

# Fall 2021 Final Exam Schedule

Time of Class	Day of Exam	Time of Exam
ASL/ARBC/FREN/ITAL/SPAN/LATN/GRE 1401, 1402, 1502, FREN/SPAN 2401	THURS., DEC 9	8:00-11:00 AM
11:00 AM MWF	THURS., DEC 9	11:30 AM- 2:30 PM
3:00 PM MWF	THURS., DEC 9	3:00- 6:00 PM
9:30 AM TTH	FRI., DEC 10	8:00-11:00 AM
1:00 PM MWF	FRI., DEC 10	11:30 AM- 2:30 PM
3:30 PM TTH	FRI., DEC 10	3:00- 6:00 PM
9:00 AM MWF	SAT., DEC 11	8:00-11:00 AM
11:00 AM MWF	SAT., DEC 11	11:30 AM- 2:30 PM
4:00 PM MWF	SAT., DEC 11	3:00- 6:00 PM
8:00 AM TTH	MON., DEC 13	8:00-11:00 AM
12:30 PM TTH	MON., DEC 13	11:30 AM- 2:30 PM
5:00 PM MWF	MON., DEC 13	3:00- 6:00 PM
8:00 AM MWF	TUES., DEC 14	8:00-11:00 AM
12:00 PM MWF	TUES., DEC 14	11:30 AM- 2:30 PM
2:00 PM MWF	TUES., DEC 14	3:00- 6:00 PM
10:00 AM MWF	WED., DEC 15	8:00-11:00 AM
2:00 PM TTH	WED., DEC 15	11:30 AM- 2:30 PM
5:00 PM TTH	WED., DEC 15	3:00- 6:00 PM

## Evening Classes:

6:00 PM MWF*, TTH*	Examinations will be held at 6:30 PM on the regular meeting night DEC 9-15
6:30 PM or later MWF*, TTH*	Examinations will be held in the regular class periods from DEC 9-15

\*MWF= MWF, M, W, F, MW, WF; TTH = T, TH

Classes that begin 30 minutes (or less) after the indicated "time of class," will have their final exam scheduled in the earliest matching time block.

Example #1: If your class begins at 8:30 AM on TTH, you would follow the final exam schedule for the 8:00 AM TTH class time.

Example #2: If your class begins at 1:30 PM MWF, you would follow the final exam schedule for the 1:00 PM MWF class time.

# FINALS PREP CHECKLIST

Find additional resources at [smu.edu/SASP](https://smu.edu/SASP)

- Schedule an appointment to meet with your professors regarding any questions/concerns:
  - Current course materials – Understanding/Clarification
  - Questions Regarding the Final Exam
  
- Review all of your Syllabi
  - Check the attendance policy
  - Confirm the final exam schedule/information
  
- Review all of your scores on Canvas:
  - Tally all of your scores to gain a clear understanding of what grades/scores to aim for to achieve your goal
  - Check for discrepancies and follow up immediately with professors on any questions
  
- Schedule an appointment with the Writing Center for any final papers
  
- Add the tutor schedule into your planner for the date/time you need to work with a tutor
  
- Schedule any study rooms/space in the library for study groups
  
- If you need to use a printer, make sure you have ink and paper
  
- Prepare a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd backup study location
  
- Revisit the calendar over the entire semester
  - Make sure you have notes for any class missed during the semester



# PREPARE FOR FINAL EXAMS

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## What are Finals?

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Final exams have special features to consider as you develop a plan for the last weeks of the semester:

- Finals are often **CUMULATIVE**, covering the entire semester, so you must recall a great deal of information, some of it from three months ago; you must keep the big picture in mind without neglecting early notes and readings.
- Finals that are **THREE HOURS LONG** give you an opportunity to demonstrate all that you have learned, but demand both depth and breadth of knowledge.
- Finals are **SCHEDULED CLOSE TOGETHER**, so you cannot study as you may during the rest of the semester, preparing for and taking one exam before starting work on the next one. Study scheduling thus becomes critical to assure that you spend your limited time in ways that produce the best possible grade in each course.
- Finals come at the **END** of a long term, when you are both physically and mentally fatigued. You must guard against burnout and pace yourself through a week of exams. If you try to re-learn every fact in every course, you may have little energy left for your last exams.
- Finals have a **LARGE IMPACT** on grades and may bring extra anxiety. One three-hour exam may well determine whether you earn an A or a C.

## Developing a Plan for Success

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A realistic study plan can help you to divide your time and energy among several courses that helps build confidence and reduce anxiety.

Because finals play a critical part in determining your final grades, careful planning -- on paper -- is needed. Students often become so concerned about the amount of work involved in preparing for finals that they spend more time on worrying than studying. Planning can prevent anxiety, wasted time, and wasted energy. How you spend the last few weeks of the semester can make a significant difference in your GPA; the results are well worth an hour of advance planning.

