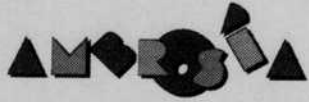


Student Checklist

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By the book

For some students, "required" textbook readings are more of a hopeful suggestion by professors

BY ADAM CHERRY
 NEWS REPORTER

Textbooks: always required, usually expensive, sometimes boring and occasionally ignored — at least by some University students.

Skipping out on required reading is a classic student trick for decreasing class workloads.

Jacob Goudy, a sophomore business administration major, admitted he spends a total of about three hours reading the entire term.

"It's pointless, because with all the teachers I have, the lectures sum it up," Goudy said. "I spent \$137 for my accounting book, and I have not cracked it once the entire term."

"In one of my poly sci classes, I read the glossary because we have a vocab test," he said. "I've aced every one of those quizzes."

Goudy said he holds a 3.0 GPA.

"If I read the book, I'd probably study more," he said. "But does it justify me spending 40 hours per week reading for another .5 on my GPA? No."

Goudy said he doesn't feel guilty when he sells back the book at the end of the term.

"I keep all the cash. It goes toward my alcohol for the first few weeks of the next term," he said.

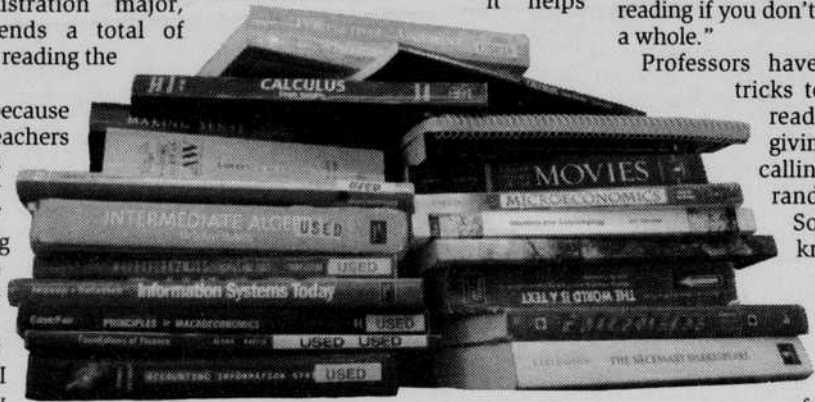
Yunah Lee, a sophomore double

major in biology and physiology, said she reads her textbooks four to five hours every day.

Lee said the pressure of always being busy motivates her to do her reading.

"When you have time, you use it," she said.

"I sometimes read half the course load (during the break between terms)," she said, adding that it helps



take pressure off during the term. "I can't read any faster than I do now."

Lee said she has a few tips for students who have trouble motivating themselves to read.

"Know where you study best," she said. Lee often does her reading in the library where there's nothing to distract her.

However, Lee is subject to the same difficulties in reading that other students are. She often finds her reading boring and occasionally has to read things twice.

"If I'm tired, I'll always space out," she said.

She has a system to keep herself focused.

"Since I am pretty busy, I always write as I read," said Lee. "I highlight and write in the text."

By writing summaries of paragraphs, Lee ensures that she gets the point of what she reads before moving on.

Lee added that if the textbook has a summary of the chapter or notes are available on a novel, she tries to read them first so she has an idea of what to pay attention to in the text.

"Sometimes, it's harder to do reading if you don't know the text as a whole."

Professors have a number of tricks to keep students reading, such as giving pop quizzes or calling on students at random in class.

Some are even known to kick out students who don't do the reading prior to class.

History professor Matthew Dennis said it's annoying when students don't read, but he understands that students get swamped.

"I don't take it personally," Dennis said.

"It seems like a waste if they don't take the time to do the reading," he added. "We're busy, so we hate to have our time wasted and to waste other people's time. If the students don't do the reading, they won't fully understand lectures. ... It's much more enjoyable to teach (when students read)."

adamcherry@dailyemerald.com

Racking the brain

The sometimes-illusory 4.0 GPA comes at a steep price for students who wouldn't have it any other way

BY DAVE ZOOK
 DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

All-nighters, cram sessions and Friday nights at the library aren't what most students envision when thinking about the good times in college. For some, these unattractive aspects of college life are a harsh reality. For others, they are a distant, unwanted fantasy. While studying often leads to success in the competitive and challenging academic world, a heavy workload can also eclipse social events, relationships and extracurricular activities.

"Sure, you can do anything too much," journalism professor Mark Blaine said about excessive studying.

He said studying can become an addiction when students become obsessed with their course work. Dealing with struggling students is part of Blaine's job as the current professor of the School of Journalism and Communication's

notoriously time-consuming information gathering course.

"You can devote a lot of time to something and not get a lot done, and that's when studying as a vice can come in," he said.

Blaine strongly advocates staying focused on finishing the assignment, even if every detail isn't worked out. He said many of the students he sees struggling are the perfectionists.

"You can obsess a little too much; a lot of the time you don't have time to be a perfectionist," he said. "Balance is key, a couple hours a day every single day."

Senior history major Dan Harnsberger shared similar sentiments.

"If you keep a pace, it's not a problem," he said, adding that he finds studying time consuming and difficult, but manageable.

In the midst of writing his thesis, Harnsberger spends at least a couple hours in the library Monday

through Saturday and anywhere from three to five hours or more on Sundays. He is a 4.0 student and pursues an A grade every time.

"Shooting for a 4.0, the studying starts into overkill sooner or later," he said.

The relentless onslaught of papers, midterms and projects are not to be taken lightly for serious students. The University's Academic Learning Services recommends 22 hours of studying per test over about four weeks to receive an A grade.

Chances are the majority of students fall well behind this approach. While Blaine does see a small percentage of his students in overkill, he sees the majority creating problems for themselves by leaving too much for too late, proving that for some, studying is anything but a vice.

Still, there are students who let the future benefits of studying propel them toward over-studying. Good study habits can lead to better grades and perhaps greater post-college success.