Study Tips for International Students

Reading

- When reading, break articles into sections and attempt to understand general concepts.
- Continue reading even if a word or sentence confuses you, since concepts will be less confusing as you continue reading. Use a dictionary if a paragraph is still unclear after you have read it.
- Avoid translating sentences word-for-word since you'll lose sense of the main concepts.
- While reading, pause after completing a section. Review the main concepts and underline new vocabulary words to study later. You'll have a better understanding of new words if you try to learn them within the context of paragraphs.
- Look at section outlines prior to reading the whole text.
- Analyze charts and diagrams until you understand them.

Lectures

- Review lecture notes immediately after class.
- Acquire missed notes from classmates to make sure you don't miss out on important information.
- Record lectures if you struggle to understand a professor. Listen to the recordings multiple times. After some time, you'll better understand the professor.

Speaking English

- Organize daily English speaking sessions with peers.
- Identify and make note of words that you've been asked to repeat.
- Try not to be self-conscious. It will take time and practice to be comfortable and confident speaking English.
- Make an effort to converse with native English speakers.
- Try to learn common expressions and other conversational English phrases.

Studying for Exams

- Focus on understanding concepts instead of memorizing word-for-word. Students are typically tested on topic comprehension at American colleges and universities.
- Ask professors questions about the lecture after class.
- Ask for sample questions if essay questions will appear on upcoming tests. Practice writing simple essays; for example, create outlines with 3-5 main concepts and then write them.
- Organize study groups with your peers and review the main concepts from class.

Don't forget it takes time and practice to learn English. You'll improve speaking skills as you spend time conversing and living with native English speakers.

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