



WOMEN IN HEALTH NETWORK  
MINI GUIDE TO FIRST-YEAR BOOKLET  
2021

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# FAQs FROM FIRST YEARS

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## Mental health & well-being tips

- ★ Recognise **your abilities, strengths, weaknesses** - don't overestimate what you can do - take everything in your stride
- ★ Know when to stop for YOU - **don't measure your abilities compared to others** because you don't know how well they're really dealing with it.
- ★ Everything happens for a reason - as long as you've tried your hardest - and as long as you've put in as much as you can, you've already achieved a lot and have so much to be proud of.
- ★ You need to trust the process you're putting yourself through, and focus on your immediate short term goals. The long term goal will fall into place only when all your little steps are set up.
- ★ **Don't lose yourself in first-year-** make sure to have an identity outside of studies - hobbies/extra-curriculars/relationships are just as important to maintain.
- ★ Physical health is extremely important - diet and sleep is imperative to ensure you're doing your best in studies.
- ★ Help yourself before you help others - but helping others can help solidify your knowledge. **Group studying can also expose a lot of gaps in your knowledge.**
- ★ Do not expect similar successes to high school - things will be different grade-wise, **do not beat yourself up**
- ★ Don't be rigid in your study techniques - **be flexible and try out loads of different techniques.**

## Study tips - tried and tested by us

- *Pomodoro - if you struggle to focus, try the pomodoro technique to break down work into intervals, traditionally 25 mins work, separated by 5 mins breaks - Grace L*
- *Background music - personally I find that white noise, classical, instrumental or lofi music can help with concentration. It's especially good for those of us who need some background noise to study well, and there are some really good online radios that can help! - Manvinder*
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qap5aO4i9A>
  - <https://calmyleon.com>
- *Grab a study buddy and test each other. You don't know what you don't know! - Madi*
- *University is 100% about working smart, not hard. Hack the system or nearly die trying to survive. Overwhelmed by readings? Add a text-to-speech chrome extension and 2x speed your readings online (free)! Stressed with taking down lecture notes? Download otter.ai and get software to transcribe everything for you (free or premium version)! - llenia*
  - <https://otter.ai/referrals/HLEN9YCX>
- *Make sure you watch your lectures in full straight away. Don't spend time making intricate notes on your first viewing. I think that if you spend too long making detailed notes on your first first viewing of the lecture you will fall behind very quickly. As long as you have watched the lecture once throughout and have a rough idea of the concepts, you can go back and make more detailed notes. I find that this is the best way to not fall behind and retain more information - Dua*
- *Use flowcharts to connect concepts and then link in all the little details. This particularly helped me in first year. And, with health, you're often referencing something very physical and real. Using flowcharts that you build up gives you a great visual understanding, and the work you put into it means you remember a lot more content. Things that force you to reconstruct and shift your information around makes you more engaged with your learning and helps so much with recall - Maitreyi*

- *Something I've been doing for the past couple of years is saying out loud the concepts I have learnt because this really gives me a clear idea of how well I really understand what I am studying. It has also saved me a lot of time than the time it would take if I was rewriting my notes over and over - Nayanika*
- *Try explaining concepts to your friends, family or even a teddy bear! Teaching somebody is the best way to learn and I've found this trick really helps consolidate the information I know and helps me identify the gaps in my knowledge - Arthana*
- *Understand your study cycle and habits! This may be something that you struggle to get the hang of in the early days of university but knowing what works for you is really important! It can be tough trying to keep up with study habits that seem glamorous to you purely because it works for most of your friends but know that everyone learns differently. Whether it be through study groups, flashcards or readings venture out and explore them, put them to practice, tweak them to what works for you and continue these habits. Remember don't be too hard on yourself if fellow classmates can understand the 100 pages of readings and 6 different concepts after each lecture - we all learn at different paces and there's nothing wrong with that! - Ritu*

## Non-core and core courses - balancing your study workload

### **Core courses**

#### **CHEM 110**

- ❖ COURSEGUIDE IS YOUR HOLY GRAIL - Try to fill out as much of the gaps during the lecture as the lecturers give you time and then **once the lecture finishes you can easily do the quiz**
  - Try to understand the underlying concepts under all the different reactions they're throwing at you!
- ❖ Labs
  - Do the prelabs on Bestchoice, good indication of what to expect
  - Go over labs in depth and **be as familiar with the method as you can** before you go in because you are generally pressed for time (watch youtube videos, read other resources, ask friends if you are unsure about something)

#### **BIOSCI 107**

- ❖ Resources
  - ALL Tortora readings are examinable
  - But remember, the content in the actual lectures are MUCH more important and definitely more examinable.
  - Focus on the things you get wrong! Write them down and remember it, connect it with the knowledge you do have to consolidate it.
- ❖ **Past papers**
  - Do them all and check your answers with a group so you can understand where you went wrong in your one
- ❖ Labs
  - Don't buy clay to practice for the embryo lab. NOT WORTH THE 30 BUCKS. Go buy yourself something more rewarding like KFC or a chicken sushi triangle from Munchy (\$3!!)

