



Ministry of Education

Course Advice Guidebook



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Dear Students,

This guidebook was created by the SG Ministry of Education cabinet 2021-2022. The main aim of the "Course Advice" guidebook is to help the students of Nazarbayev University to prepare for their studies and finals.

Here you may find advices most of which are collected directly from the Professors. These advices are likely to help you to receive the best experience from your studies.

We would like to express gratitude to the Professors who provided their assistantship to make this guidebook an available and evident source of information and help for the students. Also, we would like to express gratitude for our readers for being a diligent and pro-active student of the Nazarbayev University!

Good luck with your studies and finals!

Sincerely, SG Ministry of Education cabinet 2021-2022

HST 100

1. Take notes on the provided reading texts

It is true that many students make notes on the provided video lectures, but many disregard doing so for the reading material. Even short summaries that briefly list the main points of the text may greatly help you during the midterm and the final exam.

2. Don't try to memorize every single detail from the lectures.

There is no need to remember everything that has appeared on the slides. Instead, use the outline of the presentation (usually the 2nd or the 3rd slide) as a study guide: you should be able to summarize every major point of the lecture. Focus more on understanding the processes and general concepts rather than small details.

3. Approach the tests as soon as you finish watching the lectures.

It is preferable to start watching the lectures nearer to the weekends to subsequently attempt the test. This way, you will have fresher knowledge and will be more likely to answer the questions correctly.

HST 100

4. Connect all of your arguments to the thesis statement.

When writing, it is useful to temporarily highlight or underline your thesis statement and all of your claims. Do your arguments have a strong connection to the thesis? Is there at least one piece of evidence from the readings that support each of your claims? If so, did you remember to interpret the evidence from the readings so that the reader can clearly understand how it is related to your arguments? Keep these questions in mind when finishing your first draft.

5. Create a thesis statement that has only one component.

If your thesis states two separate things, it would be difficult to prove them both in a 500-word essay. A much more optimal option would be using the available time and space to elaborate on a single argument. To enhance the readability, put your thesis immediately in the first paragraph.

6. Don't chase after sophisticated language and perfect grammar.

This was emphasized by the course instructor. Complex expressions used without a purpose will not contribute to your

HST 100

grade, but rather will occupy the space that would have been used to bolster your arguments. Copying sophisticated-sounding sentences will not result in a better grade and will result in a plagiarism misconduct. The main criteria that you should remember are maintaining a logical structure in your essay and providing enough evidence to your claims.

ELCE 203

1. Attend ALL lectures.

The lectures are delivered ONLINE with pre-written notes and/or PowerPoint slides. The attendance is mandatory, and the teacher is available for ALL lectures to explain the material and answer the students' queries. In fact, every lecture starts with "any question from the previous lecture", and ends with a "any question with what we have discussed today.

2. Develop Problem Solving Skill.

The main requirement is to develop "problem solving skill", and students are expected to solve all homework problems, take-home assignments by "themselves". Copying from here-n-there is NOT only against any common ethics, rather also hinders their learning process.

ELCE 203

3. Follow the Learning Material advised by the teacher.

The student's learning material includes Chapters from the TextBook, Teacher's lecture notes, and power points (if available). The self-study from Wikipedia and/or YouTube is NOT recommended, as it will just create a confusion for the difference of notations and style of presentation. Furthermore, partial knowledge may be dangerous instead of being advantageous.

4. Request for Office Hours (if needed).

The teacher is ALWAYS available for office-hours (in person for students at NU-Dorm), and over ZOOM for online sessions for off-campus students. The only requirement is to send a "properly written email" and make a request for the office-hours. It is regretted that a very few students have requested for the office-hours so far.

ELCE 203

5. Not to use dishonest means for Quizzes and Exams.

It is unfortunate to see our students using unfair means during their exams. It raises problems at many levels. First, it is against the academic integrity and any ethical standards we may believe in. Second, it completely hinders achieving the main objective of course, that is developing the problem solving skills. Last but not least, it is unfair for those students who are honestly working very hard.

BUS 101

1. Be engaged with the course throughout the semester.

BUS 101 introduces students to a wide range of concepts and tools and assessment tasks are spread throughout the semester. It is therefore important for students to be engaged with the course throughout the semester - it is not the type of course where you can 'catch up' with things at the end of the semester.

2. Watch the video lectures.

While there is a wide range of learning materials provided for the course including readings, video lectures, case studies and interviews with Kazakh entrepreneurs, the main teaching materials can be found in the video lectures. Students are encouraged to watch the video lectures and not just review copies of the slide presentation because the video lectures contain significantly more information than just the slide presentation.

