

# How to Take a Multiple Choice Exam

# I. Studying

## A. Prepare well in advance

1. Study daily if possible
2. To pass the exam:
  - i. Understand
  - ii. Recall
3. Take practice exams or answer review questions in the book
4. Avoid last-minute cramming

## **B. Be prepared for the exam**

1. Know the time & place of the exam
2. Know what materials you will need for the exam
  - i. Fresh unwrinkled ScanTron
  - ii. Sharpened #2 Pencils
  - iii. Erasers
3. Be on time

## **C. Avoid changing routine habits**

1. Do not go without sleep the night before the exam
2. Do not go to the exam hungry but do not eat immediately before the exam
3. Sit in your seat if possible

## **D. To remain calm**

1. Stop studying an hour or so before the exam, relax & compose yourself
2. Avoid talking with your classmates immediately prior to the exam
3. Students that prepare at the last minute generally are ill prepared & panicking

## II. Upon receiving the exam

### A. Stay Clam!

- ❖ Take 10 deep breaths

### B. Read the instructions

- ◆ Ask if it is ok to write information other than answers on the exam

### C. Write down memorized information you might forget

- Write down formulas or memory devices before starting the exam

**D. Briefly read over the exam & plan your approach**

**E. If you do not understand something, ask your professor**

**F. Approach the exam with a positive attitude**

1. Do your best

2. Do not be over confident

# III. Taking the exam

## A. Focus on the test & relax

1. If you feel yourself panicking
2. If you cannot think
  - i. Put your pencil down & take 10 deep breaths
  - ii. Clear your mind & begin again
3. Ignore the other students, focus



## **B. Read all of the question & all of the answers**

1. Avoid jumping to conclusions
2. If the first option correct, be sure the last option is not an "all of the above"
3. The same applies to "none of the above"
4. If options appear similar, chances are one of them is the correct response
5. Be careful, alternative answers often differ by only one or two critical words

## **C. Answer the questions you know first**

1. Builds confidence & gain time for harder questions
2. Answers to questions you do not know may be in other questions
3. Go back later to answer the difficult questions
4. Circle the answer on the test and transfer it later to the ScanTron

## **D. Do not panic if you cannot remember an answer**

1. Do the rest of the test & then come back
2. If you have studied, something in the exam may stimulate your memory
3. Use everything you know to analyze the question & choose the best answer

## **E. Read the question as it is written**

1. Avoid overanalyzing or oversimplifying
2. Don't over qualify or interpret
3. Answer the professors question, not yours
4. Most professors do not try to trick you

## **F. Choosing the correct answer**

1. Try answering the questions without looking at the answers
2. Underline or circle key words in the question & the answers
3. Analyze the answers as true/false questions

## **4. Don't worry about:**

- i. "all" or "none of the above"
- ii. B & C questions

5. Be alert for grammatical inconsistencies between the question & the choices
6. Use common sense to determine the answer
7. Look for absolute statements containing words such as:
  - All, none, always, never, only

## **G. Answer all of the questions**

1. Leave enough time to answer all questions
2. Even if you do not know the answer you may be able to eliminate some choices
3. Increases the probability of choosing the correct answer
4. Unless points are deducted for incorrect responses



## **H. Before turning in the exam**

1. Double check the ScanTron
2. Make sure the circled answer on the exam is the same as that on the ScanTron
3. Check for careless errors
4. Be sure to erase thoroughly

4. Be careful when changing answers
  - i. Only change an answer for a good reason
  - ii. Do not change answers when guessing
  - iii. When guessing, choose answers that are not the first or last option
  - iv. Research indicates that the option in the middle with the most words is usually correct