#### **POPLHLTH 111**

- ❖ Rod Jackson's section
  - **GATE notes!** Explains everything more concisely
  - Read GATE notes in advance if you can because it helps to clarify his lectures more as well.
- ❖ Roshini's section
  - Focus on the **slides with stars**, she emphasizes they're important

- **Look at her quizzes in the lecture**, these are good starting points for lecture revision.
- ❖ Mid-semester test is conceptually complex and requires two/three leaps in conceptual knowledge.
  - Generally agreed to be fairly difficult and the first two modules are what's tested.
- ❖ Group presentation
  - **Be willing to help your team members**, even if the group has allocated tasks for each member, if you understand a concept/ task better and someone else is struggling, please share what you know with your team members so that your presentation can be the best possible!
- ❖ For the final exam, start your memorisation tactics early. Flashcards are helpful!

## **MEDSCI 142**

- ❖ Lectures - **Try not to fall behind! Stay on top of it.** Revise lecture the day of the lecture itself, as well as the day after ("Spaced Repetition" idea).
- ❖ Textbook is **good for explaining concepts if you need clarification**
  - Tortora readings may be examinable and they're explained quite well in the textbook.
- ❖ Labs
  - Redo practice questions a lot, the MCQs in the labs aren't as hard as the ones in the MEDSCI tests though!
  - **Opting out of the dissections will not disadvantage you** (especially if you're very uncomfortable). **The person teaching will also be dissecting and this is projected on the screen.**
  - Knowing your orientation especially in the dissection labs is very important. Try naming different features of the specimen from different views - superior/inferior/left/right/anterior/posterior).
- ❖ MCQs - be able to **explain/justify why the other options are wrong** rather than just identifying the correct answer.
- ❖ Exam
  - Get the easy systems out of the way. Digestive system is your friend + endocrine + reproto as they're memorisation. Then onto the harder ones.

## **Non-core courses**

### **POPLHLTH 101 & 102**

- ❖ Hand in **draft essay (bullet points) to tutors for feedback.** Even an introduction is sufficient, just to know you are on the right track.

- ❖ It will be extremely beneficial to you if you learn how to format an essay nicely early on. Be mindful of structure, paragraphing, indenting, font, sizing, referencing & citing.
- ❖ Compile exam questions and start forming answers to them early on in the semester.
- ❖ Also a good idea to form connections between topics in a mind-map form.

### **HLTHPSYC 122**

- ❖ Even though it may seem tempting to skip the tutorials, the tutors are there to help and the content summarises and solidifies what you learn in the lectures so it's a good idea to attend!
- ❖ Beware the lecture slides are **very content heavy!** Make your notes concise.
- ❖ Assignment - you are given a marking schedule rubric, use this as your guide!

### **BIOSCI 101**

- ❖ This unit is a good introduction to biology and the first unit has some overlap with BioSci 107 second unit (thus a little less to study!)
- ❖ Keep up with lecture recordings and make notes
  - There is **no need (or time) to make extra notes from textbooks**, but use those resources especially if you can't understand a topic.
- ❖ Labs are similar to 107; try your best to understand the lab beforehand
- ❖ Both tests are MCQs - be able to justify BOTH wrong and right options

### **BIOSCI 106**

- ❖ There is a lot of new content in this subject but try to keep up with the lectures
- ❖ Lectures have all the information that is examinable
- ❖ Labs are similar to 107 again, so do the same as you'd do in 101.
- ❖ The photosynthesis topic is quite convoluted but remember there is less pressure to remember every detail in this paper (it is a non-core at the end of the day) but do your best to remember what you can!

### **PHYSICS 160**

- ❖ The **textbook is very helpful with the practice questions**; having the newest edition isn't necessary
- ❖ Exam can be difficult, but you get a 'cheat sheet'
  - **Developing one early on / having a sheet with formulae and concepts can help you as you study through the semester.**
- ❖ Do the workshops with a group of friends or people you can rely on! Try to quickly answer the questions while the tutors are still around.



