

All of these notes of advice came from students who received A's in this class. They are unmodified. These do not represent all of the students that received A's. Only the ones who respond to my request for advice to future students.

To get an A, you must do the 3 A's:

1. Attend class (always)!
2. Actively take notes.
3. Assemble your own Study Guide.

Anonymous, Spring 2011

There is a lot of material for each test, so be sure to stay on top of it all so you don't end up cramming it all in before the test. The class is very doable, as long as you focus on understanding the overall concepts of what is being taught, and not so much the exact details of the processes. After learning the concepts, comparing and contrasting helps to understand everything better. Using action center to get one-on-one attention, get questions answered, and ensure understanding on the 'keywords and thought questions' for every chapter is extremely helpful in preparing for tests. Anonymous, Spring 2011

The best way to get an A in this class is to go to class. Although there is a lecture skeleton, there is still a lot missing and a lot of important information that you will only get by going to class. I also found it helpful to take notes on notebook paper during lecture and fill out the lecture skeleton later. This forces you to pay attention and forces you to study outside of class.

The other thing would be to find a group of friends you can study with. I always find myself sitting down to study and then ending up spending an hour on Facebook. If you get a group of friends to study with you, you won't get bored as fast. You can bounce ideas off of each other, ask each other questions, quiz each other, and keep each other focused. Anonymous, Spring 2011

Here are the tactics I used to get an A:

1. I took notes directly onto her slides. This allowed me to annotate the images as I saw fit to clarify what needed to be where.
2. Then I listened to my recorded lectures within a week of the date taken and retook my notes directly on top of the old ones in a different color. This let me reinforce what I got and find what I missed. I also noticed that I was beginning to memorize the information that way. If I couldn't remember what you had said about a slide before the recording reached it, I knew I needed to review that information.
3. I drew out everything over and over until the information clicked.

Anonymous, Spring 2011

The things that helped me the most were:

1. Coming to class everyday, taking notes, and recording lectures
2. I am a very visual learner, so watching the links Dr. Karr posted really helped me learn the mechanisms.
3. Going over all the notes, but while you are keep in mind the major concepts Dr. Karr wants you to learn, and how they relate to bacteria, Eukarya, and Archaea.

4. If I wasn't able to grasp a concept initially, listening to the recording really solidified anything I was initially confused about.

5. Going over the key words and thought questions in every chapter is a MUST. If you don't understand something, go see Dr. Karr in the action centers.

6. Make sure to take note of Dr. Karr's Underlying Themes, they will be tested over!

Anonymous, Spring 2011

I would suggest reading the notes aloud to yourself multiple times throughout the weeks leading up to an exam. Reading the book is helpful at first in the semester, but as you go you should be able to start fully relying on Professor Karr's notes as they are all the material you need for the exams. Make sure you are able to memorize and continue repeating the information as best as you can in order to ensure that you don't have to cram before a test. In my opinion, with the amount of material on the exams, it's almost impossible to cram the night before and anticipate doing well. As long as you prepare, you will do fine. Anonymous, Spring 2011

I feel what helped me the most was attending every lecture and making sure to write down everything, not just what Dr. Karr wrote on her lecture notes. The key words and thought questions were also a big help in putting all of the information together. Anonymous, Spring 2011

Dr. Karr is serious when she says that the tests are based on the lectures. The text would be better suited for a two semester series of classes and you will be doing far more work than necessary if you try to skip class and just learn from the text. Absolutely everything she tested us over was expressly covered in the lectures. I hate to work inefficiently, and believe me the most efficient way to get an A in this class is to take good notes in lecture and then study your notes for the tests. The best supplement for your notes is the sheets of key terms and study questions that she puts up by chapter. Anonymous, Spring 2011

Dr. Karr is a good teacher and you can get an A if you work hard and go to class every day. Take good notes and use those notes as a guide to study for the exam. Look over the keywords and know what they mean. Make sure you do the concept questions. These questions are often similar to questions on the exams and doing the concept questions helps you to focus on what is important. Anonymous, Spring 2011

Molecular Biology was a dynamic, fascinating class that required much effort while returning even more. My primary advice for success would be to constantly look for the overall themes and patterns of biology. Relying on memorization of specific characteristics and minute details is unnecessary; instead focus on applying what you've learned towards the larger picture. You will find that recognizing common recurring patterns will be crucial to a deeper understanding and aid in your ability to critically solve problems. If you can focus on the "cooperativity" that the various themes share with one another then I'm confident you won't have any problem doing well.

Dr. Karr is a great Professor; her lectures highlight critical information and eliminate the things that are out of scope. Her enthusiasm and passion for the material made lecture both lively and

interesting. Because of this, I would say that attending her lectures will be the single-most important thing you can do to succeed. If you actively take notes and engage yourself while listening, studying will be much easier and far less burdensome. This class was definitely one of my favorites and I hope you have the same experience, enjoy! Anonymous, Spring 2011

In order to do well in Dr. Karr's course it is absolutely imperative to attend class and participate actively in learning. Come to class prepared and pay full attention to what Dr. Karr is saying. After class, read through the book to understand concepts or ideas that you didn't quite get during lecture and add to your notes. I found it helpful to make flashcards of the key concepts and terms as we went and then go through them before the tests. I also retyped my notes to study and found this particularly helpful for the final as it provided a quick overview of each of the chapters. If you pay attention in lecture and study the key concepts in depth on your own, it isn't difficult to do well if you put in the time for this class. Anonymous, Spring 2011

