



## Reading Tips for Graduate Students

Graduate programs require a large quantity of reading each week (upwards to 250-300 pages!). Learn how to get the most out of your reading while also maximizing your time.

### Get acquainted with your reading.

- Read the introduction of a book in order to understand the framework of material. Authors will often discuss what will be covered throughout the book, including main objectives and the conclusion.
- Review the table of contents to understand the progression of material.
- Skim headings to understand what material will be covered.

### Read strategically, not linearly.

- Instead of covering every part of a chapter, find what you need to glean or information you may not be familiar with and move on to the next reading for class.

### Learn how to skim while retaining information.

- Write short 4-word phrases in the margins to capture the main points. When writing papers that critically evaluate readings, these 4-word phrases can help with finding information.

### Be purposeful.

- Ask yourself critical questions while reading text:
  - What is motivating the author to explore this topic?
  - How does this material contribute to research?
  - What are the main arguments?
  - What are the values underlying this work?

### Write down global points.

- Develop questions to bring to class and key points you found to be controversial. These ideas can help with memory recall, while helping you stand out as a stellar student!

### Create diagrams, tables, or flowcharts.

- Synthesize the information you are reading into diagrams, tables, or flowcharts in order to critically evaluate concepts you are learning. This can help formulate sound and balanced arguments for papers.

### Discuss readings with classmates.

- Review what you have gleaned from readings and understand your classmates' perspectives. This may help give a more holistic picture of the meaning of the text.

Adapted from *How to Read for Graduate School* by Miriam Sweeney.  
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