Before you start your plan make sure you have gathered these materials:

- Your course syllabi
- Access to Canvas
- Finals Schedule from the Registrar

Utilize the materials in this packet to effectively prepare for finals:

- Finals Planning Sheet (Your entire finals plan)
- Four Weeks to Finals (The last month)
- Final Week Schedule (The last week)
- Finals Check List



## Make Your Plan – Finals Planning Sheet

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**Step 1:** Take an honest look at your courses, your grades going into finals, and their relative importance to you. On the Finals Plan form, RANK YOUR COURSES in order of priority or difficulty, decide on the GRADE you can aim to achieve in each, determine the TYPE OF TEST in each course, and plan STUDY METHODS for each.

**Step 2:** Next, use the Finals Plan form to LIST THE WORK remaining in each course and to ESTIMATE THE TIME NEEDED for each task. You may feel that you could spend months on each course, but time is limited and YOU MUST MAKE CHOICES to spend your time effectively. If one grade will stay a C no matter what you score on the final, but another grade could go from B to A, put more time into the course you can influence. Any course which you are in danger of failing should go at the top.

**Step 3:** Now translate your WORK LIST and TIME ESTIMATES into a CALENDAR for the time remaining. Enter all tests and paper due dates, then plan to begin review for each exam well in advance. Brief review periods each day for several days produce better memory and less stress. You have more time left than you realize: a week contains 168 hours. From that, subtract 56 hours for 8 hours of sleep daily, 15 hours for classes, 11 hours for 3 half-hour meals daily, 3 hours for exercise, and you still have 83 HOURS OF POSSIBLE STUDY TIME EACH WEEK! With planning & discipline, you can accomplish a great deal.

**Step 4:** Then use the attached weekly schedule to plan a FINALS WEEK SCHEDULE. Enter the times of your finals, then fit in the tasks on your Finals Plan. To be at your best during exams, plan time for adequate SLEEP, FOOD, and EXERCISE during this critical period. You'll do better on an exam after a good night's sleep (at least 4 hours but preferably 8), and a protein meal to fuel both brain and body. 20-30 minutes of any aerobic exercise daily can help to reduce stress and improve concentration.

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## Finals Planning - EXAMPLE

Course	Goal	Expected Test	Study Strategies	Work to be Done	Time
PSYC	A or B+	Multiple choice Very detailed Literal and Applied Questions  Cumulative Worth 15%	Make summary sheets for text and lecture notes  Make flash cards for important terms and facts  Recite out loud to memorize	Read chap. 14 (22 pp.) & make summary sheets Read chap. 15 (18 pp.) and make summary sheets Make flash cards for chaps. 14 & 15 Review chaps. 1,2,5,7,8,10,12 with recitation Review lecture notes with recitation Review all flash cards	2 hrs. 2 hrs. 2 hrs. 7 hrs. 6 hrs. 4 hrs.  23 hrs.
ACCT	B	Problem solving  Cumulative Worth 25%	Work all problems missed on tests, quizzes, homework  Work hard problems in text that were not assigned	Do last homework assignments (problem set 8) Rework key problems (especially hard ones from tests and textbook) Work with Acct. tutors to clarify anything confusing	3 hrs. 6 hrs.  4 hrs.  13 hrs.
BIOL	B or B-	Multiple Choice  General concepts & terms  Cumulative Worth 20%	Highlight rest of book, mak- ing marginal notes  Review with some recitation (not as much as for Psysc)	Read and highlight Chapter 6 Review highlighted parts of previous chapters, with some recitation Review lecture notes with recitation Attend A-LEC review session	1 1/2 hrs. 4 hrs.  4 hrs. 2 hrs.  11 1/2 hrs.
ENGL	B+	Essays  Memory of plots, characters Critical Evaluations  Cumulative Worth 40%	Make charts to condense char, settings, plot or each novel, story, etc.  Try to predict likely essay questions  Outline key points  Review charts and out- lines	Read last 3 short stories 5 page paper: research and take notes outline & draft revise Writing Center Make charts, predict ?s, and outline answers Review charts and outlines to memorize	3 hrs.  1 hr. 2 hrs. 4 hrs. 1/2 hr. 3 hrs. 4 hrs.  17 1/2 hrs.



# FINALS PLANNING

Semester \_\_\_\_\_  
Year \_\_\_\_\_

Course	Goal	Expected Test	Study Strategies	Work to be Done	Time



## Plan your Work – Four Weeks to Finals

Once you've completed the Finals Planning sheet, translate your work list and time estimates into a calendar for the time remaining in the semester. Use the "Four Weeks to Finals" sheet on the next page, an example is provided below. Enter all tests & paper due dates, then plan to begin reviewing for each exam in advance. Short review periods each day for many days produce better memory and less stress.