## General Education Courses - our reviews

### ★ PHIL 105G

*'The ground is wet and it is very cloudy, therefore it rained.'* — is this a good argument? Phil105G is a great course if you have the strength of being able to think very logically about things. This philosophy course is not about "death and the meaning of life" (as one might imagine it to be about), but instead, it is about the very basics of building a philosophical argument. Over the first semester, you will learn about how to make a plausible argument with no loopholes and the different fallacies in philosophy. It is overall a challenging subject for the mind. Personally, I found this course quite difficult as I am a more creative thinker when it comes to using languages and forcing myself to rewire my brain to be so logical with language took a lot of effort. However, with that being said, PHIL105G has its perks of being so flexible as you are given the choice to attend classes online or in person (even during non-covid times). Lastly, the statement in the beginning would not stand as a valid argument because the ground could be wet for many different reasons! All the best! - Cindy

### ★ ECON 151G

*"Coming from someone with very little knowledge on anything to do with commerce/economics, I found this course to be quite straightforward and definitely very manageable. ECON151G is great if you're interested in learning a bit about how the economy works as it covers basic economics concepts which can be quite useful to know! The coursework is a breeze - worth 40% of your final grade consisting of 10 weekly quizzes and one mid-term essay, and this puts you in a good position for the final exam. Although there is a fair amount of content to learn, the lecturer explains all the concepts well, the tutorials are helpful and there are plenty of resources to help you prep for the exam, which is not difficult at all to do well in if you consistently keep up with the lecture content each week."* - Jackie

### ★ DANCE 101G

*"I took this during the first semester and it was such a world away from the rest of my courses. I met a lot of other biomed students there as well, surprisingly, but also SO many other people from a huge range of degrees. It was nice to take such a different paper and do something so unique! It was definitely a lot easier to study for as well. Even though it was a bit, well, airy-fairy at times, you can just run with it and generally take it easy. And yes - you do actually have to dance, but this paper is more around how to create movement so you have discussions and lectures on different movement types and healing movements which are more in the alternative medicine category. You do a lecture a week in the Architecture building and a workshop a week down at the Sir Kenneth Myers Centre (a ten minute walk from the city campus). Definitely all unexpected but interesting to add to my knowledge."* - Maitreyi

*"I found this gen-ed to be quite a nice change in pace especially with courses that are heavy on the books (which first year tends to be) but be warned that you will have to come out of your comfort zone! For me it was really enjoyable even as someone with little dance experience, although this course was more focused on interpretive dance. I particularly liked the 'artistic project' assignment where you could do literally anything connected to dance and it was cool seeing what other people had come up with. For the final exam - if you had a good grip on high school English essays you'll be sweet, as long as you can also bring in the theoretical aspects of movement and dance (i.e. readings!)" - Manvinder*

**★ THEO 106G**

*"This course was a huge eye opener! It was not like your general courses where you sit in the lecture room listening to the lecturer read off the slides but entirely discussion based! It consisted of one two-hour lecture and one one-hour tutorial a week so it is a fairly manageable course. The course content itself was very interesting as it was mostly discussion based where Zain - the lecturer opened the floor to the students to discuss views, thoughts and opinions on various topics whilst keeping it a safe and open environment - would highly recommend this course as it was just amazing!" - Ritu*

**★ MĀORI 130G**

*"This course had a fairly relaxed workload. I took it when it was available in Semester One but this (I believe) has changed. It covered Māori history in New Zealand, both before and after colonisation - it is Māori history in New Zealand taught through a specifically Māori lens. We also discussed Māori health and living statistics in the current day - health and imprisonment statistics, as well as highlighting the continuing discrimination against Māori people in our country and institutions. Overall, it was a very good course providing valuable knowledge."*  
- Irisha

# Best Study Spots

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Some of the best study spaces in our humble opinion:

## **CITY CAMPUS**

- ❖ Gen Lib levels four and up
  - Solo, quiet, but seats are taken fast especially during exam season!
- ❖ HSB microwave room
  - If you like to snack while you study
- ❖ HSB
  - There are whiteboards and large group study tables.
- ❖ Pasifika space
  - Almost never crowded. Whole couch or table to yourself and some window seats if you want a view and fresh air.

## **GRAFTON**

- ❖ Philson Library
  - It's a great quiet solo study zone but it's fairly high stress
  - Can also book study rooms which is especially great if you want to do some group study
- ❖ Student commons on the first floor
  - If you want to do group activities/discussions in an open area with tables and couches where you can talk and work
- ❖ Grafton Information Commons
  - Many computers where you can study quietly with some privacy due to the walls between the computers
- ❖ Building 507 / "The Health Sci building"
  - This is a study area with large tables for quiet group study
  - It's a really nice atmosphere but not great for high intensity studying