Test Strategies

The development of effective test preparation and testing strategies are essential for demonstrating knowledge of subject matter.
Optimal test performance is the desired goal for college students. Given the array of testing formats and the volume of information students are responsible for learning, effective test preparation and test strategies are essential for accurately demonstrating understanding of class material.
This presentation will offer tips for preparing and taking the following types of tests:

• Essay Test & Short Answer

• Open Book

• Multiple Choice

• True/False

• Problem Solving
Some things to keep in mind before we begin:

✓ Regular Class Attendance
✓ Healthy Habits (a good night’s rest, exercise, healthy diet)
✓ Talking with Your Instructor

Are Necessary for Optimal Test Performance!!
Essay Tests & Short Answer Answer

PREPARATION

• Begin preparing 1-2 weeks before the test.

• Pay close attention in class to instructor’s test review and review sheets.

• Read and review the chapters, focusing in on main ideas, concepts, bold/italics and graphs.

• Create a summary sheet to compare and contrast key facts, incorporating class notes.

• From your summary sheet, generate a list of possible questions and answer them.
Essay Tests & Short Answer

TEST TIME

• Carefully **review** all of the questions.

• Set a **time limit**. Give yourself more time on questions worth more points.

• First, answer the essay **questions you are certain** about.

• **Brainstorm** your answer in outline form, including a main idea, supporting details, and key concepts.

• Pay attention to key words such as **contrast, define, explain**, etc.

• Move on to the next question when your time is up. **Partial credit** counts!

• If you are stumped, write down what you do **know** about the topic. You might receive credit for the answer you provide.

• Leave time to **review and proofread** your answers.
Open Book

PREPARATION

• **Review** chapter ahead of time. Just because it is “Open Book”, don’t take for granted that it’s an easy “A”. Preparing for this type of test is just as important as any other.

• **Highlight** key concepts or **make notes** in the margins.

• **Use** **sticky notes to identify** and separate topics. This will also make locating specific topic information easier.
Open Book

TEST TIME

• Carefully **review** the test question.

• If you already know the answer to some of the questions, before referring to the book, go ahead and **answer it**! This will build your confidence and may help reduce anxiety.

• **Budget your time** for each question.

• Pay **close attention** to key words, charts, and graphs.

• If you are unable to answer a question, move on to the next. **Don’t go beyond your time limit** searching the chapter for an answer.

• **Go back to your unanswered question** after you have confidently answered the others.
Multiple Choice

PREPARATION

• Multiple choice questions ask for detailed information about a topic.

• Begin studying a week before the test.

• Use flash cards to review vocabulary, key facts, people, formulas, etc.

• Study class notes and review sheets from instructor.

• Diagram relationships between concepts using charts and graphs.
Multiple Choice

TEST TIME

- Read each question carefully. Watch for words like: not, except, and always.

- Budget your time. Work quickly and check your time often.

- If you get stuck, move on to the next question. Come back to the challenging test question, after you’ve answered the easier ones.

- Try answering the questions before looking at the choices provided.

- Cross out answers you are certain are wrong. Make your best guess from those that remain.

- Answer all the questions, even the ones you are unsure about.
True/False

Preparation

• Using index cards, make flash cards to review vocabulary, key concepts, formulas, important people, etc.

• Study class notes and flash cards as often as you can, even just before the test.
True/False

Test Time

• Read statements carefully.

• Watch for words such as always, never, all, every, and none.

• If you can think of an exception to such a statement, then it is usually false.
Problem Solving

Preparation

• **Review major concepts and formulas.**

• **Use index cards or formula sheet to review.** Some teachers will let you use it for the test as well.

• **To review, work problems and analyze your process.** Practice with a time-limit, explain your answers in words to gain a better understanding of the formulas.

• **Create practice tests from chapter reviews.**
Problem Solving

Test Time

- **Read questions carefully** to identify what is being asked of you.

- **Write down formulas and any helpful concepts** on the back of the test.

- **Start with the easiest questions**, budget your time, and allow more time for the questions with higher point value. Leave time to review your answers.

- **Sketch a diagram** to help formulate a solution.

- **Show all your work** - you might get partial credit for work shown.
In Conclusion,

You Can Do It! You can increase your test performance by
1). Taking care of yourself 2). Becoming familiar with the
style of test 3). Have a strategy to prepare for the test.

Use the information provided in this workshop to better
prepare yourself for your next test. Stick To It and You Will
See Results!

Also, consider seeking out the College Resources listed on
the next slide. They exist to support You!
Resources available at WCCC:

College Learning Center, Founders Hall room 565, 724-925-4135
• Offers tutoring sessions to review course material, answer questions on course content, learn test-taking strategies, and provide study skills & writing assistance

Disability Services, Founders Hall room 130, 724-925-4189
• Provides services and/or academic accommodations to support students with disabilities

Counseling Services, Founders Hall room 130, 724-925-4121
• Provides academic advising, career testing, and personal counseling, as well as referrals to outside agencies

Student Services Support Assistants, Founders Hall room 555, 724-925-6893
• Offers assistance and referrals to first-semester students
References

“Prepare for Tests.” (2013) Sanger Learning Center. The School of Undergraduate Studies, The University of Texas at Austin.


Mastery Quiz

True or False:

1). To do well on a test, you only need to review class notes the night before. _____
2). Open book tests do not require any sort of review or advance preparation since the answers are found in the text. _____
3). True/False tests never assess a student’s knowledge of vocabulary, key concepts, formulas, important people, etc. _____
4). Creating diagrams and charts of key concepts are useful for studying for multiple choice tests. _____

5). Select the behavior that is necessary for optimal test performance:
   a. regular class attendance  b. healthy habits  c. talking with your instructor
d. all of the above
6). Select the following strategy that is useful when taking essay tests:
   a. brainstorming  b. save the questions you know for last  c. overlook your spelling/grammer, just get something on the paper
d. paying attention in class is preparation enough
7). Name one study skill you plan to use this semester when taking tests._________
Evaluation

Please take a moment to complete our brief survey. You may print this slide (Ctrl-P in the design view) and return it to the College Learning Center, Founders Hall Room 565

Name of workshop: ________________  Date taken: ___________

Using the following scale, please rate each item below.
(1) Not very much (2) Somewhat not  (3) Somewhat  (4) Very much

❖ After completing this workshop, my knowledge has increased on this subject: ____
❖ I found the information in this workshop to be helpful to me: ____
❖ I am likely to use the information in this workshop in my life: ____
❖ Other comments: ____________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
Thank You!