You have more time left than you realize: a week contains 168 hours. From that subtract 56 hours for 8 hours of sleep daily, 15 hours for classes, 11 hours for 3 half-hour meals daily, 3 hours of exercise, and you still have 83 hours of possible study time each week. With planning and discipline, you can accomplish a great deal.

	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>NOV</b>		Schedule Writing Center appt.	1 hr - Read ch.14 PSYC & summarize  1 hr - research, take notes for ENGL paper	1 hr - outline ENGL paper  1 hr - finish PSYC ch.14 & summarize	1/2 hr. WritingCenter appt.  2 hrs- BIOL	3 hrs - start draft of ENGL paper  Concert 10 pm	3 hrs - ACCT problems Set 8
	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25 - Thanksgiving</b>	<b>26 – Thanksgiving</b>	<b>27</b>
	1 hr - Make flash cards for PSYCH ch.14	1 hr - Read PSYC ch.15 & summarize  1 hr. ACCT. tutor	1 hr -finish PSYC ch.15 & summarize  2 hrs ACCT tutor	2 hrs - finish draft of ENGL paper  1 hr - make flash cards - PSYC ch.15		1 hr - Rvw PSYC ch.1	2 hr - revise & edit ENGL paper  1 hr - hard ACCT problems
	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>NOV &amp; DEC</b>	1 hr - Rvw PSYC ch.2  1 hr - Rvw PSYC ch.5  1 hr – revise & print ENGL paper	<b>ENGL paper due</b>  1 hr - Read BIOL ch.6  1 hr - Review PSYC ch.7	1 hr - Review PSYC ch.8  1 hr - Read ENGL	1 hr - Read ENGL  1 hr - ACCT tutor  1 hr - Review hard ACCT problems	<b>ACCT project due</b>  1hr - Review PSYC ch.10  2 hrs - Review PSYC ch.12	2 hrs - Review PSYC notes  2 hrs – ACCT problems	1hr - Read ENGL  2hrs - Review PSYC lecture notes
	<b>5</b>	<b>6 – Last Class Day</b>	<b>7 – Reading Day</b>	<b>8 – Reading Day</b>	<b>9 - FINALS</b>	<b>10 - FINALS</b>	<b>- FINALS</b>
<b>FINALS</b>	1hr – Make ENGL outlines & charts  1hrs - LEC BIOL rvw session	3 hrs - Review PSYC flash cards  2 hrs - Make ENGL outlines & charts	2 hrs - Review ENGL charts & outlines  2 hr - Review BIOL text	2 hrs - Review ENGL charts & outlines  1 hr - ACCT probs	2 hrs - Review BIOL lecture notes  2 hr - Review PSYC Notes	2 hrs – rvw ACCT notes  2 hrs - ACCT probs	<b>11:30-2:30 ACCT FNL</b>  1 hr – ACCT problems  2 hrs - review BIOL notes
	<b>12 - FINALS</b>	<b>13 - FINALS</b>	<b>14 - FINALS</b>	<b>15 - FINALS</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
	2 hrs - Review BIOL text	<b>8-11 BIO FNL</b>  2 hrs - Review PSYC lecture notes  2 hr - Review PSYC flash cards	<b>11:30-2:30 PSYC FNL</b>  2 hrs - Review PSYC flash cards  2 hrs- ENGL study	<b>3-6 ENGL FNL</b>  4 hrs- ENGL study	<b>FOUR WEEKS TO FINALS EXAMPLE</b>		



# FOUR WEEKS TO FINALS

Semester \_\_\_\_\_  
Year \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday

NOV

14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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21	22	23	24 Thanksgiving Holiday University Closed	25 Thanksgiving Holiday University Closed	26	27
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NOV  
& DEC

28	29	30	1	2	3	4
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FINALS

5	6 Last Day of Class	7 Reading Day	8 Reading Day	9 Finals	10 Finals	11 Finals
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12	13 Finals	14 Finals	15 Finals	16	17	18
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## The Final Week

Once you've completed the Finals Planning sheet and the Four Weeks to Finals calendar use the 24/7 planner below to organize your Final Week.

First, enter the times of your finals, then fill in the remaining tasks during specific time periods on the days assigned in the Four Weeks to Finals calendar.

To be at your best during exams, plan time for adequate sleep, food and exercise during this critical period. You'll do better on an exam after a good night's sleep, and a protein meal to fuel both your brain and body is helpful.

Remember, 20-30 minutes of any aerobic exercise daily can help reduce stress and improve concentration.

