

Instructor Styles

Try to determine your course instructor's learning style by answering the following questions.

1. What clues does the language your instructor uses give you about his or her learning style?
2. What assignments has the instructor scheduled, and what do they tell you about the instructor's learning style?
3. Are there constraints (such as class size, scheduling factors, school traditions) that also influence the instructor's teaching style, apart from his or her underlying learning style?

How Your Instructor's Teaching Style Can Guide Your Studying Strategies

Having a sense of your instructor's teaching style can help maximize your success in a course. It can give you insight into the kinds of test questions your instructor may favor and help you strategize about what to pay particular attention to when you're reading and studying course material.

If your instructor focuses on broad, conceptual views of material:

- Be prepared for essay questions that ask you to pull different pieces of information together.
- Expect assignments in which you must synthesize different points of view into a coherent whole.
- As you read material, consider how different facts fit together into a broader picture.

If your instructor focuses on facts and details:

- Prepare for tests by learning individual facts, which may be tested using multiple choice or fill-in test questions.
- Expect assignments that are very specific and detailed.
- Study by focusing on specific facts. For instance, consider creating note cards on which you write individual bits of information.

What if your preferred learning style doesn't match up with your instructor's teaching style? Then keep in mind that there are benefits to the discomfort that you may experience when your instructor emphasizes activities that don't match your own learning styles. Remember that real learning is often difficult and uncomfortable, and the practice you get with less-preferred learning styles in the end will make you a more accomplished student.