Preparing For and Writing Exams

- Carefully read your course outlines noting learning objectives for each course
- Determine what the major concepts, ideas, and issues are of each course
- Complete all course readings and compile all of your notes from various sources – text notes, lecture notes, past assignments, completed tests, etc.
- Review past assignments and tests for topics, question types
- Ensure you know the time, location, and ‘value’ of each exam you are writing
- Set a realistic goal for each exam and decide how much time you will study for it and how that time will be distributed
- Study actively in a way that works for you and prepares you for the type of questions you will face
- Create a plan
- Be prepared to write your exam with all necessary tools (pen, pencil, eraser, ruler, calculator, etc.)

Multiple Choice Questions

About Multiple-Choice

- Multiple choice tests are what are called objective tests, which basically means there is one right answer – true false, fill in the blanks, etc.
- To answer the types of questions one needs to have accurate recall
- Appropriate study method is memorization
- Bad news: multiple choice tests have an added dimension. You need not only to be able to recall details but also apply those details
- Good news: you have the answer in front of you. So if you have studied and you approach the question in a systematic way, you will not have to rely on memory

Preparation for Multiple-Choice

- Focus on details (terms, definitions, etc.) when you are studying and put them in your own words and give examples.
- Could use a Study Sheet
- Create your own multiple choice questions
Academic Support
LEARNING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

Reading a Multiple Choice Test/Exam
- Read the directions carefully (this is true of all exams)
- Read through the exam quickly and note how it is organised. Begin with those questions you feel confident you can answer
- Do not skim the questions. It is too easy to miss important details
- Read every question very carefully. If you know you have a tendency to read quickly and miss key words, use the cover-up strategy:
  - Cover up options and read the question, re-stating it to yourself
  - Try to answer the question without looking at the options
  - Uncover each option one-by-one and read carefully
  - If you still have difficulty determining the correct option, read the question with each option and look for any clues that make the option incorrect
- Avoid reading and looking at the answers at the same time. A good strategy is to cover answers
- Underline key words and qualifiers which make a big difference to the meaning
- If you are not sure what the question is asking, try rewording it
- If you come upon a question you find difficult, mark it and move on, then return to it later
- Ensure you take note of negatives and absolute terms, such as always, must, never, etc.

Answering Multiple Choice Questions
- Choose the best answer then move on
- If you cannot make a choice, make a mark by the question and move on (don’t worry)
- When you have done all you can, come back to marked questions (quite often you will have picked up ideas from other questions)

Changing Answers
- Unless you have good reason, don’t change your answer!
- Wrong reason for changing is if you start second guessing instructor, lose confidence and begin to doubt yourself
- Change your answer only when you uncover more information, or if you see you missed a key word or if a calculation was wrong
Answering True/False Questions

- Every part of a statement or sentence must be true for it to be a true answer. If just one part is false, then the whole statement or sentence is false.
- Be aware of how the meaning of a statement or sentence is impacted by absolute terms (always, must, never) compared with qualifiers (sometimes, should, rarely)
- If you are not sure of an answer, guess. You have a 50% chance of being correct.

Answering Short Answer Questions

- These questions often ask for short descriptions and definitions. Make sure you study accordingly
- Concentrate on key words and facts
- Read the question carefully. Make sure you are answering what is being asked
- Put as much detail as you feel may be relevant to the question, but on the other hand, be brief