BUS 101

3. Complete online quizzes

4. Be active in team-based projects

Approximately 50% of assessment tasks are team-based and it is critical for students to be actively participating in their team-based projects (scaffolding assignments and the Final Group Project). Each team has the power to decide whether each member of the team should receive the same grade for the scaffolding assignment or Final Group Project. In the past, some students have received zero grades for scaffolding assignments and even the Final Group Project because their team has identified they have not made a legitimate contribution to the assessment task.

5. Review guidelines for both scaffolding assignments and the Final Group Project.

Students are encouraged to review provided documents carefully so that they understand the requirements for each assessment task

BUS 101

- 7.** Watch pre-recorded videos
- 8.** Review and try to solve recitation problems (which are usually uploaded on Moodle on weekends) before they come to the recitation.
- 9.** Be present and actively participate during recitations.
- 10.** Complete homework before questions given to get prepared for quizzes.
- 11.** Video presentation should cover both E&M and A&F module questions

KAZ 201

1. Students are expected to come with B1 level,

In accordance with the requirements of the standard of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, students must come with the B-1 level for this course.

2. Students are expected to devote their time in order to excel in this course,

In this course, pre-planned and contingency speech activities such as speaking, reading, listening, and writing are developed through the student's own work with the help of additional materials. The grammar of the Kazakh language is studied in a functional direction.

3. Reading tips (Оқылым),

- The text should be read only in the Kazakh language, without translation. The dictionary is provided
- It is not enough to read the text only once, try to read as much as you possible (when I ask students, most of them say that they have read the Russian version only once)

KAZ 201

4. Listening tips (Тындалым).

- Be active in the forum: answer the questions, add opinion, agree/disagree with another student.
- Preparation for the audition requires watching the video 2-3 times.

5. Writing (Жазылым).

- Two essays to be evaluated (pre-set with evaluation requirements)
- Short exercises in the form of assignments (chat or google.doc)

6. Tests (Бақылау жұмысы).

- Mainly includes vocabulary and lexical topics, i.e. articles for the week, questions on texts.

7. Preparation for writing, speaking, and observation should begin with vocabulary work on topics covered in those weeks, and working with pre-assigned words (asynchronous) (finding synonyms, antonyms, and sentences with those words).

KAZ 201

- 8.** Pay attention to the tasks and complete them **on time**.
- 9.** **Join telegram group** to ask any questions at any time.
- 10.** Sign up for **office hours** and solve any problems related to the lesson directly with professor.
- 11.** Carefully **read the syllabus** that contains specific requirements for all actions.

KAZ 202

- 1. The number of words** in an essay of 700 words should be divided into 90 (introduction), 480 (main part), 130 (conclusion).
- 2. In an argumentative essay, the author's opinion** on the issue is presented through evidence.
- 3. The introduction** describes the issue, its importance and relevance, and the purpose of the essay. You can also write a key sentence and a few additional questions about the issue at the beginning or end of the introduction.
- 4. The main thesis can be the title of the essay.** The questions of the thesis should be clear. A counter-thesis can be submitted to confirm the position.
- 5. Arguments, reasons** (opinions of scientists / researchers / experts, facts, examples, statistics from reliable sources) should be given in the main section. Each thesis must be written separately: the thesis is an argument.
- 6. In the end, the opinion is summarized.** There is no need to repeat the questions in the main section. Give new suggestions and try to finish the essay with special phrases.

KAZ 202

7. Do not forget to provide references, the list of references is given in the syllabus. Spelling, translation, style, etc. If you have any questions, you can get information from these sources <http://emle.kz/> termincom.kz/ and in the syllabus,

8. Carefully read the requirements of the essay. If there are any ambiguities, consult a teacher.

You have been given the topic of the essay in the syllabus and some basic requirements: the size of the essay, the number of words, the requirements for vocabulary and grammar, etc. Whatever the requirements, they must be obeyed.

9. Select a theme.

Choose the topic that is most important, interesting and relevant for you. You can identify the main thesis, but it should not be too complicated. You can continue thinking as needed. A thesis is a question that proves or explains something in your essay. Create a bibliography; Use scientific works first; Remember that at least two materials must be in Kazakh. Do not plagiarize. Follow the link requirements

KAZ 202

10. Plan your essay.

It's time to prove your point. Carefully read all the information you have collected. Do you see the basic principles? The main thing is the main idea of the essay. Think about the order you will follow when writing. To summarize the structure of the essay, make a brief plan, think of a title for the paragraphs.

11. Write the main section first.

Identify three main points that will help to consolidate the thesis of the text. Each point of view must be supported by examples and arguments. In a short essay, each paragraph explains the point. A large essay will need one page to justify the point of view. Keep your plan, put your sentences in a logical order. Once you have written all the main ideas, write in sentences that connect all the passages.

12. Write a conclusion.

Summarize your main ideas and suggest to the reader in which direction to read and develop them. What conclusions can be drawn from the thesis? What questions remain unanswered?

