10 Tips for Success in Econ 10A

1. **Start studying early**
   - The material takes time and repetition to master—studying a bit every day (rather than just studying in the days before the test) is the most effective method
   - Try creating a study schedule listing specific tasks you will accomplish each day

2. **Take practice tests under test conditions**
   - Gives you a good indication of how you will do on the actual test
   - Can reduce test nerves
   - Shows you where your weaknesses are and helps you strategize for the actual test

3. **Group your practice by question type**
   - i.e. do 4 marginal utility problems before you move on to MRS problems, then do 6 of those before moving on to demand functions
   - It's important to make sure you reinforce a topic and fully understand it before introducing a new one

4. **Address test nerves early in the quarter**
   - Many people will experience test nerves at some point during the quarter (even those who have never experienced it in past courses)
   - Make sure to address it before it becomes a problem!
   - The solution will be different for everyone, so look to various sources and find as much information as you can. There are many resources available online and it can also be valuable to talk to friends, professors, TA's, etc.

5. **Read lecture slides before going to class**
   - Lecture can be fast paced and it's important to do the proper preparation before going
   - Additionally, try solving the practice problems on the lecture slides before going to class

6. **Think about what the variables mean in real terms**
   - i.e. $x_1 = 5$ means 5 units of good 1; $p_1 = 8$ means good 1 costs \$8
   - Understanding the variables helps you understand the solving processes and will help you address "curveball" questions on the test

7. **Focus on the process, not just the problem**
   - When doing problem sets, remember that it's important not only to get the correct answer, but also to understand *how* to get to the correct answer if you were faced with a similar question on the test. Additionally, make sure you understand the logic behind the solving processes as well (*why* you're doing what you're doing)

8. **Make sure your "non-econ" skills (problem solving and math) are strong**
   - Problem solving skills are important so that you can handle new types of questions on the test
   - Math skills (fractions, exponent rules, algebra, derivatives, etc.) are crucial to understanding the material in this class. Make sure you master these skills early in the quarter!

9. **Create your own study materials**
   - Find the type of study tool that works best for you (flash cards, diagrams, study guides, etc.) and create your own

10. **Create connections between different topics**
    - i.e. solving for leisure demand is similar to solving for demand for x_1 and x_2
    - Noticing the similarities between topics helps you learn new topics more quickly and makes the material seem less overwhelming

***Bonus Tips:**

11. Teach the material to someone else

- Form a study group and assign a topic to each person to teach to the group
- Explaining the material to someone else teaches you to understand the solving processes and explain your answers; it also helps you to identify gaps in your own knowledge

12. Think like a professor

- As you're working through practice problems, think of ways the professor could change elements of the question to make a more challenging problem on the test
- Shifting your mindset while doing practice problems from thinking like a student to thinking like a professor helps you to become a more active learner
- i.e. if the question asks you to solve for demand functions from a Cobb-Douglas utility function, imagine what would happen if it was a Perfect Substitutes utility function instead; if the question asks you to find the substitution effect after a price change, imagine what would happen if it was an income change instead

13. Graph your answers

- i.e. once you've solved out for demand, graph the budget constraint and the IDC and then plot the optimal consumption point
- Graphing your answers teaches you to have a true, well-rounded understanding of the material, rather than just the solving process