

# Test Taking Strategies

When you take a test, you are demonstrating your ability to understand course material or perform certain tasks. Whether objective tests (true-false, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank) and/or Subjective tests (short answer, essay, oral exams), the following strategies can help you succeed:

- 1) **Attend class regularly.**
- 2) **Listen attentively to last minute instructions given by the instructor.** Teachers often make last minute changes. Missing instructions can cause extreme anxiety.
- 3) **Avoid cramming spread out study sessions days or weeks before the test.** Then you will have less stress.
- 4) **Summarize notes for studying.** You should have approximately three to five pages of review material.
- 5) **Analyze how you did on a similar test in the past.** Review your previous tests and sample tests provided by your teacher.
- 6) **Arrive early for tests.** This brief time period will boost your confidence. Use this time to focus your mind and think positive thoughts.
- 7) **Be comfortable but alert.** Choose a comfortable location with space enough that you need don't slouch; maintain good posture.
- 8) **Stay relaxed and confident.** Keep a good attitude and remind yourself that you are going to do your best. If you find yourself panicking, take a few deep breaths; don't talk to other student's right before: stress can be contagious.
- 9) **Read directions carefully.** Avoid careless errors.
- 10) **Plan how you will use the allotted time.** If there is time, quickly look through the test for an overview. Scan for keywords. If permitted, jot any notes that come to mind.
- 11) **Answer questions in a strategic order.** Answer easy questions first to build confidence. Then, answer those with the most point value. On objective tests, eliminate obvious incorrect answers. On essay tests, broadly outline your answer and sequence of points.
- 12) **Review.** Resist the urge to leave when you complete the exam-check if you have answered all the questions, and not made any errors or miss-marked any answers.
- 13) **Change answers to questions if you erred, or misread the question.**  
You may also find information in the test that will correct a previous answer.