Getting in the “Zone” for Finals

How to be calm and study on
Understanding the Final

- Is the exam cumulative?
- What information will it cover?
- What is the format?
  Multiple choice, short answer, fill in the blank
- How long will the exam take?
- What materials can be used?
  Cheat sheet, calculator
- What percentage of the final grade is the final?
  Or, how important is the final?
Scheduling Preparation

- Use a calendar to record test dates and scheduled study times throughout the semester.
- Gather study material.
- Assess what you know and what you don’t know.
Preparing for the Final

• Understand different types of tests should be prepared for differently.
• Don’t give in to a nonproductive, negative attitude.
• Study with other students.
• Don’t let open-book or take-home tests create a false sense of security.
Study Skills

• Schedule and commit to designated study times.

• Decide what learning environments suit you best.
  Do you need complete silence or some white noise in the background?

• Sit in a straight back chair at a table in a well-lit room designated in a spot for study.
  Avoid comfortable chairs and beds so you don’t fall asleep.

• Use all senses while reading.
  o Reading out loud engages your sight, hearing, and speaking.
  o Close your eyes to meditate on material to help visualize.
The Do’s and Don’ts

• Do: Study with paper and pens.
  1. Write main topic and sub-topics for each chapter.
  2. List: who, what, when, where, why, and how for each topic as applicable.
  3. Write page number where the information is found.

• Do: Highlight only key words.
  1. Avoid highlighting large passages of texts.
  2. Highlight key words, make a note, and add page numbers to utilize highlighting.
Primacy and Recency

Primacy and recency are terms used in psychology to describe the effect of order of presentation on memory.

• Primacy
  Information presented earlier is better remembered than information presented later.

• Recency
  Most recent information presented is recalled better.

• What’s learned in the middle is the least remembered.
Study Session Tip

• To avoid the affects of primacy and recency, do not study over a prolonged period of time at one time.

• Follow this study session schedule throughout the semester:
  - Study for 20 minute interval.
  - Rest for 10-15 minutes (walk around).
  - Study for another 20 minute interval.
Time Management

• Set specific times and places to study.

• Clear study area of distractions before studying.
  Turn your phone off.

• Take it slow.
  Racing through materials can hurt retention of material.

• Set realistic expectations.
  o Learn to say no.
  o Prioritize your studying.
Before Final

- Get enough sleep.
- Sleep at night, study during the day.
- Stay healthy and avoid eating junk food.
- Prepare the exam materials the night before.
- Arrive at the classroom a few minutes early.
True or False Tips

1. Look for parts that make the whole statement false.
2. Assume statements are true until you can prove them false.
3. Absolutes often make a statement false.
4. Qualifiers often make a statement true.
5. Negatives can be confusing.
Multiple Choice Tips

1. Before reading the choices, think of the answer to the question.
2. Line up the test and answer sheet.
3. Determine the TPI (time per item).
4. Don’t decide answers based on the law of averages.
5. Use a process of elimination and guess if there’s no penalty.
6. Look for highly similar pairs.
Multiple Choice Tips, Continued

7. Look for contradictory answers.
8. Watch out for tricks intended to confuse you.
9. Consider each answer as an individual true-false question.
10. Be wary of “all of the above” or “none of the above” options.
11. Watch for terms that have been emphasized.
Procrastination

Procrastination is the act of putting things off that you should be doing right now, in favor of doing another thing that is usually more enjoyable.

“A temporal gap between intended behavior and enacted behavior.”
– Psychologist Clay Lay
Reasons for Procrastination

• The task seems too difficult.
• Fear of failure
• Trouble saying “no”
• Feeling overwhelmed and not sure how to break down tasks
• Stress
• Hopelessness
Procrastination Motivational Quotes

• “The two rules of procrastination:
  1) Do it today.
  2) Tomorrow will be today tomorrow.”
  – Author Unknown

• “The best way to get something done is to begin.”
  – Author Unknown

• “It was my fear of failure that kept me from attempting the master work. Now, I’m beginning what I could have started ten years ago. But I’m happy at least that I didn’t wait twenty years.” – Paulo Coelho
Procrastination Facts

• 20% of people identify themselves as chronic procrastinators.

• People who procrastinate have higher levels of health issues.
  A study showed that procrastinating college students had more compromised immune systems including more colds, flus, and GI problems.
Tips to Stop Procrastinating

1. Write down your ideas.
2. Set your priorities first thing in the morning or the night before.
4. Tackle time consuming projects in stages, concentrate on one thing at a time and delegate.
5. Find a quiet time and close your door.
6. Keep a calendar, set reasonable deadlines, and leave flex time in your schedule.
Tips to Stop Procrastinating, Continued

• Do fun things intermittently.
  Set limits on social visits and learn to say “no”.

• Use low productivity hours for easier projects.
  Don’t be a perfectionist.

• Carry flash cards.
  Write down ideas that come up and highlight key information.

• Get rid of clutter and make decisions now, not later.

• Ask for clarification. If you don’t know, don’t assume.

• Ask yourself, “what is the best use of my time right now?”
Questions?