

How to Get the Most out of the TNS Course

The Trauma Nurse Specialist Course will require dedicated study time in class and at home in order to achieve maximum mastery of the objectives. Studying is not the same as merely reading, memorizing or reviewing written materials. True studying requires motivation, time, and use of techniques that help you to understand, store, and retrieve information...on test day and beyond.

Classroom strategies:

1. Sit in a seat that allows you to see and hear classroom activities easily.
2. Do not let your mind wander while the instructor is speaking. Use active listening to stay engaged in the material being presented. Do not try to take down everything a speaker says in your notes. You will miss the essence of the content. The course outlines are detailed and contain all of the essential core content.
3. If you are sleepy, it is recommended that you stand in the back of the room to help remain awake and engaged in the class presentations.
4. Write down specific questions you need answered to ask the instructor at appropriate times or at break. Please don't wait to ask all of your questions at lunch break or after class. The instructors need this time to attend to daily business or to prepare for the afternoon.

Home strategies – independent practice:

5. Establish a comfortable place to concentrate on “reading for meaning”, preferably away from distractions. Some people need white or background noise, others need absolute silence. Create an environment that is best suited to your needs.
6. Maintain a study schedule that is realistic and flexible. Breaking the inertia is the hardest part. Set goals. The more specific they are, the more dedicated you will be to achieving them. Take periodic breaks. Short frequent reviews of complex material help to improve recall. Memory is strengthened by repetition. If you have reached a saturation point, take a break, but be disciplined enough to thoroughly study that week's materials and keep up as the course progresses.
7. The most popular method to study is called **SQ3R**. This stands for **s**urvey, **q**uestion, **r**ead, **r**ecite and **r**evue. Review the objectives to see what content is the most important. Look at the study questions to determine points of content to emphasize. Read the module thoroughly. Then return to the study questions. First try to answer them without looking up the content. If you do not recall the answer, look it up in the module, but put the answers into your own words to enhance understanding. Another technique of study is called **OK4R** (overview, key ideas, read, recall, reflect and review). If you have trouble retaining what you read, take notes in the margins of the outlines or highlight key phrases. Highlighting is most effective if it is done after you have read the material. Otherwise, you often end up highlighting everything. Outlining your notes, where you paraphrase the content, is a good way to reinforce learning.
8. In preparing for the state exam, review the modules and the course quizzes.
9. Give yourself small rewards for achieving your goals!

View this time as an investment in yourself!