

Advice to Incoming Foundations Students: Terms 1 & 2

Based on the end of block evaluation question:
 “What advice would you give to the next group of students to take this block?”

Block 1: MCB D

| Comment Category | Alaska | | Idaho | | Montana | | Seattle | | Spokane | | Wyoming | | Grand Total | |
|---|--------|------|-------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|-------------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Don't get behind in prep/study | 3 | 23.1 | 10 | 45.5 | 5 | 18.5 | 7 | 13.7 | 2 | 13.3 | 7 | 41.2 | 34 | 23.4 |
| Don't spend too much time on class prep | 1 | 7.7 | 2 | 9.1 | 11 | 40.7 | 10 | 19.6 | 4 | 26.7 | 2 | 11.8 | 30 | 20.7 |
| Utilize specific resources | 1 | 7.7 | 2 | 9.1 | 5 | 18.5 | 11 | 21.6 | 5 | 33.3 | 3 | 17.6 | 27 | 18.6 |
| Refine study skills | 0 | 0 | 4 | 18.2 | 7 | 25.9 | 5 | 9.8 | 2 | 13.3 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 12.4 |
| Focus on objectives | 2 | 15.4 | 6 | 27.3 | 1 | 3.7 | 8 | 15.7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 11.7 |
| Stress reduction | 1 | 7.7 | 2 | 9.1 | 2 | 7.4 | 4 | 7.8 | 3 | 20 | 2 | 11.8 | 14 | 9.7 |
| Faculty interaction important | 1 | 7.7 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7.4 | 7 | 13.7 | 1 | 6.7 | 1 | 5.9 | 12 | 8.3 |
| Balance work/life | 1 | 7.7 | 3 | 13.6 | 1 | 3.7 | 3 | 5.9 | 1 | 6.7 | 2 | 11.8 | 11 | 7.6 |
| Review after class | 1 | 7.7 | 2 | 9.1 | 3 | 11.1 | 3 | 5.9 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 11.8 | 11 | 7.6 |
| Use class time efficiently | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4.5 | 1 | 3.7 | 4 | 7.8 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 11.8 | 8 | 5.5 |
| HFF specific recommendation | 2 | 15.4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3.7 | 2 | 3.9 | 1 | 6.7 | 1 | 5.9 | 7 | 4.8 |
| Group study | 1 | 7.7 | 1 | 4.5 | 1 | 3.7 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 13.3 | 1 | 5.9 | 7 | 4.8 |
| Biochem specific recommendation | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4.5 | 1 | 3.7 | 2 | 3.9 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5.9 | 5 | 3.4 |

Common responses across sites

- *Don't get behind in prep/study*: Students advise future students to avoid procrastination, continue work read, and review each day, and advise to avoid getting behind in review/study and pre-class reading and preparation. Students also suggest that consistent daily study and review is crucial.
- *Don't spend too much time on class prep*: Students advise that future students not worry about completing all assigned reading, as they suggest it is not possible to do all pre-class preparation and effectively complete necessary review and study. Students note that pre-class reading is not crucial since retention of material is low, and it is more effective to spend time on other study activities. Students also suggest focusing pre-class reading to only relevant objective related topics.
- *Utilize specific resources*: Students advise use of specific resources, including the First Aid book, Lippincott's Biochemistry, specific video resources, specific PowerPoints, study guides, review materials, OneNote, syllabi, etc.
- *Refine study skills*: Students suggest that future students establish and refine strong study habits early in the semester. Students also suggest that note/file organization is very important in effective studying. Finally, students note that it is important to be flexible in studying and learning styles, and to be ready adapt to different teaching methods or in response to poor exam grades.
- *Focus on objectives*: Some students suggest that utilizing objectives to focus studying and learning activities is important to course success.
- *Stress reduction*: Some students suggest that stress reduction and stress management is important to course success.

- *Faculty interaction important*: Some students advise that faculty interaction is important to course success, including advocating more test feedback, speaking with instructors regarding course concerns, asking questions, and giving feedback to instructors and administrators.
- *Balance work/life*: Some students suggest that it is important to take study breaks, exercise, and take Friday evenings or weekends off.
- *Review after class*: Some students advise to review pre-class/class material after class to increase retention and understanding.
- *Use class time efficiently*: Some students advise to use class time and active learning sessions efficiently, to pay attention and be engaged, and to have completed the pre-class reading prior to class to get more out of class time.
- *HFF specific recommendation*: Some students give Human Form and Function specific advice, including utilizing outside anatomy resources, studying for anatomy as early as possible, to keep up with anatomy studying, and having familiarity with anatomy prior to medical school.
- *Group study*: Some students suggest that students utilize out of class group study sessions.
- *Biochem specific recommendation*: Some students give biochemistry specific recommendations, including having biochemistry background and experience prior to medical school, reading biochemistry during the summer prior to school, to buy the Lippincott's biochemistry book, and to stay on top of biochemistry studying.

