WHY DO A COURSE ANALYSIS?

Each course you take has its own demands. You need to adjust study strategies for each course because what works in one course may not work in another. Generally, college courses can be divided into three categories. By deciding which category each of your courses belongs in and following the study suggestions for that category, you can devise a plan for success.

The Constant Discipline Course

Information in these courses is taught in sequence. It is important to master each lesson before going on to the next. Daily study is required throughout the semester, and frequent written assignments are the norm. Examples of the Constant Discipline Course include mathematics, foreign language, English composition, shorthand, accounting and many science classes.

To do well in a Constant Discipline Course:

❖ **Stay in control from the beginning.** Plan for more study time than you think you’ll need. DON’T miss a class or an assignment.

❖ **Do your homework as soon as possible after class.** You’ll do a better job while the information is still fresh in your mind.

❖ **Stay ahead of your teacher.** Always read the text before the lecture. You’ll take better notes and know what questions to ask.

❖ **Anticipate trouble spots.** See your teacher if you are making mistakes in your homework and you don’t understand what you’re doing wrong. Contain small trouble spots before they grow.

❖ **Constantly evaluate your progress.** Compare your classroom attention and learning speed with others. Are you keeping up? How are you doing on test and written assignments? If you are not working at an acceptable standard, see your instructor, visit the Study Skills Center, or get a tutor.
The Delayed Action Courses

In a Delayed Action Course, you don't have the opportunity to secure a grade through weekly assignments. Instead, your final grade may depend on only two or three examinations. You go to class, take notes, and do outside reading. Literature, many business courses, and most social science courses are in this category.

To create a good study strategy for Delayed Action Courses:

- **Keep up with the outside reading.** Take notes from your reading or learn to mark your text. A reading technique like SQ4R is excellent for building comprehension.

- **Take good lecture notes.** Edit and study your class notes daily. A two-column method of note-taking, like the Cornell method can be most effective.

- **Get involved in classroom discussions.** Ask questions. The more you are involved with the learning, the more you'll remember what you learned.

- **Go over tests carefully.** Correct and study any mistakes so you won't repeat the error. Analyze the type of questions on the exam so you can adjust your study strategy to improve on the next test.

Self-Involving Courses

Classes such as art, music, drama, and public speaking make special demands on students. Science, drafting, electronics and nursing require lab work. These courses often have different learning environments, odd schedules, or unusual demands. Teachers assume that students will involve themselves in the course with a minimum of supervision. Few tests are given. Self-learning, flexible schedules, individual progress charts and similar techniques are useful in these highly diverse courses.

To do your best in these courses:

- **Learn what is expected of the students.** Visit with the teacher prior to the first class and ask for details about the course. This is essential if the course is outside your normal field of interest.

- **Watch your interest level.** If the course is your favorite, be careful of getting over involved. If you have a low interest, make yourself get more involved to survive.

- **Get involved.** Self-involving courses are especially difficult for quiet students. Don't stay on the sidelines. Getting involved in the course can be a welcomed relief from the more discipline-oriented courses. Many advisors suggest taking at least one high interest or self-involving course each semester.

Adapted from: *The College Experience* by Elwood N. Chapman