Tips for Success in Chemistry 343

- Study regularly and often (i.e. every day). This course covers a large amount of material in a short period of time. Many of the concepts are challenging to master. Success is most likely for those who are most disciplined in their study habits; "cramming" immediately before exams is usually ineffective. The material becomes more difficult toward the end of the course, so don't become complacent if the early material comes easy to you.

- Recopy your class notes within 24 hours of the lecture. You will see and hear many important facts in class that don't get fully recorded into your notes, but remain in your short-term memory. Recopying gives you the opportunity to set down the full story while it is fresh in your mind, and cements your grasp of the points made in lecture.

- Read the assigned chapters completely before the lecture. Familiarity with the material when it is covered in lecture will greatly enhance your comprehension. Also, there is not enough time to cover all important material in the lectures, so some key points will be left for the text to explain.

- Work all of the assigned problems and don't look at solutions until you have worked the problem out to the best of your ability and written down the answer. It is easy to look at the problem, think for a moment, look at the printed solution, and tell yourself, "Oh yes, I knew that." Failure to make the best use of the problems in the text correlates strongly with poor performance in the course. Reviewing lecture notes and text will make the material familiar, but the only way to acquire an effective working knowledge and mastery of the material is by solving problems.

- Acquire a good set of models and use them continuously throughout your study. Proficiency in organic chemistry requires thinking and solving problems in three dimensions. Particularly in the beginning, you will not be able to visualize structures and reaction mechanisms correctly if you do not use 3-D models.