### The Final Week - EXAMPLE

	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed
	5-May	6-May	7-May	8-May	9-May	10-May	11-May	12-May
7am	Wake	Wake	Wake	Wake	Wake	Eat	Wake	Wake
8am	Eat	Eat	Eat	Eat	Eat	BIOL FINAL 8-11	Eat	Eat
9am	Study ACCT	Study BIOL	Study ACCT	Study ACCT	Study BIOL		Study PSYC	Study ENGL
10am								
11am	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise	ACCT FINAL 11:30-2:30	Exercise	Exercise	PSYC Final 11:30-2:30	Exercise
12pm	Eat	Eat	Eat		Eat	Eat		Eat
1pm	Study BIOL	Study PSYC	Study BIOL	Study BIOL	Study PSYC	Study PSYC	Study ENGL	Study ENGL
2pm			Study PSYC					
3pm	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	ENGL FINAL 3-6
4pm	Study PSYC	Study ACCT	Study ACCT	Study BIOL	Study PSYC	Study PSYC	Study ENGL	
5pm					Study ENGL	Study ENGL	Study ENGL	
6pm	Eat	Eat	Eat	Eat	Eat	Eat	Eat	Eat
7pm	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time	Free Time
8pm								
9pm								
10pm								
11p – 6a	SLEEP							



# THE FINAL WEEK

Semester \_\_\_\_\_  
Year \_\_\_\_\_

	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed
	Dec 5	Dec 6	Dec 7	Dec 8	Dec 9	Dec 10	Dec 11	Dec 12
7am								
8am								
9am								
10am								
11am								
12pm								
1pm								
2pm								
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5am								
6am								



# STUDY SMARTER, NOT HARDER: MAKING YOUR PLAN WORK

It's not enough to plan time for study. Studying for long periods in ineffective ways -- studying harder -- can waste your time. Before you begin, resolve to choose more effective study methods to make every available minute count. That's studying smarter! Here are some ideas:

## Reading is NOT studying! To avoid simply re-reading, create study tools:

- Make SUMMARY SHEETS for text and lecture notes; boil 10 pages down to one. Write a key topic at the top of a page, then condense important ideas from text and lecture notes onto a single page.
- Create MIND MAPS, rather than formal outlines, to show relationships; use spider webs, tree branches, or other formats. Add color to make items distinct and to boost visual memory.
- Create COMPARISON/CONTRAST CHARTS to show similarities/differences among cultures, systems, theories, philosophers, etc. Again, use color-coding to improve memory.
- Make DIAGRAMS or FLOW CHARTS to show a process or sequence of events.
- Draw a TIME LINE to show events and dates; color code to distinguish decades, centuries, eras.
- To condense reading for review, make a SPEED-STUDY DIAGRAM. Skim a chapter to count the number of sections it's divided into, then divide a single sheet of paper into the same number of sections or boxes. Read the first section, then jot down in the first box only the most important points -- and only as much as will fit in the box. Read the next section, fill the next box, and so on. You will read selectively, condense ideas, and produce an excellent one-page review sheet.
- If you learn best by hearing, review by READING ALOUD to concentrate and recall more;
  - RECORD your notes and listen repeatedly. DISCUSS concepts with others after initial study alone.
- Review a page of notes or text by forcing yourself to FORMULATE AND ANSWER QUESTIONS after each page, aloud or in writing.

## To memorize effectively, get more senses involved:

- Put important facts/dates/formulas on FLASH CARDS, adding color to create a strong visual image. Test yourself, then have a partner quiz you. Then take 2 to 4 cards at a time and try to define and discuss the relationships among the concepts. Talk aloud so you can reinforce through speech and hearing.
- Or make a MASTER LIST -- fold a sheet of paper in half, then list terms on the left side and definitions on the right side. Cover each side and alternately try to define each term aloud and give the term for each definition. Use color to group and categorize. Test yourself aloud on individual items, and then consider several items at a time.
- If you recall best what you hear, RECORD dates or formulas and listen repeatedly until you can recite with the tape.
- Prepare all flash cards, lists, or tapes. Then start to review as far ahead of the test as possible. Each day, review and test yourself in several SHORT, INTENSE memory/review sessions.
- In each session, use ALL SENSES: see it, say it, hear it, write it (or trace over it) to use visual, auditory, and motion learning channels.

## To simulate the actual test:

- Alone or in a group, PREDICT AND ANSWER possible test questions. Use notes and text to construct answers; outline points to make in an essay answer. Discover what you don't know well; study those topics again.
- Work math or statistics problems against a TIMER to improve speed and confidence. Rework all questions MISSED on earlier quizzes, homework, and tests; tough ones often reappear in the same or similar form.

