

Syllabus for the course: Learning How to Learn: Powerful mental tools to help you master tough subjects

A course for the undergraduate students of educational program “Journalism”

Course type: elective (blended)

The part of course: <https://www.coursera.org/learn/learning-how-to-learn>

Course description

This course gives you easy access to the invaluable learning techniques used by experts in art, music, literature, math, science, sports, and many other disciplines. You'll learn about the how the brain uses two very different learning modes and how it encapsulates (“chunks”) information. You'll also cover illusions of learning, memory techniques, dealing with procrastination, and best practices shown by research to be most effective in helping you master tough subjects.

Using these approaches, no matter what your skill levels in topics you would like to master, you can change your thinking and change your life. If you're already an expert, this peep under the mental hood will give you ideas for: turbocharging successful learning, including counter-intuitive test-taking tips and insights that will help you make the best use of your time on homework and problem sets. If you're struggling, you'll see a structured treasure trove of practical techniques that walk you through what you need to do to get on track. If you've ever wanted to become better at anything, this course will help serve as your guide.

Course Plan

1. What is Learning?

Although living brains are very complex, this module uses metaphor and analogy to help simplify matters. You will discover several fundamentally different modes of thinking, and how you can use these modes to improve your learning. You will also be introduced to a tool for tackling procrastination, be given some practical information about memory, and discover surprisingly useful insights about learning and sleep.

2. Chunking

In this module, we're going to be talking about chunks. Chunks are compact packages of information that your mind can easily access. We'll talk about how you can form chunks, how you can use them to improve your understanding and creativity with the material, and how chunks can help you to do better on tests. We'll also explore illusions of competence in learning, the challenges of overlearning, and the advantages of interleaving.

3. Procrastination and Memory

In this module, we talk about two intimately connected ideas—procrastination and memory. Building solid chunks in long term memory--chunks that are easily accessible by your short term memory—takes time. This is why learning to handle procrastination is so important. Finally, we talk about some of the best ways to access your brain's most powerful long term memory systems.

4. Renaissance Learning and Unlocking Your Potential

In this module we're going to talk more about important ideas and techniques that will enhance your ability to learn. You'll also discover how to more profitably interact with fellow learners, how to recognize your own strengths, and how to avoid the “imposter syndrome.” Fighter pilots and surgeons use checklists to help them with their critical duties—you can use a similar checklist to help you prepare for tests. Ultimately, you will learn more about the joys of living a life filled with learning!

Reading List

a. Required

1. Clifford A. Pickover. Wonders of Numbers: Adventures in Mathematics, Mind, and Meaning. Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2003 - URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=431193>

b. Optional

1. Nancy M. Dixon. The Organizational Learning Cycle: How We Can Learn Collectively. Routledge, 1999 - URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3002204>

2. Frank E. Ritter, Erno L., Josef N., Timothy M. O'Shea. In Order to Learn: How the Sequence of Topics Influences Learning. Oxford University Press USA – OSO, 2007 – URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=415428>

Grading System

Cumulative grade according to 10-point system includes all the for required assignments. The cumulative grade will be determined in advance of the final exam. It includes percentages for the various activities as follows:

Test Introductory Quiz (Lots of fun and useful info!)— 5%

Test What is Learning? – 15%

Test Chunking — 20%

Test Procrastination and Memory – 20%

Final test – 20%

When converting the grade into a 10-point grading system to determine the final result, the following formula will be applied.

Final grade is formed as follows:

- Cumulative grade – 80%;
- Final exam – 20%.

The final exam contains questions studied during online course.

Weighting of Assessments

You must pass each required assessment in order to pass this course. Note that you can take each quiz or the final two times in one twenty-four hour period. Only your highest quiz score counts, so if you happen to retake the quiz and score lower, it's okay, because your previous higher score is what will be retained.

Here is how we will weight and calculate each element of your grade:

MODULE: What is Learning?:

Introductory Quiz: 5% of the final grade

What is Learning? (Quiz): 15% of final grade

MODULE: Chunking:

Chunking (Quiz): 20% of final grade

MODULE: Procrastination and Memory:

Procrastination and Memory (Quiz): 20% of final grade

MODULE: Renaissance Learning and Unlocking Your Potential:

Final Test: 20% of final grade

Honors

To achieve Honors, at least a 70% score must be received in each of the two peer assessments. Your grade on peer assessments is determined by taking the median of the scores given by your peer evaluators on each rubric item. The median grades from each rubric item are added together to calculate your final grade for the assessment.

Here's an article from the Learner Help Center that gives more explanation about how learner grades on peer reviews are calculated, and here is another relevant article.

Note that the grades received on peer assessments are not factored into your overall grades in the course.

Special Equipment and Software Support

Special equipment is not required.