Tips for Successful and Productive Peer Study Meetings

One way to be academically successful in college and to build skills that you will need in your future career is to work with classmates on course material outside of class time and class requirements.

Working together with classmates in productive peer study meetings you can:

- Better understand concepts, keep up with the fast pace of learning material, motivate and encourage each other to do well in courses, and
- Develop skills that will be essential for your success in employment and graduate school settings such as teamwork, communication, problem solving and critical thinking skills.

Below are some tips for creating successful peer study meetings and examples of activities you can do to ensure your meetings are productive. If you want additional help forming and facilitating productive peer study meetings for any of your courses please contact NUCLEUS staff. We are happy to help with this!

Tips for creating successful peer study meetings:

- **Group members matter:** All group members must be serious about their academics, dependable, comfortable working with one another, attend all classes and devote time and energy to studying on their own before and after peer study meetings.
- **Keep groups small:** Two to four people work best together.
- **Keep meeting dates/times consistent:** Find a day/time that works well for all group members and meet regularly, every week for a set amount of time.
- **Make meetings focused on academics:** Socialize and vent outside of study meeting times.
- **Make meetings structured:** Decide what activities you will do when you meet, and what work group members need to do on their own before meeting.
- **Hold meetings in locations with few distractions:** See this list of good study spaces around campus, which includes group study rooms in the Morris Library.
- **Make sure group members come prepared:** In order to stay in the group, require members to do their pre-meeting work and contribute to group activities.
- **Aim for group understanding:** Utilize meetings to discuss concepts and continually challenge each other’s explanations in order come to a better understanding as a group. Attend professor’s/TA’s office hours together when the group is stuck or in disagreement.

Examples of productive activities to do in peer study meetings:

- Have members come to meetings with specific questions, then take turns answering each other’s questions and explaining concepts and terms.
- Work through difficult questions that members could not solve on their own, then create procedures in words explaining how to get to solutions and identify the concepts being tested in the questions.
- Have members come to meetings with summarized notes, then share and compare work to create a most complete set of notes or detailed outline.
- Have members identify different types of commonly asked questions and create examples of each before meeting, then share your questions and test each other.
- Create structure in your meetings using time, for example devote the first 25 minutes for asking and answering questions, the next 25 minutes for a planned activity, and the last 10 minutes for a wrap up summarizing what was learned and what needs to be done before the next meeting.