



EXAM PREPARATION WITHOUT CRAMMING

"The semester always seems to fly by quicker than I expect. I'm so far behind in my readings; how am I going to cover everything before the final?"

Sound familiar? Many students spend more time worrying about their grades and exams than studying for them. Don't let your work overwhelm you. Just tackle one topic after the other.

Find a quiet study area and establish short-range goals for each study hour. Use social and recreational activities to motivate you towards accomplishing your study goals. Find satisfactory balance between your academic and social life.

The best way to prepare for any exam is by **reviewing lecture notes daily**. Passive review (recopying notes and rereading textbooks) will only lead to an overloaded memory and a high level of frustration.

The following steps will lead you towards an active and fruitful review.

1. **Plan a study schedule** to help you systematically prepare. Set realistic grade objectives for each exam and prioritize your workload. A week's preparation would be ideal; two to three days would be cramming, especially if you haven't studied on a daily basis.

2. **Decide on which topics to cover**. If your exam is cumulative, then focus on the unfamiliar material first before reviewing the familiar. If you do not know how much the exam will cover, ask your professor; the more information you gain, the more confident you'll feel.

Let's say the class covered 5 topics since the last exam. Start with the latest topic and work backwards. Plan 2 hours of active review for each topic spread over at least 5 days.

3. **Correlate lecture notes with textbook readings**. Process lecture notes making one summary sheet for each major unit covered, summarizing the information in your own words. Fill in necessary supporting details from your textbook. These summary sheets, one for each major unit, will be the basis for your final review.

3. **Recite from your summary sheets**. This process stores information into long-term memory. When you cram, information only remains in short-term memory; consequently, during exams you may find either you totally blank out or all the facts become a sea of confusion.

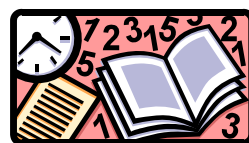
4. **Predict questions** based upon your summary sheets. Compare and contrast relationships, diagram processes, and write out essays. Apply problems given new conditions. Work problems other than those covered in your homework.

5. **Relax, think positive, and get a good night's rest**. Pulling all-nighters do more harm than good. Get to the exam room with plenty of time to spare. Don't study your notes until the last minute and avoid groups of students quizzing each other right before the exam. Their nervous behavior can undermine your confidence.

Are you concerned about your study techniques?

Stop by Damen Hall 101, 773-508-2741 (LSC) or Lewis Towers 715, 312-915-6140 (WTC).

**Knowledge is not enough; we must apply.
Willing is not enough; we must do ---
Goethe**



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