Student Academic Success Center
Tips for Success in Science and Math Courses

How are Science and Math different than other classes?

- Math and Science are subjects that you think about by doing, watching someone else work a problem is never enough.
- You must remember more than just the main ideas
- They require more time studying than other classes.
- Material builds on previous knowledge, getting behind gets you in big trouble

Before Class:

- Do the reading ahead of time, even if you don't understand everything become familiar with terminology.
- Challenge yourself to look through some of the examples and see how they are solved
- Question as you read. What are the steps? What are the variables? How does this relate?
- Study examples of problems

During Class

- Review notes from the class before
- Sit near the front
- Write down all worked examples step by step, include specifically how to get from one step to the next.
- Consider tape-recording lecture
- Identify unclear areas with question marks and leave space in notes

After Class

- Fill-in notes. Clear up questions as soon as possible.
- Review notes within 24 hours
- Understand how definitions/theories/terms relate to solving the problem.
- Practice, practice, practice - do all the assigned problems and more
- Form study groups
- Use flashcards, create diagrams, summarize material: use strategies based on your learning style to review and work with the information.

Preparing for tests

- Find out as much as you can about the test. How much is it worth? Multiple choice? Is it cumulative?
- Begin studying at least 7 days prior. Develop a schedule to cover certain topics.
- Do sample tests in book if available. Practice solving the kinds of problems that will be on the test.
- Set priorities. Concentrate on key topics

During the Test

- Assess the test. Identify point values, difficulty and time
- Work first on questions you are most comfortable with and/or those with highest point value.
- Jot down ideas as you are thinking about question.
- Use pencil
- Write down everything that seems to apply.
- Read each problem carefully twice and the read the last sentence of the problem again.
- Ask yourself "what is this question asking?"
- Evaluate your answer afterwards.

Use Resources at Grand Valley

Tutoring Center – STU 200
Math and Science Support Center – MS3 399 Padnos
Math and Stats Lab – A-2-171 MAK
Your professor
Study Groups
On-line Tutoring
Website Resources

Some of the information on this handout was adapted from **Improving Student Learning Skills** by Martha Maxwell, Jossey-Bass, 1979.