

Tips for Managing Test Anxiety

The Weeks Before

- Preparation
- No cramming, usually ineffective.
- May also cause anxiety and will impair your ability to concentrate.
- Review all the information (books, notes, anything from class)
- Ask yourself questions
- Use flash cards
- Change the way you think about studying and grades; they are not a measure of your self-worth
- Eliminate negative self-talk
- Plan ways to improve your studying.
- Look at the results as a measure.
- "Mens sana in corpora sana"...a healthy mind in a healthy body
- Take care of your basic needs
- Don't abuse foods or beverages.
- The result you hope to achieve may actually work in reverse
- Study in short periods of time

The Night Before

- Don't drink coffee or caffeinated soft drinks after about 4:00pm.
- Eat a good dinner of balanced protein and carbohydrates
- Don't drink alcohol, do drugs, or party
- Do go for a 30 minute walk or get some form of light aerobic exercise
- Lightly skim the material, jot down questions you would like to professor to review prior to the exam.
- Pack your back-pack with plenty of paper, pens, pencils, calculator, graph paper, text book, notes, and anything else you might need, including water and a snack.
- Plan to go to bed early enough to get at least 8 solid hours of sleep.

The Day of

- Get out of bed early enough to not be rushed the day of the exam.
- Eat some breakfast, preferably a balanced meal including protein and carbs
- If possible, walk for a few minutes before class
- Get to class early enough to pick out a good seat, but not too early
- Avoid "Stress Carriers", those people who can cause you additional stress
- Bring a "Stress Saver" with you (book, music, magazine, newspaper)

- Set out everything you will need for the exam and put away any materials that aren't allowed.
- Adopt a mind set of attending to the exam and doing your best.
- Clarify with the professor or the proctor any remaining questions
- Take a few deep breaths and use anxiety-reducing techniques to get yourself centered for the exam.
- During the Test
- Check your internal state before you begin the test (How do I feel? Do I feel anxious? Am I tense anywhere?)
- Use positive self-talk to keep you focused on doing well on the exam
- Review the test before starting to know how to budget your time
- Wear your watch
- Don't get stuck, if need be skip a question and go on to the next one
- Ask questions if you are unsure what is being asked
- If worse comes to worse, use any LEGAL trick to distract you!

After the Exam

- DON'T FREAK OUT – it's over now and you deserve a break. Go have some fun and enjoy the feeling of being past a hurdle.
- When you get the results back, review your answers and summarize the reasons why you missed the ones you did:
 - Did you misunderstand the question?
 - Was your answer consistent with your readings and notes? If not, what could you have done differently?
 - Is there any pattern you can see in your mistakes?
 - Would it help to talk to your professor or TA? Sometimes getting someone to explain what they were looking for or why your answer wasn't sufficient is very helpful next time.

Counseling & Psychological Services
 Kennesaw Hall, Room 2401
 470-578-6600