Block 2: Invaders & Defenders

| Category | Alaska | | Idaho | | Montana | | Seattle | | Spokane | | Wyoming | | Grand Total | |
|--|--------|------|-------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|----|-------------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| SketchyMicro | 2 | 28.6 | 10 | 43.5 | 9 | 47.4 | 14 | 29.8 | 5 | 41.7 | 2 | 40 | 42 | 37.2 |
| Use specific resources | 2 | 28.6 | 6 | 26.1 | 5 | 26.3 | 8 | 17 | 4 | 33.3 | 1 | 20 | 26 | 23 |
| Don't get behind | 1 | 14.3 | 7 | 30.4 | 3 | 15.8 | 7 | 14.9 | 3 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 18.6 |
| Video watching recs | 1 | 14.3 | 2 | 8.7 | 1 | 5.3 | 3 | 6.4 | 2 | 16.7 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 8 |
| Create detailed study materials | 1 | 14.3 | 1 | 4.3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 6.4 | 3 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 7.1 |
| Complete all prep | 1 | 14.3 | 1 | 4.3 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 8.5 | 1 | 8.3 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 6.2 |
| Use study time efficiently | 1 | 14.3 | 3 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4.3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 5.3 |
| Immuno resources/advice | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4.3 | 3 | 15.8 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 8.3 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 5.3 |
| Study on your own | 1 | 14.3 | 3 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 20 | 5 | 4.4 |
| Focus on clinical aspects | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4.3 | 2 | 10.5 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 8.3 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 4.4 |
| Come to class | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 10.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 4.4 |
| Understand won't be able to do all of prep | 1 | 14.3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5.3 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 8.3 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3.5 |
| Be flexible in study strategy | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4.3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 6.4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3.5 |
| Masterlist of bugs for micro | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4.3 | 1 | 5.3 | 2 | 4.3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3.5 |
| Don't come to class | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 6.4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 20 | 4 | 3.5 |

Common responses across sites

- *SketchyMicro*: The most common response, students recommend use of SketchyMicro for studying microbiology.
- *Use specific resources*: In addition to using SketchyMicro, a majority of respondents suggest use of specific resources, including smart flashcards, firecracker, Springboard videos, a Step1 book, videos and PowerPoints, First Aid, Picmonic, UW med wiki spreadsheets, and others.
- *Don't get behind*: Many students recommend that future students stay on top of studying, pre-class prep, and avoid getting behind in studying at all costs.
- *Video watching recommendations*: Students suggest watching videos multiple times, taking verbatim notes from the videos, watching videos at increased speed, and complement videos with outside resources. A few students suggest not using the videos at all and instead studying from PowerPoint and outside resources.

- *Create detailed study materials:* Students advise that future students spend time making their own detailed notes from videos and other study materials, and to create visual aids and charts to study from.
- *Complete all prep:* Some students advise completing all preparatory study prior to class, to get the most out of in-class time.
- *Use study time efficiently:* Some students suggest studying efficiently as possible, ignoring extraneous materials, or memorizing everything possible, and update and maintain study materials throughout the block.
- *Immunology resources/advice:* Some students suggest to look for outside immunology materials, take microbiology and immunology classes prior to medical school, or to understand the basics of immunology first, and map out clinical components of each pathogen.
- *Study on your own:* Some students suggest that future students study alone prior to group work, and to be prepared to teach themselves the material for the block.
- *Focus on clinical aspects:* Some students suggest focusing on clinical aspects and applications of the material.
- *Come to class:* Some students suggest class attendance to learn from experts in their field and gain more breadth of experience and learn from their peers.
- *Understand won't be able to complete all of prep:* Some students suggest not to be discouraged when unable to complete all of the pre-class prep videos, and to try to avoid feeling overwhelmed by the amount of preclass prep.
- *Be flexible in study strategy:* Some students suggest that future students be flexible in their learning styles, and try to best utilize the resources provided.
- *Masterlist of bugs for microbiology:* Some students suggest creating and using a masterlist or spreadsheet of all the microbes to organize studying.
- *Don't come to class:* Some students suggest that instead of attending class, time may be better spent with independent study.

