

# LRC Tip Sheet for Study Groups

## **A study group does the following:**

1. Helps you reinforce, clarify, and deepen your learning by providing the opportunity to teach others.. (Research indicates that many students improve their grades by supplementing individual study with group study.)
2. Can provide feedback before a quiz or a test on how well you are learning the material.
3. Helps prepare you for the working world, with its emphasis on teamwork.
4. Provides a support group. All students feel discouraged at times, but a group can refuel your motivation and make studying more fun.
5. Helps you participate in class because you have already discussed problems in your group.
6. Helps you become motivated to study, because you know your group depends on you.

## **Some ideas for study group meetings:**

1. Some groups begin their session by comparing lecture notes.
2. Most groups use their lecture notes, a lecture handout, or a study guide written by the professor as an outline to guide the order of topics to discuss.
3. For a more formal group: At the end of each session, write an agenda for the next session, where each group member is assigned specific material to prepare and present. Volunteer to be the presenter in the area you find most difficult. Research this area thoroughly and become an expert. Develop five questions to ask the others.
4. For an informal group, decide at the beginning of the session which topics you will study and how you will study. Share your insights and problems with the group.
6. Create summary sheets, charts, matrixes, study guides or outlines.
7. Have each member of the group prepare questions for a practice test and have the group solve the problems.
8. List your group's remaining areas of confusion and go to the professor for clarification. Ask a tutor for help at the LRC.

## **Possible Pitfalls and Problems**

1. If your group begins to deteriorate into a social group or complaining session, bring it back on track by simply asking, "Will this be on the test?" Take frequent breaks if studying for longer than an hour.
2. Try to encourage all members to participate.
3. Encourage members to work together to strengthen everyone's abilities.
4. Effective study groups require that members develop skills in group dynamics. If at first you don't succeed, discuss the problems with your group and try again. If all else fails, you might try again with a different group of students.