KAZ 202

13. Write an introduction.

Once you've written the main section and conclusion, think about the introduction. Explain the thesis and describe how you will prove it. Rarely use simple phrases: "The essay is about ..." or "This is the title of the essay ..." or "Now I tell you ...". Start with a general argument, then confirm it with a question or issue with a thesis and a brief overview of your point of view.

14. Read what you wrote.

Examine the essay from beginning to end. Is one sentence correctly connected to another? Is there a difference between the first paragraph and the second? Each argument must be related to the previous one. If you don't like the layout and paragraph structure, change them.

Step 9 Check for errors.

Correct grammatical and stylistic errors in the text. Replace repeated words with synonyms, do not use slang, check spelling.

PHIL 210

1. Components of the course and Assessment

- a) There are different teaching components of the course: Plenary Sessions, Video Lectures, and Seminars. Students should make sure that they don't neglect any one part. This is important as each of the components has a different educational function. Assessment is designed to examine how well students are doing in each of these parts. The first piece of advice then is to stay on top of these different components of the course. This means watching the videos and attending the plenary sessions and seminars.

- b) Focus on trying to understand the central ideas discussed each week as well as possible. Philosophy is somewhat different from other disciplines in that we're not just interested in you showing that you gained certain pieces of information about what an author has said but that you are able to think about, apply, form critical perspectives about the ideas of the philosophers you encounter in the course.

PHIL 210

- c) Aside from this, if you really consider whether you should accept or not accept the ideas you encounter in the course, in a way that treats those ideas in a fair-minded way, you're more likely to grow intellectually during the course and enjoy the course.
- d) Focus on your problems: where do they arise (in a specific text passage, at a certain point in the lecture?), how do they arise? If the problem lies in the use of specific terminology, look it up in a dictionary. If you need more background information on a specific theory or term, see if you can find an article on it in the SEP (<https://plato.stanford.edu>). If the problem lies in the syntax, try to find out the main clause and the main message first. If you're unsure about an interpretation of certain aspects of a theory, try to look it up in a commentary on the work.

PHIL 210

2. Learning process

a) The main thing is how you approach your learning process. The simplest and best way to do well in this course is to have a desire to understand what is going on in each reading and each lecture. Students standardly focus on trying to find what they need to do (as in follow some rubric or guidelines) to get an A. This is not terribly wrong but a much better approach is also much simpler: you just need to understand

- (i) the material and
- (ii) the exam question.

So, when you approach a reading, let your guiding thoughts be ‘what is going on here?’ and ‘what is the author trying to say?’ Think about the function of each paragraph and how these paragraphs are connected to each other. Philosophy is not about memorizing but about understanding.

b) A lot of the available grade is based on written answers. You’ll do better if you can express your ideas well in writing. Some students will be more confident of their writing skills than others. Don’t worry if you’re not confident about your writing skills. Good writing in philosophy doesn’t require you to have a very large vocabulary. What’s important is to be accurate in what you write. Make sure you are answering the question asked in an exam and that this is what you are doing is clear from what you write.

PHIL 210

- c) Philosophy requires you to think about ideas you may never have taught about before. You'll tend to do better if you can think about these ideas from various perspectives and you get into the habit of articulating those ideas. It can be very useful (and interesting) for students to get into the habit of talking about ideas they encounter during the course.

- d) Try to develop a certain level of frustration tolerance and perseverance. It would be really unusual (and not only for students) to understand a text just by a first reading. Keep rereading it, try to find out the structure and main ideas and problematic parts.

PHIL 210

3. Participation and Exams

- a) Participate in class. Your engagement will be welcome and you'll probably be able to think about the ideas better once you staked a position and had responses from others (also, see 2b).
- b) The mid-term exam is a written exam. The advice about accuracy in your writing is relevant here, as is the advice about staying on top of the different taught components of the course. Questions will require knowledge related to required readings and video lectures.
- c) During the pandemic, the final exam has had a written and oral component. For the oral component of the exam it's important to be clear about what you wrote and why you wrote it. Here the examiner has an opportunity to probe your understanding of the relevant ideas, so it's a good idea to understand those ideas well. It's also a good idea to get practice discussing your ideas. You can get this from regular participation in class and discussing ideas outside of class. In order to prepare for the oral exam, it is a good idea to do a practice oral exam with a classmate.

PHIL 210

4. The principle of getting an A is very simple.

First step: treat me (your instructor) like I am an idiot. You need to explain everything to me, just as if I was stupid. This is really important! You cannot assume that I will know what you mean. My job is to assess what is IN the paper, not what I think you meant.

Second step: make sure you know exactly what the question asks. Most questions have sub-questions. You need to make sure you got all parts of the question right.