Block 3: CPR

| Comment Categories | Alaska | | Idaho | | Montana | | Seattle | | Spokane | | Wyoming | | Grand total | |
|---|--------|-----|-------|-----|---------|------|---------|----|---------|------|---------|----|-------------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Recommend specific/outside resources | 4 | 19 | 7 | 20 | 6 | 20 | 13 | 13 | 4 | 10.3 | 7 | 35 | 41 | 16.7 |
| Utilize small groups effectively | 1 | 4.8 | 1 | 2.9 | 3 | 10 | 21 | 21 | 4 | 10.3 | 1 | 5 | 31 | 12.7 |
| Keep up with material | 2 | 9.5 | 2 | 5.7 | 4 | 13.3 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 12.8 | 2 | 10 | 25 | 10.2 |
| Use syllabi | 2 | 9.5 | 2 | 5.7 | 3 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 1 | 2.6 | 4 | 20 | 20 | 8.2 |
| Focus on case studies for class/test prep | 2 | 9.5 | 1 | 2.9 | 1 | 3.3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 7.7 | 2 | 10 | 12 | 4.9 |
| Come to class prepared | 1 | 4.8 | 1 | 2.9 | 2 | 6.7 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 7.7 | 1 | 5 | 12 | 4.9 |
| Work on small group material prior to meeting | 1 | 4.8 | 1 | 2.9 | 2 | 6.7 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 2.6 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 4.1 |
| Utilize/communicate with faculty | 1 | 4.8 | 1 | 2.9 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 2.6 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 2.9 |
| Watch recorded Seattle lectures | 1 | 4.8 | 4 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2.6 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 2.9 |
| Focus on broad concepts | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2.9 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 5 | 2 |

Common responses across sites

- *Recommend specific/outside resources:* The most common response to this question, many students recommended utilizing specific learning resources, including outside texts, websites, and other materials. In addition to course materials and videos posted on the canvas page, and the syllabus, these recommended materials and resources included YouTube (2x), USMLE RX (5x), shared board prep resources, Lilly's Cardiovascular text, QBank (2x), previous exams on MedWiki, Vander's Renal Physiology text (2x), Firecracker (5x), Dublin's Rapid Interpretation of EKGs (3x), First Aid (7x), Kahn Academy (2x), Pathoma (5x), or others to fit their learning style, or when resources offered by the faculty weren't adequate.

- *Utilize small groups effectively:* The second most common response, many students recommend attending, being involved, and utilizing as effectively as possible the small group sessions. Students also recommend using small group time to ask specific questions, and to speak up regarding points of confusion in small groups.
- *Keep up with material:* Students recommend keeping up with material throughout, and to avoid getting behind in study and preparation, and to study consistently throughout to avoid cramming.
- *Use syllabi:* Students recommend printing, reading the syllabi in detail, reading the syllabi multiple times, and read the syllabi in preparation for class.
- *Focus on case studies for class/test prep:* Students recommend focusing specifically on case studies, in their various iterations, in reviewing before and after class and small group meetings, and in preparation for exams.
- *Come to class prepared:* Students recommend preparing prior to class by reading and reviewing the syllabi and other materials. This preparation was reported to aid in learning via repetition of material, and make learning in lecture/small group more effective.
- *Work on small group material prior to meeting:* Students recommend specifically preparing for small group sessions by working through exercises and completing assigned reading beforehand. This allowed students to pinpoint areas of confusion, raise better questions, and made small groups run more smoothly.
- *Utilize/communicate with faculty:* Students recommend utilizing and communicating with faculty and small group leaders to clarify points of confusion.
- *Watch recorded Seattle lectures:* Regional students recommend watching previously recorded Seattle lectures.
- *Focus on broad concepts:* Students recommend focusing on broad concepts and big picture information before diving into the details and minutiae.