# PUTTING YOUR PLAN TO WORK

Now that you've completed your plan and calendar, how can you make the best use of review time you've scheduled? To ensure recall of what you have learned:

1. As you begin to review for each final, **PHYSICALLY ORGANIZE** all course materials: syllabus; lecture notes; reading notes; texts; handouts; returned quizzes, tests, homework, and papers. Assemble these to organize the work to be done.
2. To **MENTALLY ORGANIZE** your efforts, prepare a table of contents for each course, briefly outlining the major topics covered in lectures and text. This helps you develop a schema or overall mental picture of the course content, as well as aiding you in chunking the contents into smaller, more manageable units for organized review. Use the syllabus to back off and see the whole course. How do the notes, text, and outside readings relate? What is the purpose of the course? What are the central issues or themes?
3. Use your Finals Plan and Finals Week Schedule to distribute review time for each final over several days, designating which topics to review in each block of time. Try the **FIVE-DAY STUDY PROGRAM** to space out review and improve retention:
  - **Five days before the exam**, gather and look over all the material to be covered. Isolate the areas that are most difficult for you and section off the rest into organized, easy-to-handle amounts.
  - **Four days before the exam**, study those difficult, problem areas. If you still have trouble, you have time to consult the professor, a tutor, or a classmate.
  - **Three days before the exam**, study all the remaining, easier material.
  - **Two days before the exam**, study all of the material thoroughly, as if the test were the next day. Reassemble the material, combining the difficult and easier sections into an organized whole. Focus on seeing relationships among ideas, synthesis of the separate elements of a course, analysis of major concepts, and evaluation of theories and trends.
    - For an ESSAY EXAM, you need to see the overall picture.
    - For an OBJECTIVE final, you must master specific facts and recognize associations; pay extra attention to names, dates, and the specialized vocabulary of the subject.
    - Use frequent, brief multi-sensory reviews (see it, say it, hear it, write it) to solidify recall.
  - **The day before the exam**, review all course content briefly, concentrate on memory work immediately before falling asleep. Get a good night's rest and get up early enough to eat a meal that includes protein. To THINK rapidly and RECALL accurately, avoid exhaustion and hunger.

With this program, you cover all material three times: on Day 2, the difficult material alone; on Day 3, the easier material alone; and on Days 4 and 5, all of the material, reassembled. With no all-night or all-day marathons, you can master large quantities of information. As you prepare for several tests, you can work simultaneously on different stages to divide your time and energy productively.

## RE-READING IS NOT STUDYING!

Reading alone is only a short-term memory operation, insufficient for test preparation. To produce real learning and recall, you need ACTIVE REVIEW TECHNIQUES. Research shows these produce thorough, long-term learning in LESS TIME than passively re-reading texts and notes.

- **Write:** condense notes and text into summary sheets, write one-page summaries of articles or chapters, make flash cards, create time lines or comparison/contrast charts. The thinking and writing involved demand concentration, test your comprehension, and foster better memory. The physical action of writing brings words and concepts more sharply before your mind and better preserves them in your memory. Creating written study tools is often the single most productive action you can take.



- **Recite aloud:** state ideas aloud in your own words. Don't assume you can define a term or compare and contrast two concepts; make yourself explain in detail, in your own words, to guarantee that you have more than a superficial understanding of ideas. Looking over pages and seeing familiar ideas establishes passive recognition, not the ability to actively produce information on demand. **LOOKING OVER IS NOT STUDYING!** The true test of studying is this: **IF YOU CAN'T SAY IT, YOU DON'T KNOW IT.**
- **Predict** and answer possible test questions, aloud or in writing. This forces you to select the most important points, to actively process or re-think the information, and to perform under simulated test conditions. To prepare for essay or I.D. questions, make index cards with a brief question on one side and the key points of an answer on the other. Make up questions early, then quiz yourself repeatedly and have others test you as well. To generate questions, use old exams, the syllabus, your notes, textbook tables of contents, chapter summaries or reviews, chapter or study guide questions. Questions are doubly effective for test preparation: you must **THINK** through the material to come up with questions, then **THINK** again to produce answers.
- **Study groups** can enhance individual review **IF** all members first study independently and set an agenda for each group session. This is an excellent setting to predict test questions, to answer them individually, and then to grade each other's responses by comparing them to the text and lecture notes. For essays, collectively work out an ideal answer for each question, briefly outline key points, then memorize. For problem-solving tests in math, stat., or engineering, work practice problems, timing each other, then check each other's work.

If **TEST ANXIETY** is a problem, you'll boost confidence by using the Finals Plan and calendar to budget time and plan systematic review. Pay special attention to adequate sleep, exercise, and nutrition during the weeks before and of finals. Use a meditation app or visit the Counseling & Psychiatric Services Center (2nd floor of Health Center) to learn breathing exercises, positive self-talk, visualization, and relaxation techniques. All these can help you control anxiety during exams.

The **DAY OF THE TEST**, get up early enough to be fully awake and alert. Eat a meal with protein and carbohydrate to fuel your mind and body. Arrive at the test location on time, fully equipped (pens, pencils, calculator, etc.). Avoid talking to anyone, and try to sit at the front of the room to block your view of others who may distract you.

Before starting, look over the entire exam and do a memory dump, jotting down any memorized information to get it off your mind and onto paper. Outline essay answers before you write to improve organization, ensure against forgetting, and ease the grader's reading. Answer easier questions first, then return to ponder more difficult ones. Use brainstorming and free association to improve recall. Three hours is plenty of time; work carefully and steadily, using deep breaths and positive self-talk to stay calm.

