Tests & Exams

HOW TO AVOID CRAMMING

**Keep up with work assignments.**

Prepare for each class; do the assigned reading.

**Review regularly.**

Go over (don’t re-read) your notes and texts at least weekly— or more often if possible.

**Practice what you’re learning.**

Test yourself out loud. Do practice problems. Work in a study group.

**Do a final review before the exam. And...**

**Be confident**

**Get a good night’s sleep**

**Eat a good breakfast**

BEFORE EXAMS

* Keep laughing! Laughter can reduce stress and improve your mood, so watch, read or listen to something funny as a study break.
* Get plenty of sleep the night before.
* Watch your caffeine intake. Caffeine will stay in your system longer than you think and can keep you from falling asleep when you need to.
* Diet and exercise properly.
  + Protein-rich foods can help you sustain your energy and your focus. Sugary foods can give you an immediate energy rush, but you'll crash later. Leave the library to get some fresh air and a balanced meal instead of overdoing it on baked goods.
  + Don't cut out your exercise time during final period. The gym is a great place for a study break or go for a run or take a walk outside.
  + Don't want to leave your dorm? Go up and down the stairs a few times; have a dance party with your roommate, or do yoga.
* Eat a hearty breakfast the morning of the exam.
* Avoid panicking the last minute and last minute interference.
* Try out relaxation exercises or guided meditation.
* Look at the material from what you think might be a teacher’s point of view. What questions would you ask if you were teaching the class?
* Come to the examination with a sharp mind that has not been dulled by too much last-minute studying. Be sure that you also bring to the examination all the materials you need so that you will be ready to work when you receive the paper.
* Keep everything in perspective: they're just exams. You’re really smart, and you can handle them!

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS: DURING THE EXAM

Goal: to answer as many questions correctly as possible (not to finish the test on time). Treat each question as if it were to decide your final grade.

Practice this step-by-step approach on sample questions.

1. Read the stem question and answer options carefully.
2. Circle or underline the qualifying words in the stem question: almost, sometimes, never, etc.
3. Identify what the question is actually asking; it’s usually found at the end of the stem question. Repeat the actual question in your mind (even in your own words) before going to the options.
4. Treat each option as a true or false answer. Starting with the first option, repeat the actual question, then read the option and mark it accordingly. Continue through the rest of the options.
5. For questions in which you can’t decide between or among options, go with what you know. Avoid choosing based on unfamiliarity or numbers/statistics (going with what you don’t know). If an option “rings any small bells,” choose it.
6. Answer each question; do not leave any unanswered.
7. Mark questions that you are unsure about, using marks that denote: little, somewhat, very. This will save you time when you look over your test.
8. Do not change your initial answer unless you have a specific reason for doing so. Most changed answers go from the right answer to the wrong answer. Trust your first response.
9. If time runs out and you have questions unanswered, choose your favorite letter and use that letter for those questions. Don’t be random.