

Secrets to studying revealed

By Dana Lynn Flatekval
Staff Writer

With the last week of classes come the dreaded finals and the hours of studying or cramming that might make or break a grade point average.

Study habits obviously differ from student to student; however, most never really learn the "right" way to study.

Some people prefer the quiet, others prefer groups, but what it all comes down to is just working with your information and learning it.

"I try to take good notes during the semester," said senior elementary education and English major Denise Ondersin. "The most important advice I would give if you are struggling would be to manage your time and learn to be responsible."

Senior John Dalesandro, a secondary education and English major, said that he needs quiet.

"Anytime I try to work in groups, it ends up becoming a social gathering," he said. "I definitely need it to be quiet and I need to be alone and comfortable."

What does working with information and learning it mean?

According to Kendall Anderson Friedman, director of the Rider Learning Center and Tutoring Services, it is important to do more than just read notes over and over again.

"Hopefully you've all been diligent students who have been to class, taken notes and started studying," said Friedman. "However, if you haven't you can't just cram. You must use your senses and plan."

But many students across the country say that they don't come close to following that study regimen. Results

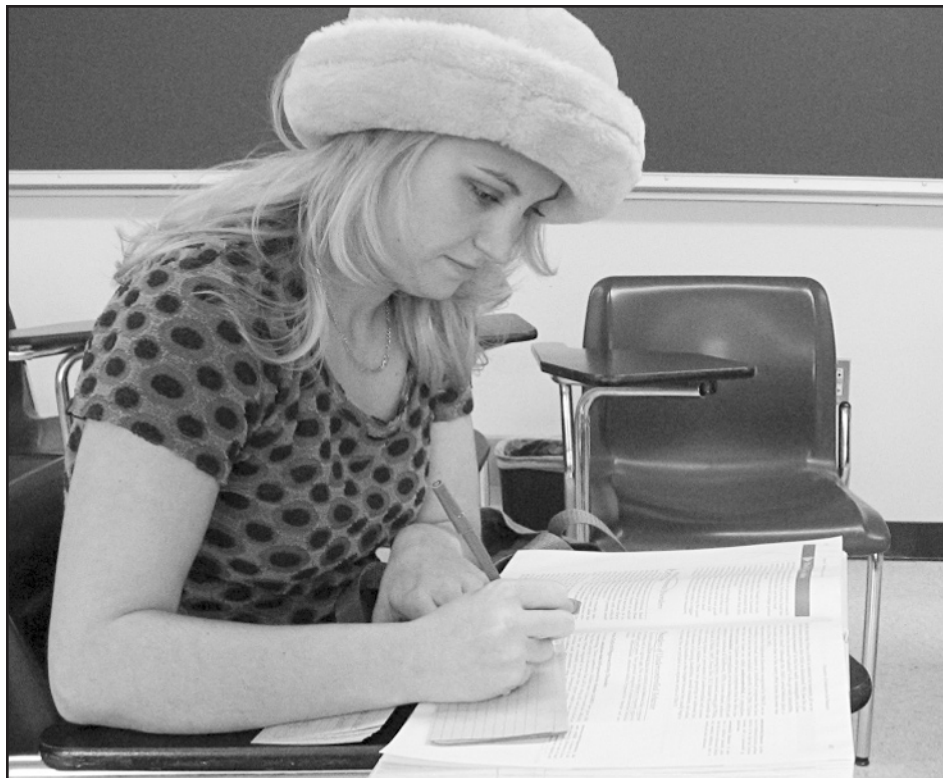


Photo by Hugh Tsung

Sophomore Kelsey Thompson takes some time out to make flashcards. As finals approach students put leisure time aside to study for exams.

from the latest National Survey of Student Engagement, released last year, found that only 12 percent of last year's freshmen at four-year residential colleges reported spending 26 or more hours per week preparing for classes while the majority, 63 percent, said that they spend 15 or fewer hours on class preparation, which the survey defines as "studying, reading, writing, rehearsing and other activities related to your academic program."

"I study at least two days before my exams," said senior Erin Moore, an English major.

Some give themselves extra time to study, like sophomore secondary education and English major Christina Carroll.

