

General Weekly Study Plan

Education experts recommend spending two hours of study time for every hour that you're in lecture. You spend about 3 hours in lecture per week and two in lab. That's ten hours of study time. Some people think, "Ten hours? Nearly an hour and a half a day? How can I possibly study biology for a whole hour and a half every single day?" However, if you're not spending that much time studying for Biology, you might not be studying effectively. You don't have to study a hour and a half straight, though. Break up your study sessions with rest times as well. Here's a general outline of a study plan for Biology 101. You might find this useful for your other classes as well.

Each class session

- Check the syllabus for the chapters of the week. Print out the class notes for the week from the class website or Moodle. Have these ready for class each day. Print the slides in a format that allows you to take notes.
- Put away all of your electronic distracters. Get out your class notes and your reading notes that you have so far to class. As you listen to lecture, take notes next to each of the slides on the class notes. Participate in all of the clicker questions and Daily Work questions. Have another paper for jotting down questions of your own. If your questions aren't answered by the lecture, raise your hand and ask.
- After lecture, review your lecture notes. Then write down, in summary form, as much of the lecture as you can recall. Do this as soon as you can. If you have a class right after lecture, spend just a few minutes jotting down the main points between classes. It really does help.

Monday

- Download the study guides for this week's chapters. Read over the summary of the concepts and the misconceptions to look for.
- Take a piece of paper and draw a line down the middle, dividing it into two columns. On one side, you will take notes on the chapter as you read. On the other side you will jot down any questions that you have. Also jot down ideas about quiz or exam questions that your professor may ask.
- Start reading the chapters, taking notes as you go. Break up your reading time. Read a section at a time, then sit back and reflect on what you read. You'll learn better if you concentrate on one or two concepts at a time.
- If you come across unfamiliar vocabulary as you read, take a notecard and write the term on one side. Write its definition on the other. Keep your notecards with you to review when you have a few minutes to spare here and there.
- When you go to lab this week, take notes on any introductory material.

Tuesday

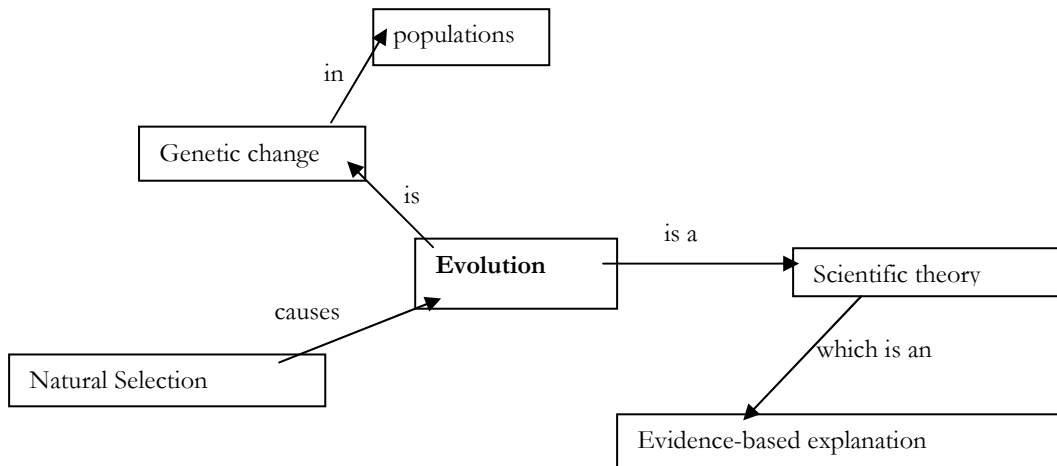
- Continue reading and taking notes on the text. Try to come up with quiz or exam questions as you go. Continue making vocabulary cards as you go.
- During your study time, compare your lecture notes with the notes you've taken on the text so far. Did you hit the main points of each section? Did you miss anything that was emphasized in lecture? Were there things that came up in lecture that were not in the book?
- Once you've finished your initial reading of the assigned chapter, start working on the questions from the chapter study guides.

Wednesday

- Continue reading and taking notes on the text.
- Continue working on the questions in the chapter study guide.
- Randomly choose two of your vocabulary cards. Write down as many connections between the two terms as you can think of. For example, two words from Chapter 18 might be “phylogeny” and “biodiversity.” As you find a connection between them, you might write, “Phylogeny is the evolutionary history of living organisms, and it is the evolutionary history that led to today’s biodiversity.”

Thursday

- By now you’re probably done with taking notes on the text and may be finished with the chapter study guide.
- Copy all of the potential quiz questions that you have thought of into a single document.
- Randomly choose one of your vocabulary cards. Write the term in the middle of a piece of paper. Around the word, write as many words or phrases as you can think of that are related. As you connect the center word with the words around it, write the connection next to the arrow, forming a concept map. Here is an example of the start of a concept map:



Friday

- Now that you’ve been to lab, check your lab notes with your chapter notes and lecture notes. If they all seem disconnected, try making a master outline to merge all three sets of notes together.
- Go through the chapter and look for any important illustrations that show processes or concepts. Study these figures, then try to sketch them from memory. Summarize what they mean. Do the same for any important tables of information in the chapter.
- Use your favorite online search engine to look up tutorials on the topic of the week. Or try out any extra credit activities that are available for the week’s topic. This will get you points and study time at the same time.
- Try out all of the study questions in the “Chapter Review” at the end of each chapter.

Saturday or Sunday

- Depending on your religious preference, if any, take one of these days to study and one to put your books aside for a study break.
- Quiz yourself with the quiz questions that you have been thinking up.

- Take the time for your weekly online quiz. The quizzes for this course are open note and open book, so have everything beside you as you take the quiz. If you've taken good notes in class, you should be well prepared, since many of the questions you've already seen as clicker questions or Daily Work questions. New ones may be previews of exam questions, so jot them down as you go. You have two chances to take the quiz. Once it closes, you can see the correct answers.
- With any remaining time, look up online tutorials on the topic.