Save time to proofread, but change answers **ONLY** if you originally misread or misunderstood the question or have remembered a fact. Except in those cases, your first answer is likely to be correct; don't change from right to wrong!

### **Use all possible RESOURCES:**

- See your PROFESSOR or TA for advice on effective test preparation.
- Find a TUTOR at A-LEC: [www.smu.edu/tutoring](http://www.smu.edu/tutoring)
- Organize a STUDY GROUP to teach and quiz each other.
- Attend the PROFESSOR'S or TA'S REVIEW SESSION.
- Schedule a WRITING CENTER appointment via Canvas.

# A COUNTDOWN TO SUCCESSFUL FINALS:

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## *2-3 Weeks before Finals*

### PLANNING

1. Complete your Finals Plan, showing all upcoming assignments and tests in each course.
2. Evaluate your probable and possible grades. Which courses have solid grades? Which are borderline? You have limited time, so decide where to invest it to get the best results.
3. If necessary, go to each professor to determine your status in the course. Take your text and notes and ask for specific suggestions on study and review techniques.
4. For each task on your Finals Plan, generously estimate the amount of time you'll need. On your calendar, indicate the days and the number of hours each day that you will work on each task (ex. Monday: 2 hrs. - read Psyc.; 1 hr. - type English paper).
5. On a weekly schedule sheet for this week, plan specific times to complete 1/3 to 1/2 of the tasks on your Finals Plan.

### CLASSES

1. Go to every class! More material may be covered now than earlier in the semester. Be alert for information about final assignments and exams.
2. Try for complete, accurate notes. Record as many main ideas as possible. Listen for summaries at the beginning and end.
3. After each class, compare your notes with classmates' notes. Add to yours to improve clarity and completeness. Within 24 hours, review your notes with a pen or highlighter, marking ideas that were stressed -- these may be test questions!

### STUDY

1. Study some every day, including weekends. If you go away for the weekend, leave campus late or return early; don't lose "prime time."
2. Provide yourself with a good study environment. Ideally, use the library. If you study in your room, clean up both room and desk. Unplug the TV. Don't answer the door or phone when you're studying. Turn off your phone, then return calls/texts later when you take a break.
3. Study during the day or early evening, then reward yourself with time off. Choose carefully. A movie leaves you fit for classes and study the next day; late night partying does not.
4. If you have many textbook chapters to read, divide the task into five or six parts, using your calendar or weekly schedule form. Then do one part per day, crossing off completed tasks on your Finals Plan.
5. For each hour of reading you plan, schedule a 10-15 minute break. Get up, stretch, move around. Read aloud or switch from one course to another if concentration lags.
6. To reduce stress, try to finish projects or papers before their due dates.

### YOU

1. Celebrate in moderation! Treat yourself to dinner and a watch a show rather than going out.
2. Laundry and cleaning are good, active breaks from studying.
3. Daily, try for a half hour of exercise, two balanced meals, and eight hours of sleep.



# A COUNTDOWN TO SUCCESSFUL FINALS:

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## *1 Week before Finals*

### PLANNING

1. List times of all finals on your calendar or weekly schedule form. If you have three on one day, check to see if one professor has two sections of the course. Ask to take the test earlier, with the other section.
2. Buy all necessary study supplies: paper, index cards, pens, pencils, highlighters, etc. Stock up on healthy, energy-producing snacks.
3. For unfinished assignments, follow these steps:
  - a. Ask: What needs to be done? How much time will it take? When will I do it? Answer on your Finals Plan.
  - b. If you have more work than time, set priorities. Start with the most important task or the one that's due first. Number each task 1, 2, 3...
  - c. Record each task on your calendar or weekly schedule, on the day you will do it, showing time needed (ex. 2 hrs - read History).

### CLASS

1. Read ahead so you go to each class PREPARED. You'll know what concepts the lecture will cover, what's hard, what questions to ask, and what's covered thoroughly in the text. You'll comprehend more and take better, more useful notes.
2. Listen carefully for summaries and overall reviews at the beginning and end. Expect more information than earlier in the semester. Record as many main ideas and supporting details as possible.
3. After class, compare notes with others' to be sure yours are complete. Within 24 hours, review and rework notes with a pen or highlighter. Fill in blanks, mark ideas stressed by the professor -- they're possible test questions!

### STUDY

1. Begin to study EARLY in the day; temptations to avoid studying are strong now. Talk yourself into studying before you do other tasks.
2. Read text assignments quickly, underlining or highlighting after each paragraph or page. Sleepy? Divide reading into 15 to 30 minute chunks; exercise or shower to wake up.
3. For each course, list what you expect to see on the exam. What has the professor emphasized? Will it be like earlier tests? Will it be a full three hours long?
4. WHERE you study is as important as how much! To do your best, use the library. In the daytime, it's quiet and you're not tired. Evenings are better used as break time. Try earplugs if noise distracts you; if they help, you can even use them during an exam.

