

OBJECTIVE TEST-TAKING

On day one of class, become aware of the exams your professor will administer this term. Then you won't need to panic when he or she tells you the objective test is tomorrow. However, you still need to know how to best study for it.

What does *objective* mean?

Objective tests include four types of questions: multiple choice, true/false, matching and short answer. They are not essay exams.

How do I best prepare for an objective exam?

- **Review your notes often**, not just the night before the exam. To review, look over them each day before or after class.
- **Ask the professor what kind of material will be on the exam.** He or she will usually provide key terms, concepts and ideas that will be on the exam.
- **Develop a study guide** if the professor does not provide one. Make yourself answer questions about the key terms, concepts and ideas. If the professor provides a study guide or sample exam, **complete it**.
- **Develop ways to memorize the material easily.** This step includes making flash cards to quiz yourself and memorizing lists of related information using acronyms and key words. Constantly reinforce these memory techniques by reviewing them.
- **Form a study group.** Get together with some friends to review the material the night before the test. However, don't let this gathering turn into chattering over pizza. Stay on task.

What should I do when the exam begins?

- **Bring two #2 pencils** since many exams are given in Scantron format.
- **Breathe deeply; keep arms and shoulders relaxed** in order to prevent exam anxiety.
- **Skim over the entire exam before starting.** This initial look gives you an idea of how the test is broken up as far as number of multiple-choice, true/false, matching and short-answer questions.
- **Read the directions carefully.** The directions will tell you if more than one answer can be selected for a question or if all the options listed in a matching section will be used.

- **Watch for qualifying words** such as *always*, *only*, *all*, *completely*, and *never*. These words limit how well the answer applies to the question. They are often triggers that signal an incorrect choice.
- **Look for the answer that BEST fits with the question.** Many times two answers that "could" work are provided, but one of them is a more accurate answer.
- **Answer the questions you know first.** If you have trouble with a question, come back to it after you have completed the rest of the exam.
- **Eliminate the choices you know are wrong** in the questions you can't answer. Evaluate the choices you have left, and answer to the best of your ability.
- **Review your answers.** Be sure to fill in any questions that have been skipped, and check if the answers have been marked in the correct spot .

What should I do if I score poorly on an exam?

- **Set up an appointment with the professor.** Talk to the professor about the difficulties you may have had studying, and ask him or her for advice on how to prepare for the next exam. Look over the answers you missed to determine why you missed them.
- **Start studying for the next exam now.** Become familiar with the new material as it is presented.
- **See a tutor.** Find someone (whether it be a friend that is doing well in the course, the professor's TA, an ALPHA tutor or Peer Partner) to help you prepare better for the next exam.