

Exam Preparation Tips

(Here are a few tips from those who have gone before...)

What to Study

1. Include all necessary material: notes, textbook, study guides, previous tests, etc.
Make sure that you know what the exam will cover.
2. Check your notes to determine if there are any gaps. If there are, check with another student or the teacher to make sure notes are completed.
3. Spend the most time on material you have not fully grasped.
4. Study the most difficult material first, when you are most alert.
5. Look up definitions of unfamiliar terms.
6. Re-read information that is difficult, until you understand it.
7. Practice taking old tests or making some of your own which are similar to your exam.
The more you practice, the better you get.

When to Study

1. Make a daily study schedule during exam week and stick to it.
2. Don't cram for an exam. Space your study sessions across several days. Staying up late all night cramming is academic suicide. You will most likely remember less of everything and your ability to reason your way to answers of which you are unsure will be severely diminished.
3. Study when you are rested. Determine the times of day when you are the most alert and concentrate the best.
4. After you study 30 to 45 minutes, take a short break.
5. Eliminate distractions in your study area such as TV, stereo, phone, computer.

How to Study

1. Set small goals each time you begin a study session.
2. Break up large units into smaller, more manageable parts. Set a stopping time before you begin. This will encourage you to use your time more efficiently.
3. Study actively with a pen or marker in hand. Write information, summary statements, questions, etc. as you study.
4. Study alone and with a friend or in small groups. Teach information to someone else to help understand and retain information.
5. Use your preferred learning styles. If you are a visual learner make outlines, charts, flash cards and other visual aids. If you prefer auditory techniques, try reading and reciting information aloud. If you are a tactile learner, try reciting as you engage in a physical activity such as walking. Do not try to just sit and study.
6. When reading a textbook or notes, use active reading techniques such as highlighting, underlining, outlining, summarizing, and note-taking in the margins or on a piece of notebook paper. An outline is one of the most effective study tools.

A Final Thought (Literally)

Try to stay optimistic. Students are tired, understandably so, and they are ready for Summer break. It is, however, important that you try to do your best for the exams and during these next couple of weeks. Part of studying well is staying positive and constantly reminding yourself: "I can do this for a couple of weeks and then really enjoy summer." Do not quit until it's over, because you do not want to be disappointed with the end result.