

Suggestions for Handling Test Anxiety



PREPARING FOR TEST

- Avoid Cramming
- Combine all the information you have been presented throughout the semester and work on mastering the main concepts of the course.
- When studying for the test, ask yourself what questions may be asked and try to answer them by integrating ideas from lectures, notes, texts, and supplementary readings.
- If you are unable to cover all the material given throughout the semester, select important portions that you can cover well. Set a goal of presenting your knowledge of this information on the test.
- Remember that the most reasonable expectation is to try to show as much of what you know as you can.
- Remind yourself that a test is only a test-there will be others.
- Avoid thinking of yourself in irrational, all-or-nothing terms.
- Reward yourself after the test-take in a movie, go out to eat, or visit with friends.
- Continue the habits of good nutrition and exercise.
- Follow a moderate pace when studying; vary your work when possible and take breaks when needed.
- Get plenty of sleep the night before the test-when you are overly tired you will not function at your absolute best.
- Once you feel you are adequately prepared for the test, do something relaxing.

DAY OF TEST

- Begin your day with a moderate breakfast and avoid coffee.
- Try to do something relaxing the hour before the test. Last minute cramming will cloud your mind.
- Avoid classmates who generate anxiety and tend to upset your stability.

DURING THE TEST

- First review the entire test.
- Read directions TWICE.
- Work on the easiest portions first.
- If you have difficulty with an item involving a written response, show what knowledge you can.

- If proper terminology evades you, show what you know with your own words.
- For multiple choice questions, read all the options first, then eliminate the most obvious. Unsure of the correct response? Rely on your first impression, then move on quickly. Beware of tricky qualifying words such as “only,” “always,” or “most.”
- Do not rush through the test. Wear a watch and check it frequently as you pace yourself. If it appears you will be unable to finish the entire test, concentrate on those portions which you can answer well.
- Recheck your answers only if you have extra time and only if you are not anxious.
- Take a couple of slow deep breath.
- Get up and go to the restroom or sharpen your pencil if feeling anxious.