Block 4: Blood & Cancer

| Comment Category | Alaska | | Idaho | | Montana | | Seattle | | Spokane | | Wyoming | | Total | |
|---------------------------------------|--------|------|-------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|-------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Use Pathoma | 2 | 15.4 | 9 | 37.5 | 12 | 46.2 | 12 | 33.3 | 8 | 50 | 2 | 11.1 | 45 | 33.8 |
| Recommend other outside resources | 1 | 7.7 | 4 | 16.7 | 6 | 23.1 | 10 | 27.8 | 2 | 12.5 | 3 | 16.7 | 26 | 19.5 |
| Go to class sessions & small groups | 0 | 0 | 4 | 16.7 | 2 | 7.7 | 3 | 8.3 | 1 | 6.3 | 2 | 11.1 | 12 | 9 |
| Time management | 1 | 7.7 | 3 | 12.5 | 3 | 11.5 | 2 | 5.6 | 1 | 6.3 | 2 | 11.1 | 12 | 9 |
| Use Syllabi | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8.3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 5.6 | 3 | 18.8 | 4 | 22.2 | 11 | 8.3 |
| Don't use syllabi | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8.3 | 2 | 7.7 | 3 | 8.3 | 1 | 6.3 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 6 |
| Focus on overall concepts/big picture | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4.2 | 1 | 3.8 | 3 | 8.3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 16.7 | 8 | 6 |
| Start pharmacology early | 1 | 7.7 | 2 | 8.3 | 2 | 7.7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 11.1 | 7 | 5.3 |
| Organize the material | 1 | 7.7 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3.8 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 25 | 1 | 5.6 | 7 | 5.3 |
| Do prep work before class | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4.2 | 2 | 7.7 | 1 | 2.8 | 1 | 6.3 | 1 | 5.6 | 6 | 4.5 |
| Don't ignore theme material | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8.3 | 1 | 3.8 | 1 | 2.8 | 1 | 6.3 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 3.8 |
| Use instructors as a resource | 1 | 7.7 | 1 | 4.2 | 1 | 3.8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5.6 | 4 | 3 |

Common Responses

- *Use Pathoma:* Students overwhelmingly stated that Pathoma was a helpful resource and recommend that students use it when taking this block next year. Many comments said that the Pathoma videos were especially helpful when the syllabi were difficult to understand, for consolidating concepts, and for incorporating more physiology with the material.
- *Recommend other outside resources:* Students mentioned several other outside learning resources as advice for helping to get through this block. First Aid (10 mentions), as well as USMLE-RX (4) and Firecracker (4) videos were the most frequently mentioned outside resources (besides Pathoma, above). Other students just said that the outside resources and other board prep materials in general are important in helping supplement the class material, organizing key pathologies, and reinforcing concepts.

- *Go to class sessions/small group sessions:* Actually attending class was frequently given advice in the comments. Many specifically mentioned attending the small group sessions, paying attention in lecture, and participating in the conferences to get the most out of the experience.
- *Time management:* Staying on top of the material and the pace of block were some frequently mentioned pieces of advice. Some suggested managing time by studying every day, staying on top of the prep assignments, reviewing information after class, and keeping up with the syllabi.
- *Use the syllabi:* Many students recommend reading the syllabi and focusing on its material throughout the block, including keeping up with it, and using it especially for getting extra information on the details.
- *Do not use the syllabi:* Some students recommended not using the syllabi as a study tool, and relying on other resources instead such as those mentioned above or the PowerPoint slides from lecture.
- *Focus on the overall concepts/big picture:* Students commented that for this block, it is helpful to focus on the big picture when learning new material, and study the overall concepts not the minute details.
- *Start pharmacology early:* Owing in part to the extensive drug list and it being given at the end of the block, students recommend starting to learn the block's pharmacology material ahead of its in-class presentation.
- *Organize the material:* A few students suggested organizing the material in specific ways, such as making flow charts, outlining the information, and creating tables to organize the anemias and leukemias.
- *Do prep work before class:* Prepping before class was some common advice in the comments, including creating outlines before class and preparing for the cases.
- *Do not ignore the theme material:* A few students mentioned that as the final assessment had a number of epidemiology questions, to not ignore the theme material presented during the block.
- *Use the instructors as a resource:* Some students suggested to listen and trust the instructors and use them as a valuable learning resource. Dr. Ritter and Dr. Martinson from Alaska were specifically mentioned.

