



Time Management for Exams

Identify testable material.

Review course outlines and make a list of what material will be covered on each exam. Speak with professors or teaching assistants if clarification is needed.

Assess your situation.

Do you have a good understanding of the testable material? Are you caught up on the readings and other course responsibilities? List any outstanding tasks for each course.

Realistically determine how much time you have for catch-up and studying.

Use a day planner or a weekly schedule to help you determine your available time. If applicable, plan time for end-of-term assignments and allocate time to prepare for and attend remaining classes. Identify time for catching up on course work and studying.

Make studying a priority.

Are there things that you ordinarily do that can be less of a priority during the exam period? For example, can you put socializing on hold or at least decrease the number of hours you spend going out with friends? Remember **not** to cut back on sleep, meals, and exercise - these contribute to quality study time.

Prioritize among and within courses.

When determining how to spend your study time, identify your course and content priorities. You may decide that it's best to spend more of your study time on the courses that are required for your program than on electives. Also, certain parts of courses may warrant more time than others if they are considered especially important or if they have not yet been tested. In other words, don't just start with any course and continue until you run out of time, but plan what you'll focus on while studying.

If you need to take shortcuts, be strategic.

You may find that you don't have enough time to prepare as fully as you would like. If you have to omit material, try to minimize the damage. For example, if you have good lecture notes for a chapter that you haven't read, you might decide not to spend the time reading that chapter and instead cover the required readings that the professor did not cover in class.





Set a reasonable schedule.

Be realistic. Don't plan to spend 16 hours a day studying; how much would be quality time? Determine how many study hours are reasonable in a productive work day. Identify blocks of time for studying and allocate time for meals, exercise, and sleep.

Practice good time management in the exam.

Consider how many questions you need to answer, how heavily they're weighted, and how much time is available, and then develop a plan. For example, for three equally weighted essay questions in three hours you may want to allocate approximately 45 minutes per answer, with some time at the beginning to read over the exam and some time at the end to proofread. For a multiple-choice or True/False exam, monitor your time periodically to assess whether you're going too quickly, taking too long, or on schedule. If you're spending too much time on a question, attempt an answer and flag the question; come back to it later if there's time.

