

# Preparing for Finals

## Planning Your Time

**1. Fill out a calendar with the dates and times of your final exams.**

- If you have more than 2 finals on the same day, speak to your instructors to see if you can reschedule one of them.
- Make sure that the date your professor has announced or has included on the syllabus is the same as the online schedule.

**2. Count how many days you have from today until each one of your finals and then subtract one day.** These are the days you have left to complete all work for the term and time to study for your final exams.

**3. Make a detailed Daily Planner for the seven-day period during which you complete classes and take all of your finals.**

- Block out times unavailable to you for studying for finals such as classes, special projects and papers, work, meals, sleep and recreation.
- Block out and label the assigned time for each final exam.
- Observe carefully how much time you realistically have to study for your finals.
- Reserve, block out, and label study times for each of your finals. Remember to schedule in breaks after 45-50 minutes of focused study.

**4. Begin now to organize your course materials for each final.**

- Identify the material covered on the final(s). Is it comprehensive or does it include information since the last test or mid-term?
- Organize and sort your notes.
- Review prior tests or quizzes if you have them.
- Consult with your instructor during office hours if you need assistance in planning for finals.

**5. Make any study tools that you will need.**

- time line
- flash cards
- comparative charts
- diagrams or illustrations

**Planning Your Study**

**1. Develop a study plan**

- Make a list of all the topics and/or materials you will need to study for the final.
- Clump related topics together, topics that might reinforce one another if you study them on the same day. Identify reasonable amounts of related material to study in a given day (remembering that studying for final exams will begin while classes are still in session and additional material is still being covered in class.
- Reserve the day before the final exam for "final" review only.

**2. Develop a study guide for each day.**

- Using the list of topics and/or materials on your study plan, make a detailed study guide for each day.
- Determine priority order for each final.

**Carrying through with Your Study Plan**

- 1. Study each day, according to your plan, in 45-50 minute units of time.** Take short breaks to refresh and refuel your brain.
2. Remember that the brain needs time to process information.
- 3. Get sleep; eat healthy.**
4. **Reward yourself** appropriately for the progress you are making.
- 5. Use affirmation to encourage yourself.**

## **Taking the Test**

### **1. The night before the exam.**

- Lay out your clothes and any materials you will need for the exam -- pencils, pen, calculator, etc. (Rushing increases anxiety and can block recall of information.)
- Set two alarm clocks.
- GO TO BED at a reasonable hour.

### **2. On the day of the exam.**

- Get up in time so that you can get dressed and get to the exam without rushing.
- Eat a light breakfast. Avoid too much sugar or caffeine.
- Bring peppermint to your exams.

### **3. At the test site.**

- Arrive in plenty of time so that you can relax a moment before the test begins. Deep, rhythmic breathing can help.
- Avoid talking about anything connected with the exam with other students. Keep calm; stay focused.

### **4. During the test.**

- If you have lists, dates, verb conjugations, formulas, or other memorized material that you fear you may forget, ask if you can use scratch paper or the back or margin of the test and write the material down before you read the test.
- Read the test through before you begin to answer. Note the instructions for each section. Decide how to budget your time.
- Start with a question you are confident in answering.
- Skip questions that you don't know and come back to them.
- Don't leave anything blank (unless you are told to do so).
- Ignore people who leave early. When someone else leaves it is irrelevant to your grade.

**5. After the test, treat yourself for having prepared well.** Then, continue studying for the next exam.