What helped me the most is attending every lecture and taking notes during the class in the powerpoint slides and then later reviewing the notes and rewriting them in my own words in a separate notebook. This is also extremely helpful when the exams are near since you can just review the notes. Anonymous, Spring 2010

I recommend coming to class every day and **actively** taking notes. The notes that I took while I day dreamed were twice as hard to review (and read) than the notes I took while really engaging with the material. Also, I think it is good to come to class because hearing Dr. Karr's explanations is helpful. It is not worth your time, though, to come and not be ready to think about molecular biology. Anonymous, Spring 2010

This class definitely requires studying, but Dr. Karr does an excellent job of explaining and illustrating all of the processes and everything that she wants you to know, so getting an A in the class is definitely achievable. I would strongly recommend going to as many class periods as possible. And in class, actively listening and writing down everything she says (there is enough time, don't worry), not just what she writes down, is the best way to get all of the information you need to study and do well on her tests. In order to do well on the free response, you really need to know your material. It's not hard. Her slides are very thorough and helpful. It was a great class -- I gained a much better understanding of a lot of material that I had "learned" in other classes. She is a great teacher! Anonymous Spring 2010

1. Take notes. Class notes are very very important.
2. Don't fail to go through the links she provides if you want to solidify what you learnt in class.
3. If you are given critical thinking questions, take efforts to answer them.
4. Do note down important things in each chapter (which strikes out literally) and utilize them to relate to things happening in other chapters. In her words " think in terms of what consequences events can have". Be really prepared for this as your Final exam would really test you.
5. Utilize office hours if you have any doubts.

Anonymous, Spring 2010

"My advice: 1) go to every class and arrive before class starts so you don't miss any participation questions. I missed the class on Friday before spring break, and it hurt my performance badly on

the corresponding exam, 2) writing out all the notes from the slides helped during studying - for visual learners, 3) you will only get out what you put in, but this goes for any class, 4) start studying for the exams a week early - there is that much info to know, 5) when studying for the final, it helped to write out Replication, Transcription, and Translation steps in 1 long list - this helps bring everything together that you learned during the semester." Anonymous, Spring 2009

"I outlined all the lectures with book notes and redrew all the figures and then put them all on flashcards and memorized all the notes that way. Fill in the notes with information from the book." Anonymous, Spring 2009

"For the advice for students, I want to say that for me, I reviewed what I learned in the class the day I learned or the next day. Sometimes, I got behind on my review, but I never let more than 3 lectures behind. Doing this helped me refresh my memory during midterms. Also, I read the related text over and over in the book when I had anything I didn't understand. Finally, I e-mailed, made an appointment, or visited Dr. Karr during office hours whenever I had questions. This helped me a lot preparing for the exams." Anonymous, Spring 2009

"Some advice that would help for this class would be: staying on top of learning the materials all the time to keep you from getting confused, especially between the different techniques we learn and all the processes, like transcription, translation and regulation; study/review the notes after each lectures, so that when exam comes, you can just review it rather than study it last minutes. Take advantage of the animations or links posted, they really help." Anonymous, Spring 2009

"First and most importantly, go to class! The lectures give a good representation of what is important and what is not worth studying. Second, read the book. Although the tests are mostly based on lecture material, the book is an invaluable resource to clarify and solidify difficult concepts. Reading the book also ensures that the notes taken in lecture are accurate and complete. Finally, it was very helpful to me to take a blank page and reproduce all of the major figures and pathways I knew would be covered on an exam. Putting the steps in chronological order with the correct components and then recalling all of the major characteristics of each component showed me which concepts I had mastered and which I needed to further study." Anonymous, Spring 2009

"The main tip that I have for studying for Molecular Biology is to make sure that you learn all of the processes step-by-step. Be able to take a blank sheet of paper and write out all of the steps that you are studying. This way, you will be able to ensure that you know the order of the steps, the factors involved, and the transitions between steps. It is useful to study the figures as well to make sure that you can visualize what is happening. Anonymous, Fall 2008

The other advice that I have is to keep the big picture in mind. For example, once you learn the steps in translation, make sure that you know how it relates to transcription and replication. Also, compare and contrast the different molecular techniques that you learn. This is the best way to keep track of the differences in each technique, as well as what each one is used for, since there are quite a few of them and they can get confusing." Anonymous, Fall 2008

"What worked for me was that I reviewed that notes in class directly after lecture. Then I would go through and highlight the important topics. Afterwards I would look at the book to see figures so that I could visualize the notes I took in class. Also I reviewed ALL the notes after each lecture, not just that day's lecture so that when quiz/test time came around, I was already prepared and didn't feel overwhelmed with a lot of material." Anonymous, Fall 2008

"I think the biggest trick was drawing out the diagrams. If it was referenced in the book and I couldn't get it down in the notes I would go back and look each one up and draw it by hand. Especially at the end of the semesters when all of the minutia of the translational processes needed to be memorized, I think drawing it out with appropriate notes and names played a huge part in understanding everything together instead of just as a series of unrelated steps." Anonymous, Fall 2008

"The advice I would give is to go to every class. The clicker points will help your grade. Also, hearing the lectures and taking notes really helps prepare you for the exams." Anonymous, Fall 2008