



Exam Preparation

Objective Exams

- Make a list of key points
- Organize this information around broad concepts
- Focus on a couple of broad concepts each study session
- Begin each study session with a review
- Rehearse and self-test
- Concentrate on areas of weakness

2 key factors in preparing for objective exams:

1. organizing your information
2. thinking about it the way your professor expects

Taking the exam:

- Look through the exam
- Find a question you know
- Eliminate answers
- Use information from other answers
- Use all the allotted time
- Don't spend time on questions you don't know - guess

Multiple choice exams:

- Read the directions
- Read every answer before you select the correct answer
- Eliminate answers
- Look for the *best* answer
- If you are unsure, skip the question and return to it later
- Look for hints from other questions
- Carefully mark your answer on answer sheet
- Answers with qualifiers are often correct (often, generally, frequently)
- Beware of absolute answers (all, never, always)
- Review your answers and don't be afraid to make changes
- If you are unsure, stay with your first answer

Problem-Solving Exams

- Work different types of problems
- Think about concepts
- Talk through problems as you work them

Don't just memorize how to do the problems, think about concepts underlying the problems. If you can't verbalize what you're doing as you solve the problem you probably don't understand the concept.

The question: What is the problem asking for?

The solution:

- Visualize the problem
- Determine the basic idea behind the problem (formula/equation)
- Explain the variables
- Write and solve the equation

Taking the exam:

- **Before looking at the problems, write down all the formulas you remember**
- **Answer the easiest problems first and skip difficult problems till the end**
- **Write out each step so if you miss something you could still get partial credit**
- **Review the exam to check for careless errors**

Essay Exams - PORPE

Predict questions that might be on the exam.

Organize the ideas you want to include in the essay.

Rehearse the information you organized until you know it.

Practice writing out the answer under timed conditions.

Evaluate: Is my introduction clear and focused?
 Are my generalizations clear and focused?
 Are my examples and supporting information accurate and complete?

Do I have a conclusion that relates back to my introduction and overall thesis?

3 important factors in taking essay exams:

1. Watch your time
2. Structure your essay (introduction, key points, conclusion)
3. Be careful about grammar/spelling

Study Strategies

Plan a review schedule

- Start early
- Be realistic
- Break up the work

Study in a good place

- Library
- Empty classroom
- Usually NOT your room

Prepare yourself mentally

- Visualize success
- Positive self-talk
- DON'T cram
- Stay healthy

Use multiple review methods

- Flash cards
- Study groups
- Mind maps
- Summary lists
- Past exams
- Reading out loud

Know what is expected

- Type of exam
- Grading criteria

Tips for test day

- Get a good night's sleep and wake up at least 2 hours before the exam
- Arrive prepared (pencils, paper, ID, etc.)
- Sit where you won't be distracted
- Eat something light before the test
- Mentally prepare yourself (use positive self-talk)
- Read the directions
- Budget your time
- Answer a question you know well first
- Skip difficult questions and return to them later
- Guess if you are not penalized for incorrect answers
- Review your answers and do not be afraid to make changes