

Success Tip: Preparing for Exams

Schedule study time.

Use an online calendar or a planner to create a study plan for yourself. Plan out study time for two weeks at a time. Remember: If you are taking 15 credits, you should be studying 30-45 hours per week.

Break up study time.

Create “to do” lists or use hourly planners to schedule study time. Stick to the plan! Begin studying for exams two weeks beforehand.

Be active in learning.

Using material from the textbook, lecture notes, homework, and previous tests, create your own test questions to study past the point of recognition. To do this, make sure you can do the following: Can you apply the concepts learned? Do you understand the “who, what, why, when, where, and how” something happens?

Use all senses in learning.

Read it, say it, hear it, do it, and think about it. Pair up with a fellow student and explain concepts to one another. Develop visual aids to help you see what is actually happening (concept maps, timelines, graphs, pictures, etc.). Develop models, flash cards, and example problems to involve tactile learning. Write and recite to master vocabulary and concepts.

Make study sheets/cheat sheets.

Some professors allow the use of study sheets during exams. Make sure yours is concise, clear, and contains pertinent information.

Review notes and readings.

If you have not clarified your notes, review them now. Rewrite notes into questions and answers on flashcards. Turn notes into a drawing or make a mnemonic device with related terms. Use color. Compare notes to the information in the textbook. Compare notes with another student to see if you have missed anything.

Visit professor's/TA's office hours.

If you have questions about the material, go to your professor's office hours or make an appointment to get the information you need.

Use your resources.

Does your class have a resource that can provide additional assistance? For instance, there is the Math Lab, the Physics Learning Center, tutoring, and more. For more information, visit the [Student Success Hub](#) or use the Resources button in your Navigate app.

Suggestions from successful students:

- Work fewer hours. The first priority is to be a student. For keeping to a plan, schedule one social activity, movie, and/or social media time as a reward.

- Do not skip classes. Classes at the end of the semester especially may include information not included in the textbook, and/or class could be a review session for the final.
- Do not skip one class to study for other classes.
- Study in an environment free from distractions.
- Get up earlier to study as opposed to staying up later.
- Get more sleep.
- Use weekends for studying.

Planning for FINAL EXAMS

Why plan now for finals? Planning early helps students to create a study schedule that allows for adequate preparation, especially if taking numerous finals. Another reason to start preparing early is STRESS. Decrease an already stressful time of year by making a plan and sticking to it.

Determine your schedule for finals week.

Write down the final exam days/times to verify that you do not have two exams scheduled at the same time. Students who have a schedule conflict may contact the Office of Student Records to have a final rescheduled.

Length of time allotted.

Finals are usually scheduled for a longer period of time and typically count more towards your final course grade than a regular exam. Ask the professor or look at the syllabus to determine the weight of the final exam.

Cumulative finals.

Cumulative finals include information from the entire semester. Non-cumulative finals include only information learned since the previous exam. Some finals are cumulative and others are not, ask the professor well in advance to find out.

Balance your studying.

To earn the grades you want to achieve, know your current grade in all of your courses. This will show which courses need the greatest effort and amount of study time.

Break up study time.

Rather than preparing for one final at a time, plan time to study one subject in the morning, another in the afternoon, and another in the evening. Start doing this at least three weeks before finals week to give you ample time to review and learn the material effectively.

Review exams from throughout the semester.

If you have not, do a post exam review. Did you make silly mistakes by rushing or misreading the directions? Identify the content areas and types of questions that you were the weakest in and improve upon those.