### YOU

1. You are the star performer during finals, so pace yourself. Keep to a routine, including exercise, rest, food, and sleep. Don't experiment with new forms of caffeine or "foolproof" stay-awake schemes. They could spell academic disaster.
2. Finals are an emotional period; roommate arguments and broken romances are common. Try to keep relationships on an even keel, delaying any confrontations until after finals.



# A COUNTDOWN TO SUCCESSFUL FINALS:

## *Finals Week*

### PLANNING

1. Double check the date, time, and place of each final; record on your calendar.
2. Before you leave your room/home to take a final, be sure you have: a watch to pace yourself during the test; notes to review briefly on the way; paper, pencils, and pens; a calculator if needed. To boost energy and concentration, take a snack to eat halfway through a long exam.
3. Plan to arrive 10 minutes early for a last review. Avoid talking to panicky classmates; sit upfront to block your view of others, and they won't distract you.

### CLASS - THE FINAL EXAM

1. Don't panic when the test is handed out. Read directions carefully. Breathe deeply and pretend you are alone in the room. Do a "memory dump," writing names, dates, formulas, etc. on the test.
2. Preview the test for organization and point distribution. Plan your time: a part worth 50% gets 50% of the time. Jot down start and stop times for each section. Use a watch to stick to your schedule.
3. Answer EASIER questions FIRST, then return to harder ones. Read each question carefully; accept it at face value. Don't read things into the question that aren't there. Focus on one question at a time. Underline or circle key words in the question and in answer choices to help concentrate.
4. Lapses of memory are normal & temporary. Don't let yourself panic. Relax, move on, then return.
5. For essays, print or write on every other line to improve legibility and to leave space for corrections and additions. To clarify organization, state your thesis in the first sentence, and write a separate paragraph for each key point. Underline key points to ease grading. Remember to save a few minutes to proofread and make any final corrections before turning in.
6. Change answers ONLY if you misread a question or just remembered a forgotten fact.
7. CHEATING IS FAR MORE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR ACADEMIC RECORD THAN FAILING. You can retake a course, but expulsion or an honor violation on your transcript can't be erased.

### STUDY

1. Review notes, textbook underlining, and returned tests. To remember, do MORE than read: recite aloud; write summaries; make lists, charts, maps, or flash cards; tape notes and listen; discuss ideas with a study group or tutor. Create test questions or problems and practice answering them.
2. More than one final on the same day? Allocate time carefully so you can study for one without worrying about the other. Decide if they deserve equal time or if one needs more; set up a schedule. You may study last for the first final, so it is fresh in your mind. Then, after the first, review for the second.
3. Don't overdo caffeine to stay awake, or you won't be able to sleep when you need to. Exercise is preferable. Need a break from thinking? To use up nervous energy, start packing to go home.
4. Resist the urge to blow off your last final, especially if it's on Saturday. Remind yourself of all the work you've already invested in that course. You want your final grade to reflect that investment.
5. Respect 24-hour quiet policies. Celebrate the end of your finals away from others studying.

### YOU

1. After finishing a final, give yourself at least an hour off to unwind before starting to study again.
2. Dress for comfort, not style. Wear colors that make you feel "up."
3. For energy and concentration, at least eat 2 well-balanced meals a day. Limit caffeine, sugar, and alcohol.
4. Get adequate sleep. For best recall, wake up 1 to 2 hours before a test and eat a combination of protein and carbohydrates.



# TEST PREPARATION PLAN

*For your toughest final!*

## ANALYZE PAST TESTS AND SET A GOAL

Course \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Final Exam \_\_\_\_\_  
Problems on Previous Tests \_\_\_\_\_  
How to Overcome these Problems \_\_\_\_\_  
Grades on Past Exams \_\_\_\_\_  
Goal Grade for Final Exam \_\_\_\_\_

## DEFINE TASKS AND SET PRIORITIES

Material to be covered on the final exam  
*Create a "table of contents" of specific topics in text, outside readings, lecture notes, films, lab work, etc*

Which of these topics are difficult for me and should take top priority in studying?

Which topics are easier for me and thus lower in priority?

Do I need to catch up on reading or assignments before I can review? YES NO  
If "YES" what make-up work needs to be done?

Estimated Total Time Needed \_\_\_\_\_ Catch up on: Days \_\_\_\_\_ Times \_\_\_\_\_

Are there topics on which I need extra help from a professor, TA, or tutor? YES NO  
If "YES" what are the topics?

