

## Exam Preparation Tips & Test-Taking Strategies - Action Plan

According to the workshop presenter, it is important to focus on learning the information and not simply memorizing it. Learning means that you understand the information, can apply it, and that you know the information well enough to teach it to others.

### Part 1: The Study Cycle.

One of the most successful strategies you can use is called The Study Cycle. Review the five steps of The Study Cycle and do a self-assessment. For each step, briefly describe how often you practice the strategy. When you are done, think about the areas in which you need to improve and jot down what specific things you are going to do in order to improve.

#### **Step 1: Preview information before class.**

(Skim chapter, review summaries, note questions you would like answered in class)

#### **Step 2: Go to class.**

#### **Step 3: Review after class.**

(Within 24 hours, review notes, fill in gaps, and note any questions)

#### **Step 4: Study.**

(Set a goal, study with focus, reward yourself, review, ask questions such as why, how, and what if)

#### **Step 5: Assess your studying.**

(Ask yourself: Do I understand the material well enough to teach it to others?)

Describe what you need to improve and how you plan to do it.

Part 2: Use all of the resources available.

In addition to buying the textbook, you should take advantage of all of the other resources available to you. First, review the definitions of supplemental instruction and study group below. Then, for each course you are currently taking, find out what additional resources are available and answer the questions.

**Supplemental instruction**

Uses peer-assisted study sessions to help students succeed in a course. Typically, a student who has succeeded in a course helps other students complete the course by leading regular review sessions outside of class.

**A study group**

A small group of students (you and your classmates) who regularly meet to discuss the course material and study together.

**Name of Course 1**

What are the professor's office hours? Include the days, times, and location.

Is tutoring offered? If so, include the days, times, and location.

Is there supplemental instruction and/or a study group for this course? If so, include the days, times, and location.

**Name of Course 2**

What are the professor's office hours? Include the days, times, and location.

Is tutoring offered? If so, include the days, times, and location.

Is there supplemental instruction and/or a study group for this course? If so, include the days, times, and location.

**Name of Course 3**

What are the professor's office hours? Include the days, times, and location.

Is tutoring offered? If so, include the days, times, and location.

Is there supplemental instruction and/or a study group for this course? If so, include the days, times, and location.

**Name of Course 4**

What are the professor's office hours? Include the days, times, and location.

Is tutoring offered? If so, include the days, times, and location.

Is there supplemental instruction and/or a study group for this course? If so, include the days, times, and location.

**Name of Course 5**

What are the professor's office hours? Include the days, times, and location.

Is tutoring offered? If so, include the days, times, and location.

Is there supplemental instruction and/or a study group for this course? If so, include the days, times, and location.

**Part 3: Get organized!**

(1to 2 weeks before test) Choose a course in which you have an upcoming test. Find out the following information regarding the test and jot it down here.

- Course name:
- Date and time of test:
- What will be covered on the test:
- The format of the test (multiple choice, fill in the blank, essay):

Choose one of the following strategies to help you organize and learn the information for this test. Hand these in with this action plan.

- make flash cards
- make up practice questions or a practice test
- use mnemonics

**Part 4: Post-test assessment.**

What grade did you earn? Use the following questions to keep track of strategies that you used and did not use when preparing for the test by typing yes if you did it and no if you did not.

Grade earned on test:

I identified the exam specifics (format of questions, time allowed, content to be tested).

I organized my textbook notes and lecture notes.

I created flash cards, practice questions, and/or mnemonics to memorize key terms.

I tried to teach someone else the material.

I reviewed my textbook and lecture notes regularly.

I used positive self-talk on the day of the exam.

I arrived early.

I read instructions very carefully.

I jotted down formulas and definitions on back of test.

I surveyed the whole test before starting the test and began with items I found easiest.

I left as soon as test was over and did not talk to others about it.

I rewarded myself.

I went over the exam when it was returned and looked at errors.

## Part 5. Preparing for specific types of tests.

How is preparing for a multiple choice test different from preparing for an essay test? How should you prepare for an open book test? Before your next test, determine what type of test it will be and do an Internet search for mastering that type of test. For example, search for mastering multiple choice tests or mastering essay tests. You could also ask your professor or tutoring center for tips.