say a 5 day work-week because I get significant studying done during the week (and am not as efficient during the weekend). But I still need to study a lot on weekends to get my work done.
- Since I have to skip classes occasionally, I make a friend or two in my class so that on Tournament weekends I can copy their notes (using my printer, not writing, because that takes too long and it's all going on a notecard anyway).
 - I am strategic about this. How do I become friendly with them?
 1. Sit in the front during lecture. You'll find either nice people who are academically serious, or awkward smart people that appreciate you smiling and saying hi to them. Even something as little as a smile and saying hi will get you "in".
 2. Lab partners provide a good way to get to know someone outside of lecture. Being that your lab partner has a significant effect on the quality of your lab work (and thus your grade), be strategic about this as well.
 - a. Be 10 to 15 minutes early to lab. The people that you'll find already there are either (a) academically serious or (b) have a lot of time to waste. Most likely the (a), but

you can usually tell the difference between the two. Because you're early, there is likely an open spot next to the person you want to be partners with. Plus, seats are usually assigned on the first day, making this day more important than other days. In General Chemistry or other lower level labs, spots may already be assigned (tough luck), but in upper division, you get to choose.

- Use/Print out the power point lecture slides the teachers give you and make notecards from them word for word.
 - Copy the slide, putting significant words as a blank.
 - Example Powerpoint Slide: "Truffles, a fungus also eaten as a delicacy, can be smelled in the ground by a female pig"
 - Example Notecard: "Truffles, a __1__ also eaten as a delicacy, can be smelled in the ground by a female pig." (On the back of the notecard, you write the answer next to the number, putting multiple notes on one notecard)
 - Mental Case is a program I bought for \$15. It allows you to make notecards on your computer, take screen shots of your computer screen, and organize your notecards by test. You can export these notecards to your iPhoto or picture library and sync them with your iPod. This allows you to study your notecards regardless of how much light you have (great for van trips down to ultimate tournaments).