"If I'm lucky, I study at least a week in advance," said Carroll.

According to the survey, the most commonly prescribed amount of studying is at least two hours of class preparation for every hour spent in the classroom—meaning 25 to 30 hours a week for a typical full-time student.

"It's important to assemble materials and possibly create review materials," said Friedman. "These can be sample quizzes, games, charts, study sheets or practice essays."

"Also, if you get your essay questions in advance deconstruct and formulate answers as soon as possible. It is important to list key and supporting points as well."

Quite a few students follow the cre-

ated review material strategy.

"I type up my class notes and then study from those," said junior Matt Popilowski, a political science major and law and justice minor. "Good notes and a quiet environment help me study."

Sophomore French and Spanish major Estefania Juncal said that she finds study groups to be helpful in cramming.

"When I study for a test I try to get a few friends together that I have in that class and study with them because sometimes it helps when other people are there to organize ideas and important points," said Juncal. "It also helps you when someone doesn't know something. By explaining it to someone else, it helps you to remember it as well."

There are professionals at the Rider Learning Center located in the Academic Annex next to Daly's who can help students prepare for exams and help with study habits.

It has professional tutors available for private one on one sessions which are free of charge. Students are welcome to go to the Annex for more information or help.

But seniors have advice for incoming freshmen who don't know a thing about taking a final or are scared out of their wits.

Concentrate on what needs to be done immediately, even if it is not the most fun. Don't wait until the last minute to work on things. Do a little each day, according to Jeanine Puglisi, a senior elementary education and communications major.

"Remember that you have three years ahead and GPA isn't everything," said Dalesandro. "Just try your best."

Making memories during the gift-giving season

By Jordana Tusman
Staff Writer

December may be the holiday season of spending time with friends and family, but it's also a time when people scramble for scraps of money and rush to the malls. Presents are by far an important holiday element.

Ever since people were of a young age, it has been drilled into everyone's heads that it is better to give than to receive. This is when the trouble comes in: deciding what gifts to purchase. Many factors must be considered, such as how much money to spend on each particular gift, the quality of the item and which gift is right for whom.

"I get gifts that are functional and that I know my friends will enjoy," said junior Alyson Sherby.

Rider students seem to be pleased for the most part with the gifts they buy for their friends and family.

"I gave an ex-girlfriend a box. Inside was a poem I wrote for her and a ring," said freshman Christopher Mattie. "She opened it and cried."

"I usually buy gifts based on individual jokes and experiences," said freshman Jennifer Kriston. "I like to give mementos like decorated picture frames with photos inside."

After making the purchases, picking out the right gift-wrapping materials is just as important. Giving gifts in bags with lots of tissue paper engulfing a present or presents where people can rip off pretty bows or colored wrapping paper is almost as exciting as the actual present itself.



"I like wrapping gifts with bows and ribbons," said Kriston. "I like wrapping them more than unwrapping gifts myself."

The final stage after giving presents to friends and family is receiving them in return. Most people would agree this is one of the best parts.

"My favorite gift was my GI Joe headquarters set I got when I was eight," said Mattie.

Sometimes the most appreciated gifts cannot be bought in stores. Making a gift is always a thoughtful idea.

"My grandfather made me a nice necklace," said Sherby.

A lot of people who like to buy and receive gifts often participate in Pollyannas. This is when a person draws a random name out of a hat and buys a present for the person they chose. The person can be a friend

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**—Christopher Mattie,
Freshman**

or someone you don't know.

"Pollyannas are a cute idea," said Kriston. "I don't care what presents I get, but I like to give them."

For those that are known to be last minute shoppers and need some last minute quick gift ideas, candy, stuffed animals, clothes and gift certificates are always popular choices.

"Bake cookies and treats and put them in little bags, get gift cards to the mall or buy stuff from The Body Shop," said freshman Jennifer Zimmerman.

Don't forget that the most important part of holiday presents is the love and thought behind them. Leave time for presents, but be sure to spend the month with those who are close to you.

"The day before Christmas, my mom and I sit down and wrap presents together," said Kriston. "It's nice."