

SUCCESS CENTER: Preparing for Tests

Preparation for quizzes, exams, and papers **begins the first day of class**. Form a study group or connect with one or two study partners. **Work with tutors in the Success Center** to reinforce what is taught in class and/or answer questions. Cramming last minute is ineffective and creates stress.

Begin with a positive attitude toward preparing for tests. Procrastination, poor time management, and an unwillingness to take responsibility for your learning can lead to increased stress and anxiety. **A positive mindset and hard work is more important than talent or intelligence in determining one's success.**

Use your student planner to **create a test preparation plan**. Fill in 30-45 minute chunks with short breaks each day to study specific topics that will be covered on the test. **Remember, for each hour in class, schedule 2-3 hours of study and self-testing time OUTSIDE of class.**

Complete your assignments every day, even if they aren't graded. Read assignments prior to class.

Our brains are not made for information overload caused by the constant stimulation of technology. **Eat, sleep, exercise and set aside time away from screens and other distractions.**

During Class: Listen attentively, take notes by hand. Copy anything the instructor writes, repeats or emphasizes.

- **Attend every class. Be punctual.**
- Choose to **engage in the class** lecture and learning activities. Ask questions.

Start memorizing key information during and after the first class and regularly test yourself with notecards or study questions.

At the end of every class, write down from memory everything you can remember, including information about assignments; then double check against notes and the book. This is your first test of this material.

Anticipate what will be on the test from class and reading notes, study guides, chapter summaries, or handouts. Ask your instructor or other classmates what to expect. Use these to create potential practice test questions.

Create a study checklist of information that you anticipate will be on the test to prevent overlooking key material.

Self-test for 15-30 minutes several times a day rather than cramming it into one long session.

Stay engaged when you study. Self-monitor your study and reading sessions to prepare for tests. Recite in your own words what you read and memorize as you go. Ask and answer questions aloud. **Reflect** on what you understand and what you don't, and make connections to what you already know.

Meet with a Success Center tutor to learn engaging and effective strategies for organizing, processing, and memorizing information.

Create a mock testing environment with a practice test and use a timer. After completing the entire self-test, check your answers.

Study in different locations.

Address test anxiety early on. Frequently **visualize** yourself taking the test and calmly answering questions correctly.

Keep all tests and quizzes if possible to review. If keeping tests is not allowed, after class write down topics to review. Instructors are often willing to help you **identify error patterns or confusing concepts** to re-learn.

Deliberate Practice Includes Striving and Failing. Repeated attempts to solve problems builds new knowledge

Sources:

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