Third step: make sure that your answer (a) answers every aspect of the question and (b) contains everything that needs to be said. Don't write more than what is needed.

PHIL 210

4. The principle of getting an A is very simple.

Fourth step: do not use internet sources when answering the questions! We can see when a student is just using some stuff found online when they should have engaged intellectually with the question. How do we know? It's simple. The stuff you can find online will not involve a direct answer to the question. Thus, focusing solely on this stuff will result in your answer not being a direct answer to the question. Like it or not, you will have to go through steps 2 and 3 yourself! You will have to think about the question and what constitutes the right answer to the question.

PHYS 161

1. Practice solving problems as much as possible.

The main aim of the PHYS 161 is to teach students to analyze and solve physical problems. Having regular practice of solving extra problems is mandatory to succeed in the course. At the end of the “Physics for Scientists and Engineers” book by Serway and Jewett, there are a lot of practice exercises which you should solve. Solving these exercises appears to be the best preparation for the exam’s problems. There is no other way to master physics but to solve a lot of different problems.

2. Calculations.

We would like to advise you not to count for each variable separately. Counting for each variable separately is likely to take your time and does not guarantee that you will later know where to plug these numbers. Moreover, some physical quantities may cross each other out during your physical analysis of the problem. It is better to come up with the final formula and insert the values of the given physical quantities. By doing this, you will also keep your calculations quite precise.

Secondly, please don’t forget how to round up your solutions to three significant figures and use a dot sign (not a comma) when you transfer your answers to Loncapa.

PHYS 161

3. Units

When you first read the problem, start writing down the given physical quantities and near them create a separate SI table to transform the numerical values of quantities into SI form. This is very important, so do not hurry up here. Remember the SI units for the physical quantities. For instance, velocity is measured in m/s, mass is in kg. Also, make sure you know how to transform from ml to m^3 , from eV to J, from cm^3 to m^3 , etc.

4. Checking the calculations

In most physics problems correct calculations play a significant role. Thus, it is very important to recheck your calculations when you finish because it is such a pity to solve the problem right from a physical point of view, but make a mistake in calculation.

5. Don't stop at one problem during the Exam

Sometimes you may be stuck on the first Exam problems not paying any sufficient time to the last ones. We may advise you to start looking through the questions and start solving ones which seem familiar to you, leaving the tough ones for the end.

PHYS 161

6. Use some popular preparation books for learning how to solve exercises .

Besides the books advised by the Professors, you may use some popular preparation books in Russian language: Касаткина “Репетитор по физике”, Гольдфарб, Кирик.

7. Copybook with formulas.

It is helpful to create a separate copybook with formulas which will guide you through the exam if it is an open book exam. Spending your time to look through the bunch of your notes is not worth it as it takes your time.

8. Create your own Mock Exams to form a habit of concentrating for 1 hour.

9. Pay attention to Loncapa homework as it weighs a high portion of your grade .

Do not leave your homework for the last day. Try to start solving the homework as soon as possible.

PHYS 161

10. Don't just memorize formulas .

Pay attention to the physical quantities which are included into the formula and pay attention to the direct and inverse proportionality. For example, pressure is directly proportional to the applied force and inversely proportional to the area. Well, this seems logical. Try to imagine the physical situation and understand the logic behind. it.

11. Don't give up

Yes, physics seems to be a tough subject. However, with each solved problem you are likely to become a more successful problem solver. This is likely to be helpful for you in the future.

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PHYS 221

1. Have a solid knowledge of calculus and linear algebra.
2. Follow each lecture, taking notes not by copying what is written on the board but writing down what you understand at that moment.
3. After the lecture (same day or at most the next day) go through the notes and try to redo the calculations yourself. Use the book as an aid only if you get stuck at some point. If something is still unclear write down the question and ask in class during the next lecture.
4. After having done the calculation by yourself try to apply the knowledge to some exercises (for example from homeworks) solving them by yourself. Keep on doing exercises until you can solve them comfortably.
5. Before the next lecture, revise the previous material quickly, to make sure you remember what it is about and how it is done.
6. Before midterms do lots of exercises. Starting at least two weeks before, do at least one or two exercises per day.

PHYS 201

1. Take notes during the lectures. Write down what you understand trying to make a mental image of what is discussed.
2. After the lecture go through the notes and fix the most important points trying to explain them yourself. If you realize something is unclear, use the book as aid. If something is still confusing, write down a question to ask in the next lecture.
3. At the end of each week go through the material checking notes, slides and the book. Item by item make sure you have a clear understanding of how things work asking yourself questions like 'how does this work?' 'how do we know this?' 'What are the consequences of this?'.
4. Every day should be used to learn a bit more. Expecting to remember everything by studying all the material one or two days before the exam is wishful thinking as there are too many things to be absorbed all at once.