

# Preparing for Final Exams

Final exam week can be fun if you are prepared. If you plan ahead, most of your studying will be complete before finals arrive. Review the information listed below, download and complete the final exam information form at the end of this information, and begin preparing for your finals right now.

## Early Preparation

1. Begin preparing for the your final exam on the first day of the term.
2. Lecture notes, assigned text pages, and homework problems are part of the preparation.
3. As test day approaches, you should know how much time you will need to review, what material the test will cover, and what format the test will take.
4. Three things will help you study well: good communication with your instructor, effective time management, and organization of materials:
  - **Ask your instructor.** Talk with your instructor about the content of the exam. Ask for additional help with difficult concepts or problems.
  - **Manage your time wisely.** Make a new schedule for the week before and during finals. This time is unlike any other time during the semester.
  - **Sharpen your study habits.** You should have materials to effectively review what is likely to be on the exam. Use study groups or a partner to share information.

## Planning your Approach

### *Physical Preparation*

1. **Maintain your regular sleep routine.** Don't cut back on your sleep in order to cram in additional study hours. Remember that most tests will require you to apply the concepts that you have studied, and to do so effectively, you must have brain power available.
2. **Maintain your regular exercise program.** Exercising is an effective stress reducer and provides positive and needed breaks from studying.
3. **Eat right.**

### *Mental Preparation*

1. **Know your material.** If you have given yourself adequate time to review, you will enter the classroom confident that you are in control.
2. **Practice relaxing.** Use relaxation techniques like taking deep breaths and closing your eyes and thinking about places that make you happy.
3. **Use positive self-talk.** Make positive statements such as "I have attended all lectures, done my homework, and prepared for this exam. Now I am ready to pass this exam."

## Taking the Test

1. **Analyze, ask, and stay calm.** Read all the directions so that you understand what to do. Ask for clarification if you don't understand something. **Be confident. Don't panic!** Answer one question at a time.
2. **Make the best use of your time.** Quickly survey the entire test and decide how much time you will spend on each section.
3. **Answer the easy questions first.** Expect that you'll be puzzled by some questions. Make a note to come back later.

# Final Exam Information Form

Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date and Time of Exam \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

What percent of the final grade is the exam? \_\_\_\_\_

What information will be covered on the exam?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

What type of exam (multiple choice, true/false, essay, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the most efficient way to study for this exam? \_\_\_\_\_

Tools I will use to study for the exam:

\_\_\_\_ Notes      \_\_\_\_ Flash Cards      \_\_\_\_ Summary Sheets      \_\_\_\_ Study Groups  
\_\_\_\_ Old Exams      \_\_\_\_ Study Partner      \_\_\_\_ Text and Other Resource Books  
\_\_\_\_ Other (List \_\_\_\_\_)

Name, telephone number, and e-mail addresses of study group members or study partner \_\_\_\_\_

*Partially adapted from Your College Experience, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, Gardner and Jewler, Wadsworth  
Thomason Learning.*