Person to see for help \_\_\_\_\_ Days \_\_\_\_\_ Times \_\_\_\_\_

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE TEST

What kinds of questions will the test contain? \_\_\_\_\_  
What else has the professor mentioned? \_\_\_\_\_

## SELECT STUDY TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

*What study tools can I create to organize and improve my review?*

\_\_\_\_ Flash cards or master lists      \_\_\_\_ Summary sheets      \_\_\_\_ Time lines  
\_\_\_\_ Compare/contrast charts      \_\_\_\_ Diagrams & flow charts      \_\_\_\_ Speed-study diagram  
\_\_\_\_ Mind maps & visual outlines      \_\_\_\_ Formal outlines      \_\_\_\_ Mnemonic devices  
\_\_\_\_ Audio tapes of important concepts

*Check off study strategies as you use them for improved concentration, comprehension, and recall:*

\_\_\_\_ Test self on all chapter highlighting      \_\_\_\_ Test self on all chapter summaries  
\_\_\_\_ Answer chapter or study guide questions      \_\_\_\_ Test self on all lecture notes  
\_\_\_\_ Rework missed homework, test, quiz questions      \_\_\_\_ Memorize in short, intense, daily reviews  
\_\_\_\_ Attend a review session \*by professor, TA, or A-LEC\*      \_\_\_\_ Use all senses to memorize – see it, say it, hear it, write it  
\_\_\_\_ Predict & Answer possible test questions      \_\_\_\_ Read aloud then look away and explain the concept aloud  
\_\_\_\_ Create your own questions & answer aloud  
\_\_\_\_ Take turns with a study partner to test each other on definitions, formulas, or flashcards



# SCHEDULED TEST PREPARATION TIME

## *Using the 5 Day Test Prep Plan*

### **5 days before the test, organize your approach:**

- Look over all the materials for the class and gather all the things you will need to prepare for the test including the textbook, lecture notes, handouts, returned homework and quizzes, etc.
- Isolate difficult areas that give you problems to study first.
- Section the remaining material into three organized, easy-to-handle amounts, based on level of difficulty or the order in which subjects were covered in class.
  - *You will have four sections total. Your first section is the most difficult and the remaining three sections are organized as you see fit.*
- Today, review all of the materials for the most difficult information. Study intensively: reread a section, combine the information with lecture notes, explain concepts aloud, define terms, ask and answer questions. If you can't say it, you don't know it! Go back and study it again.
- For the remaining three sections, decide which study tools you can create to organize and improve your review.
  - *Examples include formal outlines, flash cards, concept maps, mnemonic devices*
- Choose which study strategies to use for improved concentration, comprehension and recall.
  - *Examples include self-test on all lecture notes, answer chapter or study guide questions, and/or memorize in short, intense daily reviews.*

### **4 days before the test:**

- Briefly review the first section, which you studied thoroughly yesterday.
- Then study the second and third sections, following the same intensive procedure to unite reading with notes/handouts/homework/quizzes. Again, if you can't say it, you don't know it. Work more on that topic or concept.
- It's not enough to recognize material; you need to be able to produce it. Test yourself by reciting information aloud in your own words. Explain concepts, define terms, ask and answer questions.
- If you still have areas of difficulty after this study session, you'll still have time to get help from your professor, tutor, or classmate before the test.

### **3 days before the test:**

- Quickly review the first, second, and third sections of your material.
- Then study the fourth section intensively
- Use recitation for thorough understanding and retention.

**2 days before the test:** Study all the material thoroughly from beginning to end, as if the test were the next day. Put the most time and effort into studying on this day. Review parts you know well and pug in those problem parts where they belong. Simulate the test to get into the habit of test-taking.

**1 day before the test:** Reassemble all four sections and review all the material briefly. Get a good night's sleep! Sleep will help you recall and use all that you have learned.



Example: Simulate the Test

- For a problem solving exam, work tough problems that were not assigned; work against a timer to increase your speed.
- For an objective test, try to predict and answer multiple choice, true/false, or identification questions; answer any sample questions in the text or study guide.
- For an essay exam, come up with possible questions, outline a brief answer to each, and reduce the outlined answers to key words that will trigger your memory, using mnemonic devices such as acronyms, peg words, loci or memorize key words.

Example: 5 Day Test Prep Plan

Course & Exam	Goal Grade	5 Days before test	4 Days before test	3 Days before test	2 Days before test	1 Day before test
Philosophy Exam		<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>
Thursday		Organize all materials	Review most difficult, read aloud, notecards, define terms	Review section 1, 2, and 3	Review all 4 sections	Review all 4 sections briefly
25 Multiple Choice Questions	B	Determine & study most difficult	TUTORING	Study section 4	Ask and answer questions	Reorganize all notes and materials
Details Important		Plan strategies for sections 2,3,4	Study section 2 & 3	Recite all sections aloud	Simulate the test	Confirm final questions
Use prior quiz examples						GO TO BED EARLY



# 5 DAY TEST PREP

Semester \_\_\_\_\_  
Year \_\_\_\_\_

Course & Exam Information	Goal Grade	5 DAYS before test	4 DAYS before test	3 DAYS before test	2 DAYS before test	1 DAY before test

