Thriving as a Trojan Online

Building your Finals Toolkit

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What are we going to cover today?

• Preparing for finals in advance
• Learning/Study strategies
• Test taking strategies
• Setting aside time for self-care
Preparing for finals in advance

1 – 2 Weeks Before the Test

• Become familiar with the test
• Develop a study schedule and plan
• Communicate with your Professor and/or TA

During the Week Before the Test

• Stick to your study plan that you created
• Minimize distractions
• Set up a work & test taking space
Create a Study Plan

- Helps keep your studying on track
- Break down large tasks into manageable pieces
- Review material over various days to strengthen connections to your memory
Other finals study planning tools

KCLC’s Weekly Action Plan

KCLC’s Finals Study Plan & Habit Tracker

https://kortschakcenter.usc.edu/tools-resources/
Learning/Study Strategies

• Rehearsal Strategies
  • Mixed problem sets
  • Spaced/Distributed Practice

• Elaboration Strategies
  • Mnemonics
  • Writing notes in your own words
  • Analogies

(Seli & Dembo, 2020)
Learning/Study Strategies (cont.)

- **Organizational Strategies**
  - Classifying information into groups
  - Creating outlines
  - Representation maps

(Seli & Dembo, 2020)
Other memory strategies

- Sleep
- Exercise
- Self-Referencing
- Write about it
- Sing about it

(Brown, Roediger, & McDaniel, 2014), (Lipitz, Liu, & Gutchess, 2018), (Loprinzi et al., 2018), (Spencer, Walker, & Stickgold, 2017)
Tackling the Big Test

• **Day Before the Test**
  - Determine which questions you may want to tackle first and last
  - Figure out how much time you want to spend on each question &/or section
  - Get a good night’s sleep!

• **Day of the Test**
  - Don’t forget to eat!
  - Log on to Zoom or testing site early
  - Press “Save” button after answering a question to avoid loosing work
  - Read questions out loud
  - Outline essay questions
Strategies for Multiple Choice Exams

• If possible, preview the questions

• Answer all the questions you know first; mark the ones you don’t know to come back to later

• If You’re Unsure of the Answer
  • Don’t overthink the answer
  • Use context clues

• If time allows, review your answers and make sure you have answered each question
Setting aside time for self-care

- Effective self-care reduces anxiety, raises mood, and can help make you more productive.
- Eat health study snacks
- Get plenty of sleep
- Practice relaxation techniques
- & more!

Tips for Stress Management

- Invest in Your Health
  - Incorporate movement breaks when studying (i.e., take a walk or stretch)
  - Incorporate regular exercise into your daily routine (i.e., biking, basketball, yoga, running)
  - Get enough rest; 7-9 hours of sleep is best!
  - Treat yourself to some self-care (i.e., explore the city, visit the beach, go on a hike, get a massage)
  - Eat 3 meals a day with nutritious snacks in between

- Take a Mindful Moment
  - Practice mindfulness through meditation or prayer
  - Start a gratitude or appreciation journal
  - Take a moment to color or draw
  - Go outside to observe nature and your surroundings
  - Notice each sensation when doing daily activities (i.e., doing the dishes, brushing teeth, taste of food)

- Build Connections with Others
  - Call, text, or video chat with a friend or loved one
  - Develop a positive support network of peers & mentors
  - Practice random acts of kindness
  - Volunteer in your community for a cause that's important to you
  - Don't be afraid to seek professional help for additional care and support
KCLC Online Tools and Resources

- On-Demand Workshops
- Handouts Online

https://kortschakcenter.usc.edu/
Thank you! Questions?
References


