



# Tips for Test Taking

## **Attend Class Regularly**

When you miss a class, you miss vital information. This will, of course, affect the outcome of tests.

## **Be Prepared**

No matter what study methods you use, nothing can take the place of studying on a regular basis. Do not rely on cramming. Review class notes every day. Keep up with reading assignments. Study key terms, definitions, examples, lists, diagrams, and charts. Pay particular attention to items your professor emphasizes in class.

## **Understand vs. Memorize**

Memorization techniques can be helpful. However, you must also learn concepts and the relationships among facts.

## **Control Anxiety During the Test**

Arrive early. Get settled, relax, and give yourself time to organize your thoughts. Listen carefully to all instructions before beginning. Quickly review the test. Answer the easiest questions first. If you get stuck on a question, leave it and go back to it later. If you have no idea of an answer, remain calm, try to recall what you do know, and use other test questions to give you clues. If you do become anxious, close your eyes for a moment, take deep breaths, and concentrate on relaxing.

## **Use Effective Strategies During the Test**

Preview the test. Start with questions you can readily answer. Plan your time and pace yourself. Use the hints listed on the reverse side of this page for specific types of tests. Allocate time to review your answers.

## **Take Care of Yourself**

It is important to take care of yourself during periods of high stress. Eat balanced meals; try to get at least six hours of sleep at night consistently in order to best function; and try to make time for exercise.

## **Ask for Help**

There are many resources available to help you succeed. Ask your instructor if you don't understand something. Form a study group. Check out the services in the Learning Assistance Center and the Student Services Center.

# Hints for Specific Types of Tests

The following are general tips that may be helpful. There are no magic hints or formulas that will help you with each and every test. Studying and preparing well are always your best bet.

## Multiple Choice Tests

1. Read through the entire test and answer the questions you know.
2. Read each question carefully. Identify key words. Rephrase questions in your own words.
3. Some students find it helpful to read the question and try to recall the answer from memory before looking at each of the choices.
4. Make sure you look at all choices before choosing an answer.
5. As you read through the possible choices, mark through the ones you know are wrong. This will save time if you have to come back to the question later.
6. If two choices appear to be equally correct, eliminate the response that appears to be least related to the question being asked.
7. If you are not certain of an answer, guess. Narrow down your selection to two responses and then compare them and identify how they differ. Finally, make an informed guess.
8. Change answers only if you have a good reason for doing so.

## True/False Questions

1. If part of a statement is true and part of it is false, the statement is false.
2. Pay close attention to qualifiers such as *always*, *never*, *only*, *often* and *frequently*.

## Matching

1. Matching sections on exams often test your knowledge of definitions, names, and events.
2. Review the entire section before beginning.
3. Match up those terms you are sure of first. Cross out matches as you use them.

## Essay Tests

1. Read directions carefully. Ascertain whether or not you must answer all the questions and if your test time is limited.
2. Read all questions before beginning. If you can select questions to answer, choose those for which you are best prepared.
3. Pay attention to key task words in essay questions, such as *discuss* or *define*.
4. Write focused, organized answers.
5. If you begin to run out of time and do not have time to write complete sentences, quickly list the information you intended to include in your essay answer. You may gain extra points by letting the professor know what you know.