Block 5: Energetics & Homeostasis

| Comment Category | Alaska | | Idaho | | Montana | | Seattle | | Spokane | | Wyoming | | Total | |
|---------------------------------------|--------|----|-------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|---------|------|-------|------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| No Response | 2 | 50 | 6 | 23.1 | 6 | 25 | 11 | 25.6 | 1 | 7.1 | 3 | 21.4 | 29 | 23.2 |
| Read Syllabi | | | 6 | 23.1 | 3 | 12.5 | 11 | 25.6 | 3 | | 4 | | 27 | 21.6 |
| Small Group/Cases | | 0 | 3 | 11.5 | 7 | 29.2 | 12 | 27.9 | 1 | 7.1 | 1 | 7.1 | 24 | 19.2 |
| Use Outside Resources | 1 | 25 | 2 | 7.7 | 5 | 20.8 | 10 | 23.3 | 2 | 14.3 | 1 | 7.1 | 21 | 16.8 |
| Miscellaneous Comments | | 0 | 2 | 7.7 | 6 | 25 | 5 | 11.6 | 2 | 14.3 | 5 | 35.7 | 20 | 16 |
| Stay on top of reading/Prep for class | 1 | 25 | 7 | 26.9 | 2 | 8.3 | 6 | 14 | 2 | 14.3 | 1 | 7.1 | 19 | 15.2 |
| Focus on the Big Concepts | | 0 | 1 | 3.8 | 2 | 8.3 | 5 | 11.6 | 1 | 7.1 | 3 | 21.4 | 12 | 9.6 |
| Pay Attention in class/in lecture | | 0 | 2 | 7.7 | | 0 | 5 | 11.6 | 2 | 14.3 | | 0 | 9 | 7.2 |
| Enjoy the Block! | | 0 | 1 | 3.8 | | 0 | 4 | 9.3 | 1 | 7.1 | | 0 | 6 | 4.8 |
| Study Anatomy | | 0 | | 0 | 2 | 8.3 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 7.1 | | 0 | 6 | 4.8 |
| Don't Use Syllabi | | 0 | | 0 | | 0 | 1 | 2.3 | 3 | 21.4 | 2 | 14.3 | 6 | 4.8 |
| Watch Pathology Videos | | 0 | 2 | 7.7 | 2 | 8.3 | | 0 | | 0 | | 0 | 4 | 3.2 |
| Watch Recorded Sessions | | 0 | 3 | 11.5 | | 0 | 1 | 2.3 | | 0 | | 0 | 4 | 3.2 |

Common Responses Across All Sites

1. *Read Syllabi:* The majority of comments advised future students to read the syllabi. Some suggested to read the syllabi like a novel, to just skim it and not take too many notes, and instead read the margin boxes in more detail, making sure to understand the general concept from each section. Others advised to read the syllabi in detail. All agree that reading the syllabi in any capacity is critical in this block.

2. *Utilize small group/pay attention to small group cases:* After reading the syllabi, studying from the small group cases and paying attention in small groups were the most popular suggestions for future students in this block. Many comments mentioned to focus on knowing the cases well and studying them primarily as many test questions are taken from the small group cases. Others mentioned that using the cases in small groups were helpful in understanding the information in the syllabi, and that small groups are very helpful for learning the main concepts from the syllabus.
3. *Use outside resources:* Many comments suggest supplementing the syllabi, lecture slides and other reading materials with outside resources such as First Aid, USMLE practice questions, Acland videos for studying anatomy, Pathoma, and Firecracker.
4. *Miscellaneous Comments:* Some of the advice mentioned in these comments include: do well on the quizzes early on, not to stress about the tests or the essay questions, form study groups, study harder for the tests than is necessary so that the block content is learned for the future, take the extra time from a lighter workload to review content from the previous blocks, review MCBBD before the block starts, and to get enough sleep.
5. *Stay on top of reading/prepare for class:* most of the comments in this category alluded to following some sort of study schedule so as to not fall behind on reading, and to be appropriately prepared for each class session. Several students suggested pre-loading studying at the beginning of the weeks to be prepared for anatomy and quizzes at the end of the week, and to make sure reading and other pre-class prep is done in order to “maximize the benefit from class.”
6. *Focus on the big concepts:* paying attention to learning the main concepts and not getting bogged down in the details was frequently mentioned in the student responses.
7. *Pay attention in class and to the lectures:* Comments mentioned paying attention to the main concepts presented in the mini-lectures and to utilize other class materials.
8. *Enjoy this block!* A few students mentioned that this was their favorite block so far, and advised future students to enjoy learning during this block.
9. *Study anatomy:* Comments concerning anatomy mentioned beginning anatomy study early on so as not fall behind and to avoid cramming for the pin test.
10. *Do not use the syllabi:* Compared to the number of comments that mentioned reading the syllabi, only a small amount suggested the opposite, to not read the syllabi. Some said to focus on small groups instead or to use alternative outside resources.
11. *Watch Pathology videos:* Dr. Rendi’s Path videos were cited as among the most beneficial learning aspect of the course.
12. *Watch recorded class sessions:* Students from Idaho specifically mentioned that re-watching the Seattle lecture videos and review videos were very helpful if behind in reading.