

# STUDYING AT UNIVERSITY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

Some good practices for study management according to your characteristics

## 1. Organization

### Organization is essential for studying at university (academic learning)

First of all: decide how many hours you will dedicate to attend different classes (lessons), to autonomous study, and how many hours you will dedicate for other activities: when you have too much time and you **do not organize it, you risk to waste it by studying all the time in an inefficient way, so plan what to do, how and for how long.**

- **Set long-term goals** (which classes do you want to attend? Which exams do you want to take?) and **short-term goals** (what do I want to do by today?). The choice of the number of courses to be taken and the corresponding exams to face should always be made by considering the right proportion between lecture hours and the necessary time for independent study, and in the case of **a student with DSA it is essential to make realistic predictions.**
- **Focus on the material you have, check what you will need to find**, and plan how you will handle it **according to your own characteristics.**
- Make a **daily/ weekly** schedule (plan) of your commitments: time slots for lessons (and/ or laboratory/workshops), hours of individual study in which to process and memorize, time for reviewing individual topics (e.g. a few hours) and larger parts (e.g. a day), etc. taking also into account the available time for other daily commitments (e.g. shopping, lunch and dinner).
- Remember to **plan your** work, including **breaks** according to your fatigue level and ability to concentrate.

- **Free time:** Clearly establish which hours to spend for study activities and which hours to devote to oneself.

## 2. Attending classes in the classroom (in presence)

- If possible, **read/browse (check) the material** (PowerPoint or notes) of the lesson **before going to class**
- **Sit in a place that facilitates your concentration** (away from the door/window or sources of distraction). If there is something distracting you during class, get up and change your seat so that you can continue following without distraction.
- **Take notes** the way you prefer (handwritten notes in a notebook or on the computer with annotation programs directly on slides or other). **In the case of DSA or other BES profiles consider your characteristics.**
- Try being **active and follow** the lesson **carefully** (reflecting on what you are listening to, asking questions and explanation)
- **Get involved during the lesson/class:** if the professor proposes activities, stop taking notes and interact.

## 3. Process/elaborate and memorize, then review

- **Review notes** taken in the classroom: **look for the** parts of the book/booklet in which you find the **lesson topic and** integrate with **your notes**. Read analytically the parts of the text referring to the lesson/topic; Integrate your notes with the slides and the book.
- **Process** the material you have available by asking yourself questions about the content (imagine what you might receive during the exam) and/or by making a diagram, writing down a bullet points, short notes. In this way **you will fully understand and memorize the** contents! You can fix them even better if, at the end of a topic, you try to remember it and express it in your own words. In elaborating and memorizing, consider your own characteristics but also those of subject.
- **Review** when you have finished a topic, allow time for the final review of the entire program for the exam. Do this considering your own time and any supports you usually use (for students/youth with a specific learning disorder, compensatory tools).



## 4. Find the right motivation

- Participate in activities and other types of interaction proposed by the professor during the lessons. **You will feel active and more involved and you will be able to test what you are learning.**
- Do the exercises and mock exams when available, to assess how prepared you are.
- Break down large goals (preparing for an exam) into smaller ones (learning the contents of a lesson): achieving them **will make you feel more motivated and effective.**

## 5. Do pleasant activities

During the day, intersperse study with **pleasant activities that you like!**

- Dedicate your free time (that you have planned!) to **favorite** pastimes and/or **new hobbies** and activities. **Then** you'll return to your studies more willingly!

**REMEMBER:** There are not only social media (networks) to spend your time!



## 6. Keep up to date and refer to appropriate services

- Use **official** sources to retrieve up-to-**date** information on how teaching methods are conducted (**university teaching pages** <https://didattica.unipd.it/>, Moodle page of your course of study or teaching) and to find information on academic life (university website).
- If you cannot find information on the website, you can always contact the faculty member in charge of teaching or contact the student services of the university or your department/school.
- Check what the University offers students and students with DSA or other BES.



Carts et al. (2014)  
Reid et al. (2012)