

# TEST TAKING

## THE IDEAL SCENARIO:

When a professor announces that there is a midterm in two weeks, that announcement doesn't send shivers down your spine. You've been preparing for a test throughout the entire semester. This required an *active role* in the learning process. While attending lecture, taking notes, or reading the text, you've been keeping a mental catalog of possible exam questions, main topics in the text, and emphasized ideas in lectures. You understand professors give tests to evaluate your comprehension of the material, and to determine if you have actively engaged the subject, gaining insight into the topic.

Since your test preparation has occurred throughout the entire semester, your review sessions before the test will be just that: REVIEW. All the material was learned when presented, not the night before the test. This requires dedication, reading the text when assigned, and completing homework thoroughly and on time. Such preparation also imparts an attitude of success and accomplishment as opposed to the stress and apprehension you will feel if not so prepared.

## AS THE TEST DATE APPROACHES...

- Increase the number of your review sessions.
- Study the hardest material first.
- Request a study guide from the professor. They will not always provide one, but it doesn't hurt to ask. Also, if the instructor provides or allows it, use old tests to supplement your review.
- Pay particular attention during lectures leading up to the test and attend all review sessions.
- Test day should not be different from any other day. Get a good night's sleep before the exam and follow your normal morning routine. Your mental attitude will be affected by your physical appearance, so shower, put on nice clothes and prepare yourself for a good day.
- If you are very anxious about a test and cannot get rid of that mindset, consider making an appointment with the counseling center. They are available to help you with different strategies for overcoming nervousness and anxiety. (They are located in Garland, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. <http://www.jhu.edu/counselingcenter/>)

## DURING THE TEST:

- Arrive early and prepared. Do not allow other students to make you nervous with their questions or recitations of the material.
- Relax! Take deep breaths and review the material in your head to ward off distractions prior to receiving the exam papers.
- Read the directions!
- Budget your time so that you can thoroughly complete each question. Don't waste time on a question mulling over the answer. If you don't know it, move on.
- Use all the time allotted for the test. Save yourself some time at the end to review what you have done before you hand it in.
- Don't panic when students start to hand in their tests. There are no prizes for finishing first.

## AFTER THE TEST:

- ALWAYS study returned tests to see what you did wrong!
- What test strategy errors did you make? What information was incorrect?
- USE THIS KNOWLEDGE TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE ON NEXT TEST!

## RESOURCES:

- Contact Angela Ruddle (410-516-8216) in OAA about study consulting.
- Helpful websites:
  - <http://www.studygs.net/tstprp.htm>
  - <http://gracie.smsu.edu/myth/testtips.html>