

Objective Exam Strategies

Prepare thoroughly for all your exams. There is no substitute for study.

- Start studying for your final exam the first day of class.
- Keep reviewing regularly using a variety of methods.
- Always study as if an essay test was scheduled regardless of whether the test will be essay or objective.
- Set up a schedule of intensive study the two weeks before finals.

Make the best possible use of your time when taking exams.

- Budget your time
- Answer easy items first.
- Mark omitted items to assure easy relocation.
- Use remaining time to reconsider answers and proofread.
- Try to be the last one to leave an exam, not the first.

Avoid careless errors.

- Read all directions carefully.
- Avoid mechanical errors.
- Consider all alternatives in a multiple choice question before making your decision.

Plan your guessing strategy.

- Always guess if there is no penalty for guessing.
- Always guess if you can eliminate certain options in a multiple choice question.
- Do not guess if there is a correction for guessing and you have no basis on which to make a choice.
- Do change answers if you have a good reason to change. First impressions are not always the best guess.

Use logical reasoning.

- Eliminate options that are known to be incorrect and choose from the remaining options.
- Look for information in test items that will help you answer other questions.
- Restrict choice to those options which include all or two or more, given statements known to be correct.
- Choose neither or both of two options which imply the correctness of each other.
- Choose neither or one (but not both) of two statements, one of which, if correct, would imply the incorrectness of the other.

Pay close attention to key words on True-False questions.

- Closed words, such as: never, only, always, all, none, and most, are indicators of a false statement because they restrict possibilities.
- Open words, such as: usually, frequently, mostly, may, and generally, are often found in true statements, but may also be found in false statements.

Adapted from: How to Take Tests. Jason Millman and Walter Pauk. McGraw-Hill. New York, 1969, and the Study Skills Center at UT Dallas.