

TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

BE PREPARED

- Review material for each class on an everyday or every other day basis.
- Review material you will be tested on 5-7 times prior to the exam.
 - Pre-reading (1)
 - Lecture (2)
 - 30-minute review within 24 hours of lecture (3)
 - 2-4 review sessions (4-7)
- Assess yourself after each study session (ex: 2 hours of studying, 30 minutes of assessment) – do not wait to test yourself the day before the exam.

PLAN APPROPRIATELY

- Arrive to campus early to avoid rushing or being late.
- Bring all materials needed for the exam.
- Minimize last minute cramming with peers.

USE TEST TAKING STRATEGIES

- Read the directions carefully.
- Attempt to answer questions before looking at possible answer choices.
- Answer the questions you know first and mark the questions you aren't sure about.
- If there is an answer choice that you have never seen before, that is likely not the correct answer.
- Be aware of answer options that include absolute statements such as "never," "always," "ensures". Absolute statements are difficult to defend.
- Use information and context you have gained throughout the exam to help you with difficult questions.
- If you must guess, do so methodically:
 - Eliminate answers you know are wrong
 - Identify how your remaining choices differ
 - Brainstorm everything you can think about related to your remaining choices
- Your first instinct is usually correct. Avoid changing your answer and second guessing yourself unless you are 100% certain that this new answer is correct.

MANAGE TESTING ANXIETY

- Prepare for the exam over time – avoid cramming.
- On exam day, avoid people who add stress before the exam.
- Close your eyes and take 2-3 deep breaths (5 seconds in and 5 seconds out).
- If you don't know an answer, take your best guess, mark the question, and come back to it at the end – it is better to be strapped for time with questions you are guessing on than questions you know.
- Ask for help when needed.
- Avoid comparing answers with peers – this can raise anxiety.

AFTER THE EXAM

- Discuss and review your exam with instructors, tutors, and teaching assistants.
- Use the exam as a learning experience – evaluate your preparation, strategies, and content.